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A MODEL OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE  
NEW ZEALAND WORKPLACE

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

MASTER IN SOCIAL WORK  
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Robert Handyside

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is about the provision of social work services in the New Zealand workplace. A central line of argument is taken which proposes that the workplace, which up to now has been neglected as a site for social work practice, can become an important site for the provision of services.

The development of a comprehensive model for occupational social work is the central feature of this thesis. Following the development of the model it is field tested in a case study involving a large employer.

Located in the context of the development of New Zealand industrial relations, this thesis reviews the objections which have been raised when social workers become involved with a profit making organisation. Future possibilities for a specialised field of practice are proposed, making this thesis an early contribution to an analysis of the social work role in this setting.

## PREFACE

My interest in this field of social work arises from my involvement in two very different settings. The first was providing relationship seminars for the Workers' Compensation Board in Queensland, Australia. The second was my involvement with the implementation of Employee Assistance Programmes at the Wairoa and Feilding Freezing Works in New Zealand. These gave me the opportunity to closely observe the organisation and direction of Employee Assistance Programmes in New Zealand.

The training staff of Lifeline Ipswich worked with me in the development of the Queensland programmes. It was a most interesting and enjoyable experience establishing the programmes and taking them to centres throughout Queensland. During this time I became aware of great gaps in social service provision.

Anne Tucker, who was at the time Central Regional Manager for Employee Assistance Programme Services, in New Zealand introduced me to these programmes. I am grateful for her enthusiasm, willingness to share knowledge and practical assistance in arranging my involvement in the Synfuel case study contained in this thesis.

The General Manager and staff at Synfuel have been very helpful and open to discussing the strengths and

weaknesses of their programme. I am grateful for the access and information which has been available at this modern industrial plant where the case study was carried out.

Dr Rajen Prasad has guided me throughout the time I have worked on this thesis, a period of time which has been longer than we expected and made more difficult by my status as a part-time, extramural student. More recently Dr Mike O'Brien has also participated in supervision. As thesis supervisors they have both taught me a great deal.

My colleague Dean Henderson has been helpful in reading drafts and commenting on the development of my ideas. Sue Dawson was a great help at the time of final checking of the thesis and Dennis Paxie helped by producing the figures. I also appreciate the help of a number of people who have assisted with typing, finding references, reading drafts and suggesting ways I might develop my thesis.

Finally I acknowledge the support of my extended family who have continued to encourage me and have allowed me the time to press on and complete this work when there were many other things I should have been doing with them. Particular thanks are due to my wife Judy and to Kate, Rachel and Mark who have been very understanding of the importance the thesis has assumed.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

All societies place emphasis on work and the workplace. Participation in paid work becomes an important determinant of personal and group wellbeing, fulfilling a range of needs. Experience also shows that the workplace becomes a site where personal difficulties manifest themselves and conflict arises. Therefore it is logical for social work to assert its presence in this location. As a profession interested in people and group process social workers will find opportunities at this site to make use of a wide range of interventions.

This thesis is concerned with the provision of social work in the New Zealand workplace. The approach taken develops a theoretical model (1) for social work practice.

A case study of the Synfuel (Taranaki, New Zealand) Employee Assistance Programme is used to provide an insight into existing conditions and to further develop the model. The case utilizes qualitative methodology to understand the operational process for the implementation of the Synfuel E.A.P. (2).

### OVERVIEW OF THIS STUDY

The first chapter provides an overview of the thesis, introducing the way the model for practice will be

developed by utilising the literature review and four theoretical dimensions. It also sets out a definition of the key terms which are used throughout the thesis.

Chapter Two outlines the methodology. It describes the various steps to the development and field testing of a model for social work practice in the New Zealand workplace.

A prerequisite to the discussion of social work services in the workplace is an understanding of the major influences which have shaped the New Zealand workplace. Chapter Three traces the history of industrial relations, showing the strong interventionist role of government and the influence of the 1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act which makes New Zealand's industrial relations distinctive. This chapter details the emergence of a strong Public Service Association which, as early as 1914, demonstrated a concern for welfare which extended well beyond salary negotiations. The influence of the 1987 Labour Relations Act, the 1988 State Sector Act and the 1991 Employment Contracts Act is explored.

In Chapter Four the development of social services in the North American workplace is reviewed. The growth and interest in occupational social work is described as a significant step in the development of the specialty area of practice. Key North American writers who have documented their experience of workplace programmes are

referred to.

The chapter identifies a number of practice and ethical issues associated with workplace programmes. A series of levels of involvement proposed by Ozawa (1980) are identified as a framework for discussing programmes. Shank (1985) and Straussner's (1990) frameworks are discussed in this context.

Chapter Five develops a theoretical model for social work practice in the workplace. Contributions from a number of theoretical writers are utilized in the construction of the model.

Sociological literature contains a variety of writings on the topic of the purpose of work. These are diverse, spanning traditions as widely divergent as Marxism and the Job Enrichment school. Most writers agree that work life occupies a significant role in people's lives.

The second theoretical strand is drawn from radical social work which challenges practice to break away from a preoccupation with individualism and to concentrate also on the structures which lead to the oppression of workers.

The third theoretical strand draws on the ecological ideas of Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Garbarino (1982). They identify the series of interconnected systems which affect our lives. When applied to social work, ecological theory

requires social workers to select ways of working which take into account all of the factors which are necessarily interconnected, that affect a person, e.g home and family life, participation in community organisations and the workplace.

The final strand considers the alternative notions of welfare provision. This has particular relevance at a time when there are competing political views on the provision of welfare.

Contributions from each of the above theoretical perspectives are drawn together to develop a model, which is referred to as the Acacia model.

In Chapter Six the case study of New Zealand Synthetic Fuels (Synfuel) describes the implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme (E.A.P.) at a work site in March 1990 and sets out the results of the evaluation which was undertaken in October 1990.

Chapter Seven discusses an extension of the Acacia model based on the findings in chapter Six. It also summarises the thesis; draws conclusions and proposes future directions for social work in the workplace.

The thesis uses a number of key terms which are defined below.

## KEY TERMS

Social welfare, social work, occupational social work and employee assistance programmes are all terms that I will use throughout the thesis. They may be viewed as a hierarchy extending from a general approach down to a very focused form of social service intervention. Their frequent use requires a brief discussion of each term.

### Social Welfare

Romanyshyn suggests *"The term Social Welfare expresses an ambiguous and changing concept"* (1971:3). The term may be narrowly defined to describe the provision of financial assistance to meet subsistence needs or may be more broadly defined to refer to collective responsibility which ensures universal needs are met. Romanyshyn uses the broader definition describing social welfare *"as including all those forms of social intervention that have a primary and direct concern with promoting both the wellbeing of the individual and of the society as a whole"* (1971:3).

In this thesis it will be shown that welfare may be provided by either the state or by private organizations. It will be argued that any shift of provider has important consequences for social work.

## Social Work

Social work has been defined from a number of perspectives. The concept, as utilised in this thesis, is informed by systems, radical and ecological perspectives. Each is discussed briefly below:

### 1. Systems Approach

From a systems perspective the purpose of social work is to:

- a. enhance the problem-solving and coping capacities of people;
- b. link people with systems which provide them with resources, services and opportunities;
- c. promote the effective and human operation of these systems;
- d. contribute to the development and improvement of social policy (Pincus and Minahen, 1977:78).

Preston - Shoot and Agass (1990) comment that systems theory attempts to address the wide range of factors which interact and influence each other thereby acknowledging that *"the problems brought to social workers are complex and multidimensional. Political, historical, cultural and economic systems besides the psychological, are interlinked and daily impinge on individuals and families"* (1990:69).

## 2. Radical Social Work

Radical social work takes a more active position with respect to the problems related to the capitalist mode of production. Therefore radical social work sees the social work role as one which requires social workers to collectivise their practice, and assist groups of people to recognise and act to overcome the oppression of the capitalist system. Radical practice is *"that practice which attempts to be of maximum service to people experiencing problems in their daily lives and at the same time is informed by a commitment to radical social change"* (Joseph 1975).

While radical social work accepts the need to meet people's immediate needs, it is laced with a more ambitious agenda for transformative action to create a more egalitarian society.

## 3. Ecological Perspective

The writers in the ecological tradition recognise that *"human needs and problems are generated by the transactions between people and their environments"* (Germain and Gitterman, 1980:1). Garbarino (1982) describes a series of interlocking systems all of which

influence daily life. These writers propose that a recognition of these systems, and the interactions between them, facilitates the selection of the appropriate intervention.

These and other approaches contribute to a rich spread of understanding of the role of social work practice from which a specialty area of practice is now identified.

### Occupational Social Work (3)

The growth of this specialty area of practice is documented by a number of writers: Akabas and Kurzman (1982) (4), Googins and Godfrey (1987) and Straussner (1990).

These writers support the status of a specialty area of practice on the grounds that a thorough knowledge of this environment is a prerequisite for practice. Occupational social work is defined as *"a specialised field of social work practice which addresses the human and social needs of the work community through a variety of interventions which aim to foster optimal adaptation between individuals and their environments"* (Straussner, 1990:2).

This thesis argues for the recognition of occupational social work as a specialty area of practice. It does this for two reasons:

1. The provision of welfare is likely to shift from the public to the private sector if governments continue to favour monetarist economic policies (5). This will lead to different employment possibilities for social workers.

2. Social workers in general practice have failed to make use of the workplace in their practice. Googins and Godfrey observe, "*The individual's network of family and social relations and the world of work have traditionally been viewed, even by social work, as separate and unrelated. Despite the fact that each is concerned with and impacted by human behavior and a wide range of social problems, the boundaries of each have been firm and exclusionary of each other*" (1987:35).

Within this specialty area of practice Employee Assistance Programmes are the most common method of service delivery.

#### Employee Assistance Programmes

Employee Assistance Programmes (E.A.Ps.) established in North America and now operating in Australia and New Zealand, provide a vehicle for social workers to become involved in workplace programmes. Large numbers of North American social workers have adopted this model as a way of gaining entry to the workplace. By the mid-1970s writers such as Googins (1975) were encouraging social workers to take the opportunity available through structured E.A.Ps. to link social work with the needs and

problems which could be identified in the workplace.

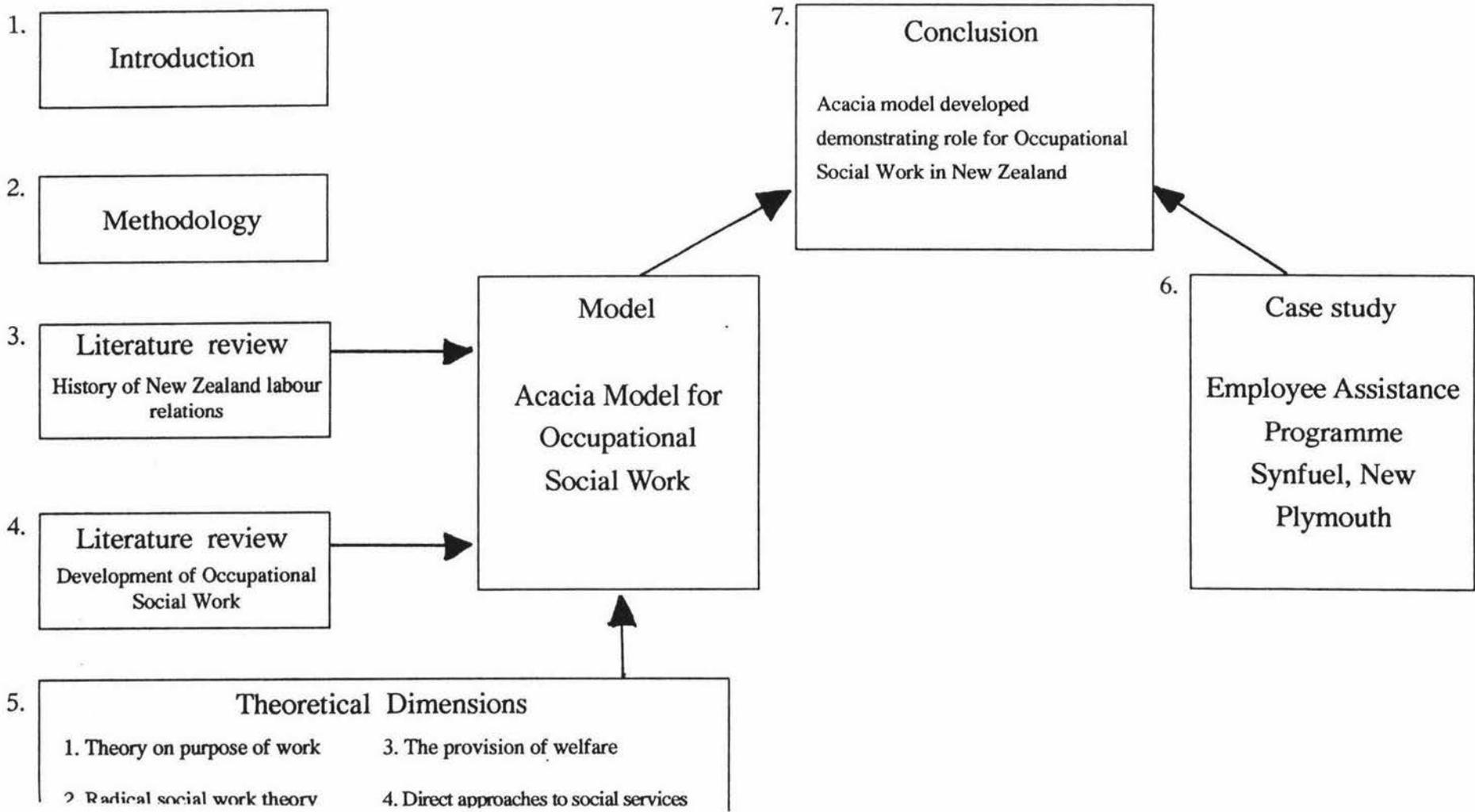
E.A.Ps. focus on identifying impaired work performance related to personal problems and on arranging counselling for the troubled employee. They rely on training people at the workplace to recognise impaired work performance and refer fellow staff to the programme. E.A.Ps. provide access to one-to-one counselling. The North American experience shows that E.A.Ps. have focussed on a micro-counselling approach. Googins and Godfrey urge occupational social workers to move away from the medical model of individually oriented practice to focus on the area of organisational and institutional change. They caution, *"Even today the occupational social work community, flushed with the victory of establishing countless counselling programmes, is primarily treatment-oriented and a rush of treatment along medical lines could well freeze occupational social work into a traditional micro model"* (1987:16).

#### SUMMARY

1. This thesis is about occupational social work and argues the case for its development in New Zealand.
2. The argument is pursued through developing a model from four theoretical strands, testing this model in a particular site and then revising the model.

The theoretical material is linked closely to the methodology. Figure One shows the steps which will be taken to develop the argument. The next chapter sets out the methodology.

# Thematic representation of Occupational Social Work Practice in N. Z. will be developed as follows



FOOTNOTES

1. I have called the model the Acacia Model. It takes its name from Acacia Bay where I stayed during an intensive period of working on this thesis.
2. Brown (1985) has compiled a review of the literature relating to the evaluation of E.A.Ps. for the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council. He has identified three major North American reviews, Schramm and Archer (1982), Schramm(1980), and Kurtz, Googins and Howard (1984). Each of these reviews emphasises the importance of carrying out process evaluations to ensure that adequate implementation of the programme has occurred. Brown concludes that the process evaluation should precede any outcome evaluation which may be proposed.
3. In Europe the term "industrial social work" is widely used. North American writers reject this description on the grounds that it provides a limited definition, which fails to fully recognise changing demographic and work trends.
4. Akabas and Kurzman were instrumental in organising the Inaugural Conference of Americal Occupational Social Work in 1978.
5. Monetarist economic policies have been used in New Zealand since the mid 1980s. Whitwell explains monetarist principles in "The Fourth Labour Government: Politics and Policy in New Zealand."

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

The central focus of this dissertation is the development and field testing of a model for social work practice in the New Zealand workplace. This chapter identifies the methodology, showing the various steps that have been taken to achieve that end.

The research method comprised a number of systematic stages leading to :

- Step 1     The construction of a model for occupational social work,     and
- Step 2     field testing and amending the model.

The key stages in Step 1 were:

- (i)        review of the literature on the New Zealand workplace and the development of occupational social work in North America;
- (ii)       identification and explanation of key principles of four theoretical contributions which led to the construction of a model.

The key stages in Step 2 were :

- (i)        selecting the site
- (ii)       providing training for key personnel
- (iii)      selecting the sample to be interviewed
- (iv)      conducting interviews
- (v)      analysing data and drawing conclusions.

Each of these steps will be briefly discussed.

## STEP 1      Literature Review

### **Understanding the New Zealand Workplace**

The review identifies the distinctive features of New Zealand industrial relations which have prevailed for a long period (1). Very recent legislation has resulted in important changes which are currently under observation by Industrial Relations commentators. The period reviewed is from 1840 to 1991.

### **Occupational Social Work**

An on-line computer search was undertaken. This showed that the literature is predominantly North American. This part of the review which is found in Chapter Four was limited to the material which comes in the main from North America where since 1975 a keen interest in the topic has developed (2).

### **Theoretical dimensions**

Here four dimensions of theory were identified and relevant references obtained to provide knowledge of each dimension. It was only after these areas had been

explored and examined in association with the historical reviews that the model began to take shape and could be developed to its present form. The model will be developed with the aid of a series of diagrams.

As this is a new field of practice in New Zealand there were a limited number of practitioners with a knowledge of the field with whom ideas could be developed (3).

## STEP 2

### (i) Selecting the site

Synfuel was selected for the case study for the following reasons:

1. The Synfuel management team had agreed in February 1990 to proceed with the implementation of a comprehensive E.A.P. They had accepted consultant's recommendations regarding the nature of the programme and were keen to include a formal evaluation at a later date (4).
2. There were already in place human resource and health personnel who would take a major role in implementing the E.A.P.

3. The time frame which had been agreed on enabled me to review the programme at the implementation stage and again at a review stage six months later.

4. The Central Regional Manager of E.A.P. Services and the Co-ordinator of the Synfuel E.A.P. were interested in co-operating with the fieldwork on the understanding that the results would provide an assessment of the Synfuel programme which could be available to the management and unions. The letter outlining the agreement is included as Appendix One.

(ii) Training Key Personnel

The training for the Synfuel staff was conducted in March 1990. I assisted with the section of the training involving staff who would carry out assessments of "troubled" employees(5). As part of the training, the Referral Advisers were asked to keep records of the nature of the assessment interviews they undertook. A recording sheet is included in Appendix Two.

Eighty staff received some specialised training to identify impaired work performance. Everyone employed on site attended a two hour awareness session introducing the programme. A brochure introducing the programme is included as Appendix Three.

(iii) **Selecting the sample to be interviewed**

The review of the Synfuel E.A.P. was conducted in the week commencing 8th October 1990. The review consisted of sixteen interviews with people who had been involved or had observed the programme. Agency records of the use of the programme were made available.

Those interviewed fell into three groups:

**1. The Stakeholders (6)**

These were:

- (i) General Manager
- (ii) E.A.P. Co-ordinator
- (iii) Representatives of the three major unions on plant.

**2. The Referral Advisers**

These people interviewed and assessed "troubled" employees making the necessary arrangements for referral. They each had other roles in the organization. They were:

- (i) Employee Relations Adviser
- (ii) Occupational Nurse
- (iii) Chaplain (eight hours per week arranged by Interchurch Trade and Industry Mission)
- (iv) Medical Officer (on contract eight hours per week).

