

sociology

Gathered at the American Sociological Association meeting in Boston

ECONOMICS

Reform a substitute for resources

Educational programs without food; job training without jobs: This pattern characterizes social reform programs of the 1960's, charge two sociologists from the Ford Foundation and Bryn Mawr College.

They say that social programs, including the poverty war, have been mistaken in attempts to bring about social reform in the absence of economic assistance.

The poverty program, for instance, sought to prepare people for training, "only to discover that training is ineffective without jobs. . . . In the absence of a national policy for full employment and/or for a guaranteed and adequate income, the opportunities at hand are limited," say Dr. S. M. Miller and Martin Rein. Similarly, educational programs sought to help poor children who need food first before they can benefit from school. But there is no national food or school lunch program.

These social programs have been, acting, in effect, as substitutes for needed resources, say the sociologists.

By ignoring wider economic issues, they claim, social services of the past six years have "run the risk of deceiving themselves and others, while distorting their functions."

PREDICTION

Emergent social sciences

Dr. Philip M. Hauser, outgoing president of the American Sociological Association, says the social sciences, particularly sociology, are still emergent sciences and may, in the next 100 years, pave the way for social engineering.

It took the physical sciences from about 1750 to 1850 to achieve a position whereby engineering could transform the physical world, says Dr. Hauser.

Then bio-medical sciences followed suit from about 1850 to 1950. During that time, bio-medical engineering has produced increased longevity and health.

"It is to be hoped that the century from 1950 to 2050 will be the period during which the social sciences will achieve a level of respectability and acceptance that will pave the way for social engineering to eliminate the chaos that characterizes contemporary society," he says.

SOCIOLOGY

Religion affects medical careers

Career choices are affected by religious affiliation, according to a survey of the plans of some 2,600 students from eight medical schools in the United States.

None of the schools was Catholic, although one was predominantly Protestant while another almost entirely Jewish.

The majority of the students in each religion went as follows: Protestants chose private practice; Jews chose internal medicine and Catholics chose surgery.

Dr. John Kosa, Harvard sociologist, reports that about

91 percent of the students identified themselves with one of these three religions. The six percent who claimed no affiliation tended to choose psychiatry.

Dr. Kosa comments that religion affects career choice through the characteristic values that each represent: Catholic students tended to emphasize the certainty of knowledge above everything else and infrequently chose those items most important to Jewish students. The latter laid major emphasis on prestige, warm relations with patients, high ability and contribution to knowledge. Protestants were middle-of-the-road on these measures, but were least likely of all three to choose either teaching or research.

LANGUAGES

Gaelic, English and colonialism

The Irish have a severe case of ambivalence over restoration of their national language, Gaelic, according to Dr. Gordon F. Streib of Cornell University.

The language was suppressed and supplanted by English through centuries of British rule over Ireland. Since independence 50 years ago, restoration of Gaelic has been a national priority—at least formally.

It is the first official language as noted in the Irish constitution; yet laws are written in English and only later translated into Gaelic. A recent Irish prime minister supported restoration of Gaelic—yet could not speak it. The language is often used in primary schools, but not in universities. A Gaelic speaker can find himself in the middle of Dublin unable to communicate because no one knows his language.

Dr. Streib says the Gaelic restoration may be seen as an attempt to remove the deleterious effects of colonization, but he adds, "the outside observer wonders whether there might not be other ways to assert and to establish national autonomy and a positive self image." The Irish experience, he said, may be applicable to other colonies attempting to restore a national language.

PROTEST

Sociologists write off Chicago

The American Sociological Association has written off Chicago as a convention site for the next eight years. Their resolution canceling plans to meet in Chicago in 1969, 1972 and 1976 passed overwhelmingly among members attending this year's annual meeting, held in Boston as the Democratic Party convened in Chicago.

The resolution stated that the association "should refuse to assemble in a city which has shown and continues to show, with vivid clarity, that it holds the principles of free inquiry and reasonable protest in utter disdain."

Referring to police action against anti-war protesters at the Democratic convention, the sociologists pledged to make known their "disgust and revulsion" to the mayor of Chicago, the city's convention bureau and the Democratic National Committee. The association will urge other scientific societies to follow suit.

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