Some observations on developmental change and bureaucracy in developing countries

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General.

1. « Changes in modern society », wrote Neumeyer, « are so fundamental and far reaching in character that they have unsettled the old foundations, especially the structure of society. Organized groups and modes of behavior have experienced deviations, resulting in uncertainties and confusion. Both the continuity of the social order and the changes in society must be recognized... » (1).

However, we are faced with not only social changes, but mostly with everyday scientific and technological changes. And to a lesser degree with functional and structural changes, though « functions change more rapidly and easily than structure does » (2).

If change is so phenomenal to human nature and behavior, the ambition of developing societies to rid themselves of their miserable conditions and to break-out their inferiority becomes an unquestionable fact.

Developing countries, therefore, are sharply reacting to employ all possible means and measures to enforce change in a variety of methodologies. In some instances, a comprehensive and radical change is followed. In others, a partial and incremental change is sought, depending on many factors ; among which are : ideology, potentialities, climate and geography. However, it has been evidenced that the waves of change — in all cases — are sweeping torrentially and relentlessly.

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(1) Martin H. NEUMEYER, *Social Problems and the Changing Society*, D. Van Nostrand Co., Princeton, N.J., 1953, p. 34.

(2) *Ibid.*

The deteriorated overall socio-political and economic conditions together with the psychological incentives, had obviously contributed to inflame the developing mental attitudes to strive so anxiously for a better standing among other nations.

Changes are not only sought to acquire a better international standing inasmuch as to eliminate indigenous unequalities. In this sense, even developed countries are involved in such a process of change. There are countries with striking economic, social and cultural differences existing among the people of its sub-regions. To eliminate these indigenous differences, governments sought to employ respective changes. « Even small developing countries such as Ceylon, Greece and Guatemala have rich and poor, leading and lagging regions. In bigger countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia and Pakistan, and in middle-sized countries such as Italy and Egypt, the regional contrast are dramatic » (3).

Definition and typology.

What is change ?
Resistance to change.
Extent of change : comprehensive and partial.
Tempo of change : immediate and incremental.

2. *What is change ?*

To eliminate the defects of the present conditions, a new different aspects of life have to substitute for the old prevailing ones. In other words, a transformation from the old traditional to the new modernized way of life has inevitably to take place. This process of « transformation » is the « change ».

In this sense, it is an abstract process of a skip from one given circumstance to another. On the other hand, this same process, in dynamic terms, i.e., the building up of the requirements of the change is, the « development ». However, the two terms have often been employed interchangeably.

« An adequate theory of change », according to Olaf Larson and Everett Rogers, « should encompass these following questions : 1° What is it that has changed ? 2° How much has it changed (extent)? 3° How quickly has it changed (rate)? 4° What were the conditions before and after change ? 5° What occurred during change ? 6° What were the stimuli that induced change ? 7° Through what mechanism did change

(3) Benjamin HIGGINS, *Economic Development,* Constable and Co., London, 1969, p. 20.

occur ? 8° What brought stabilization at a particular point of change ? » (4).

To my opinion, the above given theory is not an adequate one for change. It rather seems to be principles followed in checking up or re-examining an executed plan for change. A more adequate theory for change, to my feeling, must provide a convenient grounds or principles on which theoretical assumptions that create a certain process of change can be established. In this sense, we suggest these general founding questions for determining and defining a given process of change : 1° *What is to be changed ?* 2° *Why, when, how* and *where* to be changed ?

By answering these questions precisely, a defined plan for change will be acquired. However, we admit that these answers will fall short of building up a complete theory. It may be more logical to further our questions by the above suggested ones of Larson and Roger. Both groups of questions are to be employed consecutively, i.e., our questions that provide the « plan of change » and Larson and Rogers' that provide the « re-examination » for it.

The scope of change has been ramified proliferously to cover a variety of sub-topics, such as, scientific, technological, social, economic, political, administrative and cultural changes. Undoubtedly, all have emerged out of the needs of human requirements for the betterment and the advancement of their prevailing conditions.

As we are mostly concerned with the bureaucracy and its environmental conditions that influence its interfering role into some activities of economic development, the following brief discussion will be mainly centered in the economic change. Nevertheless, political and social changes would yet be involved, because economic matters are in practice interwoven with other socio-political and cultural ones.

3. *Resistance to change.*

As the change is a skip from the known to the unknown ; from the secured present to the obscure future, thus, not surprisingly the people hesitate to abandon their habitual normative practices and welcome new but uncertain and unfamiliar ones.