**3. The Service Users**

Twenty-nine employees used the E.A.P. in the first six months; nineteen were referred to an outside counsellor; six of these nineteen were interviewed when I visited the

plant.

These were in-depth interviews arranged in a way which maintained the confidentiality of the programme. The complicated shift work patterns and confidentiality agreement prevented any more interviews than those being conducted.

#### (iv) Conducting interviews

Three interview schedules were developed to assist in the collection of the necessary data to evaluate the E.A.P. The specific nature of the information and the small population to be interviewed did not allow for pilot testing the interview schedules. The schedules were designed for each of the abovementioned groups (7).

Each schedule contained a number of sections. Before the schedules were designed I decided that the interviews should provide information to fit the following areas of exploration: knowledge and usage of the programme; satisfaction with the programme, and coverage by the programme (8).

Briefly the interview schedules can be described in the following way:

#### **Interview Schedule - Stakeholders (Appendix Four)**

This schedule commenced by establishing the employment background of the interviewee and his/her understanding of the philosophy underpinning E.A.Ps. It then led the interviewee to a number of questions about the implementation and evaluation of the programme. In the final section four questions explored the interviewees' views on improvements and extensions to the programme.

#### **Interview Schedule - Referral Advisers (Appendix Five)**

This was a more comprehensive schedule reflecting the key position of the referral adviser in the E.A.P. process. Following the first questions intended to learn something about the referral advisers, it surveyed the types of referrals, method of working, scope of the programme and use of the programme. It also concluded with questions regarding improvements and extensions to the programme.

#### **Interview Schedule - Service Users (Appendix six)**

This schedule was different from the first two. It can be best described as an exploration to understand the context of the employees' home, community and workplace. It asked questions about satisfaction with the programme and suggestion for improvements and extensions.

The interview schedules were found to be suitable for

their purpose. Used in a setting where the interviews could be recorded on audio-tape, each interview proceeded unhampered by the need for extensive note taking.

The medical officer was not available at the time of this visit. It was necessary to conduct a telephone interview with him at a later date.

**(v) Analysing the data and drawing conclusions**

Following the completion of the interviews I replayed each tape, transcribing the information onto sheets I had ruled up to correspond with each section of the interview. On a separate sheet I recorded key quotations which I could return to later. Using this process I was able to identify common themes which emerged.

After transcribing the information I was able to assemble it under four headings relating to knowledge, useage, satisfaction and coverage of the programme. Using these headings I evaluated the extent to which the case study meets the requirements of the Acacia model and contributed to its further development (9).

**SUMMARY**

This chapter has shown how the literature review and preparation of theoretical dimensions have been approached and how the dimensions are linked to the methodology for

this research. The methodology for the case study has been set out showing how the interviews were conducted and the data analysis completed.

The two steps in this thesis have been explained :

1. the preparation of the literature review, the exploration of theoretical dimensions and the development of a model for practice;
2. the setting up of a case study to test the model.

The next two chapters set out the literature. I will begin with an outline of the history of industrial relations in New Zealand.

FOOTNOTES

1. This history is set out in Chapter Three.
2. The Journal of the National Association of Social Workers provides a good sequence of contributions from 1975 to the present time. Googins' (1987) annotated bibliography provides a comprehensive list of published material up to the date of that publication. The review of this literature is found in Chapter Four.
3. A meeting in Palmerston North in July 1991 which included Roy Bowden (contracted to Glaxo) and Madeline Taylor (employed by Wellington City Council) was an early attempt to bring together a number of people with an interest in this field.
4. The Consultants' report was prepared by Ms Anne Tucker, Central Regional Manager for E.A.P. Services, a branch of the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council.
5. "Troubled" employee is a term frequently used to describe employees whose work performance is showing signs of impairment.
6. Stakeholders is the name I have given the senior staff and union officials who are concerned with the results of the programme.
7. The interview schedules are located in the Appendices as follows:
  - Stakeholders- Appendix Four
  - Referral Advisor- Appendix Five
  - Service Users- Appendix Six
8. These are headings used in Chapter Six where the results of the interviews are set out.
9. This is developed in Chapter Seven.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE NEW ZEALAND WORKPLACE – A Review of the Literature

The New Zealand economy and the distinctive history of industrial relations in New Zealand forms the background to existing conditions in the workplace. The influence of two industrial systems, one for public servants and the other for the unions which registered under the 1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, underpin many of the practices and attitudes which currently influence the nature of work in New Zealand.

This chapter provides a review of the struggles to achieve acceptable wage levels and conditions of employment. Important personalities in the Labour Movement are identified, major events are recorded and the evolution of the industrial relations system is documented. The review shows that historically the union movement has primarily focussed on workers rights, pay and working conditions. The Public Service Association has a stronger tradition of negotiating for social services in the workplace. Since 1973 changes in industrial relations legislation have progressively allowed for bargaining outside the arbitration system. The most recent legislation, the Employment Contracts Act (1991) places individual employers in a stronger position and leaves some groups of employees in a vulnerable situation.

It is important that social workers contemplating involvement

in the workplace have a knowledge of the industrial relations background and appreciate the major shifts in emphasis which have occurred, particularly in the last five years. The chapter concludes by identifying gaps in human resource services which result from the changes in bargaining arrangements.

### The Foundation of an Industrial Relations System in New Zealand

The origins of an industrial relations system in New Zealand can be traced to the defeat of the maritime unions in 1890 following their rapid rise to prominence. Very soon after this defeat a Liberal Government with labour sympathies was elected with the assistance of an extended franchise. Public opinion favoured government intervention to prevent "sweating" and other harsh practices by ruthless employers, but at the same time was anxious to prevent union stoppages.

Against the background of events in the 1880s and a rapidly changing scene in the 1890s, labour legislation- the best known of which is the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1894 was introduced, allowing the New Zealand Government to have a strong interventionist role in the New Zealand workplace.

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (1894) was a departure from the British system of labour relations and remained in force for 72 years. The influence on the workplace

of the I. C and A Act (1894) persists today and has been the subject of considerable overseas interest. A brief review of New Zealand history from the time of colonisation assists an understanding of the background to the 1890s legislation.

### Colonisation

The early white colonisation of New Zealand under the Wakefield system of transplanting fairly complete social sections of the English population brought a mixture of farmers, professionals and working people (Woods, 1963:17). The rigours of life in the new colony imposed on master and workman alike required long working hours, often in isolated conditions which discouraged the formation of any form of organised labour other than small local groups of journeymen.

It was the discovery of gold in Coromandel, Nelson and Otago which brought an influx of unskilled labourers who had no established relationship with employers. This group of prospectors was soon seeking alternative work as the gold fields became depleted.

The land wars of the 1860s further delayed opportunities for organised labour to become properly established, temporarily straining resources and delaying any further influx of both immigrants and capital. By the late 1860s New Zealand had a significant pool of unemployed people, who had not developed a way of organising themselves.

In 1870, the Prime Minister, Sir Julius Vogel, launched a bold and extensive policy of national development. Overseas loans were raised for public works, roads and railways. The former unemployed worked alongside newcomers who formed part of a further wave of immigration. These men, organised into working gangs, were dissociated from the more personal employer-employee link of earlier days. In this environment men shared common problems and took the opportunity to discuss their concerns and to become better organised. As the demarcation between employers and workers became more clear-cut, the emergence of a working class could be identified. The origins of the Labour Movement in New Zealand can be traced to this period.

The boom years of the early 1870s were not sustained; as world prices slumped New Zealand's fledgling economy was quick to experience the impact which resulted in increasing unemployment and depression. Greater numbers of people were settling in the towns, and this trend accelerated towards the end of the decade. Industry was small-scale and working conditions could be described as being in a rudimentary stage of development.

### Early Labour Legislation and Trade Unionism

Early labour legislation represented a cautious copying of measures already operating in other countries. The first industrial legislation was the Master and Apprentices Act in 1865, followed by other acts including the Employment of Females Act (1873) based on similar legislation in the State of

Victoria and the Employers' Liability Act (1882) based on English law.

From the 1870s labour unions grew in number and membership, meeting together for the first time in 1885 at the Inaugural Trades and Labour Congress. With the influence of British and Australian settlers, unionism was developing quickly and this provided impetus to their growth.

The latter part of the 1880s provided a backdrop to the legislative initiatives which were to follow. The Rev. Dr Rutherford Waddell of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Dunedin became one of the first speakers to bring attention to "sweat shop" conditions, particularly in the clothing industry (Woods, 1963:24). Daily newspapers carried stories of poor working conditions, stories which produced demands for government action to bring about improved working conditions. Hard-line opposition by some employers persuaded a large section of the community that legislation was the only way to correct the abuse of workers which was occurring. From 1886 to 1890 strikes became commonplace as unions strove to gain recognition by employers and secure improved conditions of employment (1).

### The 1890 Maritime Strike

The influence of the British union movement increased. Socialist publications began to reach New Zealand in large numbers in the late 1880s adding to the ferment of new ideas in

the rapidly growing union movement. Roth (1974:7) records that for the first time in New Zealand unionists began to see themselves as representatives of a class, rather than of a craft or trade.

In August 1890 the maritime strike which began in New South Wales and grew out of involving the employment of a union delegate on the steamer *Corrina* spread to New Zealand affecting the Union Company, waterside unions and coal miners. Public opinion which had up to now supported the union movement, turned quickly against the strikers, and at a time when work was short there were plenty of volunteers willing to break the strike on the wharves. After a bitter struggle lasting nearly two months the strike collapsed and with it the large union movement which had been established so quickly. Employers exacted harsh penalties, refusing work to former strikers, dismissing known unionists and imposing substantial wage cuts to prevent any further trouble from union membership.

The defeat of the unions in 1890 led to a focus on third party government intervention which became a possibility with the election of a Liberal-Labour Government. In the same year a Royal Commission which was set up to inquire into industrial conditions recommended the introduction of factory law providing for the registration of all factories and limiting hours of work. It also recommended the establishment of Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration and the formation of a Department of Labour.

### 1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act

Trade unions were defeated in 1890 at a time when public opinion was stirred by reports of intolerable working conditions. There were demands that action be taken to improve these working conditions. At the same time there was a widespread feeling that the community should not be subjected to the discomforts of widespread stoppages.

Christchurch lawyer and Member of Parliament William Pember-Reeves and a fellow Socialist, Edward Tregear whom Reeves appointed as head of the new Department of Labour, drafted the industrial legislation. This was put to the house several times before becoming accepted as the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1894. In contrast to the British Industrial Court which was regarded as an independent body, the New Zealand Arbitration Court, one of the principal features of the Act, was envisaged as an integral part of the whole system of labour regulation. It was set up as a tribunal with legislative powers(2).

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act came into operation on 1 January 1895. Within the first nine months most unions registered under the Act, although employers were more reluctant to accept the new Industrial Court. The major features of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act were:

- (1) a system of state registration and recognition of unions;
- (2) a system of conciliation and arbitration for all industrial disputes;

- (3) the prohibition of all rights to strike or to lockout;
- (4) state enforcement of registered awards and industrial agreements (3).

Roth (1974) observes that while the 1894 Act helped in the revival of unions, intentionally or not, it kept unions weak and small. An American observer described the unions of the day as *"litigious, rather than militant organizations, the creatures and instruments of State regulations"* (Clark 1907:64).

In a favourable economic climate unions which submitted claims to the Arbitration Court gained higher wages and improved conditions until 1900 when the Court's attitude hardened. The 1894 Act contained a bias toward arbitration and despite attempts to strengthen conciliation boards, this bias persisted.

### Industrial Action

No strikes were recorded for a period of twelve years, following the passage of the Act, until the Auckland Tramways strike in 1906. This strike acted as a trigger to further industrial unrest arising from dissatisfaction with the decisions and delays of the Arbitration Court.

Following the 1907 Blackball miners' strike, a number of major figures in the Labour movement including P.C. Webb, P.H. Hickey, R. Semple, M.J. Savage and P. Fraser emerged to form what soon became known as the "Red Federation", promoting a Marxist view of the relationship between the capitalist and working classes. Their beliefs were partially based on those of an American union, the United Workers of the World. The political beliefs were later explained by Hickey : "*The working class and the employing class have nothing in common .... between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production and abolish the wage system*" (Hickey, 1925:15).

The "Red Feds" considered the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (1894) to be the "leg iron of Labour". They wanted to be able to bargain directly with their employer and resort to strike action if necessary in preference to either conciliation or arbitration. The unions controlled by the "Red Feds" cancelled their registration under the Act.

The predominantly skilled unions took a more moderate position and sought to organise a separate Federation of Labour but by 1912 the "Red Feds" had the strength of numbers. This radical group now by-passed the Arbitration Court to negotiate their own agreements with the waterfront industry and Auckland tramways.

A change of Government in 1912 saw a new conservative

administration led by W.F. Massey. Determined to crush the Labour movement this Government used the Waihi engine drivers' strike to establish and recognise an alternative breakaway union. A similar strategy was followed the next year to crush the waterfront strike which effectively destroyed the labour movement of that time (4). For the second time militant unions failed to secure their socialist objectives.

To ensure that the Unions could not work outside the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act the Government passed in 1914 the Labour Disputes Investigation Act designed to counteract some of the consequences of Unions which deregistered themselves voluntarily.

#### War and Depression Years

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act continued to be the predominant force in labour relations until the time of the 1929-35 depression. A conservative government amended the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in 1932 in order to deprive trade unions of the right to compulsory arbitration (Woods, 1963:128). Powers introduced in association with the Finance Act allowed wage cuts to take effect. Wage rates declined by as much as one third and unemployment soared to record levels making it nearly impossible for the unions to influence decision making.

The New Zealand Labour Alliance had been formed in 1919 bringing together the unions which had previously been the

backbone of the Maritime Council and the Red Federation although their influence was nowhere near as strong as previously. When the Labour Party gained power in 1935 restoration of the Arbitration Court was a high priority. Ignoring the requests of the Alliance the Government introduced compulsory membership and restored compulsory arbitration. Important features of the 1936 Amendments were:

- (1) state enforced compulsory unionism, in substitution for the system of qualified preference;
- (2) extended coverage to enable white collar unions to organise;
- (3) encouragement for gradual reduction in ordinary hours until a forty hour week was reached;

A National Industrial Conference which met in Wellington in April 1937 brought together factions within the labour movement and formed the Federation of Labour which has continued as an umbrella organization for Unions to the present day. With the outbreak of war in 1939 the Federation of Labour pledged support for the war effort and supported the adoption of conscription. While the war continued the unions by and large accepted stabilisation.

Immediately following the Second World War divisions were again apparent within the union movement with a Communist faction in many unions arguing for a more militant approach to industrial relations. In 1949 the Labour Government amended the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to enable the Minister of Labour to deregister unions for industrial action.

### 1951 Waterfront Lockout

With a change in government in 1949 there was a temporary lull in the antagonism which was building between the union movement and government. The watersiders became a powerful breakaway group, known as the Trade Union Congress. Inspired by the leadership of Jock Barnes they refused overtime in support of wage claims in February 1951. The employers retaliated by suspending workers, claiming it was a strike although the union insisted it was a lockout.

The labour movement was divided in its response to the waterfront dispute. While the watersiders received support from some unions, others distanced themselves from the conflict. The government, anxious to crush the lockout and break the power of the union, declared a state of emergency and deregistered the unions, using a tactic previously used in 1912-1913 when the Government encouraged the registration of replacement unions. The 1951 lockout involved the greatest number of working days lost in any strike in this country. Its supporters were largely the militant maritime unions. The defeat of the union had important political and industrial consequences. For the third time the strong maritime unions which had previously been crushed by conservative governments suffered defeat. Within the labour movement the more conservative factions saw their radical associates defeated.

The right wing of the trade union movement led by Walsh dominated the movement until Walsh's sudden collapse and death

in 1963. Walsh's strong concern was the independence of the union movement. In Walsh's last address to the Federation of Labour a few days before his death, delegates were reminded, *"There is a real and lasting division between labour and capital. As long as our present economic system continues this division will remain "* (Roth, 1974).

#### TRADE UNIONISM IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The development of trade unionism in the New Zealand public services has its own distinctive and interesting history. Reference has previously been made to government's role in public works during the Vogel years of national development. The first union of public servants was the New Zealand Education Institute (N.Z.E.I.) formed in 1883. This was followed by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (A.S.R.S.) and the Post and Telegraph Officers' Society.

E.J. Keating (1974) observes that conditions amenable to the development of union activity in the Public Services were evident from the 1880s(5). He identifies the interest for public servants in developing agreements with their employers on superannuation, classification, fair promotion, appeal systems, sickness provisions, reduction of working hours, payment of overtime and provision for leave. These were progressively achieved by the various unions with the final major objective being attained with the passing of the Superannuation Act in 1907.

The Public Service Association had its origins in a staff association of mainly clerical workers established in 1890 as part of the fervour for socialist-inspired unionism which existed at that time. Unlike some of the more active groups of railwaymen and post and telegraph employees, this Association found it much more difficult to sustain momentum and was reported to have been virtually out of existence by 1900.

Roth (1987) notes that in the first decade of liberal administration advanced legislation transformed New Zealand into "*the world's social laboratory*". Sir Joseph Ward (1911) observed that New Zealand was "*doing more work through State Departments in proportion to our population than is done in any other country in the world*" (N.Z. Parliamentary Debates, v155: p147). The growth in government activities provided the potential membership for strong union activity.

In 1906 the New Zealand Civil Service Association was formed but like its predecessor, the Staff Association, it remained a conservative body, lacking strong leadership.

In 1911 the Liberal Government during its last months in office, set up the Hunt Royal Commission to inquire into and report on unclassified sections of the Public Service. By the time the Commission reported back, the Massey Government had won the election. They were, however, in agreement with the Commission's recommendations which are listed by Keating :

1. unity of control by a board of management not necessarily civil servants;

2. entry by competitive examination;
3. probation before final admission;
4. security of tenure while of good behaviour;
5. promotion by merit from within the service;
6. pensions on retirement;
7. free transfer of officers between departments;
8. elimination of back-door admission to government employment;
9. increased remuneration. (Keating, 1974).

When the 1912 Public Service Act was passed, the major departure from the Commission's recommendations was the replacement of the Board of Management by a Public Service Commissioner and two Assistant Commissioners. The new legislation laid down the principles the public service would follow, resulting in the formation in 1913 of a new organisation, the Public Service Association (P.S.A.) which was immediately recognised by the Public Service Commissioner.

#### The Public Service Association

At the 1913 conference interest was shown in a raft of conditions of employment including overtime, travelling allowances, removal allowances, civic rights, compulsory retirement, appeal rights, higher duties allowances and the buying back of superannuation.

While the delegates at the conference discredited the former Civil Service Association, it was the 1912 Public Service Act which provided sufficient protection and recognition for public

servants to speak openly about their conditions of employment without fear of retribution by their employers. Roth (1974) concludes that a great strength of the Public Service Association in its early years was the involvement of senior public service officers who shaped the direction taken by the organisation.

Three years later in 1916, the Council of New Zealand State Service Associations had its first conference, with participating unions being called together at the initiative of the P.S.A. but this body ceased to meet after 1919.

The period between 1920 and 1935 was an unremarkable period for the P.S.A. and other state unions. At a time when the economy weakened, leading into a depression, conditions were not favourable for the development of unions. Like the unions in the private sector, unions of state servants saw wages cut and membership decline until the change to a Labour Government.

The new Labour Prime Minister, Joseph Savage was quick to enlist the cooperation of the public service to get the economy moving in 1936. The implementation of new policies required an expanded workforce. P.S.A. membership increased from 6,868 in 1935 to 12,254 in 1937 (6).

