

## Politics, Ideology, and Social Welfare Programs: A Critical Evaluation of Social Welfare Legislation in Taiwan\*

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### Introduction

To the majority of people in developing and underdeveloped societies, industrialization, economic growth, and modernization are three interchangeable terms which all lead to one unitimate goal: a better way of life. Analytically, however, there are differences in the quality of change produced by these three phenomena.

Industrialization in the strict sense entails the extensive use of inanimate sources of power in the production of economic goods and services. But in a broader sense, industrialization is often used to describe the process of the radical changes in methods of production and economic and social organizations and the consequent rise of the factory system (1, 2). Thus it is often measured by changes in productive technology, in labor organization, in occupational structures, and in economic consumption.

Economic growth may be defined in terms of the total physical output of the economy. It refers to increase in the economy's real gross national product or real national income. It is also often

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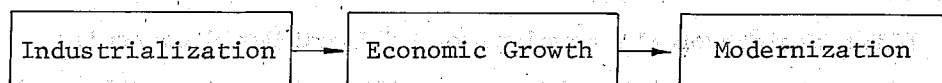
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linked to increases in real per-capita output. Thus, a growing economy, by definition, enjoys an increment in its annual production output and income (3, 4).

Sociologically speaking, industrialization and economic growth, are the two special forms of social change that focus on changes related to production and consumption in economic activities in society. Modernization, on the other hand, is a process which involves transformation of all systems by which people organize society, i.e., the psychological, social, economic, intellectual, religious, and political systems. Wilbert E. Moore says, "Modernization may be more closely identified as rationalization of the ways social life is organized and social activities are performed. By this, I mean the use of fact and logic in the choice of instrumental behavior for the achievement of various identified goals, increased economic output, improvement of health and life expectancy, a reliable civil service, an appropriately educated population, and the achievement of a governable urban area" (5, p.1). To say a society is modernized, according to Daniel Lerner (6), is to say that society possesses a high degree of self-sustaining growth in the economy, a high level of social mobility, a diffusion of secular-rational norms in the culture, and participation in the polity.

Studies of development in the non-Western societies (7, 8, 9) have all pointed out that the above differences among industrialization, economic growth, and modernization are not merely differences in their scope and quality of change, but represent three different stages of development in these societies. Figure 1 illustrates such development:

FIGURE 1: Developmental Stages and Measurements



Changes in  
production and  
consumption  
systems

Increases in  
economic outputs  
and national  
income

Changes in  
economic, political,  
social and cultural  
systems

In this analytical frame of reference, industrialization is seen as a precondition, or cause, necessary for the emergence of economic growth, which then leads to societal modernization. In other words, without an extensive change in the system of production and consumption in the society's economy, a sustaining economic growth will not occur; without a sustaining economic growth to pave the way for other extensive changes in the non-economic sectors of the society, modernization will not be completed. A society is becoming modernized if it can look beyond economic-and-production-related changes to changes in political, social and cultural systems.

It would be naive, however, to conceptualize modernization as a fracture intrinsic to autonomous (societies). Modernization in any society must be seen as part of an international system. This is particularly true of the modernization efforts of the Third World nations, for modernization after all is a process of coming from without, i.e., as a response to external pressures. Portes indicates "Structural characteristics like currency and markets, formal legal regulation, and bureaucracies exist in both developed and underdeveloped nations, for both kinds are part of an integral world-order. The functions of these traits vary, however, between the two types of societies because their 'adaptive' potential is employed in accordance with the particular insertion of the country into the international economy." (9, p.67).

Dependency theorists such as Immanuel Wallerstein (10), J. R. Finkle (11) and A. G. Frank (12) all have stressed the impacts of the core capitalist nations on the development of Third World economies. A nation's position in the world order will undoubtedly affect the development of its modernization, both in economic and in non-economic spheres of the society.

To a large degree, efforts toward modernization in Third World nations are reflected in their implementation of social welfare programs. Modernization, as has been defined, means not only economic prosperity but also human dignity. Nations like Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore all have successfully achieved economic prosperity during the past two or three decades. Their efforts are now being directed toward social welfare programs aiming at closing the gap between the rich and the poor, and at reducing human suffering among disadvantaged in the society.

Our paper focuses on social welfare legislation in Taiwan. In this paper, we will first present a brief summary of social and economic developments in Taiwan during the past three decades. Then we will outline the four major social welfare legislation programs and analyze the socio-political circumstances under which these programs came into existence. Finally, factors that have impacts on the course of welfare policy in Taiwan will be summarized and extended to Third World nations. We shall argue that the initiation of social welfare programs in Taiwan reflected Taiwan's position on the periphery of the world system, and that social welfare legislation in Taiwan is more a political maneuver than a program to meet the needs of the target social groups. We also believe the Taiwanese experience is characteristic of some Third World nations.

## Economic And Social Development in Taiwan

Economist Herman Kahn (13) in his discussion of world economic development has singled out Taiwan, along with South Korea and Japan, as "heroes" of development, for they have lifted themselves from object poverty to middle-income levels in less than a decade and are now within a decade or so of becoming fully mature industrial economies. John C. H. Fei et al. (14) and Walter Galenson (15) have also called Taiwan's success a "miracle," while Richard E. Sarrett and Martin King Whyte (16) have labelled Taiwan "a deviant case" of dependency theory.