Change is not expected to affect equally all individuals and institutions. Nor can it evenly secure advantages to all sectors of public or private utilities. Therefore, it is expected that the process of change

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(4) LARSON and ROGERS, *Rural Society in Transition,* in James H., Edit., *Our Changing Rural Society,* Iowa State Univ. Press, Ames, 1964, p. 40, quoted by Dr. Joseph S. Roucek, Univ. of New York, Bayside, *The Development of the Concept of Social Change,* Revista Internacional de Sociologia, Consejo Superior de Investigaciónes Cientificas, Instituto (Balmes) de Sociologia, Madrid, Núms. 105-106, Enero-Junio, 1969, p. 51.

will result in some scattered lacunae in which individuals or institutions will be left out unbenefitted or detrimented. Thus, a second motivation that is likely to hinder the proposed plans for change may also emerge.

Conservative groups and institutions also play a crucial part in impeding the change. For rigidly valued mentalities, collective or individual, are likely to resist any scheduled changes with all their possible potentialities.

Thus, *uncertainty, detriment* and *conservatism* are, in our opinion, the main factors — among others — behind the resistance to any change.

We believe that these factors are not operating at random. Their origins are deeply rooted in the social and psychological interactions of both individuals and institutions existing within a given society. For example :

Uncertainty, is provoked by fear of the unknown (psychological).
Detriment, is provoked by desire to profiteering (economic).
Conservatism, is provoked by traditions (sociological).

Whichever motivation contributes to the resistance to change, it is clearly evidenced that resistance takes a variety of forms depending on the expected risks.

Change is frequently thought of to undermine the security of the status quo. Accordingly, people who enjoy security provided by the status quo, would rather be reluctant to quit their minimum security even when new programs are expected to guarantee them a higher yields. In our opinion, this is partly due to the over-evaluation of the minimum security enjoyed by those who resist the change, and partly because of the foreseen uncertainty of what will come next, i.e., the fear of the unknown.

In this connection, the resistance to change becomes an inevitable phenomenon of every attempt towards the developmental reform ; at least because no evidence has shown that a development program has won a general agreement of the people concerned. In all cases, some lacunae will be left occupied by uncertain, detrimented or conservative individuals, groups or institutions.

To avoid people's resistance and passivity, it is highly important to maintain a popular preparedness to accept the new values, motivations, new methods and new means employed to enforce the scheduled change. What is needed therefore, is a massive and a nation-wide process of « brain-washing ». The extent of the popular responsiveness, however, depends on the effectiveness and precision of the brain-washing program and, more importantly, on the degree to which the people are prepared to sacrifice their status quo.

4. *The extent of change : comprehensive and partial.*

By the term « comprehensive », it is meant, a sustained change in all national structures and functions of both public and private sectors. It also inclusively means to comprise developmental programs for scientific, technological, social, economic, political, cultural and administrative changes.

By the term « partial », it is meant, a sustained change in a given geographical area or in a given activity (or activities) of the development at large. In other words, it may include a regional development even in the comprehensive sense of the change, or that which may concern one or more activities of the development program, such as socio-economic, political, cultural or administrative..., etc.

It is hard enough to determine whichever kind is suitable, especially in meeting the variety of diversifications of the ecological conditions prevailing in the developing countries. However, it might be possible to calculate the advantages and the disadvantages of each, to arrive at a general conclusion. Nevertheless, this will not help determining suggestible course of action for neither one of the developing situations.

Advantages

comprehensive change

a) Deals with the grassroot of all the problems in one great containing take-off.

b) A comprehensive planning of change brings about a general survey of national resources and requirements, and hence, to the coordination of all program goals in one integrated national plan.

Disadvantages

a) Requires enormous potentialities in planning, execution, control, coordination and re-examination.

b) Requires a huge resources in manpower, materials and budgeting that might not be maintainable within the capacity of the developing countries.

c) Requires unlimited technological capacities in all fields of action.

d) Requires such a long period of time that may be extended to a generation or so ; in which case, developing societies — in their current political conditions — may not guarantee to sustain.

e) The extraordinary long-termed outputs may not be congruent to meet urgent demands of the impatient peoples ; hence the rising popular antagonism may eventually hinder the whole scheduled plan.