Discontent with the Executive gathered momentum. Although the war years between 1939-1945 were an unfavourable period for obtaining greater concessions, they represented a time of internal reorganisation. In 1946 Jack Lewin was elected

president. Roth's assessment of Lewin's leadership of the P.S.A. from 1946-1951 reads, *"In these remarkable six years of Lewin's leadership, the P.S.A. underwent a profound change .... He transformed the P.S.A. from a passive, toothless weakling into a powerful instrument for social change "* (Roth 1987:130).

Lewin's radical leadership became unacceptable to more conservative sections of the membership to the point that to remove him from office he faced a well organised campaign in 1951. He stood down at the time of the annual election but supporters remained on the executive and his influence continued for a significant time.

Roth's history of the Public Service Association records that in addition to the constant work of improving conditions of employment for many occupational groups, and representing individual workers, the P.S.A. since 1950 has made a notable contribution by :

1. taking a strong and consistent stand against racism;
2. demonstrating opposition to nuclear testing;
3. declaring its support for Halt All Racial Tours (HART);
4. making an affiliation to CORSO (the Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas);
5. declaring affiliation to the N.Z. Foundation of Peace Studies;

In addition to these issues, equal pay for men and women has been a major focus for the P.S.A. The next section discusses union action surrounding this issue.

## EQUAL PAY

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment Act which was passed in 1936 stated that the basic wage was to be *"sufficient to enable a man .... to maintain a wife and three children in a fair and reasonable standard of comfort."*

Corner (1988) observes *"The breadwinning role of men in New Zealand families had been legally recognised in the statute books, and women and children were generally seen to be the financial dependents of the husband or father "* (Corner, 1988:16). The experiences of the Great Depression had reinforced traditional attitudes that men should have first option of access to employment and that they should be expected to maintain women and children as dependents. The concept of a "social wage" which was dominant for many decades was not replaced by the acceptance of equal pay until as recently as the 1960s.

Corner (1988) records that the earliest demands for equal pay were made by the suffragettes in the 1890s. New Zealand women had access to equal educational opportunities at an early stage of the colony's development. The National Council of Women became involved in equal pay discussions as early as 1896.

In the previous section reference was made to importance of the 1913 conference, the inaugural conference for the P.S.A. The following year a remit to Conference was passed demanding *"that female employees of equal competence with male employees and*

*doing similar work shall receive equal treatment as to pay and privileges"* (Corner, 1988:14). It took the Association forty six years to achieve the goal of having this remit accepted by parliament. The issue was debated both within the Association and in its representations to the Commission and Parliament. When it was finally recognised in law, New Zealand was one of the last of the "developed" countries to accept the principle and it took some time for some private industries to adopt equal pay, particularly in the clothing industry.

Unfavourable economic conditions up to 1936 coupled with conservative views meant that there were very limited employment opportunities for women in New Zealand. Unmarried women were employed predominantly in "service" type employment, but it was usual practice -indeed it was expected that they would give up paid employment at the time of becoming married. There was a high expectation that women would remain at home attending to housework and caring for dependent children and the aged.

Corner (1988) found that in 1936 only 8.5% of married women in New Zealand were in paid employment. The expanding economy of the late thirties, and the need for women to replace men during wartime, accelerated changes that were taking place in women's lives, and in traditional attitudes to the family. By 1945 the proportion of married women in the workforce had increased to 17.2%. As the number of women in the workplace increased, they formed friendships where common grievances could be shared and became involved in union activities. This was particularly

the case with public servants where a strong union already existed. Men who were sympathetic to their grievances became firm allies. A 1945 survey of women in the public service found that 83% favoured a system of equal pay with family allowances.

In 1945 the P.S.A. women were supported by the Federation of Business and Professional Women of New Zealand in their pursuit of equal pay. Caroline Webb's (1946) speech recorded by Corner captures the prevailing mood of that time: *"Now that family allowances have removed the basic reason for the difference in pay between men and women, now that the war has given women the opportunity to prove their ability in every field of work, and now that the United Nations have reaffirmed in their charter the equal rights of men and women, now is the time to press our demands for economic equality, and so complete equal status for men and women"* (Corner, 1988:31).

Throughout the union movement agitation for equal pay became much stronger with private sector unions bringing it to the attention of the F.O.L. which in turn raised the matter in the Arbitration Court. Remits supporting equal pay were raised at Labour Party Conferences and the National Council of Women Conference. In 1946 the Public Service Commission "accepted in principle" the concept of equal pay in 1946 and by 1947 women were eligible to join the permanent staff.

The granting of equal pay by Parliament was not achieved for a further thirteen years. A long and strenuous campaign was required to gain this legislation(7). The legislation which

enabled equal pay to proceed was finally passed in October 1960 just prior to the election which Labour was to lose. The legislation was effective for all women in the public service : it was phased in over a three year period and had a flow-on effect to private industries where equal pay had not been achieved.

## POST 1960

### 1973 Industrial Relations Act

It has been shown that New Zealand had developed an industrial relations system which depended strongly on access to Arbitration and Conciliation. Deeks and Boxall (1989) record that the system worked satisfactorily for all parties throughout the 1950s. As levels of prosperity increased in the 1960s and in an environment of full employment, there was a move by some of the stronger unions to pursue direct bargaining. Unions began to secure "ruling rates" well above award rates in what became known as "second-tier" bargaining (8). The credibility of the arbitration system was seriously undermined by the "nil wage order" of June 1968, which was overturned six weeks later.

In recognition of the failure of the arbitration system the government introduced new legislation. The Industrial Relations Act (1973) replaced the Industrial Conciliation and

Arbitration Act which had been in place for 80 years. Boxall (1986) identifies this legislation as the first phase in a movement to a new system of bargaining which has been further developed in the Employment Contracts Act 1991.

The Industrial Relations Act 1973 endorsed the growth of free collective bargaining, which had commenced in the 1960s. It introduced the North American distinction between disputes of rights and disputes of interest. This legislation introduced flexibility. Deeks and Boxall observe that the law has allowed *"for freedom of choice within an umbrella structure rather than rigid stereotyping of labour relations behaviour"* (1989:41).

In the 1970s inflation became the most significant problem in economic policy. Annual award rounds were dominated by the settlement of key awards, for example the metal trades. Other awards followed, expecting to obtain the same percentage increases. The government responded with wage controls, the harshest being the 1982 to 1984 wage freeze.

#### The Fourth Labour Government Reforms

Boxall recognises the period of Labour Government as the second phase of change towards a new Industrial Relations System. Deeks and Boxall (1989) record four major contributions the fourth Labour Government made to the structure of labour relations in New Zealand.

1. The Labour Government stepped away from a national policy

of direct wage controls. This Government attacked inflation through tight monetary policy and the liberalisation of previously protected markets.

2. Arbitration was made voluntary in the Industrial Relations Amendment Act (1984). The emphasis was placed on resolving disputes through conciliation.
3. A major review of the Industrial Relations Act 1973 through a Green Paper led to the Labour Relations Act of 1987. This Act, while it retained access to conciliation and other dispute procedures, aimed to encourage unions and employers to make wage deals which were more appropriate to industry and enterprise circumstances.
4. State sector pay fixing was reformed with the introduction of the State Sector Act 1988 which made each government department an employer in its own right. Effectively this Act decentralised pay fixing and introduced much greater flexibility into personnel policy. State pay fixing arrangements were integrated with those of the public sector (Deeks and Boxall 1989) (9).

### 1991 Employment Contracts Act

The third phase of reform is contained in the 1991 Employment Contracts Act (E.C.A.). This Act goes further than the two preceding phases towards introducing a decentralised and voluntarist system.

The Act provides for :

1. Voluntary Unionism.
2. Employers and workers are free to choose who will represent them in bargaining but the employer does not have to accept the choice of the worker.
3. Two types of bargaining outcomes are available, individual or collective employment contracts.

The Employment Contracts Act applies to all workers from senior managerial staff down. There is no longer any provision for the exclusive registration of union coverage for any specific occupational or industry- based group.

Speaking on the social policy implications of the new Act, Harbridge (1991) concludes:

*"The E.C.A. has two key thrusts that are inter-related. First it completes the shift from a compulsory system of labour relations to a voluntarist system that is devoid of rules of process and does not require any element of "good faith" bargaining. Second, it emphasises the rights of individuals over the rights of the collective, making collective bargaining more difficult and multi-employer settlements very much harder to reach. Coming as it does in an economic recession, the E.C.A. places much power in the hands of employers. How that power is used will depend much on where in the labour market each employer is located "* (Harbridge, 1991:6).

Harbridge recognises the vulnerability of workers in secondary industries, particularly retail, tourist accommodation,

cleaning and in other workplaces where turnover has traditionally been high and workers have been from the disadvantaged groups - women, youth and Maori. He draws attention to the fact that the E.C.A. *"promotes the individual above the collective and the voluntarist over the compulsory"* (Harbridge 1991:7) Harbridge claims the E.C.A. will result in income disparities being accentuated.

Deeks and Boxall (1989) suggest that the centralisation of labour relations matters in New Zealand has taken away the need for employers to talk with their own staff about wages and conditions. In a new industrial relations environment, many employers are unprepared for their new responsibilities in negotiating with employees and employee organisations. Barrett sums up the position of many employers as being :

- ignorance of awards and award negotiations
- low organisation status awarded to personnel and labour relations functions
- lack of corporate personnel and labour relations policies
- lack of bargaining and negotiating skills and knowledge
- ignorance of legal obligations of the employer
- lack of senior management interest and involvement in labour relations, personnel and employment issues
- sense that the management of labour and employee relations in the enterprise is not possible
- poor communication with their staff
- attempts to segregate the management of labour relations from other aspects of the organisation's business

(Barrett 1987).

Deeks and Boxall (1989) take the experience of Bechtel (Pacific) Corporation Ltd, the contractors who built the Gas t Gasoline Plant at Motonui as an example of successful industrial relations (10).

The arguments put forward by Deeks and Boxall (1989) and Barrett concerning New Zealand, are that employers have relied on national organisations to deal with labour matters. Under the new legislation, this will be more difficult to do. There is a need to improve the experience and skills of employers and personnel departments. As this happens there is also a need for social work practitioners to become involved in human resource matters. The North American workplace contains many examples where this has happened. The next chapter will provide examples of how this may come about.

### SUMMARY

In this chapter I have identified the people and events which have influenced conditions in the New Zealand workplace. I have shown that from a strong commitment to an Arbitration and Conciliation system, there has been a development towards more flexible system which now favours employers. While it is early days yet to comment on the full impact of the changes brought about by the fourth Labour Government and the E.C.A.

(1991), it is my proposal that there is a role for social workers to become involved in ensuring that industrial relation reforms do not disadvantage people who are unable to have an adequate voice in their workplace. The E.C.A. (1991) has introduced changes which create gaps trade unions may not be able to fill. The next chapter shows how social work has become established in the North American workplace where there is a very different history of both industrial relations and the development of social services.

**FOOTNOTES**

1. Roth (1974) provides a useful account of the spectacular rise of unionism from 1886.
2. Woods (1963) gives an analysis of the background to the introduction of the 1894 I.C. and A. Act
3. These four elements were repeated with more or less emphasis in the Industrial Relations Act 1973.
4. Williams (1986) provides a summary of the way the United Federation of Labour was destroyed by the government.
5. Keating (1974) draws on earlier analyses of the combination of factors which are necessary for unions to be viable.
6. Roth (1987) records that the P.S.A., in spite of its rapid growth in membership, was controlled by a weak and compliant leadership.
7. The Parker case (1956) had the effect of fuelling the debate between supporters of the social wage and supporters of the "rate for the job". The Jean Parker Test Case 1956 is documented fully in P.S.A. records and included in histories by Roth (1987) and Corner (1988).
8. Second-tier agreements were entered into voluntarily to replace or add to conditions in the relevant awards or registered agreement; in practice setting higher rates than those agreed to in the award.
9. Changes in the State Service under the Fourth Labour Government are discussed by Martin (1990).
10. Reference to this will be made in chapter 6 which outlines the case study undertaken at this plant at a later period.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE WORKPLACE

#### A Review of the Literature

While New Zealand has a very recent history of social services in the workplace some other countries have a much longer tradition of social work involvement in this setting. In this chapter the North American experience is reviewed with particular reference to occupational social work which has experience dating back to the latter part of the nineteenth century. The first National Conference of Industrial Social Work Practitioners held in June 1978 provided an impetus for the development of this specialty area of social work practice (1).

This chapter identifies a number of models for practice which have been developed and appraised in North America. These models will contribute to the development of a model for New Zealand practice which is proposed in chapter five. At the conclusion of the chapter a section on ethical and practice considerations highlights the debate around this subject which began at the first National Conference of Industrial Social Work Practitioners and persists today.

## EVOLUTION OF OCCUPATIONAL SOCIAL WORK IN NORTH AMERICA

### United States Welfare Capitalism

A number of writers trace the origins of occupational social work to the emergence of welfare capitalism in the United States. Googins and Godfrey (1985) note the need for early industrialists to secure the availability of "healthy, orderly and loyal workers". They observe "*Early U.S. capitalists struggled with a work force of men whose rowdy drinking and carousing carried over into the factories and undermined the values on which Capitalists relied, a loyal, virtuous, and, above all, hardworking labor force*" (Googins and Godfrey, 1985:397). In response to their workforce needs Shain (1989) records the movement within industry from 1870, guided by a paternalistic philosophy. Welfarism in industry covered many aspects of employee well-being including housing, medical care, fitness, nutrition, recreation, savings, pensions, education and general working conditions. Nineteenth century welfarism, which was in many respects preventative, aimed at guaranteeing a reliable workforce.

Shain (1989) provides a detailed account of the Amoskoeag Textile Mills. She records that the majority of the workforce were young, unmarried women and girls. "*Meals were provided at low cost in boarding houses where curfews were imposed. Church attendance was made compulsory,*

*alcohol consumption was prohibited and smoking forbidden as a safety measure. Emergency health care was always available on site" (Shain, 1989:7).*

Shain (1989) describes English Quaker Companies which were characterised by an ethic *"that all members be industrious, frugal, temperate and honest."* The Quaker companies placed value on the workers; quality of life because it was the *"Christian way and it made good business sense"* (Shain, 1989:9).

Shain goes on to the Bourneville "model community" built by the Cadbury family in England to illustrate the most integrated implementation of the Quaker industrial ideal. She observes that in spite of the great concern for workers physical, mental and spiritual health the approach was *"paternalistic"* offering a package which was *"defined by the employer and assumed what workers needed"* (Shain, 1989:12).

From the 1870s welfare or social secretaries were appointed. Mrs Aggie Dunn of the H.J.Heinz Company at Pittsburg is recognised for her fifty years as "mother" to her female workforce. Popple (1981) states that 33% of the 431 largest companies in the United States had at least one full time welfare secretary. Googins and Godfrey (1985:379) note that many of the early social secretaries were the wives of industrialists and were therefore regarded with suspicion by the developing union movement.

Lewis (1990:101-102) records that F.Perkins, a social worker, was witness to the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in which 146 women workers were trapped and killed. Later as Secretary for Labour under Franklin Roosevelt he led the movement for passage of protective labour laws including the minimum wage and standards of workplace safety.

### Human Relations Movement

Googins and Godfrey have described the Human Relations Movement as *"the second major building block for human services in the workplace"* (Googins and Godfrey, 1985:397). They identified the origins of the movement as an *"antidote for Taylorism"*, the scientific management movement which emphasised the proper design of tasks, and the selection and training of employees.

The Human Relations movement developed from experiments started by the Western Electric Company at its Hawthorne Works in 1923. The original investigators were interested in the effects of illumination on workers and their output. After three years of inconclusive results Professor Elton Mayo and colleagues were invited to inquire into the influence of morale and motivation. The researchers concluded, *"The study of the bank wiremen showed that their behavior at work could not be understood without considering the informal organisation of the group and the relation of this informal organisation to the*

*total social organisation of the company* "(Quoted in French, 1978:23).

Googins and Godfrey observe, "*Many have charged the human relations movement with possessing the same exploitive and paternalistic motivation as that of welfare capitalism*" (1985:397). They argue that the movement encourages organisation practices which result in a loyal, socialised work force.

The contribution of the human relations movement is its emphasis on a person centred orientation and the fulfilment of individual needs within the context of employment. The contributors to this school of thought have influenced the development of personnel functions and the human resource departments with which we are now familiar. Many of the concepts developed over a twenty year period from the mid 1920s have become an integral part of human resource approaches. Growing out of the human relations movement new approaches developed, one of the best known being Employee Assistance Programmes.

#### Employee Assistance Programmes ( E.A.Ps )

The E.A.P. concept developed from various attempts to establish "Alcoholism in Industry" Programmes. These early attempts date back to the 1940s and were undertaken mainly by recovered alcoholics who recognised the effects of

alcohol abuse in the workplace. More recently occupational alcoholism programmes have been replaced by "broadbrush" E.A.Ps. which emphasise impaired work performance.

The E.A.P. is a system for identifying and arranging counselling for employees whose personal problems result in impaired work performance. Their objective is to restore an employee to normal work productivity. E.A.Ps. have been supported by both employers who benefit by minimising lost production and unions who view the system as a way of preventing dismissals.

Googins lists the major assumptions underlying E.A.P. as follows :

1. *Unless job performance is impaired, a person's life or problem is his/her own.*
2. *Most problems, regardless of their nature eventually manifest themselves in poor job performance.*
3. *It is the role of supervisors to measure and evaluate job performance. Thus they can identify deteriorating work performance without having to diagnose the nature of the underlying problem.* (Googins, 1975:465)

Googins (1975) viewed E.A.Ps. as representing an initial stage in a gradually evolving field designed to meet the needs of problem employees. More recent articles by the same writer indicate the rapid growth of interest and ideas in occupational social work since his early writings. I will return to a fuller discussion of E.A.Ps.

later in this chapter. Before doing so I need to discuss social service involvement in work sites.

### STAGES OF SOCIAL SERVICE INVOLVEMENT

Ozawa observed that "*programmes of social services in work settings are still in their infancy*" (Ozawa, 1980:467). She provided a model of four stages of development, predicting that when services are available work organizations will progressively recognise their usefulness and request increased levels of involvement. The four levels of involvement for occupational social work are :

Stage 1 The management or union requests social service input in the form of an Employee Assistance Programme. This is likely to be in response to a perceived need. Frequently the incidence of alcohol or other drug abuse provides the reason for this first request.

Stage 2 It is recognised that the social worker has skills which can be utilised in prevention or education programmes. Health and welfare services may be expanded.

Stage 3 Social service practitioners recognise that a great deal of the staff dissatisfaction is associated with the way work activities are organised. Systems and organisational approaches are utilised by the social worker.

Stage 4 This stage is characterised by the blurring of the line of demarcation between management and employees and the development of a sense of community.

Ozawa sees a role for occupational social workers in facilitating the process of community organisation in industries, making it possible for employees to share in decision making possibly at a board level. Writing from a social work perspective she observes *"What industry and unions are looking for is a profession that can do the job of solving pressing problems at the workplace. They do not seem to be much concerned about which profession should do it"* (Ozawa, 1980:469).

Akabas and Kurzman conclude that social workers will initially gain recognition through involvement in counselling services. Once this has occurred they state that *"from this solid base of internal power, derived from professional expertise, the social worker is able to build trust and make use of the professional's full repertoire of knowledge and skill - the key assets of which, in the world of work, are its understanding of person and environment in interaction, its commitment to individual growth, and to social change"* (Akabas and Kurzman, 1982:198).