Industrialization and economic growth in Taiwan are not an overnight success story. Rather they have been achieved through careful planning and effective execution of the plans. From 1953 to 1981, six long-range economic plans were launched and effectively implemented. As a result, the national economy has shifted from agriculture-oriented to industrial-oriented, from import-oriented to export-oriented, and from relative poverty to prosperity.

As clearly demonstrated in Table 1, the non-agricultural population in Taiwan has steadily increased between 1951 and 1979, with almost 70 percent of the total population now engaged in non-agricultural activities. Such a shift of a large proportion of population from agricultural activities to industrial activities has increased the relative importance of industrial products in the net domestic product. As Table 1 shows, industrial products occupied 13.01% of the net domestic product in 1951, and was increased to 34.32% in 1979. Volumes of gross national product during the same period increased from US\$2,110.5 millions to US\$24,751.6 millions; per-capita income increased from US\$246 to US\$1,288; and the overall national economy has grown at a very impressive rate during the period.

TABLE 1: Selected Indicators of Taiwan's Economic Growth

Indicator	1951	1956	1961	1966	1971	1976	1979
% of non-agriculture population in total population	47.13	49.96	50.96	55.31	60.26	66.30	67.74
% of industrial product in net domestic product	13.01	14.53	16.99	20.34	28.90	32.55	34.32
Gross national product (Million US\$)	2110.5	3230.2	4525.5	7255.0	11979.6	18318.4	24751.6
Per capita income (US\$)	246	316	371	520	770	1039	1288
Economic growth rate (%)	NA	5.50	6.83	9.01	12.90	13.48	8.08

Sources: National Income of the Republic of China, 1979. Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of China, 1979. Graphical Survey of the Economy of Taiwan, the Republic of China, 1980.)

When the Nationalist government moved to Taiwan in 1949, Taiwan was predominantly an agricultural society with a large proportion of its population residing in rural areas. The economic boom of the past three decades has not only increased the nation's wealth in a dramatical fashion, but has changed the social structure of Taiwan.

One of the major changes in Taiwan during the period is a rapid urbanization. As new technology and industry are located in or close to urban centers, population starts to move from rural to urban areas. In Taiwan, we see the rapid increase of urban population; in 1951, about 51% of the population on the island lived in urban areas, but in 1979 it was increased to 67.1% (17). Moreover, the evidence also shows that this urban population seems to be concentrated in large cities. As Table 2 indicates, in 1957 only 27.5% of the population lived in urban areas with a population of 100,000 or more also increased, from 8 in 1957 to 17 in 1978. In other words, almost half of Taiwan's population is now living in 17 large cities. Government reports (18, 19) show that half of Taiwan's urban population is concentrated in four major metropolises population of 500,000 or more.

TABLE 2: Urban Population in Localities or More

Year	% of Urban Population	Number of Localities
1957	27.5	8
1959	28.3	8
1961	29.2	10
1963	29.7	10
1965	30.4	10
1967	33.6	11
1969	37.3	12
1971	38.6	15
1973	41.4	17
1975	43.9	17
1977	44.8	17
1978	45.4	17

Source: Wen-hui Tsai, "Industrialization and Urbanization in Taiwan." Journal of Sociology, No. 15, May 1982, Table 8.

Another significant change as a result of economic prosperity in Taiwan is found in an increase in life expectancy, which reflects Taiwan's ability to sustain the lives of its members. In Table 3, we can see that the 1952 average life expectancy of 58.6 years was increased to 70.7 years in 1979. Better nutrition, better health, and better living conditions all have contributed to the increase of the population's life expectancy. One of these indicators is the decline of infant mortality rates. In Taiwan, the infant mortality rate was 91.2 per thousand in 1952, but it was reduced to 24.1 per thousand in 1979.

TABLE 3: Infant Mortality Rates and Average Life Expectancy

Year	Infant Mortality Rate (deaths/1,000)	Average Life Expectancy (years)
1952	91.2	58.6
1954	64.5	62.1
1956	54.2	62.6
1958	46.8	64.3
1960	42.2	64.5
1962	40.4	65.3
1964	31.9	66.5
1966	32.3	66.9
1968	30.9	66.9
1970	26.5	68.7
1972	24.4	69.4
1974	24.6	69.4
1976	23.1	70.5
1978	24.1	70.8
1979	24.1	70.7

Source: Statistical Data Book for the Conference on Social Report of the Republic of China, Ming-teh Foundation, 1981, Table 5.



It should be no surprise by now that we find the overall quality of life in Taiwan has shown steady improvement. Table 4 is a checklist of selected indicators for measurement of the quality of life in Taiwan from a longitudinal perspective.

The decline of unemployment rate as a consequence of industrialization and economic growth is expected. But the trend toward a more equal distribution of family income is somewhat a surprise to developmental sociologists, especially those defenders of the dependency theory of development. It is a deviant case of dependency theory, as Barrett and Whyte (16) have pointed out, because Taiwan's industrialization has not resulted in unbalanced sectorial development, economic dualism, privileged enclaves, and a deterioration in income distribution, the characteristics which dependency theorists have discovered to be so widespread in Latin American nations.