Partial change

a) Does not require enormous potentialities in planning, execution, control, etc.

b) Does not require a huge resources in materialistic terms, thus it falls relatively within the capacities of the developing countries.

c) Requires a relatively limited and defined technological capacities.

d) Requires shorter period of time, normally short or medium-range execution, thus providing — to an extent — an acceptable yields despite the instable political conditions.

e) Provides a stable succession of the implementation of programs according to its scheduled priorities.

f) The short-termed output may well succeed in appeasing urgent popular demands.

g) The less congested programs' list enables government to realize successfully some of its main scheduled projects ; hence popular sup-

f) The magnitude of tasks and responsibilities may eventually cause governments to achieve neither of the programs.

g) The congestion of programs may undermine yielding of outputs in its scheduled priorities. Thus, a chaos in implementation and a further extemporization may often be expected due to the unexpected future situation of the long-range implementation.

b) Requires vast governmental intervention and control.

a) Does not cure the very source of the ever-growing problems, thus, falls short of remedying much of the felt needs.

b) Later programs may stand in contradiction with the previously implemented programs ; for the projected plans are limited in scope and independently defined in objectives, apart from the difficulty of being coordinated with other national goals in the comprehensive sense.

port to governmental efforts may become possible.

h) Provides a feasible and healthy implementation.

i) Requires less governmental intervention and control.

Note : The above advantages and disadvantages are set up on the assumption that the government alone monopolizes or undertakes the crucial role in the implementation of the programs, in a centralized economy. However, if the private sector is to participate with its utmost capacity, i.e., in decentralized mixed system economy, a great number of the perceived disadvantages will certainly diminish.

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The choice of either one of the above-mentioned dichotomized changes is rather difficult as has already been indicated. However, one can roughly determine the employment of one or the other in the light of the following factors, yet in general terms :

Comprehensive change seems to be likely employed when :

a) the state's material and human resources are relatively abundant ;

b) the political stability is prevailing ;

c) the health and education standards — among other related factors — are of/or near to, medium level ; and

d) the people in question are patient and non-emotional, e.g., as in Egypt and India.

By contrast, *partial change* seems to be favored when :

a) the state's material and human resources are poor ;

b) the political instability is dominant ;

c) the health and education standards — among other related factors — are low ; and

d) the people concerned are impatient and emotional, as in some Latin American and Asian countries.

However, our hypotheses will certainly fall short, if precise planning, coordination and careful re-examination of the change programs are ignored ; and above all, if a competent, devoted and responsible bureaucratic apparatus is not actually existing.

5. *The tempo of change : immediate and incremental.*

Unlike the extent of change which is mainly interpreted in terms of the space and size element, the tempo of change is mainly interpreted in terms of the time element. However, comprehensive change has frequently been conjoined with rapidity, whereas partial change has more frequently been linked up with graduation.

It has been evidenced that economic structure changes more rapidly than political, social and legal orders due to the fact that the latter are more rigidly dependent upon the social values that are, by nature, evolving slowly.

« The tempo of change », wrote Steiner, « among institutions that have an immediate and direct impact on government and economic order differ considerably. The tempo of change in the economic system, for example, is very great when technological advance is rapid. But the political system, aside from revolution, has no such tendency to change so rapidly. The legal system also changes rather slowly » (5).

However, despite the relative rapid changeability, the changes in the economic structure, as we have seen, undergo a considerable resistance that seriously interrupt its expected rapid achievement.

In view to the tempo of change, two different methodologies have been applied ; the *immediate* and the *incremental* methods.

Immediate change seems to be favored in a country seeking to satisfy the urgency of popular growing demands and to accelerate a rapid take-off. Thus, national potentialities, political instability and the existence of impatient and emotional masses, necessitate the enforcement of an immediate change.

Incremental change is, on the other hand, required in a country that lacks the necessary resources and enjoys a degree of political stability with a disciplined and non-emotional masses.

To amplify this configuration, it is noteworthy to further our opinion by what Higgins, Baldwin, Meier and others had contributed in this respect, i.e., the sequence and tempo of development (6).

« In broadest outline, there are two different schools of thought. One group believes that the obstacles to development are so formidable and

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(5) G.A. STEINER, *Government's Role in Economic Life,* McGraw-Hill, 1953, p. 31.

(6) B. HIGGINS, *Development Planning and the Economic Calculus,* Social Research XXIII, n° 1, 36, 47, Spring 1956, and. *The Dualistic Theory of Underdeveloped Areas,* Economic Development and Cultural Change, IV, n° 2, 114, January 1956, quoting BALDWIN and MEIER, *Economic Development,* Wiley, New York, 1959, pp. 362-363. See for ample details, G. WILSON and M. WILSON, *The Analysis of Social Change,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1945. See also, Joseph MEIER and Richard W. WEATHERHEAD, *Politics of Change in Latin America,* Edit., Praeger Co., New York, 1965.

pervasive that they can be overcome only by having the state attempt to industrialize deliberately and immediately : the government should engage in comprehensive programming and planning, assume most of the entrepreneurial activities and attempt to achieve a high rate of capital formation as soon as possible. A complete development plan is advocated. Such a plan would have at least *four* main components : *first,* specific production (targets) representing increase in the qualitative production of desired commodities ; *second,* a capital budget, comprising public investment projects ; *third,* a (human investment budget) covering government expenditures that represent investment in people-education, manpower training, health ; and *fourth,* regulatory measures governing the activities of private individuals, enterprises, and institutions intended to redirect and guide these activities in a manner contributing to the achievement of the objectives included in the plan.