Other writers share the view that by demonstrating competency in providing Level 1 services other

interventions will be requested. Balgopal notes, "*E.A.Ps are the dominant model for occupational social work and have opened up the door for clinical services for industry*" (Balgopal, 1989:438). Balgopal urges social workers to "*work toward gaining a professional role that is broader than which is offered by E.A.P s*" (1989:438). Among the other issues with which Balgopal suggests social workers should become involved are entrenched organisational patterns such as institutional racism and sexism which warrant attention. As social workers expand their role he anticipates the need to be sensitive to questions of professional boundaries which other occupational groups will raise.

Safford draws attention to the role for occupational social workers "*to reach out to those older employees who primarily identify with their work roles*" (Safford, 1988:44). Moving beyond the issues of substance abuse and mental health which are normally associated with E.A.Ps., Safford proposes the value of gerontology including preventative and therapeutic interventions to meet the social problems associated with aging. Foster and Schore (1990) provide a discussion of the role for social workers when job losses are imminent. Again they suggest a role which is not confined to individual redundancy counselling. These writers urge social workers to become involved at a senior level throughout any down-sizing movement to ensure that the employees affected receive the fairest possible treatment.

### A Typology of Occupational Social Work

Shank (1985) outlines a three dimensional approach to practice developed at the University of Pittsburgh. This approach provides three practice models, suggesting the activities which are likely to be carried out under each. Shank also discusses the training which should precede entry into these areas of practice.

Straussner (1990) provides a typology which is an extension of this Pittsburgh model. He suggests that an occupational social worker may function in more than one model at a time:

#### **1. Employee Service Model**

This model focusses on direct involvement with employees and the development of a range of programmes which may include E.A.P.s and occupational health prevention and wellness models. Stress management, smoking cessation and preretirement planning are examples. Working within this model it is suggested the social worker will utilise the skills of counsellor, broker, advocate, mediator and teacher - trainer.

#### **2. The Employer - Work Organisation Service Model**

Participation is aimed primarily at assisting the employer or work organisation identify and develop policies and services in relation to the workforce. Examples may be the

establishment of a work-based child care facility, analysis of the impact of down-sizing, consultation on the establishment of appropriate affirmative action plans for minority groups. It is noted that this model has been widely used in Western Europe. The roles and skills include consultant, educator, analyst, trainer and programme developer.

### **3. The Consumer Service Model**

This model focusses on the needs of the consumer of the work place rather than those of employers. The roles of the social worker include counsellor, programme planner and developer, consultant and advocate.

### **4. The Corporate Social Responsibility Model**

The focus in this model is on assisting major employers to make a commitment to the communities in which they operate. There would be very few New Zealand employers large enough to require a full time appointment to an equivalent position. The roles which may include community analyst and planner, budget allocator and programme developer may, however, be a part of an occupational social worker's role. The nearest equivalent position in New Zealand is possibly the community development officers employed by local bodies who in some cases have responsibility for advising councils regarding the distribution of grant monies to community groups.

### 5. Work Related Public Policy Model

This model includes the formulation, identification and analysis of, and advocacy for, those public government policies, programmes and services which directly or indirectly affect the world of work. Again this is likely to be a small part of the total role for an occupational social worker in New Zealand. The skills required include policy planning and analysis, programme development, advocacy, coalition building and networking. An example may be the preparation of a paper to consider how various public policy options may impact on employment prospects for younger people in a rural area.

#### A Closer Look at Employee Assistance Programmes

Straussner (1988) records that the most rapid growth in the field of occupational social work in the United States has been in the field of E.A.P s. In his paper the relative merits of in-house E.A.Ps. are compared with contracted out services. The author concludes that a *"well run E.A.P. can be provided in either form, as long as those planning the programme are aware of the benefits and limitations of each "* (Straussner, 1988:55).

In New Zealand the Alcoholic Liquor Advisory Council through its Employee Assistance Programme branch has provided a consultancy and training service for the implementation of in-house programmes. Similarly the State

services Commission provides resources and training for government departments to implement programmes.

Although most programmes fall within the broad categories of in-house or contracted out, a wide variety of models has been developed. Weissman (1975) describes a multiservice centre staffed by social workers. Weissman identified three basic types of service :

1. counselling;
2. linkage and referral;
3. emergency twenty four hour hot line;

Weissman describes the social worker's role in such a centre as broker, mediator and advocate.

Simcock (1985)(2), prepared a comprehensive review of the literature on E.A.Ps. Searching for appropriate models for the New Zealand situation she proposed a Consortium Model for use in areas where there are a number of small employers. Simcock emphasises the importance of finding out which strategies are most likely to work in which organisational structure.

To ensure that there is a closer match between the model of E.A.P. and the work organisation within which it operates, it is now expected that a pre - programme analysis will be carried out. Balzer and Pargament (1988) discuss this needs assessment. These authors propose that multiple research methods should be used to collect

information which will tailor the E.A.P. to fit the organisation's requirements. This research role may include the use of various data collection instruments. This adds a further role to those already suggested for the occupational social worker.

Ford and Ford note that "*E.A.Ps. operate in a network of social systems with diverse and often conflicting agendas*" (Ford and Ford, 1987:57). Acknowledging that the E.A.P. practitioner has a primary focus to assist employees, Ford and Ford discuss ways in which the practitioner can also "*align effectively with many other constituencies*" which can greatly help (or harm) the employee (e.g. supervisors, unions) " (Ford and Ford, 1987:58) (3).

The growth of E.A.Ps. in North America has led to a specialisation related to particular organisation environments and groups of people in need of assistance. Two examples highlight the potential for specialisation.

The first example is a paper by Stevens (1988). In this paper the role for E.A.Ps. in public schools is discussed. Stevens acknowledges that there is very little previous literature on his specialty. In his study he surveyed forty three school boards to discover the status of E.A.Ps. within schools. He concluded that E.A.Ps are flourishing in New York schools. The results of this study are of particular interest because previous writers

suggest that white collar and professional workers are much less likely than blue collar groups to make use of an E.A.P.

Sullivan-Chin and Chin (1988) propose that E.A.Ps. have a unique role in identifying and obtaining counselling for Adult Children of Alcoholics (A.C.As). In their paper they suggest *"Until they become dysfunctional in the work world many A.C.A s suffering from myriad problems - remain undetected by social workers, counsellors and other clinical providers in various settings"* (Sullivan Chin and Chin, 1988:67).

As workplace programmes have developed in North America, increasing numbers of practitioners have contributed papers outlining their experiences. Central to many of these papers is a discussion of the ethical and practice considerations. In the next section these become the focus.

### Ethical and Practice Considerations

Reference has been made earlier in this chapter to criticisms levelled at the early social secretaries whose paternalistic stance was viewed with suspicion. Akabas, Kurzman and Kolben identify a fundamental social work question, namely *"whose agent are you?"* (1978:17). These writers suggest that the issue of confidentiality in occupational settings is *"complicated, continuous and*

*consequential"*(1978:17). Occupational social workers have access to a great deal of information which can affect people's livelihood. The way in which this information is interpreted and used is critical. Reporting on the first National Conference of occupational social workers Akabas, kurzman and Kolben highlight the debate which focussed around this subject. Organisational goals which include productivity and profit maximisation may conflict with individual needs for security and reduced stress levels.

Social workers employed in an industrial setting may face a dilemma when the employing organisation, striving to fulfill its goals, condones the use of unsafe equipment, toxic substances or marginal work practices. Reference has been made to institutional racism or sexual harassment which are issues into which the social worker can expect to be drawn. It is appropriate that social workers address these issues, but the isolation of occupational social work positions removes the social worker from the support of colleagues. Nevertheless as Shank notes, "*social workers believe that the value base, knowledge and skills of the profession lend themselves to effectively providing social services in the workplace*" (Shank, 1985:55). She goes on to propose that it is necessary "*to learn how the business environment operates relative to the power, policy and decision making structures*" (Shank, 1985:55). It is suggested that adequate preparation should include studies in personnel administration, organisational behaviour, management and labour relations.

Akabas and Kurzman caution that "*the parallel interests of the individual and the organization may not be readily apparent*" (Akabas and Kurzman, 1980:198). They urge the profession to avoid the pitfalls of the past when social workers became the handmaidens of either management or unions. Consideration of the literature available at this time suggests there is considerable scope for further discussion of the ethical issues associated with working in a complex profit-making organization.

#### SUMMARY

Occupational social work has an historical tradition and is firmly established as a specialty area of practice in North America. This chapter has identified key writers on the subject. Ozawa's analysis of the levels of involvement places Employee Assistance Programmes at an early stage of involvement. Ozawa (1980), Shank (1985) and Straussner (1990) agree that E.A.Ps. may open the door to other social service involvement within organisations. They all see scope for extended services after the social work practitioner is accepted into the new host site. Straussner suggests a social worker may be required to utilise several approaches depending on workplace needs. Important political and ethical issues are associated with the development of workplace services. In the theoretical contributions which follow I will show that these provide some guidance in these matters.

**FOOTNOTES**

1. The literature is expansive, see particularly Googins annotated bibliography (1987).
2. Simcock (1985) worked on contract to the New Zwaland Alcoholic Advisory Council.
3. Ford and Ford (1987) propose that "social power" as originally defined by French and Ravens (1959) offers a basis for E.A.Ps to achieve a balance of effective organisational influence.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### TOWARDS A THEORETICAL MODEL FOR SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE WORKPLACE

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will develop a theoretical model for providing social work services in the New Zealand workplace. The model will be developed by drawing on four dimensions of theory, each of which contributes to the construction of the model.

These four dimensions are:

1. theories of the purpose of work;
2. a Radical Theory for social work intervention;
3. theories of the provision of welfare;
4. direct approaches to social service;

The next section of this chapter sets out the rationale for selecting these four dimensions.

## 1. Theories of the Purpose of Work

"Work" is a central theme in this thesis, hence a discussion of the theory of work is essential to understanding the workplace. The work which people do, their relationship to the means of production, is a central theme in sociological literature. Changes in the way work is organised, technological changes in the work environment and the redefinition of the relationship between the employer and the worker affect not only the hours which are spent at work but all aspects of life. At a time of high unemployment, the access to paid work becomes an important determinant of life opportunities(1).

## 2. A Radical Theory for Social Work Intervention

The radical tradition of social work represented in the social work literature by British writers (Bailey and Brake, 1975; Corrigan and Leonard, 1978), presents one of the most consistent challenges for social work to address the person as well as the structures that impact on people's lives. Work is clearly one such critical element of the wider environment.

In my introductory chapter I advocated a broad approach to occupational social work. Referring to work by Googins and Godfrey (1987), it was suggested that most of the

occupational social workers' activities will be at a level requiring intervention and change in large systems. Radical theory provides a valuable contribution to the explanation of that social work activity, hence its inclusion here.

### 3. Theories of the Provision of Welfare

I indicated in the introduction that the New Zealand workplace which has previously received minimal attention from social work is now emerging with new significance as a viable and strategic site for practice. The theoretical work of Titmuss (1974 and 1976) and Mishra (1977) will be utilised to consider the relationship between the provision of welfare and the provision of occupational social work in the New Zealand setting. Occupational social work occurs in the context of the wider provision of welfare.

### 4. Models of Social Service Provision

Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Garbarino (1982) have developed an interlocking social systems framework. This provides a useful way of viewing levels of social work intervention. In this chapter I will discuss the ecological framework and relate it to the levels of intervention identified by Ozawa (1980) in the previous chapter.

I will turn now to a fuller discussion of each of these

four dimensions.

### THEORIES OF THE PURPOSE OF WORK.

The importance of work in people's lives has been addressed by many writers. Corrigan and Leonard, propose *"In social work we must begin to understand individual experience and the features of individual personality as a reflection of the social relations of production and of the contradictions within those relations"* (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978:122). They remind their readers that *"nearly all of Marx and Engels work is an attempt to show the working class movement the way in which the capitalist mode of production warps human lives"* (1978:71).

It will be shown that other writers take a different view of work, proposing that work fulfils a number of human needs. At a time of high unemployment the opportunity to have access to remunerated employment has become an important personal and political issue. In the next part of the chapter the purpose of work is discussed, and historical and current perspectives are explored. This will then lead to proposing of a theoretical position on the purpose of work.

### Historical Perspectives

Pahl (1988), a key writer in the field, discusses

contributions to a theoretical position on the purpose of work. I will draw on Pahl's major piece of work at various stages in this chapter. Pahl encourages readers to consider the way in which work and employment have been viewed historically. She cautions, however, "*Few of the great thinkers who have turned their minds to the problems of work have managed to avoid an explicit or tacit retrospective utopia*" (Pahl, 1988:3).

Shostack (1982) provides an analysis of the nature of work over the following historical periods:

**Ancient Greece and Rome** During this period waged work which was conducted in a master-servant relationship was held in disdain. It was thought that to have value, work should be carried out as an expression of oneself. Little progress with technology occurred during this period as the result of society's low regard for "mechanical arts".

**Judaeo - Christian Period** Shostack (1982) records that new attitudes emerged and work assumed three sources of worth.

1. Work was preferable to sin-tempting idleness.
2. It was a promising source of extra income which could be given as alms to the poor.
3. It was a vital source of commercial projects with which to build churches and monasteries. Work obtained a new "spiritual dignity".

**Medieval Catholicism and Guilds** Medieval monastic orders taught that an obligation to work was a divine law. Within monasteries painstakingly developed techniques such as the production of enamel work, porcelain, glasswork and others were kept alive. Guilds of craftsmen formed, work skills developed and the craftsman's way of life (applauded at a later time by Marx and others) reached a peak level of development.

Shostack notes, *"Work skills changed rapidly, with some attendant dislocations and social costs, but overall the work of common folk gained in stature, complexity and social significance"* (1982:11).

**The Reformation** Protestantism taught that work anywhere was an honour, a worthy form of serving God.

*"Protestantism emancipated economic life from ecclesiastic domination and lifted work from being a taken for granted backdrop of life to being a new testing ground for selfhood"* (Shostack, 1982:12).

By the end of the 18th century the protestant view of *"salvation through dutiful work"*, ensured the availability of a workforce which according to Weber helped give rise to the *"Spirit of Capitalism"* (1).

**The Industrial Revolution** The reorganised methods of production created the division between labour and capital which has become the focus of much of the discussion about

work, particularly by Marx and neo-Marxist writers. The rapidly emerging working class who became congregated in large work sites achieved a combined, previously unknown, power base. Power relationships became a central theme in the literature on work.

**post Industrial Revolution** Shostack, speaking primarily with respect to the North American environment, suggests that with the onset of the Great Depression years 1929 to 1935, the philosophical ideas which underpinned the notion of work were disrupted and laid bare to scrutiny. Of this period he says, *"The meaning of work in this country lost much of its hard earned association with expiation (Hebrew and early Christian teachings), aesthetics (renaissance emphasis), a "calling" (reformation focus), personal mobility (early American dream), citizenship training (1850 - 1900 Republican emphasis), and productivity gain (1910 -29 Taylorist preoccupation )"* (Shostack, (1982:17).

By the end of the mid 1930s the emphasis throughout the western world was to put people back to work. The need to regain security and ensure that basic needs were met gave impetus to the rise of the labour movement and a renewed interest in trade unionism. The labour movement and trade unionism arose from the struggles of working people to protect and promote their interests vis-a-vis employers.

Shostack identifies the pioneering work of industrial

sociologist Elton Mayo (1945) at the Chicago Hawthorne Works of Western Electric as the origins of the Human Relations movement. This approach (referred to in the previous chapter) counselled managers to organise the workplace in a way which would assure happier and more informed employees. Initially the union movement was suspicious of the new human relations practitioners although as time has progressed the charges that this approach was "neo paternalistic" appear to have given way to an acceptance of the benefits they have brought.

This short historical review of the purpose of work shows varied influences on theories about paid work. The previous chapter on the development of the New Zealand workplace also contributes to our understanding of why the availability of paid work is of vital importance today. I have shown a progressive development towards highly organised workplace arrangements which define the opportunities people will have to realise their desire for employment. In the next section I will continue my reference to Shostack, showing a framework for understanding today's workplace. I will also identify potential areas of social work contribution to the needs of employees in the workplace.

### Current Perspectives

Shostack (1982) suggests that an analysis of the way work is understood today can be undertaken by considering the

four particular issues of power distribution, needs satisfaction, participant roles and value emphasis. The following section uses Shostack's framework and is relevant to the New Zealand workplace in the 1990s.

### Power Distribution

The historical discussion of labour relations in New Zealand contained in Chapter Three shows that while there is in Marxian terms, a history of class struggle in New Zealand, the strong interventionist role of government which was established with the 1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act has had the effect of containing the Union movement. The Federation of Labour and the Combined State Unions, now the Combined Trade Unions, have been very significant bodies since depression years. They have won a succession of benefits for their members including conditions of employment which do not necessarily have a cash-value. In Chapter Three it was suggested that the Employment Contracts Act 1991 will lead to a shift in power in favour of employers, particularly those in secondary industries, where the workforce is scattered across a range of small work sites.

The relative distribution of power between governments, employers and employees is critical to our understanding of the workplace. Shifts in the balance of power may lead to a substantial change in working conditions. The erosion of overtime and shift work payments are an example.

### Needs Satisfaction

Chestang (1982) is a North American writer who is interested in the role of the occupational social worker. He says, "*Work then is a central element in achieving and maintaining a sense of personal identity*" (Chestang, 1982:63). Chestang identifies the personal meanings of work as "*internal organiser, social learning, social recognition and status, providing meaning in life.*"

Chestang suggests that rising levels of educational attainment create higher expectations of both the satisfaction that can be gained from work and the availability of leisure time to pursue other activities. Improvements in technology, changing managerial policies, the amalgamation of capital and the development of international markets have all had a strong impact on how work is organised. It becomes impossible to provide any general statement about how needs are satisfied in the workplace as a whole. It is, however, possible to consider individual groups of workers or occupational groups. Braverman's deskilling thesis (1974) (2), proposes that with the introduction of new technology workers have progressively lost the skills they had as craftsmen and women.

More flexible working arrangements which are tailored to fit with child care, continuing education needs and individual interests have developed. At a senior level individual "remuneration packages" are worked out to fit personal circumstances but these are not usually available to the majority of the workforce. While some groups of workers have experienced enhanced job satisfaction resulting from organisational and technological change, others, particularly those with lower levels of skill, have found it increasingly difficult to satisfy their needs in the workplace. These are the people who can benefit from the availability of the social worker in the workplace.

### Participant Roles

The third issue Shostack (1982) considers significant is participant roles. Pahl (1988) provides a comprehensive discussion on gender as a principle of stratification in the historical organisation of labour. Pahl observes that for an atypical period of 100 years commencing in the 1800s households were dependent on the male earner. She suggests working men's opposition to the proletarianisation of their wives and children is seen as rooted in a desire to maintain their patriarchal privileges within the home.

In Chapter Three reference was made to women's struggle to gain equal recognition in the New Zealand workplace. Until

very recently disabled and minority groups have been disadvantaged by employment conditions. Over the last decade there have been major moves to ensure a greater acceptance of people who have been excluded initially from the workplace and also from promotion within organisations. Equal employment opportunity (E.E.O.) legislation has opened up possibilities for people previously discriminated against in the workplace. New Zealand employers have responsibilities under law to be a "good employer".

Again, as in the previous section, although there has been increased attention given to providing equal opportunities, this corresponds with a period of reduced vacancies. Nevertheless there is an important role for social workers to be vigilant in seeing that E.E.O. policies are complied with.

### Value Emphasis

The final issue Shostack (1982) considers important within this framework is value emphasis. Large scale redundancies which were unknown in New Zealand in recent decades have coupled with an erosion of employment in many fields to heighten anxiety about job loss. Unemployment figures have become a focal point of discussion, constituting an important public issue. Shirley et al (1990) show that unemployment in New Zealand has risen from 0.06% in 1974 to 7.4% in March 1989 (3). For a large part of the

workforce retaining their employment is now of over-riding importance.