Technological advancement, increased productivity, rapid economic growth, near-full employment, and a better distribution of family income have all contributed to a tremendous improvement in the quality of life in Taiwan. As Table 4 demonstrates, through the years the number of leisure hours has increased; T.V. set and automobile ownership has also increased; illiteracy rate has declined; health care has been improved, with more health-related personnel per thousand population. To a certain degree, Taiwan is a model for other Third World nations in both economic and social developments. It is a model because it has been able to avoid social deterioration in the aftermath of industrialization.

### **Social Welfare Legislation in Taiwan**

Industrialization and economic growth in Taiwan have not been without cost. Problems of aging surfaced as a consequence of a longer life expectancy, water and air have been polluted with deadly chemicals,

TABLE 4: Selected Indicators of Taiwan's Quality of Life

Indicator	1953	1958	1963	1968	1973	1978
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.81	3.80	4.26	1.72	1.26	1.67
Income share of bottom 20% of all households (%)	1.7	N.A.	7.7	7.8	8.9	8.9
Number of Leisure hours per month	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	495	503	508
Number of TV sets per thousand households	N.A.	N.A.	14.3	174.8	738.3	989.9
Illiteracy Rate (%)	41.5	30.9	23.6	16.4	13.8	11.2
Number of automobiles per thousand persons	1.1	1.6	2.3	4.9	11.5	25.6
Number of health-related personnel per thousand persons	N.A.	10.2	10.5	8.9	13.1	21.2

Source: Same as Table 3.

crime rates have significantly increased, and overcrowded urban groups are fighting for more needed shelter (20).

In response to these social problems, the Nationalist government in Taiwan has begun to pay more attention to social and cultural related programs. For instance, public expenditures on education and culture which occupied 14.6% of the total government budget in 1961, were increased to 17.2% in 1979, and from 1956 to 1979 the government has also invested a total of NT\$6,707 million in public housing projects. The new Ten-Year Economic Development Plan (1980-1989) now calls for, in addition to economic development, an extensive and far-reaching improvement of the general welfare and livelihood of the people of Taiwan.

At the same time, the Nationalist government has also gone through the legislative process of establishing goals and procedures for the management of social welfare programs. In 1980, three major social welfare legislation programs were passed, and the government's expenditures on social welfare reached approximately US\$1,345.8 millions.

The history of social welfare legislation in Taiwan reflects its position on the periphery of the world system, strongly under the influence and dominance of the core capitalist nations and of international organizations backed by the latter. The first major social welfare program in Taiwan was the 1973 Welfare Law for Children passed as a response to the urgent appeal of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

UNICEF was established in December 1946 as a practical channel for international cooperation in providing emergency aid for children who were victims of war. Later, UNICEF broadened its activities to include health and nutrition programs in behalf of many other children in many countries. In 1960, inspired by the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child, UNICEF extended its activities to include educa-

tion, vocational guidance and training, and children's social services, in addition to its original health and nutrition services for children.

The government in Taiwan was one of the recipients of UNICEF funds. Between 1950 and 1972, more than US\$15 million in aid was extended to Taiwan from UNICEF. Table 5 is a summary of the allocation of UNICEF funds to Taiwan.

TABLE 5: UNICEF Aid to Taiwan, 1950-1972

Program	UNICEF Aid (US\$)
Basic Health including maternal and child health, environmental sanitation, and school health education.	3,499,300
Disease Control including BCG vaccination, TB comprehensive control, VD control, and trachoma control.	8,018,300
Other Disease Control including DP immunization, freeze-dried SPV production, poliomyelitis control, and school dental health.	432,700
Nutrition Programs including supplementary feeding, goiter control, soyfood clinical testing, and soyfood marketing promotion.	303,000
Social Services for Children	849,100
Educational Programs including elementary education, pilot education for the blind, industrial arts education, and pre-employment training for youth.	2,547,000
TOTAL	15,649,400

Source: Fact Sheet-Summary of UNICEF Assistance, China Liaison Office of UNICEF, 1973.

As early as 1961, the Ministry of the Interior had begun to draw outlines for welfare laws for children, the aged, and the disabled. It was not until the beginning of the 1970's, however, that serious attempts were made to speed up preparation for such legislation. With assistance from UNICEF, the First National Symposium on Child and Youth Welfare and Development was held in Taipei on July 7-11, 1970, and a National Promotion Committee for Child and Youth Development was organized later that year. The first major modern social welfare legislation in Taiwan under the Nationalist government was promulgated in February, 1973, entitled "Welfare Law for Children."

Several factors contributed to the enactment of the Welfare Law for Children in Taiwan. First, and most importantly, was an international concern for the welfare of children in the 1960's and early 1970's, inspired by UNICEF. As a charter member of the United Nations, the Nationalist government in Taiwan responded with the enactment of the Law, part to legitimize the spending of the funds it had received from UNICEF.