The second group shies away from this (all or nothing) approach. Instead, it advocates a more gradual approach which places little if any emphasis on deliberate industrialization, limits the degree of specific planning, relies mainly on the market mechanism and private efforts, and approaches development problems in a step-by-step fashion.

Those who oppose the gradualist approach — in general — believe that, if a development program is to gather sufficient momentum to be successful ; it must operate rapidly and extensively throughout the economy (insistance on slow evolution that cannot succeed in the face of all the obstacles). Unless the program involves big changes, it is believed that the development process will never... become self generating and cumulative : if the race is to be run at all, a certain minimum speed is necessary. »

At any rate, the application of either one of the two approaches as has been evidenced, is dependent — in addition to the above conditions — on the propensity of the ruling system towards either centralized or decentralized enforcement of the development programs.

Immediate comprehensive change, for instance, is sought in highly centralized systems, as in the Soviet Union and Egypt in 1970, in which the greater emphasis is placed on industrialization and public substitution for all activities.

According to this standpoint, centralized control over economic development in developing countries is favored because : « 1° the economic structure in these countries is simpler with fewer interdependencies among various sectors ; 2° the number of investment projects to be coordinated is small ; 3° the economies must import many key inputs

so that shortages caused by planning may be more easily offset by merely importing more rather than waiting for local production ; and 4° new technology may be adopted quickly. However, as a country grows more highly developed and complicated, it is more difficult to maintain central control » (7).

Incremental partial change, on the contrary, is evidenced in countries of decentralized economies where agriculture and private entrepreneurship in light industries were given the greatest attention as in Pakistan and Turkey. Thus, immediate comprehensive change seems to require sharp governmental intervention that might well exhaust all governmental efforts, whereas incremental partial change requires much less intervention and control, hence saving the government time and efforts to be mobilized for the achievement of the essential requirements of the public overhead capital and the larger basic industries.

It has been argued (8) that incremental partial change has more advantages over the immediate comprehensive change for many reasons. Some of which are : *firstly,* concentrating on agriculture promises to increase national income and to distribute the increase to people who need it most. By contrast, full-scale industrialization might encounter problems of capital absorption and scarcity of raw materials or even foodstuffs. *Secondly,* since it is possible that the growth of industry is ultimately to be induced by expansion in other sectors, it would be more profitable to raise income in agriculture by more efficient methods of production and by such projects as dams, irrigation systems and farm-to-market roads. These projects will facilitate the flow of commodities between rural and growing urban areas. *Thirdly* (9), when change or growth is rapid, many people have to face a new set of problems for which past experience, collective or individual, may have little relevance ; there is the risk of making mistakes out of ignorance, even for those who — are willing and eager to change their mode of behavior.

In any case, the enforcement of change — comprehensive or partial, immediate or incremental — has given rise to the government intervention and provoked bureaucracy to become the main agent of change enforcement.

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(7) D.H. PERKINS, *Centralization versus Decentralization in Mainland China and the Soviet Union,* Annals of the American Academy of Pol. and Soc. Sciences, September 1963, pp. 70-80.

(8) BALDWIN and MEIER, *op. cit.,* pp. 364-366.

(9) BAUER and YAMEY, *The Economics of Underdeveloped Countries,* Nisbet and Cambridge University Press, 1960, p. 180.

Bureaucracy : The main change agent.

6. In reviewing the possible agents of change in society, one may find them falling under two main categories ; *first,* the deliberative agents, and *secondly,* the implementing agents. Each is composed of the following institutions and groups :

A. *Deliberative Agencies :*

By these, we mean those institutions that genuinely initiate deliberative actions respective to change, and those groups or forces that may in one way or another affect the deliberative processes of shaping and enforcing the change. In this category, the following may be included :

a) The Parliament (in democratic systems).

b) Political, formal and informal organizations and forces, i.e., Parties, Pressure Groups and Interest Groups, etc.

c) Party Leadership (in uniparty systems).

d) Elites (in military, authoritarian and totalitarian ruled systems).

e) Bureaucracy (with a delegated legislation).