Shostack (1982) says that workers have become increasingly aware of health and safety factors. In New Zealand occupational health and safety committees have been established and have increasingly accepted wider responsibilities (4). Much greater attention is given to health checks such as hearing testing. As health and safety issues receive greater attention in the community as a whole a critical examination of workplace environmental issues is expected. This involves many considerations from protective clothing through to job and equipment design.

The sweat shop conditions of last century are far removed from a modern industrial plant which makes use of all the available technology to provide safe working conditions. Some union representatives are participating fully in health and safety actions.

Shostack (1982) suggests that a new found recognition of mental health issues accompanies an awareness of physical health hazards. In his analysis this provides the opportunity for social services to become involved in new areas.

This completes my discussion of the way work is understood today. Shostack's (1982) framework has been useful in

identifying key areas. The section shows there has been an awareness of the need to create opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged groups previously excluded from participation in the workforce. However the number of jobs has declined and the type of work available is changing.

I conclude this review of the workplace with the observation that while some people have had much better opportunities to satisfy their needs in the workplace others have given up any hope of securing paid employment again. In this section I have identified a number of social work activities to which I will return when developing a model for practice in the workplace. In the next section I will draw together the key points about work which have emerged in this chapter.

#### SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION ON THE PURPOSE OF WORK

Writers from various theoretical traditions are in agreement that work is a central theme in the understanding of social life. According to Marx and Engels, *"Work is the first premise of all human existence"* (1978:48). Maslow (1970) sees work as meeting needs at several levels from basic food and shelter needs to the higher level need of "self actualisation". A similar position underlies the job enrichment school of industrial psychology. Herzberg argues, *" People are active and productive beings for whom work can and should be*

*attractive and involving"*(1966). Pahl proposes, "*more people are becoming self-consciously aware of the processes of which they are a part. The individual both moulds and is moulded by his or her work"* (1988:3).

In the brief historical review, work was shown as continually changing in response to changes in technology, employers' practices, political intervention, economic development, and managerial, socialist and feminist ideologies.

The opportunity to work and the economic and political systems that determine the context of the workplace have a major impact on communities. The relative distribution of power within the workplace is of great significance. Pahl suggests : "*The state is judged by the way work is organised and distributed. Employers create types of tasks and levels of reward "* (1988:3).

At a theoretical level therefore, it can be concluded that:

1. Despite changing perspectives throughout history, currently work is seen as being of positive value in our modern society. Most people wish to participate in paid work.

2. Economic and technical development in the twentieth

century has changed the nature of work. Employment opportunities are now strongly linked to government economic policy and the decisions of large multinational companies.

3. Unemployment is increasingly consistently high (10% (5) and is an isolating experience. Most people wish to be linked with the workplace, which provides a sense of personal worth and belonging.

4. A number of personal needs are fulfilled in the workplace, and these are described above by Chestang (1982), as *internal organiser, social learning, social recognition and status and providing meaning in life* (1982:66).

The theoretical review of the purpose of work leads to a position which is consistent with that stated by Akabas and Kurzman (1982) who propose, work is a "cornerstone" of life. These writers urge practitioners to view work positively. They suggest that social workers recognise the benefits derived from participating in the workplace and assist their clients and client groups to maximise these benefits. These principles will inform the model for practice developed late in the chapter.

I will now turn to the writers from the radical tradition to identify the principles which are important in their work to advance an understanding of workplace practice.

## A RADICAL THEORY OF SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

Radical theory makes a contribution to the development of a model for occupational social work through its advice to move beyond a preoccupation with individualism, to be aware of the potential for collective action. The so-called "radical" school of social workers say it is necessary to take account of the economic and political environment people find themselves in. These writers provide a number of principles which are important to the development of the argument for a broad range of interventions.

In this section I outline the work of the so-called "radical" writers, before I move on to show how Fay (1987) prescribes a framework for action.

In the previous chapter Employee Assistance Programmes which focus on individual impaired work performance were identified as the method of practice most commonly used by North American social workers. Writers who represent a critical dimension draw attention to the need for social workers *"to develop an organisational context which provides a space to collectivise practice as far as possible"* (Brake and Bailey, 1980:24).

Corrigan and Leonard propose *"Western psychology generally*

*reflects this ideological commitment to abstract individualism, unrelated to the historical circumstances and the economic context within which individuals live and work"* (1978:109). A radical social work perspective challenges this specialty area of practice to break away from a preoccupation with individualism. Radical social workers recognise that by working through their clients' feelings of isolation, depression and despair, they may help them at both an individual and a collective level.

The following principles are drawn from these writers:

1. Social workers must understand the organisational context of the environment they work in.
2. It is necessary to recognise the oppressive nature of the workplace.
3. By moving beyond a preoccupation with individualism it is possible to make people aware of the benefits which are associated with collective action.

Brake and Bailey (1980) stress the importance of social workers being aware of their own position within the structures they work in and the things they have in common with the clients themselves.

The radical writers I have referred to provide a critique of the capitalist economic system. They call for social workers to adhere to a socialist ideology but they do not prescribe models for social work practice. In this respect the work of Fay (1987) is useful. Fay sets out a series of actions which are similar to the community development

approach of Freire (1972).

Fay says *"Critical social science is all too aware of the dependency in which most people live and the passivity which is forced upon them by the conditions of their existence"* (1987:205). Fay shows that the critical social science tradition has a theoretical base which includes :

1. a theory of false consciousness;
2. a theory of crisis;
3. a theory of education;
4. a theory of transformative action.

The following principles emerge when we apply Fay's contribution to social work:

1. The social worker must assist the people he or she is working with to understand how the environment in which they live and work affects their lives.
2. These people must come to an understanding of the conditions that determine how they are affected.
3. They must learn about the possibilities they have to effect change.
4. They must share in the responsibility for bringing about change.

From both the radical social work writers and from Fay one can conclude that occupational social workers must empower groups of people to seek their own solutions to problems in the workplace. An essential part of those solutions is that workers recognise and struggle to change the

unsatisfactory features of that workplace.

The ecological writers also propose some important principles, and it is these writers I turn to next.

#### APPROACHES TO SOCIAL SERVICE PROVISION.

In the last section I demonstrated a need to view alternative levels of intervention. The options of individual change and collective action have been discussed. Extending the argument for different levels of intervention I will apply the work of the ecological writers, Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Garbarino (1982), to my argument.

Ecological theory proposes that a particular situation can only be understood through a consideration of the interaction of the various parts. This view is a similar view to that taken by the radical school of writers, who propose that the individual must be assessed in relation to the context of his or her environment. Bronfenbrenner (1979) provides an ecological model which can be adapted to demonstrate the relationships between family, the workplace and other social activities. The essential parts of Bronfenbrenner's interlocking social systems are explained by Garbarino (1982):

1. **Microsystems** A single family dwelling provides the example of a microsystem. Within the dwelling a few people

live together, interacting closely. The workplace may also be viewed as a microsystem when small groups of people form teams, or gangs join to collectively undertake their work. The roles, relationships and activities that pertain to a microsystem give it form and character (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

**2. Mesosystems** These are the links between systems. For the particular purposes of this thesis I am interested in the links which are established between the workplace and the home. Prasad says "*The positive contribution of mesosystems is enhanced when there is agreement between settings on the role expectations of people in each setting*" (1988:19).

**3. Exosystems** These are powerful settings which make decisions affecting a person or group, but in which the person or group is not physically present. Local body and similar policy making settings are examples of the exosystems. The decision-making at the Board and Committee levels of a larger workplace employing several hundred or more people may be viewed as an exosystem.

**4. Macrosystem** The ideological, political, economic and cultural influences which impact on a group of people in a given society give it form and affect each of the other levels discussed above. Consequently Bronfenbrenner refers to them as the "development tracks" on which a society finds itself. These he termed the macrosystem

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Relating Bronfenbrenner's model of the ecology of human development to the provision of social services in the workplace allows a critical examination of the services available. Reference is made to the failure of social services to recognise the world of work as an important system affecting clients' lives. Practitioners who choose the workplace as a site for practice may also focus strongly on microsystems. If they do this they are open to the same criticism for failing to take adequate notice of the wider systems.

Garbarino (1982) proposes human service practitioners consider carefully their options for intervention. He suggests the practitioner define the desired outcome and then identify the steps required to achieve these outcomes. He states "*this may involve changing individual characteristics or interpersonal behavior (microsystems), providing resources or creating support systems (meso and exosystems) or even advocating social change (exo and macrosystem)*" (Garbarino, 1982:184).

Ozawa's (1980) four levels of intervention can be equated with Bronfenbrenner's model as follows: (6)

1. Personal counselling (micro and meso system)
2. Prevention or education (micro and meso system)
3. Organisational approaches (meso and exo system)

#### 4. Community approaches (exo and macro system)

The contribution of the ecological writers to the Acacia model is their emphasis on the interaction between the various systems. In this thesis this is the interaction between the workplace and other areas of people's lives. When this does not happen the approach has limitations.

The final theoretical dimension is the work of writers on the provision of welfare.

#### THE PROVISION OF WELFARE

This section discusses where the responsibility for providing welfare lies. It deals with the implications associated with a shift from one welfare system to another and assists in locating the social work responsibilities in each system.

In the first chapter I chose a broad definition of welfare provided by Romanyshyn who defines Social Welfare as *"including all those forms of social intervention that have a primary and direct concern with promoting both the wellbeing of the individual and of the society as a whole"* (1971:3).

Rothman (1982) identifies a separation between social work and the community of work. Rothman refers to Titmuss

(1968) who says the occupational social welfare system existing within the world of work is "walled off "from other community based welfare programmes. Titmuss says *"What goes on within and as a result of one system is ignored by others. They are appraised, criticised or applauded as abstract, independent entities"*(1968:194).

Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) introduced the terms residual and institutional to describe the way social welfare is provided. To these Titmuss added a third category which he named "industrial achievement". Titmuss (1974) outlined the three models to explain alternative methods for providing welfare.

#### **1. Residual Welfare model of Social Welfare**

In this model the state should only intervene to provide welfare when both the private market and the family are unable to support those requiring assistance. This is a model of minimal intervention by the state.

#### **2. Industrial Achievement - Performance Model of Social Welfare**

There is a significant role for social welfare institutions as adjuncts to the economy. This model holds that social needs should be met on the basis of merit, work performance and productivity. Known as the "handmaiden model" this model would be consistent with the paternalistic involvement of early welfare workers in the North American workplace.

### 3. Institutional Redistributive Model of Social Welfare

Here social welfare becomes a major integrated institution in society, providing universalistic services outside the market on the principle of need. The principle of social equality is supported. This model most closely equates with the provision of social services in New Zealand up to 1984 when the adoption of monetarist policies brought about major changes in social policy.

Mishra (1977) provides a model which sets out the main features of the residual and institutional type of welfare. He proposes: "*The main types of arrangements through which needs may be met in a capitalist society are the social services, fiscal benefits, occupational welfare, mutual aid and charitable or voluntary assistance*" (1977:90). Using a comparative approach he proposes that each of these arrangements are present in every capitalist country. The mix of arrangements varies; the reasons for this are complex. Mishra shows that while there has been a shift from the residual to the institutional provision of welfare in most countries, occupational welfare has developed alongside this expansion of public social services.

Mishra (1977) found that the scope of state welfare varies widely and can best be measured by looking at the proportion of Gross National Product spent on the social services. He questioned whether countries like the United

States and Japan, where expenditure is relatively low on public provision, were compensated by higher spending on occupational welfare. He found this difficult to assess due to problems associated with collecting relevant data. There is some evidence to support the view that this is the case especially in Japan where the larger companies recognise the needs of the workers in many ways.

The effects of capitalist development result in changes in the balance between different types of social welfare provision. While redistributive income maintenance programmes are limited, "occupational" and "fiscal" welfare are extended since they are integral to capital development. Occupational welfare consists of making various employee benefits available, usually to the advantage of people near the top levels of an organisation and at the expense of those who are not highly skilled or valued within the organisation.

Changes are likely to occur as the provision of welfare is reoriented towards the privatisation of services providing housing, health care and care of the aged.

Titmuss (1974) and Mishra (1977) both question the implication of simultaneous extensions of public and private (occupational) welfare systems. Mishra observes, *"Widely varying levels of public provision raise questions of the relationship between State Welfare and other forms of provision"* (1977:95).

Mishra (1977) argues that in Marxist terms occupational welfare tends to reproduce the capitalist relations of distribution.

These writers highlight the separation between the provision of welfare in the workplace and the provision of welfare by the State. Titmuss (1974) concludes that this division must be addressed by those concerned with social policy.

In the section on the provision of welfare I have found:

1. Most capitalist countries have developed a system of distributing welfare through public provision.
2. Institutional welfare, the welfare provided by the state, is "walled off" from occupational welfare which is provided by private employers.
3. Occupational welfare favours those who are already in a more comfortable position. The benefits do not reach those who need them most.

Assuming that monetarist economic policies continue to be applied, a trend towards a reduced public sector is likely. Social workers who are at the interface between the public and the private systems must examine their role in communicating the inequities which occur when the responsibility for the provision of welfare passes to the

private sector. Occupational social workers should become involved at the interface between the two welfare systems to play an influential role on behalf of those who may be disadvantaged by any transfer of welfare provision. Traditionally social workers have played a role in assisting groups of people to resist any erosion of benefits which assist them to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

#### A MODEL FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE NEW ZEALAND WORKPLACE

The following broad conclusions may be drawn from the four theoretical contributions discussed above.

1. The work site is one of the most important sites in people's lives. Work has been described by Akabas and Kurzman (1982) as a "cornerstone of life". Involvement in the workplace has both individual and social significance.
2. Social workers have a role in assisting people to increase their control of the economic and political structures which impact on them. The radical social work tradition urges practitioners not to confine their practice to working with individuals but to facilitate opportunities for groups of people to take up responsibility for finding their own solutions.
3. Ecological theory and radical social work concepts

which assist the practitioner to be involved at various levels that affect a person's wellbeing inform the Acacia model for occupational social work.

4. With the likelihood that some provision of welfare may transfer to the private sector social workers must ensure that low-income groups are not disadvantaged. Social workers must become involved at the interface between the public and the private welfare systems.

It should be possible for the reader to trace the influence of the foregoing discussion on the various aspects of the composite model presented below.

#### Steps of the model

The models for occupational social work proposed by Ozawa (1980), Shank (1985) and Straussner (1990) have been explained in Chapter Four. Each suggests that as the occupational social worker becomes accepted in the workplace, opportunities will develop to extend the levels of intervention from personal counselling services to becoming involved in policy and organisation issues.

The chapter on the New Zealand workplace has provided a background and concludes with observations by Harbridge (1991) forecasting that employers and employee organisations alike are confronted with changes in legislation with which they are not necessarily equipped

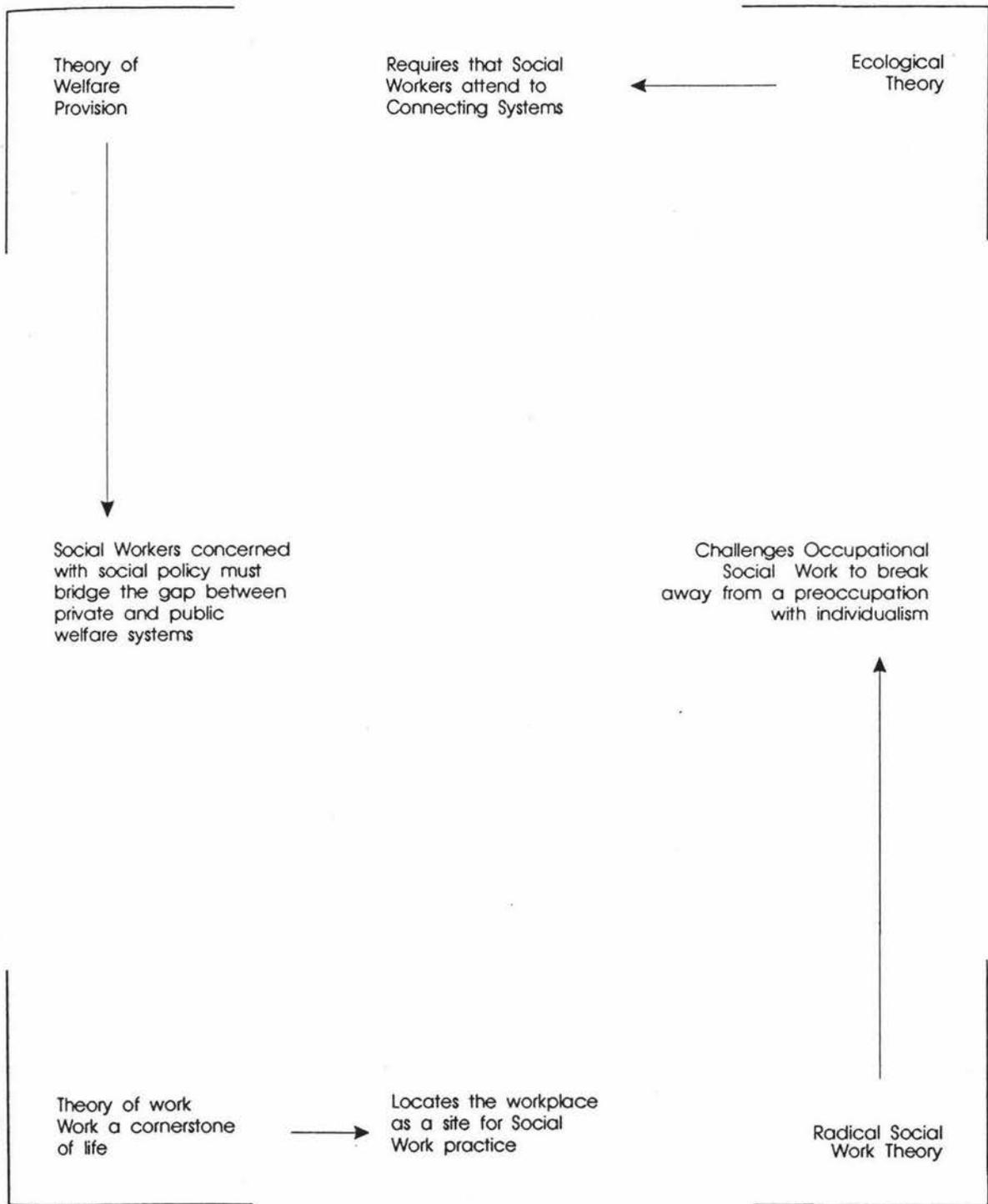
to cope.

Figure 1 provides a schematic summary of the theoretical positions which have been identified in this chapter.

In addition to the principles identified earlier, the following four strategies show the developments which should occur as occupational social work becomes established:

1. The theory of work identifies the relationship with the workplace as a major theme in people's lives. A prerequisite for involvement in the workplace is an understanding of the various perspectives on work which have been developed. In addition to achieving an adequate level of competency as a social work practitioner, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the role of work and an insight into the characteristics of the workplace.

For example, the social worker who expects to become involved in an industry which uses a shift work system must consider the way in which this may cause disruption to the family, adding pressures to both work and home life. At this first stage I advocate that social workers make themselves thoroughly familiar with the environment in which they will practice. This will include understanding the profit-making orientation of most workplaces.