Second, the economic boom of the 1960's enabled the Nationalist government to afford social welfare programs. As we have demonstrated, Taiwan's industrialization and its subsequent economic growth brought the nation wealth, with increased revenue in both the public and private sectors. A content analysis of the government's development plans shows that the plans have been expanded from pure economic planning in the early years to such non-economic planning areas as education, culture, and social welfare programs in recent years (17).

Third, social welfare programs are generally seen as indispensable indicators of a good government and of a modernized nation. With the increase of the nation's wealth, the pressure from the public to have a fair share had started to build. Spending on social welfare programs was used to help justify the government's budget distribution.

Finally, the Nationalist government lacked legitimacy in Taiwan. The ruling elite of the Nationalist government consists exclusively of the followers of the late President Chiang Kai-shek, who had fled to Taiwan in 1949. The majority of the population is the native-born Taiwanese who had not been given any share of national power. The awareness of political discrimination started to build momentum in the early 1970's. Social welfare legislation was used to publicize the government's good intentions toward the improvement of the livelihood of the general population.

The enactment of the first major social welfare program in Taiwan was thus more a political act than a result of concern for children's welfare. This becomes even more apparent when one considers the fact that the Nationalist government was expelled from the United Nations in October, 1972, four months prior to the enactment of the law.

The withdrawal of UNICEF's programs after Taiwan's leaving the United Nations and the 1974 worldwide energy crisis and economic depression had a severe negative effect on the development of the nation's social welfare programs in general, and on the execution of the Welfare Law for Childhood in particular. With the shrinking of export revenue, social welfare programs became expendable. Such programs were seen as a heavy burden to the nation's economy and an obstacle to its immediate recovery. For the next six years, between 1973 and 1979, not a single social welfare program was passed by the Nationalist government. All attention was given to a speedy economic recovery.

United States recognition of the People's Republic of China during the Carter Administration in December 1979 came as a tremendous blow to the Nationalist government. With a growing sense of international isolation, the Nationalist government had no choice but to secure its base in Taiwan from the people within. A social

construction movement was thus launched immediately after the US-PROC normalization announcement in search of support from the general population. Legislation for social welfare programs was rushed through at a frantic pace. In one year, 1980, three major social welfare programs were passed: the Welfare Law for the Aged, the Welfare Law for the Disabled, and the Social Assistance Law. Table 6 presents the dates and titles of the four major social welfare programs, along with their respective enforcement rules.

TABLE 6: The Four Major Social Welfare Programs in Taiwan

Title	Promulgated Date	Number of Chapters	Number of Articles
Welfare Law for Children	Feb. 1973	5	30
(Enforcement Rules)	July 1973	-	32
Welfare Law for the Aged	Jan. 1980	-	21
(Enforcement Rules)	April 1980	-	27
Welfare Law for the Disabled	June 1980	-	26
(Enforcement Rules)	April 1981	-	34
Social Assistance Law	June 1980	8	27
(Enforcement Rules)	Jan. 1981	-	18

Source: A Summary of Interior of the Republic of China, The Ministry of Interior, 1982.

Discussions and debates during the reviewing process at cabinet-level meetings and legislative sessions centered not so much on the substance of these laws, but on the possible financial burden the government would have to bear. Particularly, heated debates occurred on the definition of old age in the Welfare Law for the Aged. The beneficiaries of the aged welfare law included only those aged 70 or above,

as against a commonly accepted definition of 65 or above. The definition was imposed by a powerful group of financially and economically political elite fearful that a slowdown in the nation's economic recovery would result from spending on social welfare. Raising the age limit from 65 to 70, they argued successfully, would save substantial amounts and encourage the economic recovery of Taiwan (21).

Successful implementation of any social welfare program in any country needs sufficient money, manpower, and plans. The strong ideological concern for economic development among members of the ruling political elite hindered implementation from the very beginning. Thus, although the four major social welfare programs all stated clearly the responsibility of each level of government--county, provincial, and central--to provide necessary funds for the implementation of the welfare laws, the laws did not mention the appropriate proportion of the annual budget required for such purposes. As a result, the much-needed financial resources from various levels of government are in serious doubt.

In Table 7, the gross national product, government expenditures, and spending on social welfare are presented and compared. Data on the private sector are not available, but it is generally believed this sector plays only a minor role in social welfare in Taiwan.

As Table 7 indicates, social welfare outlays as a percentage of gross national product have shown relatively steady increases annually, doubling from 1.5% in 1962 to 3.0% in 1981. This picture is slightly different in a comparison of social welfare spending to total government expenditures. Table 7 shows that between 1962 and 1972, a trend of increase was obvious with the exception of 1965-1966. After the peak of 1972, however, the ratio has shown no significant increase (See Figure II).