B. *Implementing Agencies :*

These are, the agencies, institutions and groups who are — at their competence — able to implement one or more processes of change. These may be dichotomized into domestic and foreign agents. They may therefore include :

Domestic :

a) Bureaucracy and Public Sector Institutions.

b) The Private Sector which — in turn — includes :

— Industrial Manufacturers.
— Agricultural Producers, i.e., Cooperatives and risk-takers.
— Financial Investors.
— Individual and institutional entrepreneurs.
— Traders, in domestic and foreign trade.
— Craftsmen and the like..., etc.

Foreign :

a) The UN Technical Assistance Programs implemented at times under bureaucratic supervision and at other times through direct bureaucratic execution.

b) International Bilateral Agreements providing for a variety of technical assistance programs.

c) Private foreign entrepreneurs.

The above mentioned institutions, groups and individuals must not be understood to have an equal standing in terms of power and competence. Bureaucracy seems to trespass them all, in power, organization, legal and financial weapons, freedom of choices and maneuverability. Furthermore, all other institutions, groups and individuals — with the exception of the Parliament — are under a considerable subjection to it.

The magnitude of the immensely growing popular demands, had contributed to push the bureaucracy forward to occupy a leading position. Other contributing factors (10) to the paramountcy of bureaucratic role in economic management are obvious both in deliberative and implementational processes.

As an instrument for economic development, bureaucracy can affect all other existing private institutions by a variety of monopolistic practices.

The government's leading role as the main change agent is seemingly to have its grounds on the need of a macro planning for developmental programs on the one hand, and on the need of a comprehensive supervision and coordination at the highest level on the other. Both tasks were therefore vested in the government as the only competent and proper organ among the above listed institutions. Environmental and institutional conditions together with the ever-increasing public demands, have accelerated and multiplied the importance of the role of government as the main change agent.

The extent to which government plays its role in developmental change varies — as we have seen — from planning and coordination, to supervision and in some cases to actual administration and execution. However, two equally important principles that facilitate government's task to impose the required changes and help appeasing the likely popular resistance and antagonism :

The *first,* is the avoidance of « violent change », which may frequently bring about unnecessary sharp and severe reactions against any attempt for improvement. Government action should be initiated by the employment of convincing measures that gradually provoke and affect obstinate

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(10) Factors as : Economic, political and social backwardness ; weakness of domestic private capital ; unemployment ; political instability ; exploitation of the public by private monopolies ; and embracing socialism.

attitudes likely to impede the new programs. In this respect, it might be greatly beneficial to approach people from within their inveterate values and habits to generate their interests in the new programs. However, violence may be kept as a last resort when all convincible measures appear to be unworkable. The advantage behind this is clear in preserving a peaceful achievement of the programs and in avoiding undue wastefulness of time and effort involved in antagonistic clashes likely to arise between the government and the masses, as the case is elsewhere.

The *second,* is the avoidance of immediate and large monopolization of new projected services. Starting such monopolistic practices will cause a popular frustration — at least within the private sector — in the sense of being isolated and discarded, and hence a feeling of irresponsiveness would often dominate their behavior. This will generally lead to a gap and later to a conflict followed by violent actions. The government for its part, will eschew its genuine developmental task and become exhaustively engaged in sidal conflicts that may eventually threaten its existence.

Nevertheless government's monopoly is not entirely denied in some vital services and enterprises, but one of the most important accelerators for development, in our opinion, is encouraging private institutions and individuals to participate — under public supervision — in the take-off and confining public activity to those fields that private sector cannot — for one reason or another — afford.

However, government's monopoly may become unavoidable as in the state total undertaking of all the means of production in socialized economies. To our opinion, the application of these two principles will help rendering more and better outputs and save national governments unnecessary sidal problems.

Summary.

The article attempts to define the change ; explores the reasons behind the resistance to change ; to analyse the typology, the advantages and disadvantages of comprehensive and partial changes, and the methodologies of its enforcement. Moreover, it shows that the state bureaucracy almost in all societies enjoys a leading role in planning, supervision, coordination and even in the execution of developmental change processes. It tresspasses all existing institutions, groups and individuals in power, organization, legal and financial weapons, freedom of choices and maneuverability.

In searching for a convenient methodology of change in the developing societies; the article stresses that since these societies entirely differ in their material and human resources; political stability; standards of health and education; and above all in their mentality and emotional reactions, the determination of whichever change — immediate or incremental — to be followed, would certainly be out of question. However, incremental partial change may seem to be more practicable in the majority of these states.

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