2. At the next stage of the model social workers are encouraged to "collectivise" their practice as far as this is possible. Writers from the radical school encourage social workers to facilitate the sharing of experience among workers, to ensure that groups of people can take responsibility for improving their own conditions and opportunities. Occupational social workers must avoid becoming trapped at a micro-model of practice, providing individual services only.
3. The third stage requires that social workers attend to connecting systems, assisting people in the workplace to make good use of the many resources available to them. This requires a comprehensive knowledge of the community resources and an ability to assist with linkages where this is necessary. Again, in this stage, practitioners must work in several systems and not limit their involvement to the individual and to the people directly around him/her.
4. The fourth stage requires that social workers have a responsibility to become familiar with the way in which the employers, staff and welfare policies interact with other systems including the provision of welfare through public systems. Consistent with the role of social work set out in the first chapter *"social workers contribute to the development and improvement of social policy"* (Pincus and Minahan,

1977:78). Occupational social workers have the opportunity to influence decisions affecting groups of people who are dependant on the decisions of their employers.

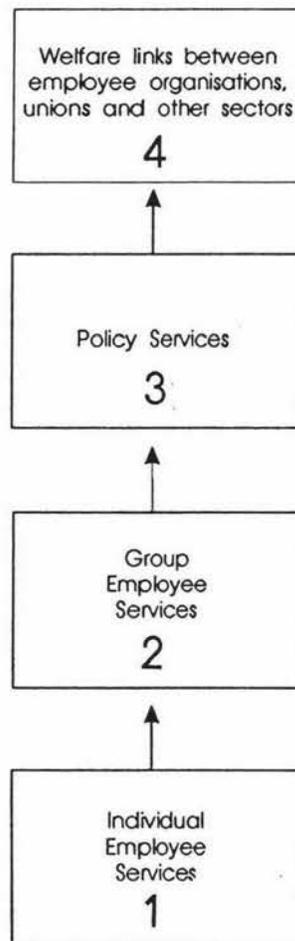
Figure 2 summarises the levels of involvement at which social workers may expect to be involved. By including named activities it is possible to compare a specific workplace programme with the model to assess the levels at which it is able to work.

1. At Level 1 a social work service is likely to be confined to individual counselling. Advocacy on behalf of individual staff is a possibility although this may be done by a union delegate. Other health/welfare professionals are likely to be involved at this level. In New Zealand, occupational health nurses and industrial chaplains commonly occupy positions at Level 1.

2. Group sessions at Level 2 may focus on a range of areas including improved amenities, child care, occupational safety, health promotion, education. The social worker is likely to work alongside other staff with specialist functions, eg. personnel officers, union delegates, industrial health specialists.

As the skills of the social worker are recognised and valued he/she may be asked to become involved in problem areas where relationships between groups and individuals

Figure 3



are strained. The role of "trouble-shooter" on human resource matters is one which should be accommodated.

3. At Level 3 the opportunity to become involved in staff and organisation issues leads to involvement in policy making. This may include examining employment and supervision practices to ensure that the employer is fulfilling the responsibilities as a "good employer". It may also lead to active involvement in controversial areas such as environmental impact considerations.

4. The level I have described as welfare linkages (level4) offers a wide range of involvement. At this level there is opportunity to participate in management decisions which affect not only people in the immediate workplace but also the population as a whole.

Figure 3 brings the two preceding diagrams together to illustrate that the cornerstones from theory guide the social worker in the choice of level at which intervention should occur.

The North American writers say that success at the first levels will open the way for involvement at a higher level.

In figure 4 I add the levels identified as a list of activities I would expect to find at each level. These activities are drawn from my own experience in a

Holistic Framework to show the way in which theoretical perspectives inform a model for Social Work Intervention in the workplace

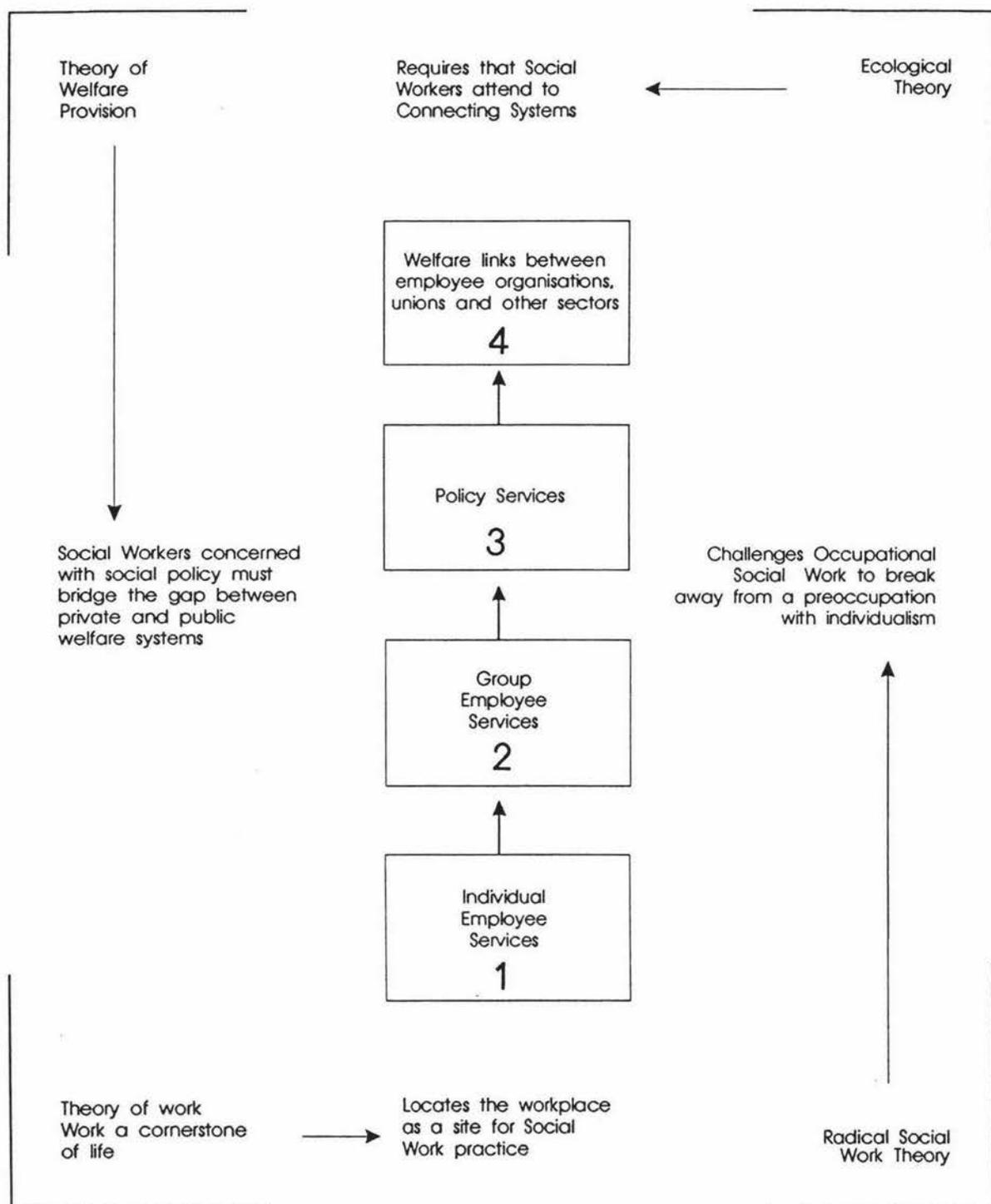


Figure 5

## Activities at each level of the Acacia Model

### **Individual Employee Services**

- Crisis Intervention
- Substance Abuse / Mental Health Assessment
- Advocacy
- Individual Counselling
- Family Counselling
- Referral to Specialised Agency / Counsellor

### **Group Employee Services**

- Conflict Resolution
- Group Counselling
- Education / Training / Facilitation
- Health Promotion
- Programme Development / Evaluation

### **Policy Services**

- Commitment to Environmental Health
- Preparation of Redundancy and Retirement  
Protocols and Packages
- Management of Change Process

### **Welfare Linkages**

- Social Impact Research
- Advice to Organisations in relation to  
Social Welfare Legislation
- Advice on Corporate Donations
- Provision of Community Analyst and Planner

workplace setting coupled with my knowledge of the literature in this field.

### SUMMARY

The Acacia model identifies a number of options for social work intervention in the workplace. In this chapter I have shown how four dimensions of theory inform workplace practice. It has been shown that :

1. Work is a central theme in people's lives and currently it is viewed as having a positive value. The introduction of new technology and the changing economic environment create tensions in the workplace resulting in a shift in the distribution of power between the employer and the employee. This is of particular interest following the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act 1991.
2. Social work should move away from a preoccupation with individualism, recognising the potential for collective action. Social work must take account of the economic and political environment.
3. The interaction between the various parts of people's lives determines their ability to fulfil their needs

within both their workplace and their lives away from work.

4. Welfare may be distributed in several ways. A shift from state provision to private provision may mean that those who work with the least resources are further disadvantaged. State provision and private provision exist as separate systems without an agreement between the two on how welfare should be distributed. There is a role for social work at this interface.

These four findings which have emerged from the theory have been used as cornerstones for the Acacia model. They define important principles which should constantly guide social workers in their practice. Informed by these principles, a hierarchy of interventions has also been established. These interventions are similar to those proposed by Ozawa (1980), Shank (1985), and Sraussner (1990) which are described in Chapter Four.

In this chapter I have developed a composite, theory-based conceptual model against which occupational social work can be assessed. The model shows that social workers may become involved in many aspects of the workplace where decisions are made. In the next chapter the Synfuel case study will examine the experience of one New Zealand worksite showing how far that experience goes towards meeting the requirements of the Acacia model. At the same

time it will show additional activities which can be added to those already described in Figure 5.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Shirley et al provide a comprehensive discussion of unemployment in New Zealand.
2. Bravermans deskilling thesis has been the subject of wide debate. For discussion of this see particularly Pahl (edit) 1988
3. Unemployment in New Zealand is currently estimated at 10% (household survey 3rd quarter 1991).
4. The Labour Department keeps up-to-date figures on Occupational Health and Safety.
5. The National household survey for the third quarter 1991 showed unemployment at 10%.

## CHAPTER SIX

### NEW ZEALAND SYNTHETIC FUELS CORPORATION LIMITED (SYNFUEL)

#### A CASE STUDY

This chapter provides a case study relating to the implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme at Synfuel. Reference is made to a previous case study at this site which describes the Industrial Relations strategy used by Bechtel (Pacific) Corporation Ltd during the construction phase (Cammock, 1987).

The present case study was undertaken in two parts. In March 1990 I was involved with the implementation of an E.A.P. at this site in association with the Regional Manager of E.A.P. Services. In October 1990 I returned to the site to evaluate the programme.

In this chapter I set out the evaluation process which was followed and the results of interviewing the people involved with the E.A.P. In the next chapter I will discuss the implications of these findings for the Acacia model and make any adjustments to the latter that are indicated.

### THE SYNFUEL PLANT

The Synfuel Gas to Gasoline complex in North Taranaki was officially opened in February 1986 following a six year planning and construction period. The complex attracted a large workforce during the construction stages peaking at 2,400 in 1984, of whom many had specialist experience and were recruited overseas. The construction phase was notable for its lack of reported industrial conflict. A senior team of industrial relations staff was retained by Bechtel (Pacific) Corporation. There was active support for union activity with Bechtel playing a mediator role in disputes between the unions and subcontractors. Cammock's (1987) reporting of this period describes an industrial relations strategy which resulted in high trust between management and union.

In 1990, when the E.A.P. was introduced, the plant had passed the development stage. The workforce has stabilised at 310 with an additional 50 people employed as contractors. The staff are predominantly local people although some specialist staff are still drawn from Mobil plants throughout the world, usually for short periods. A profile of the staff is provided in Appendix Seven. The attrition rate is low, recorded at 8% in 1989. Of the 310 people employed, 120 are operations staff who work on four shifts of 30 people per shift providing round the clock coverage. The shift pattern of two twelve hour day

shifts, followed by two twelve hour night shifts, followed by four days off, creates a distinctive lifestyle which isolates the operations staff from the administration and maintenance staff who are working routine day shifts.

### Orientation to work

The high profile which Synfuel has enjoyed, coupled with the advanced technology, has created a pride in being associated with the project. At the development stage there was an excitement for workers linked to the fact that this was the "world's first" plant of its kind.

The project itself gave a sense of purpose associated with the "Think Big" philosophy of the National Government who supported it (1). Competition by local people for employment on the site was high and continues to this day (2). Well qualified and experienced people were recruited for both maintenance and operations positions. As the initial operations problems have been resolved the work has become more routine, creating a workplace with many skilled workers whose expertise is underutilised except at times of mechanical or electrical failure.

Conditions of employment and rates of pay are much better than other employment available locally (3). Staff are unlikely to resign because they cannot equal these benefits elsewhere. During the years that the New Zealand

Government retained a 75% shareholding, staff endured the criticisms that Synfuel was a "white elephant" due to lower oil prices.

Operations staff in particular report being satisfied with their conditions, but after about two years on the job the lack of variety or scope for change contributes towards the work becoming tedious and unfulfilling. Work is seen by these people as a way of earning an income which would support interests outside the workplace. The shift pattern for operations staff makes it possible to spend time in a variety of other secondary occupations, including farming and fishing. During the time I spent on site several staff raised the lack of variety in the work as an important factor.

#### Provision of Health and Social Services

The nature of the workplace demands a very high level of attention to safety issues. The possibility of fire or explosion is high. There is a well developed health centre with a full-time occupational health nurse and a medical officer on contract eight hours per week. Occupational safety issues are taken seriously.

Similarly the advanced skill levels require a well developed human resource section which utilises sophisticated recruitment, assessment and training methods. The employment of four specialised people in this

area is higher than would be normally expected in an organisation of this size. To complement these services an industrial chaplain linked with the Interchurch Trade and Industry Mission (I.T.I.M.) has been contracted for eight hours per week. A range of benefits are available to staff including a high quality cafeteria, free annual health checks and subsidised medical insurance.

### Introduction of the E.A.P.

The first discussions relating to E.A.Ps. were held in 1985 but there was insufficient interest to proceed with the introduction of a programme. Further talks were held in September 1988 at the initiative of the employee relations adviser and the occupational health nurse who is a trained psychiatric nurse. The initiative was rejected by the manager of human resources at that time. In mid 1989 a well known and popular employee committed suicide. This incident, coupled with a change in Human Resource Manager, led to a decision to investigate E.A.Ps. further. This initiative was supported by a new General Manager who emphasised the need to pay close attention to staff as an essential company resource.

In line with accepted practice, E.A.P. Services requested permission to carry out a pre-programme analysis before implementing the E.A.P. This analysis was undertaken in November 1989 after which an agreement to proceed was

completed.

A key part of E.A.P. is the development of an effective information, referral and training programme. This training was undertaken in March 1990. Because of its central importance the next section discusses the role and training of the referral adviser.

### Referral Adviser Role and Training

These people are selected because of their position and acceptance within the company. They are asked to conduct an interview with troubled employees. Four referral advisers were trained. These were: employee relations adviser, occupational health nurse, medical officer and chaplain. The referral adviser is required to decide whether the problem disclosed arises from personal issues or whether it is the result of the way a job is structured, that is, would changes within the workplace overcome the problem? If the situation fits the former category an appropriate referral to professional assistance outside the workplace is made. In the latter case human resource personnel are asked to review the position.

The referral advisers were asked not to become engaged in counselling themselves and not to allow an employee to "talk their problem out" to the point where they would not be motivated to seek further counselling. The training

included an explanation of what E.A.P. is, basic communication skills, overview of problem area, the referral process, discussion, recording, confidentiality and ethical issues. Several role plays were used to assist referral advisers to become familiar with this particular interviewing style.

The troubled employees are classified in two groups:

Informal: The employee self refers, indicating that he/she requires appropriate assistance.

Formal : Here a manager or a supervisor requests that the troubled employee seeks assistance. The referral may be an alternative to disciplinary action.

#### EVALUATION : The First Six Months of Operation

The referral advisers commenced accepting referrals in April 1990. They were asked to keep records of the people they saw under the E.A.P. arrangements and were provided with a record sheet (4). In October 1990 I returned to Synfuel to evaluate the progress of the first six months. The methodology for carrying out the evaluation is described in Chapter Two.

During my second visit to Synfuel I interviewed five stakeholders, four referral advisers and six service users. During the four days I spent on plant I also had access to a considerable amount of informal discussion which provided further insight into the needs of the

workplace.

### Interview Results

The structured interviews conducted in October explored several aspects of the E.A.P. These will be discussed under the following headings: knowledge of the programme., usage of the programme, satisfaction with the programme and coverage by the programme.

#### Knowledge

Each person who was interviewed was asked what they knew about the programme. They were also asked to comment on other people's understanding.

In all but one interview there was an agreement that while E.A.P. may not be talked about a lot, everyone knew the E.A.P. existed and they knew who they could go to for access to it. The service users remembered either the staff awareness meeting or the brochures which were distributed.

One service user had been overseas at the time of implementation and had not become aware of it until she was in a crisis situation. Another service user suggested that the E.A.P. should be publicised periodically at team briefings which all employees attend monthly. The people interviewed said there would be a

decline in the knowledge of the programme unless a method of retaining a high profile was implemented.

When I questioned the reason for introducing the E.A.P., the stakeholders' responses varied significantly. The two management stakeholders described the E.A.P. as a "management tool". In both interviews the training was seen as a way of passing responsibility for staff on to line supervisors. Management language, like "performance standard" and "basic tool" were used in these interviews.

In contrast the union representatives gave three quite different answers:

- "I was aware there had been a few problems"
- "An operator committed suicide - that was a contributor"
- "I don't know why it was introduced, I just thought it was some bright cookie's good idea"

In a number of interviews the E.A.P. was viewed as something which formalised an approach, "which was already there".

One Union representative stated, "the company tries to do a number of good things". The expression "benevolent" was used in three interviews to describe the company attitude.

The referral advisers were asked a number of questions

about the ability of the referral agents (supervisors and managers) to use the referral procedures which had been demonstrated at the training day. They said that while they understood the procedures, the supervisors lacked the confidence to use them and required further training. I was told the need for additional "communication training" had been identified in a number of ways over the preceding nine months resulting in a psychologist being contracted to conduct a number of workshops. It had been decided that fifty two supervisory staff should participate in a total of six days' training spread over several months. This training was given a high profile with all Management staff required to participate. The E.A.P. co-ordinator said the introduction of the E.A.P. was a contributing factor to recognising the need for this training.

### Usage

There were 310 permanent staff and fifty contract staff on plant giving a total of 360 people who could potentially use the E.A.P. in the first six months. Thirty were seen representing 8.3%. This number is higher than expected. The regional manager of E.A.P. Services expected an uptake of about 5% annually. There are several possible explanations for the high usage of the programme. I have drawn these conclusions from my discussions with several people including the regional manager of E.A.P. Services who was not on site at the time I was conducting interviews.

1. Some people had longstanding problems which were not resolved.
2. The nurse had been supporting a number of people, prior to the implementation of the programme, who were referred to contracted counsellors, following the referral adviser training and commencement of the programme.
3. The counselling was available at no charge. It became known that this was available from private psychologists who had a good reputation in Taranaki.

Of those who had already agreed to counselling age was not a significant determinant. A slightly higher number of women had sought counselling. There were an unexpectedly low number of formal referrals.

A good level of confidentiality was achieved. All five of the stakeholders said they did not know who was using the E.A.P. or indeed whether it was being used at all. The union representatives did not expect and did not want to know who was using the programme.

The referral advisers were pleased with the range of people using the programme, including people at a senior supervisory level. They had anticipated that they would receive more drug and alcohol related referrals than had

eventuated.