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TABLE 7: Gross National Product, Government Expenditures,  
& Social Welfare Spending in Taiwan

Year	GNP (million NT\$)*	Government Expenditures (million NT\$)*	Social Welfare Spending (million NT\$)*	I (%)**	II (%)***
1962	76,652	15,414.0	1,116.9	1.5	7.2
1963	86,710	16,456.8	1,259.6	1.5	7.6
1964	101,492	18,485.5	1,495.4	1.5	8.1
1965	111,895	22,391.3	1,699.1	1.5	7.6
1966	125,343	23,836.0	1,123.8	0.9	4.7
1967	144,839	30,726.8	2,197.8	1.5	7.1
1968	168,695	33,002.0	2,581.3	1.5	7.8
1969	195,693	41,868.9	3,724.5	1.9	8.9
1970	225,283	49,152.6	4,712.0	2.0	9.6
1971	262,125	54,829.1	5,682.9	2.2	10.4
1972	314,869	63,667.7	8,101.8	2.6	12.7
1973	407,419	79,835.9	8,663.7	2.1	10.9
1974	544,847	89,982.0	9,719.9	1.8	10.8
1975	581,150	126,435.5	12,657.4	2.2	10.0
1976	696,101	149,321.6	16,940.3	2.4	11.3
1977	811,819	191,472.7	20,428.1	2.5	10.7
1978	967,938	227,341.2	24,489.1	2.5	10.8
1979	1,164,473	265,749.3	29,706.7	2.6	11.2
1980	1,440,778	344,598.5	38,223.8	2.7	11.1
1981	1,703,713	433,415.8	51,143.0	3.0	11.8

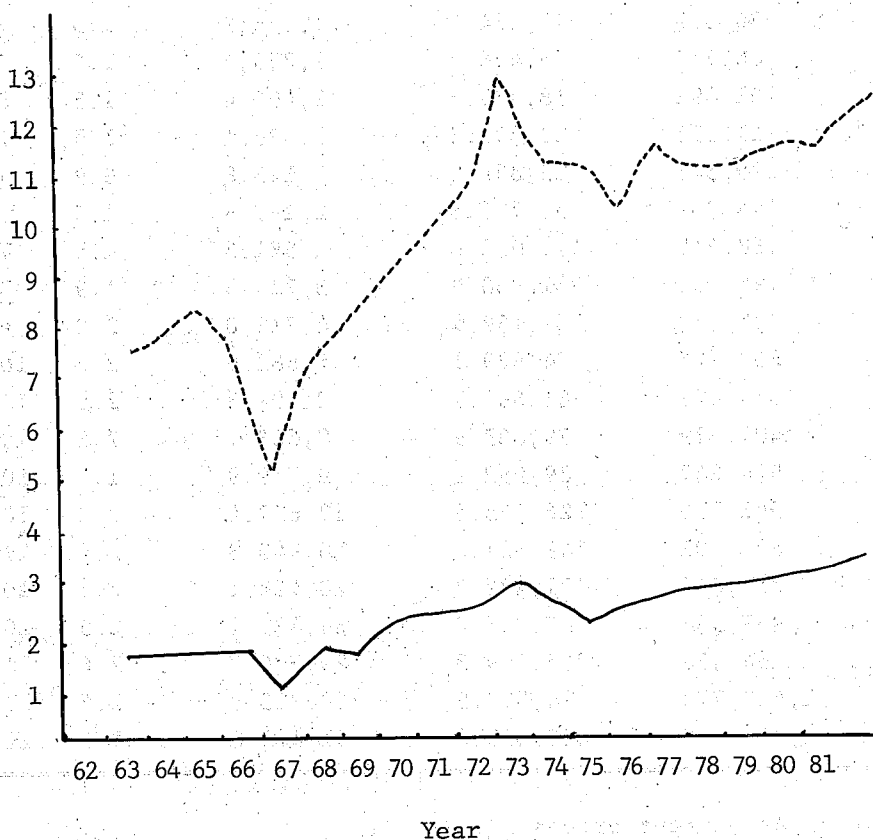
Notes: \* At current prices.

\*\* I = social welfare spending/GNPx100.

\*\*\* II = social welfare spending/government expendituresx100

Sources: Data on GNP and government expenditures are taken from National Income of the Republic of China, 1981. Data on social welfare spending are calculated from the Yearbook-book of the Ministry of Finance, 1981.

FIGURE II: Social Welfare Spending as a Percentage of Gross National Product and Government Expenditures in Taiwan



Key: ---- social welfare spending as percentage of government expenditures.  
\_\_\_\_\_ social welfare spending as percentage of gross national product.

Sources: Same as Table 7.

Thus, although the Welfare Law for Children was promulgated in 1973 and the remaining three welfare laws were enacted in 1980, both Table 7 and Figure II reveal no significant increase in social welfare spending in proportion to either gross national product or total government expenditures after the enactment of these laws.

In other words, these newly enacted welfare laws lacked the governmental financial support needed for effective and successful implementation. This observation supports the suspicion that the enactments were aimed primarily for political propaganda, with very little intention of promotion and implementation of the laws. It also supports the opinion that the political elite in Taiwan today are still very much committed to economic development. The Minister of Economics, Mr. Yao-tung Chao proclaimed in May 1982, "We are not ready for welfare laws. Our first priority must be given to economic growth without reservations." (22)

The lack of financial resources to support the welfare programs was the key factor making their implementation ineffective. Another factor was that no additional professional agency or staff was provided after the enactment of these laws. A few of them even expressed concern about the increasing confusion caused by administering the laws.