A significant aspect of the programme has been the willingness of people to accept outside referrals.

Three clinical psychologists, two men and a woman, have received approximately 75% of the referrals. In several cases of longstanding problems, more than twelve counselling sessions have been made available at the company's expense. Although there is an understanding that the counselling arrangements will be reviewed after the first three appointments, the company has adopted a liberal view allowing appointments to continue at the discretion of the counsellor.

The remaining referrals have been to Area Health Board staff and in one case to a social worker in private practice. Questions in the referral advisers' interview schedule explore the choice of counsellor used: The referral advisers choose people they recognised as having a high level of professional status. They reported a high level of satisfaction with the service provided by these contracted counsellors. They were unable to make any distinction between the skills and knowledge of a psychologist, and those of a social worker. I concluded from the interviews that there was very little recognition of social workers as a distinct profession able to provide any specialised service.

### satisfaction

stakeholders representing the company showed more enthusiasm for the programme than the Union representatives. The General Manager and the Co-ordinator of the programme expressed strong support for the E.A.P. concept, again stating that it represented an extension of company policy to care for their workers. The statement was made that "good supervision needs E.A.P. as a tool".

The Union representatives took differing positions:

- "I am in favour of anything that is an alternative to someone getting the bullet"
- "It is working nicely, quietly"
- "I am not entirely convinced it is a necessary thing"

The Referral Advisers all identified their strong support for E.A.P.

The chaplain contrasted his E.A.P. training with his training as a chaplain with I.T.I.M. As a chaplain he understood he should wait until people came to seek assistance. He understood E.A.P. to require a more active response. He was satisfied that there were times when it was appropriate to intervene rather than wait for a call for assistance.

The nurse, who has a background in psychiatric nursing,

had become involved in some on-going counselling prior to the implementation of the E.A.P. He is now referring staff to contracted counsellors rather than becoming involved himself. He stated, "It's saved me lots of time ..... it's good". He described himself as a "strong supporter of E.A.P."

The doctor also found he could minimise the time spent with troubled workers. His interest in occupational health is a broad one, not confined to "doing medicals" and seeing people on a one-to-one basis. In the eight hours a week which is available on plant he has an interest in seeing that the plant meets high environmental health and safety standards. The E.A.P. has relieved the pressure for personal consultations, thereby making her time available for a wider range of duties.

The employee relations adviser had previous experience of "listening" to people's troubles. She was aware that some people had "dumped" their problems on her without getting a chance to move on towards a resolution. The E.A.P. has provided the opportunity to refer quickly, a role she is more comfortable with, thereby making his time available for a wider range of duties.

The six service users who were interviewed all expressed a high level of satisfaction with the counselling they had been referred to. Two of them believed the E.A.P. had saved their jobs. They all said they would be confident to

recommend the E.A.P. to anyone else they knew who was experiencing problems.

I found the introduction of E.A.P. clarified the roles of staff who were previously trying to provide a counselling role. They were now able to refer on to counsellors they recognise as better qualified than themselves. Both the nurse and the medical officer were able to put time into other aspects of their work which they had previously neglected.

### Coverage

Three clinical psychologists were receiving most of the referrals from Synfuel. Each psychologist had been referred to positively by both referral advisers and service users.

The General Manager expressed the view, "I have to feel comfortable with the quality of the care, I worry about amateur psychiatrists". On the feedback of his staff he was satisfied that appropriate counselling was available.

The psychologists and other counsellors had offered a clinical service. They involved other family members where they thought this was desirable. Problems had, however, been responded to on an individual basis. After conducting the interviews, the researcher was left with the impression that the counselling was done by competent professionals who were able to leave both the referral

adviser and the service user feeling satisfied with the service.

The limitation of this work is that there was only evidence in one case that anyone had proposed grouping people together to let them view their situation collectively. The one exception related to an anger management situation where the service user was invited to join a group following individual counselling. This finding is consistent with Ozawa's (1980) observation, that services will commence at an individual level with one to one counselling. Services are likely to remain at this level unless counsellors with an awareness of the importance for group action become involved.

The E.A.P. which has been established at Synfuel has focussed strongly on individual cases. The confidentiality which has been assured enables people to receive outside help from the local psychologists and other health professionals as appropriate.

#### A Need for Further Services

The interviews included questions about the scope for other social services in this workplace. The answers to these questions strongly reflected the role of the person being interviewed.

The union representatives indicated any expansion of

services should be related to conditions of employment. Examples given were enhanced job satisfaction and cheap housing loans.

The nurse saw a need for health promotion and health protection activities to be expanded. The example given was a need for a change in the medical form used at the time of joining the company. It was suggested this should include more lifestyle indicators and fewer illness-oriented questions.

The chaplain, whose role is a flexible one, moves about the plant listening and where appropriate attending to the needs of employees. He was in favour of improved opportunities for women within the organization including creche facilities. He viewed the company as very male oriented.

The employee advisor thought that referral advisers skills could be utilised in industrial disputes particularly individual grievances.

The General Manager had the widest view of the possibilities; this may be attributed to his broad experience within the Mobil Oil organisation in four countries. Responding to the final section of the interview which covers improvements to the E.A.P. the General Manager suggested that corporations now viewed their responsibilities quite broadly. The example was given of the skipper of the Exxon Valdez who was

responsible for the oil tanker which created widespread pollution when it ran aground in Prince William Sound, Alaska, on March 24 1989.

The General Manager said the Exxon Valdez case provided an example where an employee whose work performance was impaired by alcohol was responsible for damage much greater than just a loss to the company. In this case widespread environmental damage occurred following the oil spill. The responsibility for the environment was a matter companies had become very sensitive to. It was suggested that social services might extend into concern for a range of environmental issues which affected both the health of the workforce and the wider community. The Mobil organisation has communicated to all its branches since the Exxon Valdez incident that it wishes each plant to develop a policy on drug and alcohol use. Mobil New Zealand is currently investigating both screening and education strategies related to substance abuse. An educational package for Mobil staff has been prepared and launched in November 1991.

As a relative newcomer to this country the General Manager also suggested that race relations issues needed to be on the agenda, not just of governments but also workplaces. He suggested that senior executives were looking for answers to social issues and that anything social service practitioners could suggest, "would be extremely useful".

## Conclusions

From an analysis of the interviews at Synfuel a number of statements about what occurred during the first six months of service delivery are possible.

1. The E.A.P. policy matched the company policy of caring for its workforce. The policy received strong endorsement by the General Manager.
2. The unions which were consulted, and agreed to sign a joint statement of support for the policy, were generally supportive of the programme.
3. There were already in place clearly defined roles and procedures for staff and management which were compatible with the E.A.P. model.
4. Adequate attention was given to staff awareness presentations and the distribution of a brochure outlining the policy.
5. The Referral Advisers who were chosen were acceptable to the workforce.
6. The contracted counsellors available to Synfuel provided a service which staff said they were

satisfied with.

7. A high level of confidentiality was achieved.

The interviews which were conducted led to the following conclusions :

1. The E.A.P. has been the stimulus for improved communication and understanding within the company.
2. The training has contributed to increasing the competency of the supervisors in responding to troubled staff especially at times when they become dysfunctional at work.
3. There are examples which show that jobs have been saved by involving E.A.P. While this has obvious benefits for the person concerned, the company has the opportunity to retain a person with training and experience who would be difficult and/or expensive to replace.
4. It has been said that less time is lost from work when appropriate counselling services are available.

The interviews also suggest what needs to happen to achieve an improved service. Improvements would be made possible by:

1. further discussion at team briefings to raise the awareness of the E.A.P. and the knowledge of how to use it;
2. introduction of the programme to new staff at the time of orientation;
3. periodic refresher courses for supervisors and delegates including training for newly appointed people with these responsibilities;
4. growing support over a period of time from those who have benefited from the service recommending it to others;
5. a better level of consultation between the management and unions about the role of E.A.P. in the organisation.

#### SUMMARY OF THE REVIEW

The structured interviews with stakeholders, referral advisers and service users enabled the researcher to make an appraisal of the E.A.P. at Synfuel at the end of the first six months use. Several strong impressions emerged as a result of talking with these people:

1. Confidentiality, which is an important pre-requisite

- for a programme, has been achieved.
2. Thorough implementation has resulted in good levels of knowledge of the programme.
  3. The high level of use in the first six months indicates the willingness of the workforce to use the programme.
  4. The referral advisers and counsellors have conducted their work in a competent way.
  5. Management support the E.A.P. In their view it supports their image as a "good employer".
  6. There has not been a strong union involvement. Interest from the union ranges from supportive to indifferent.

This chapter has shown that during the first six months of use the E.A.P. at Synfuel was well received by each of the groups I interviewed. While it will be necessary to continually publicise the E.A.P. it can be expected that it has achieved a good level of acceptance and that satisfied users of the programme will take part in promoting it to fellow staff.

The major limitation of the E.A.P is the focus on

individuals rather than groups of people. It was found that management staff are open to the possibility of extending social services in their workplace. A discussion of these conclusions will follow in the final chapter.

## FOOTNOTES

1. "Think Big" is an expression commonly applied to National Government projects of the early 1980s and associated particularly with Prime Minister Robert Muldoon.
2. The Human Resource Department advise they receive high numbers of applications, particularly for operator positions.
3. In 1990 an operator received approximately \$45,000p.a.- a much higher level than wages for work of a comparable nature in some other industries.
4. This is found in Appendix Two.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

This chapter will briefly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Synfuel E.A.P. before discussing the implications for the Acacia model. Consequential additions to the role of the occupational social worker will be developed. Furthermore it will be argued that the occupational social worker should also assist management and unions to reach decisions which affect not only employees of one company but also the wider community as well.

Some North American writers (Akabas, Kurzman and Kolben 1978, Shank 1985) have expressed concerns about the ethical considerations of practitioners working in close association with profit making organizations and the transfer of social work resources to the private sector. In this chapter I suggest how these objections can be overcome.

The development of the Acacia model represents an initial contribution to a study of occupational social work in New Zealand. As further studies are undertaken, alternative models will no doubt be developed. Some future possibilities for the development of occupational social work are also developed.

### STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE E.A.P. MODEL

The conclusions section of the previous chapter showed that the Synfuel E.A.P. delivered a number of benefits for both management and staff. As a way of making counselling available to anyone in the organization it achieved what it set out to do. As would be expected the interviews highlighted a number of procedural matters which could be improved, but these were of a relatively minor nature and are not important to the central thrust of the thesis (1).

The Synfuel case study validates the argument, based on the radical social work tradition, that when social services are restricted to individual counselling, social work fails to realise its full potential. Furthermore the interviews at Synfuel show that the links, (mesosystems) (2) between the workplace and other areas of peoples' lives received insufficient attention. Therefore, the model used at Synfuel was a limited one. It provided a good service to individual staff members but did not provide services to groups of people.

The General Manager was particularly helpful in explaining what he recognised as a gap in the range of social services available to the company. His position appears to be consistent with Ozawa's observation : "what management and unions are looking for is a profession that can do the job of solving pressing problems in the

workplace. They do not seem concerned about what profession should do it" (Ozawa, 1980:469).

At the time of the visit to Synfuel (October 1990) the company was considering a request from the Mobil International Head Office for all branches of the Mobil organization to implement a substance abuse programme. The E.A.P. established by A.L.A.C. partially fulfilled this requirement by offering counselling to workers whose job performance could be identified as impaired through substance abuse. The company wanted to go further than this, by providing both a screening and education programme.

These matters have now been addressed; in the first instance by the occupational health staff and in the second by a psychologist in private practice.

The General Manager recognised other areas that could also be addressed. He particularly identified an area he referred to as "race relations". At the interview he stated that he observed a need for improvement in communication between various ethnic groups, but particularly between Pakeha and Maori. It was not clear to him where he would receive any guidance in this.

Because the Synfuel E.A.P. model only responded to individuals who requested counselling, there was no scope to provide improved substance abuse services or to address some of the wider causes which may have been responsible

for substance abuse. Neither was there scope to respond to the General Manager's concerns about minority groups in the workplace. The Acacia model proposes levels of involvement where social workers can become participants in working with others to find solutions in these areas. Most social workers are not currently situated close enough to the workplace to be able to take advantage of the opportunities which may arise to become a participant in these areas.

The Synfuel case study has contributed to the central argument of this thesis for workplace services by showing firstly that there are gaps in the provision of social services in the workplace which need to be filled and secondly that at the present time managers may not be aware of the potential for social workers to fill these gaps.

I will now return to a consideration of the Acacia model to show how it could specifically address the above areas.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ACACIA MODEL

In Chapter 5 I tentatively proposed a list of activities which the occupational social worker is likely to be engaged in. These are now reproduced in Figure 6 with some new services proposed. The new services appear in bold print.

Figure 6

## Activities at each level of the Acacia Model

### Individual Employee Services

Crisis Intervention  
 Substance Abuse / Mental Health Assessment  
 Advocacy  
 Individual Counselling  
 Family Counselling  
 Referral to Specialised Agency / Counsellor  
*Housing Loans and other Financial Services*

### Group Employee Services

Conflict Resolution  
 Group Counselling  
 Education / Training / Facilitation  
 Health Promotion  
*Establishment of Amenities*  
 Programme Development / Evaluation

### Policy Services

*Drawing up Substance Abuse Policies*  
*Drawing up Racism and Sexism Policies*  
 Commitment to Environmental Health  
*Affirmative action for Minority Groups*  
 Preparation of Redundancy and Retirement  
 Protocols and Packages  
 Management of Change Process

### Welfare Linkages

Social Impact Research  
 Advice to Organisations in relation to  
 Social Welfare Legislation  
 Advice on Corporate Donations  
 Provision of Community Analyst and Planner

The range of services identified as level 1 services (figure 5, page 111) were provided by Synfuel referral advisors in association with contracted counsellors and other health / welfare professionals on site. The additional services like housing loans and other financial services including budgeting advice, requested by the union representative, could be added at this level.

There was less evidence of activities at Level 2, (figure 5, page 111) group employee services, at Synfuel although some staff had skills that could be applied in this area. The chaplain proposed improved services such as child care for women on the staff. There was considerable scope for more activity in each of these areas although the interviews did not highlight any additional activity not already listed.

It is at the level of the model described as policy services (figure 5, page 111) that the Synfuel case study has the most scope for additional activity which, as proposed by the General Manager could include concern for minority groups and substance abuse.

At Level Four, (figure 5, page 111) the interface between private and public welfare systems, the interviews did not contribute information to suggest how this might be managed. As an observer on the plant on two occasions

however, I am able to make some comments which are relevant to this part of the Acacia model. Mishra (1977) predicted that private welfare systems would advantage the people who are at a more senior level in the organization. Synfuel has in place an employee benefit system which provides medical insurance and other benefits to permanent staff. These staff receive better than average levels of remuneration. The provision of vehicles and study leave are more likely to be available to senior and specialised staff.

The Synfuel management team is very conscious of its interface with the wider community (3). Corporate donations are made to a variety of local groups. The attention that this company pays to public relations is particularly important due to environmental issues associated with the product they are manufacturing and the methods of production. Additional research could be undertaken in respect to environmental impact, making a closer analysis of the way public affairs are managed. This would constitute a separate study. In my view social work involvement in this area is necessary.

The Acacia model proposes an expanded role for occupational social workers, which includes concern for the workplace environment and the impact of the organisation's activities on the wider community. In this final chapter I have shown a full range of social work activities which may be associated with the workplace. I

now return to a consideration of the issues associated with working in a profit making environment.

### The Profit Making Environment

The difficulty of working in profit making organisations receives frequent attention in the North American literature. It is suggested that as social workers take an increasingly pro-active role within the organisation the occasions where there will be a conflict of values or ethics increase. Some writers take a cynical view suggesting "Social Work has incorporated the values of industrial society and has become a tool in the development and maintenance of Western European and North American capitalism" (Collier, 1980:50), while others take a positive view of the ability of the profession to prepare its members for the conflicts they will face. Colon and Asen (1989) surveyed 227 social work students including BSW and MSW students on their perceptions of workplace practices. These writers propose that social work faculties have a role in preparing social workers for the value and ethical issues they will encounter in the workplace.

Maiden (1987) discusses the ethical considerations when skilled social workers shift to workplace settings.

Maiden claims :

1. *Social Workers are unable to exercise the same professional judgment and responsibility in an occupational setting such as Employee Assistance Programmes as they would in a non-profit agency.*
2. *Workplace practice drains highly qualified social workers from the public to the more lucrative private sector.*
3. *Workplace programmes only serve the better off individual at the expense of the poor.*
4. *The profit making status of the organisation exerts more control over the client and therefore limits rights to self-determination and infringes upon client confidentiality (Maiden, 1987:33).*

Ozawa, however, in urging social workers to enter the worksite, explains, "what industry and unions are looking for is a profession that can do the job of solving pressing problems in the workplace. They do not seem to be much concerned about which profession should do it." (Ozawa, 1980:469).

Maiden appears to be suggesting that social workers should not be lured into believing they can fulfil the human resource needs of the workplace. In his view, the costs to professional integrity are too high.

In this thesis I have taken the opposing view to Maiden. While it can be said that the isolation of this site from other social workers may act to reduce the allegiance to the profession and the principles which underpin it, I have advanced an argument in favour of worksite practice because of the opportunities which arise to fulfil the social work role.

## The Future of Occupational Social Work in New Zealand

### Consortium :

It has been necessary to draw heavily on the experience of North American writers due to that country's longer involvement in workplace practice. Many of the North American case studies available are drawn from organisations with large numbers of staff. The case study at Synfuel involved an organisation with 310 staff. Simcock (1986) says that new models will be necessary for workplaces with small numbers of employees. Simcock proposes a "consortium" model where a number of workplaces may be grouped together to make use of a social work service. The theory based Acacia model represents a working model suitable for New Zealand conditions. It can be offered from one site to a range of work sites, thereby accepting Simcocks proposal.

### Possibilities for Involvement :

In New Zealand, as state agencies reduce their commitment to the provision of welfare, schools and workplaces are more likely to become a host site for practice.

1. As employee organisations adjust to changes brought about by the Employment Contracts Act 1991 they may

offer opportunities for increased numbers of social workers to work within their structures.

2. Increasing numbers of social workers in private practice are likely to be considering their opportunities to establish arrangements with employers concerned for the the welfare of their staff.
3. As Community Health staff within newly established Crown Health Enterprises become familiar with contracting for service delivery they may wish to offer health/welfare packages to employers, perhaps on a retainer basis.
4. The larger voluntary organisations e.g. Presbyterian Support Services may offer health /welfare packages on a similar arrangement to Crown Health Enterprises.
5. Employee Assistance Programme Services (N.Z) have already repositioned under new organisational arrangements which give them a position independent from A.L.A.C. They market a range of services extending from critical incident debriefing (counselling staff after traumatic experiences) to management consultancy.

I have argued that the social work profession has a part to play in the development of the workplace where rapid changes require new approaches to employer-employee

relations. Unlike Maiden (1987), I don't believe this compromises the profession. As the above shows there will be increased opportunities to provide work related social work services.

### SUMMARY

This thesis has systematically developed a model for social work practice in the New Zealand workplace. The Acacia model has emerged from an understanding of the theory of work, theory of the provision of welfare, Radical social work and ecological theory. The model urges social workers to :

1. view the workplace as an important site for practice;
2. extend involvement beyond services limited to individuals and be concerned for the needs of groups of people and their families;
3. make good use of their knowledge of communities and the systems / networks which operate within them;
4. become involved in the social policy issues at the interface between occupational welfare and welfare provided by the state.