Furthermore, we could not find any evidence that training for social welfare workers has been expanded, for the number of college graduates at the Departments of Sociology, Social Work, and Labor Relations did not show any significant increase. The governmental civil service examination did not increase its allocation for social welfare officeholders either.

Nevertheless, awareness of social welfare has increased in recent years among the public, especially the intellectuals, Table 8 presents calculations of the published papers and articles with topics related to social welfare in Taiwan from 1969 to 1981. In general, we see an

increase in numbers of articles and papers published in various popular and professional journals with a focus on social-welfare-related topics. The number was 29 in 1969, and 161 in 1981.

TABLE 8: Published Papers and Articles on Social Welfare in Taiwan

Year	Child Welfare	Aged Welfare	Disabled Welfare	Social Assistance	Others	Total
1969	3	2	0	5	19	29
1970	5	4	0	17	22	48
1971	3	6	0	12	7	28
1972	9	9	3	19	24	64
1973	16	6	2	23	46	93
1974	19	11	2	7	5	44
1975	7	10	4	12	16	49
1976	4	15	4	9	20	52
1977	4	17	2	12	20	55
1978	11	26	2	15	37	91
1979	18	36	8	5	28	95
1980	6	42	12	13	24	97
1981	12	45	45	9	50	161
Total	117	229	84	158	318	906

Sources: Data for 1969 are taken from Journal of Social Security, Taiwan. Data for 1970-1981 are taken from Index for Journal Articles, Central Library, Republic of China.

Two additional observations could be made from the statistics contained in Table 8. First, there seems to have been a greater increase in concern for the welfare of the aged than for the subjects of the other three programs, especially in the most recent years. As the aged population has increased significantly in recent years, the public concern over aged welfare has also been increased.

Second, the number of papers and articles published prior to and after the enactment of individual welfare laws shows a significant increase. The number of papers and articles on children's welfare reached its peak in 1974, one year after the enactment of the Welfare Law for Children. Articles on the aged and the disabled also reached their peak one year after the enactment of these two laws. Papers and articles dealing with social assistance appear evenly distributed with a slight upward trend in 1980, when the social assistance law was passed.

In short, judging from the number of social welfare programs that have been enacted in Taiwan during recent years, one might easily gain the impression that Taiwan is moving rapidly toward a modernized welfare state. Our analysis of the substance and structural features of the legislation and its implementation tells a different story. The programs are more a political smoke screen than a concern for the welfare of the population in Taiwan.

### **Conclusion**

Taiwan's success in industrialization, economic growth, and modernization is indeed remarkable. Within a short period, Taiwan had been shifted from an agricultural economy to a rapidly developing industrial nation, and it has achieved an impressive improvement in overall quality of life for its population, with an extended life expectancy and a better social environment.

Yet, Taiwan's success has not been achieved in isolation. It reflects Taiwan's dependency on international currents. Without a favorable international trade atmosphere, economic growth experienced in Taiwan during the past two or three decades would not have been possible. Taiwan is thus extremely sensitive to external pressure.

Politically, Taiwan is even more vulnerable to external pressure.

As a nation of continuous crises in facing military threat from Communist China and in dealing with growing isolation from international community, Taiwan's current status reflects its position in contemporary world order. The withdrawal from the United Nations in 1972 and the U.S.-China normalization in 1979 have made great impacts on socio-political development in Taiwan.

On the surface, one could very well be impressed by the progress made in social welfare in Taiwan. With a growing economy and national wealth, government spending on social welfare has been increased substantially, and at the same time government seems to exert efforts to establish programs for social welfare promotion and management. Our analysis of the four major social welfare programs, however, reveals a great many politically motivated manipulations.

Several factors have helped shape the development of social welfare in Taiwan. First of all, external factors have clearly played a significant role in social welfare programs and legislation in Taiwan. It was the financial assistance which Taiwan had received from UNICEF that promoted the establishment of the first social welfare legislation in Taiwan in 1973. It was again external pressure that motivated the government to rush through three major pieces of social welfare legislation within one year, in 1980, in response to the crisis resulting from the U.S.-China normalization declaration. Social welfare programs were seen as a defense mechanism in a time of political uncertainty in international relations.

Second, social welfare programs have been used as a stabilizing measure in dealing with growing internal demands from the public for a larger share of national wealth and power. The Nationalist government in Taiwan consists exclusively of the followers of the late President Chiang Kai-shek. The native-born Taiwanese was denied participation in the national power structure. With an improved

economy and better education, public demands for a share of wealth and power have grown rapidly since the beginning of the 1970's. Although the Nationalist ruling elite is willing to share wealth, as reflected in equal distribution of family income, but rejects any demand for participation in the national power. A political riot broke out on December 10, 1979 in Kao-hsiung city, the largest industrial city in Taiwan. The enactment of the three major social welfare legislation in 1980 was in part a response to the riot. Social welfare programs were manipulated by the central government to quiet complaints and potential challenges to the ruling Nationalist elite. They were political smoke screens defending the elite's power.

Third, although the government has shown some interest in promoting social welfare in Taiwan with budget increments and legislation, there was no cohesive effort among various government agencies in planning and coordinating welfare programs. As we have shown, ambiguity in the content of the legislation and a lack of professional staff to handle welfare policy have made those programs unworkable. The government could have put forth more effort for the implementation of these programs.

Finally, the economically oriented ideology of the influential political elite has become an unbreakable stumbling block to make the government more committed to social welfare programs. To them, government's intervention in social welfare is a waste of needed capital, a threat to the future growth of Taiwan. The task of a good government, in the eyes of this group of economic elite, is to increase national wealth, not to spend it.

In summary, some of these factors are conducive to the development of social welfare in Taiwan, e.g., financial assistance from international organizations, Taiwan's position in the current world system, economic growth and national wealth, political stability,

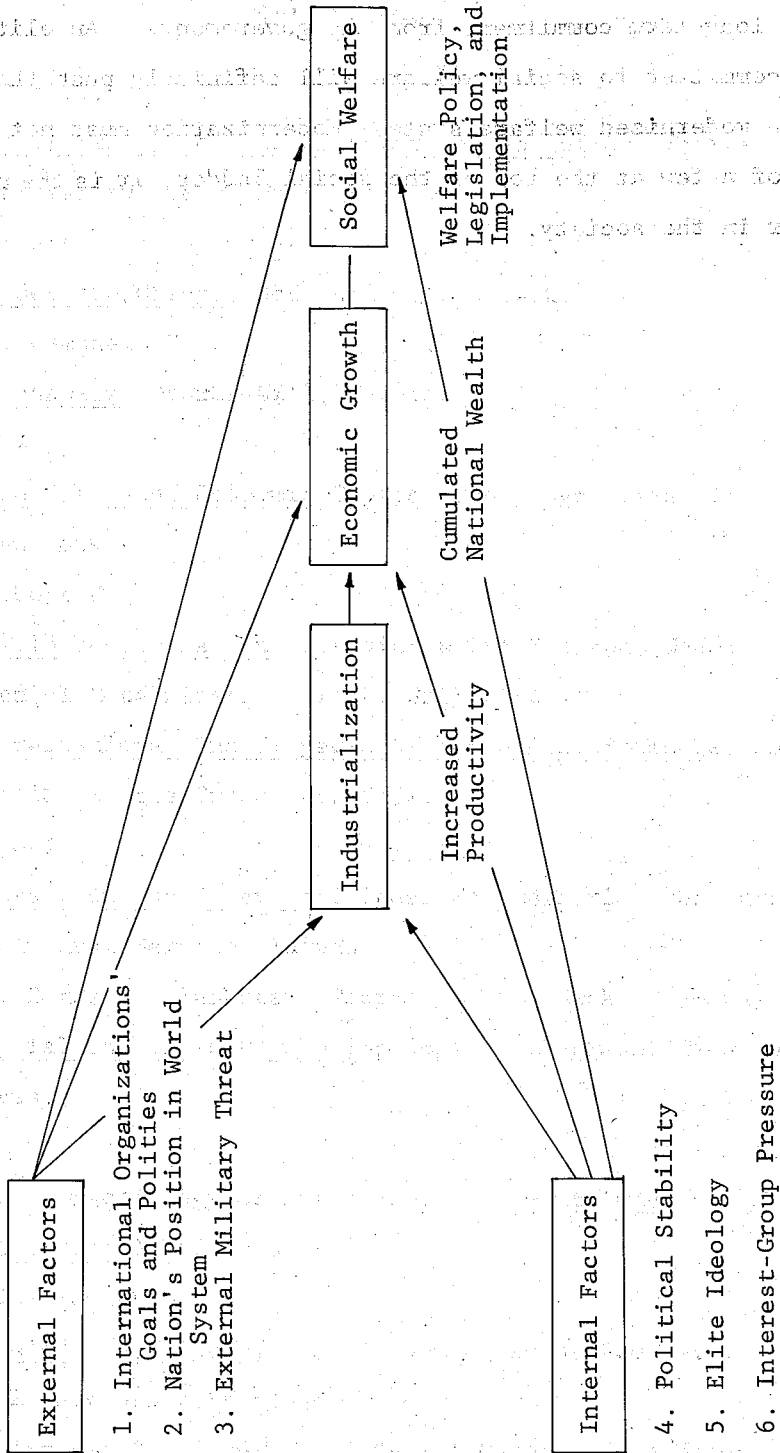
and increased interest-group pressure in favor of social welfare. Some are not conducive, e.g., the cut-off of international funds, a political elite ideologically committed to economic growth, built-in deficiencies in welfare legislation, and a lack of professional staff in managing the social-welfare system. All of these factors have affected the development of social welfare in Taiwan and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. Figure III presents the various factors that have affected social welfare development in Taiwan.

What happened in Taiwan is not at all unique. It could very well have happened or be happening in other developing nations in the Third World. Just like Taiwan, most of the developing nations in the Third World are peripheral states in the current capitalist world system; their development in both the economic and the sociopolitical spheres are often influenced by external pressures spread from the core capitalist nations. Malloy and Borzutzky's (23) study of welfare policy in Latin America reveals similar process of development. They have found the population problem related to welfare policy in Latin America is more a politically induced reality than a product of mindless demographic forces. Abbott's (24) analysis of social welfare practice in Hong Kong discovers similar characteristics.