The case study of the Synfuel E.A.P. was undertaken with a view to understanding how social services were currently being provided at a New Zealand worksite. Data from this case study was then utilized to extend the Acacia model to move it closer to a comprehensive model for the delivery of social work at the worksite.

The arguments pursued in this thesis represent an early

contribution to the belief that the worksite provides a tremendous opportunity to access peoples needs in what is accepted as a key institution in our society. Further, more detailed research and development is needed to test and further develop the ideas traversed here. If the social work profession wishes to be relevant in our changing society, developments such as those discussed here will be taken up by practitioners, researchers and scholars and perfected for the benefits of all New Zealanders.

**FOOTNOTES**

1. A report including recommendations for improving some procedures was sent to Synfuel following the second visit to the plant. This was a confidential report intended as a set of recommendations to the Synfuel Management.
2. Meso-systems are described in Chapter Five.
3. The staff Journal "Synopsis" published bimonthly outlines projects undertaken to support the local community.

38 Trigg Crescent  
TARADALE

Phone (070) 445 730

Mr John Tanswell  
E.A.P. Co-ordinator  
New Zealand Synthetic Fuels Corp. Ltd  
NEW PLYMOUTH

Fax (067) 44 169

Dear John

EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Further to my recent telephone discussions with Julie Rowlands, Dave Dawson and yourself, I am providing details for undertaking an evaluation of the first six months of your Employee Assistance Programme.

The purpose of this evaluation is:

- (1) To fulfill the research requirement for my thesis in a Masters Degree in Social Work at Massey University. The title of the thesis is "The Provision of Social Services in the New Zealand Workplace".
- (2) To provide New Zealand Synthetic Fuels and E.A.P. Services with a report on the usage of the programme and results as reported by Managers, Supervisors, Union Representatives, Referral Advisors and staff who have used the service.

My visit to your plant will be from 9th - 11th October. during the time I am with you I would like to carry out the following interviews and survey.

- (1) Interviews of approximately half an hour with the signatories to the Management and Union Commitment.

i.e. Mick Jacks - General Manager  
Geoff Shearer - Engineers Union  
Bill Warren - Electrical Workers Union  
Chris Hickey - Taranaki Natural Gas  
Processing Union

- (2) Interviews of approximately one hour with Referral Advisors who participated in the Referral Advisor training, conducted in March and with yourself as Co-ordinator.

i.e. Danny Winstanley  
Dave Dawson  
Julie Rowlands  
Dr Tim Spratt  
John Tanswell

Page 2.

- (3) Interviews of approximately one hour with as many of the participants in the programme as can be arranged by the Referral Advisors, without breaching the confidentiality assured to staff.
- (4) I would like to survey, using a short questionnaire, a number of staff who participated in the Supervisor Training. The best way to do this would be by bringing about 15 staff together in a central place, perhaps a tearoom. It would take approximately half an hour for me to talk about the reason for the research and have them complete the questionnaire.

To assist in the organisation of this evaluation I am providing a letter which can be given to people who have used the E.A.P. and a draft letter requesting participation in the supervisor/delegate survey.

I would be grateful of your assistance in distributing these and arranging a timetable for me to carry out the various interviews.

If you have any questions about this evaluation proposal I am available every morning this week on my home phone number listed above.

I expect to arrive at Synfuel at 8.00am on Tuesday 9th October.

Yours sincerely

PP 

ROB HANDYSIDE.



**Management & Union Commitment**  
New Zealand Synthetic Fuels Corporation Ltd, in conjunction with employee representatives, has created an Employee Assistance Programme, designed for the benefit of all personnel who might experience personal problems. The company and the union give this programme their full support and we would urge any employee to take full advantage of the facility available, should it be needed.



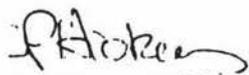
Mark Jacks  
General Manager



Geoff Shearer  
Chief Officer Engineers Union



Warren  
Chief Officer Electrical Workers Union



Chris Hickey  
Chief Officer Taranaki Natural Gas Processing Union

Anyone who has personal problems can be helped by contacting:

Danny Winstanley  
Referral Advisor  
(Industrial Chaplain)  
Phone: 44356

Dave Dawson  
Referral Advisor ext. 8880  
(Occupational Health Nurse)  
Phone: 68825

Warren Mullins  
Referral Advisor ext. 8820  
(Human Resources Advisor)  
Phone: 27609

Julie Rowlands  
Referral Advisor ext. 8817  
(Employee Relations Advisor)  
Phone: 32957

Dr Tim Sprott  
Referral Advisor ext. 8879  
(Medical Advisor)

**E.A.P** EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

People are our priority



NEW ZEALAND SYNTHETIC FUELS

**E.A.P** EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

**Personal Problems  
affect our work**

- ☛ Financial Difficulty
- ☛ Relationship Difficulties
- ☛ Physical Problems
- ☛ Legal Battles
- ☛ Family Troubles
- ☛ Mental Health Problems
- ☛ Alcohol Problems
- ☛ Drug Problems
- ☛ Grief
- ☛ Stress
- ☛ Any other Personal Problems

1. Syntuel is concerned with the well being of its employees.
2. Personal problems can have a serious effect in the work performance and safety of colleagues and clients of employees in any organisation.
3. Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme will facilitate the early identification and referral for help of employees whose work performance is impaired by personal problems.

**Aim:**

To establish a policy and procedure, and to provide services which will encourage staff who need help for personal problems to seek that help with the support of the management and unions of Syntuel.

**Objectives:**

1. To promote early identification of work impairment caused by personal problems.
2. To encourage supervisors to recognise and act upon work impairment.
3. To motivate staff to seek help from appropriate services.
4. To provide referral services for employees seeking help for personal problems.
5. Through the programme, to help restore employees to full health and well being, and to restore their work effectiveness.

**Coverage:**

1. This programme is available to all employees of Syntuel.
2. Self referral is encouraged and will carry with it the assurances set out below.

employee and their immediate family.

**Conditions:**

1. Entry into the programme is entirely at the choice of the employee concerned.
2. Supervisor referrals will occur only if impaired work performance continues after normal supervision practices have been followed
3. The continued employment of an employee whose work is below standard and who elects not to accept professional help or not to begin to continue treatment will depend on whether they achieve and maintain satisfactory work performance.

**Assurances:**

1. All records and discussions will remain confidential, to the E.A.P. referral advisor and/or counsellor and the employee, and will not be kept on the employee's personal file. However if a formal referral is made it will be noted whether or not the employee accepts or declines the programme.
2. Employee entitlement to approved leave will apply if necessary.
3. The employee will not be penalised for undertaking a counselling or rehabilitation programme.
4. Entry into the programme will not itself adversely affect the employees future career prospects.
5. Security of employment will be maintained for all those participating in, and successfully completing a counselling or rehabilitation programme, within a reasonable time period as approved by the company.

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - STAKEHOLDERS**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE NEW ZEALAND WORK PLACE**  
**CASE STUDY OF NZ SYNTHETIC FUELS LTD**

**Introduction**

My name is Rob Handyside. At the present time I work as a Service Manager for the Hawke's Bay Area Health Board and I am also a student at Massey University. My purpose for being here today is to talk with you about your personal experiences of EAP at Synfuel. The study I am doing is in relation to my studies at Massey University.

I would like to enter into a discussion with you in which I will also ask a number of questions. Because it will be difficult to remember all that you say, I would like to record your comments. I am the only one who will listen to the recording and it will be destroyed within three months of completing the study. No information that identifies you personally will be disclosed in the write up of the project. I will make a copy of the results of the study available to you.

**The Background and Philosophy**

1. What is your position in the Organization?
2. Where were you working before you came to Synfuel?
3. How did you find yourself at Synfuel, i.e. how did you end up in this job?
4. How long have you been at Synfuel now?
5. Could you elaborate on your philosophy of EAP, especially for your Organization?

Prompt: How do you feel about EAP's generally?  
 Would you say you're a strong supporter of EAP's?

6. What were some of the reasons behind the implementation of the EAP at Synfuel?
7. What part did some of the problems identified with your employees play in the implementation of EAP?

Prompt: Specifically what types of problems were you having that you thought an EAP might help?

Prompts: What part did problems like alcohol and drugs, stress, absenteeism, accidents, play in the setting up of the EAP?

**The Process of Implementation**

8. Could you briefly trace the history of the setting up of your EAP?

9. What processes did Synfuel go through to implement an EAP programme?

Prompt: What were the key stages you went through?

10. Could you describe the details of your current EAP programme?

No prompts

11. What was the role of training in the setting up of the EAP?

### Evaluation of Current Programme

12. Currently, who are the key participants in your EAP?

13. In your opinion, how well is EAP working currently at Synfuel?

14. How much use does the programme get, in your recollection?

15. Who uses the programme?

Prompt: Are any particular groups or problems disproportionately represented amongst the users?

16. Would you expect people at all levels of the organization to use the EAP services provided?

17. What kinds of reasons would be acceptable to you for a person using the services provided?

18. What kinds of reasons would be unacceptable to you for a person using the EAP?

Prompt: Housing needs, family problems, financial assistance, debts, cultural reasons, matters that have little directly to do with Synfuel?

19. In your opinion what have been some of the outcomes of introducing EAP at Synfuel?

Prompts: Outcomes for service users, supervisors, managers, production, harmony etc?

20. What are the strengths of your EAP?

21. What are the gaps in your EAP?

### EAP Services

22. You used an outside consultant to advise you on EAP. In your opinion how did that work out?

23. Thinking back, were there other services that you would have liked to have had at the time?

**Improvements**

24. Do you think the EAP should have been implemented any differently at Synfuel?
25. Does the EAP go far enough in terms of the goals you have set for it at the present time?
26. Having had the EAP experience, where to from here for the the social services at Synfuel?
27. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the EAP at Synfuel and your experiences of it?

Could you please keep the details of this interview to yourself until I have finished interviewing the others. I should have finished by Friday.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - REFERRAL ADVISERS**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE NEW ZEALAND WORK PLACE**  
**CASE STUDY OF NZ SYNTHETIC FUELS LTD**

**Introduction**

**My name is Rob Handyside. At the present time I work as a Service Manager for the Hawke's Bay Area Health Board and I am also a student at Massey University. My purpose for being here today is to talk with you about your personal experiences as a referral adviser at Synfuel. The study I am doing is in relation to my studies at Massey University.**

**I would like to ask you a number of questions and I would like to record your comments. I am the only one who will listen to the recording and it will be destroyed within three months of completing the study. No information that identifies you will be disclosed to the Company or anyone else. In my writing up of the study, it will not be possible for anyone to recognize the comments you make today. I will make a copy of the results of the study available to you.**

**Demographic**

1. How long have you been employed at Synfuel?
2. How long have you been a referral adviser?
3. What is your area of work in Synfuel?
4. Do you mind telling me how old you are?
5. Male/Female

**Types of Referrals**

6. How many people have you seen in your capacity as a referral adviser?
7. How many were formal referrals. i.e. referred by delegates, supervisors or managers and how many were informal, i.e. self referrals?
8. In your opinion, which of the following best describes the reason for each of the referrals to you?

If none of the categories apply, would you please indicate briefly the reason for the referrals.

(Show list of 11 categories to choose from.)

9. Specifically where did you get your referrals from?

Prompt: Try to be specific.

### **Process of Working with the Consumers**

10. What is the process by which people are referred to you?

Prompt: Describe the key steps in the referral process

11. How do you assess the clients needs?

Prompt: Do you dwell on personal areas or do you include factors at home, in the community or those involving other agencies, Government Departments etc?

12. What do you do once you have undertaken an assessment of the client's needs?

Prompt: Please describe the main steps you take to ensure the client receives appropriate help.

13. Describe the range of people or professionals you use to refer the client to?

14. Is this range adequate to meet the types of needs your consumers have?

15. Are you satisfied that the counsellors you refer people to are competent to meet the needs you identify?

### **The Referral Agent**

16. In your opinion, how much understanding do supervisors and delegates that refer cases to you, have of the Synfuel EAP?

Prompt: Do you think the supervisors and delegates understand EAP?

17. What are the areas in which you can see some gaps in the knowledge that supervisors and delegates have of the EAP?

18. Do you think they need further training or refresher courses on the process of referral and the purpose of the EAP?

19. In your opinion are people encouraged to use the EAP?

20. What level of Union acceptance do you think there is for the EAP?

21. What level of acceptance by managers do you think there is of the EAP?

### **Who Does EAP Reach**

22. In your opinion, are there people in the workplace with personal problems who are not getting the kind of help they should be getting in a company with an EAP?

Prompt: Do you think EAP is reaching the people you envisaged it would?

23. In your opinion, what would help extend the use of the Synfuel EAP?

Prompt: Specifically, is there a need for further training of supervisors and delegates in how to use an EAP?

### **Personal Experience/Opinion**

24. Could you elaborate on your philosophy of EAP, especially for this Organization?

Prompt: How do you feel about EAP's generally?  
Would you say you're a strong supporter of EAP's?

25. What has been your experience of EAP in your role of a referral adviser?

Prompt: Has it given you the opportunity to assist workers in the way you think it should?

### **Who Uses the Programme**

26. Who uses the programme?

Prompt: Are any particular groups or problems disproportionately represented amongst the users?

27. Would you expect people at all levels of the organization to use the EAP services provided?

28. What kinds of reasons would be acceptable to you for a person using the services provided?

29. What kinds of reasons would be unacceptable to you for a person using the EAP?

Prompt: Housing needs, family problems, financial assistance, debts, cultural reasons, matters that have little directly to do with Synfuel?

30. In your opinion what have been some of the outcomes of introducing EAP at Synfuel?

Prompts: Outcomes for service users, supervisors, managers, production, harmony etc?

31. What are the strengths of your EAP?

32. What are the gaps in your EAP?

33. Has your involvement in EAP led you to want to change anything around here?

Does it expose other areas of need not yet catered for?

34. Do you think the introduction of EAP has any effects on industrial relations?

35. Have family or whanau members been involved in using EAP?

Prompt: In what way have they been involved?

36. In your opinion has the EAP been used to consider wider issues in people's lives?

Prompt: Has it been used to address housing, recreation, financial assistance, debts, cultural reasons, matters that have little directly to do with Synfuel?

### **Improvements**

37. Do you think the EAP should have been implemented any differently at Synfuel?

38. Does the EAP go far enough in terms of the goals that have been set for it at the present time?

39. Having had the EAP experience, where to from here for the the social services at Synfuel?

40. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the EAP at Synfuel and your experiences of it?

Could you please keep the details of this interview to yourself until I have finished interviewing the others. I should have finished by Friday.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - SERVICE USERS**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE NEW ZEALAND WORK PLACE**  
**CASE STUDY OF NZ SYNTHETIC FUELS LTD**

**Introduction**

**My name is Rob Handyside. At the present time I work as a Service Manager for the Hawke's Bay Area Health Board and I am also a student at Massey University. My purpose for being here today is to talk with you about your personal experiences at Synfuel. The study I am doing is in relation to my studies at Massey University.**

**I would like to ask you a number of questions and I would like to record your comments. I am the only one who will listen to the recording and it will be destroyed within three months of completing the study. No information that identifies you will be disclosed to the Company or anyone else. In my writing up of the study, it will not be possible for anyone to recognize the comments you make today. I will make a copy of the results of the study available to you.**

1. **How long have you been employed at Synfuel?**
2. **What is your area of work in Synfuel?**
3. **What are your cultural affiliations? What cultural group do you belong to?**  
  
Prompt: If Maori, seek tribal affiliations.
4. **What is your marital status?**
5. **Can you tell me a little about your family**  
  
Prompt: Partner, children, ages etc.
6. **Where do you consider your home to be?**  
  
Prompt: Province, city, town, tribe etc.
7. **What else is important to you besides your work?**  
  
Prompt: Recreation, group membership, etc.
8. **Do you mind telling me how old you are?**
9. **Male/Female**

10. **Can you tell me what you do when you have a personal problem at Synfuel?**

Prompts: What can you tell me about the E.A.P. that was established this year at Synfuel?

How did you find out about the E.A.P.?

Staff Awareness programme, staff brochure, told by friend, supervisor, Delegate.)

11. **Which of the following best describes the reason for you using the programme?**

If none of the categories apply, would you please indicate briefly the reason for you using the EAP.

(Show list of 11 categories to choose from.)

12. **Can you recall what was happening for you before you sought assistance?**

Prompt: What were the areas in which you were experiencing difficulties?

eg Missing time from work.  
Unable to concentrate  
Feeling stressed.  
In conflict with workmates  
Health  
Finance  
Housing  
Family

13. **Who did you go to first?**

Prompt Supervisor, Delegate, friend, Referral Advisor

14. **Did you choose E.A.P. yourself?**

Prompt: Was it your idea to go to the Referral Advisor?

15. **Why did you go to that person (ie Supervisor, delegate, friend, Referral Advisor)?**

Prompt: What was it about them that helped you decide to go to them?

16. **Did you have any difficulties in seeing that person?**

17. **When you went to see the person, what did you expect?**

Prompt: What were you hoping would happen?

eg Advice, a listening ear, information, assurance, support.

**18. Would you have sought help yourself if you hadn't been referred?**

Prompt: Would you have located a counsellor without help from the company?

**19. Did your Referral Advisor deal with you himself/herself, or were you referred to an outside counsellor?**

**20. If referred to an outside counsellor, where were you referred?**

Prompt: Who was that person or organization?

**21. How many times did you see the counsellor and over what period of time?**

**22. In your opinion was that enough?**

**23. What happened when you saw the counsellor?**

Prompt: What sorts of things were discussed in the counselling sessions?

**24. Were there any matters troubling you that you feel should have been discussed but were not?**

Prompts: Could you please be specific about these areas?  
E.g. health, housing, relationships, recreation, financial, educational needs, involvement in your community etc.

**25. On this scale of 'not useful' to 'very useful' (show scale) how would you rate the counselling?**

**26. Why do you give it that rating?**

Prompt: Can you explain your choice?

**27. What did you gain from the counselling?**

Prompt: How has seeing the counsellor changed things for you?

**28. Did the counsellor understand your situation?**

Prompt: Did the person have an insight into your needs at the time?

**29. Did the person helping you involve others?**

Prompt: Family members, friends, workmates?

**30. Was anybody else invited to attend counselling?**

**31. Apart from yourself, who else has been affected as a result of the counselling?**

- 32. Would you use the programme again?
- 33. Would you recommend E.A.P. to someone else?
- 34. Do you think other workers at Synfuel would use the programme?
- 35. Do you think managers at Synfuel would use the programme?
- 36. How much do other people you work with know about your use of E.A.P?

Prompt: Did E.A.P. allow you to maintain confidentiality?

- 37. Would you please indicate on the following scale (show scale) how much do you as a worker feel involved in Synfuel's E.A.P.
- 38. In your opinion, is the EAP programme good for the company?

Prompt: Could you please explain?

- 39. Is EAP a common subject of conversation in the Company?
- 40. How important is it to you to work in a Company which has an E.A.P?
- 41. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the EAP at Synfuel and your experiences of it?

Could you please keep the details of this interview to yourself until I have finished interviewing other people. I should have finished by Friday.

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX 7

STAFF PROFILE - NEW ZEALAND SYNTHETIC FUELS  
FEBRUARY 1990

(1) Number of Full Time Employees 310

There are an additional 50 contract workers on the site. These are the Doctor and maintenance workers.

(2) Age distribution.

Age	Male	Female	Total
15-21	10	2	12
22-29	57	22	79
30-39	125	12	137
40-49	65	3	68
50-59	13	1	14

(3) Ethnic background.

New Zealand European	247
New Zealand Maori	6
British	41
Other	16

(4) Staff Turnover

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