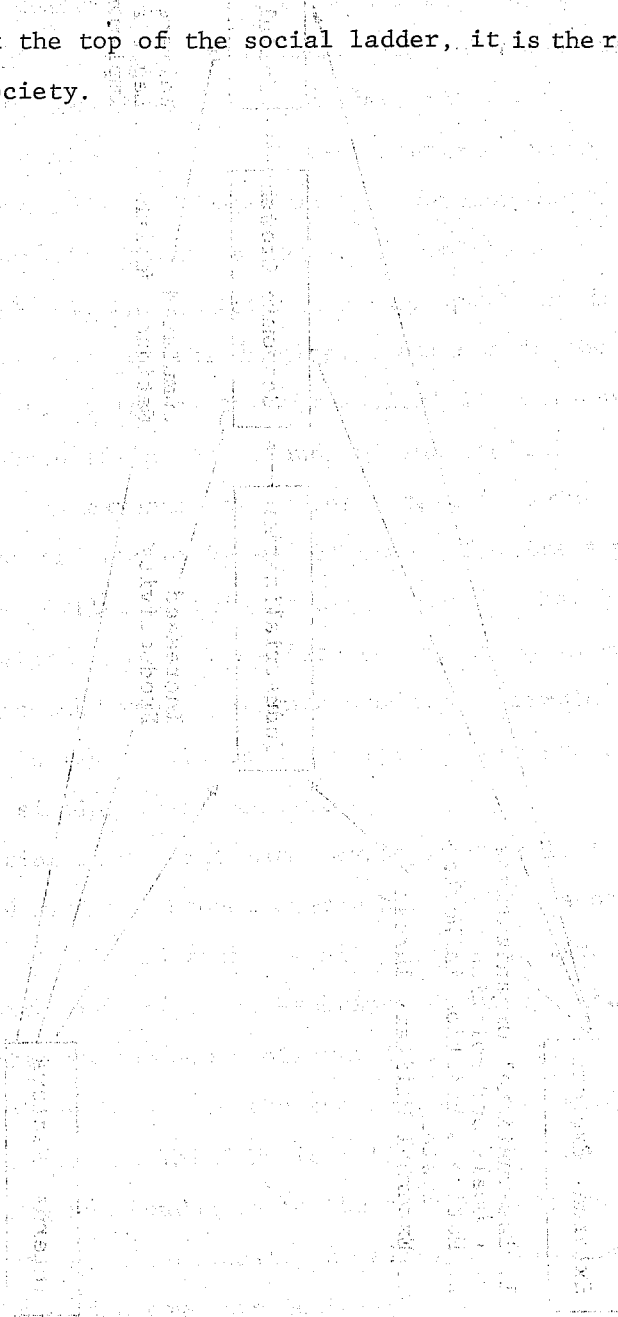
Modernization is the ultimate development goal of the people of the Third World nations; economic growth is only one of the necessary stepping stones to attain such a goal. Social welfare is an integral part of the better way of life resulting from modernization. Those factors presented in the above diagram in Figure III we found in Taiwan and all have impact on the success or failure of social welfare and of modernization in Third World nations. One can only hope the factors which are not conducive to the promotion of social welfare in nations like Taiwan will gradually be eliminated at the initiative of both international and domestic leadership.



FIGURE III: Factors Affecting Social Welfare in Taiwan



The development of social welfare programs in Third World nations needs long-term commitment from the governments. An elite ideologically committed to social welfare will definitely push the society toward a modernized welfare state. Modernization must not be the privilege of a few at the top of the social ladder, it is the right of every member in the society.



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# 政治、意識型態和社會福利： 台灣社會福利立法之評估

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## 中文摘要

短短的二十年中，台灣已從農業經濟型態國家快速成長蛻變成工業經濟型態的國家。經濟學家和社會學家們均認為台灣的成長是一種「奇蹟」，並稱讚台灣為“第三世界國家中的英雄”亦是“偏離依賴理論常軌的案例”。

雖然台灣的經濟成長及其所累積的國家財富，已使政府有能力對非經濟性的社會因素付出更大的心力；但社會福利計劃的施行與國民所預期的目標之間，仍有很大的差距。經由對台灣社會福利立法的分析，發現可從下列四個方面來說明台灣社會福利的發展：(1)就外在的因素而言：社會福利立法被認為是一種確保其國際政治地位的方法；(2)就國內的壓力而言：在面對國內不斷成長的需求上，社會福利計劃被用來作為一種安定的策略；(3)就組織的困難而言：在社會福利的計劃和方案的實施上，缺乏累積性的努力。(4)就精英意識型態而言：強烈的精英意識型態影響了經濟成長，阻礙了社會福利計劃的健全發展。台灣的社會福利受到上述的影響，致未能有很好的發展；然我們相信，上述的因素並不僅對台灣而言，它們亦存在於其他的發展中國家。

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