I. REFLECTIONS ON SCHOOL EDUCATION—SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE
In the present day world education is experiencing a period of great soul-searching, turmoil and conflict. Among the contributing factors to this state of affairs are caste and class relations and conflicts, problems of poverty, increasing alienation of the young as reflected in high dropout rates, drug abuse in some cases, crime, underachievement and last but not the least, the intergenerational conflict and inequality in imparting education itself. Inter-generational conflict has already resulted in increased open rebellion in both primary and secondary schools and indications are that the future will bring even more disruption unless effective means of problem-solving are developed. School personnel and their administrators are expected to be able to respond in new and non-traditional ways to resolve these myriad problems, but it is unlikely that their responses will be sufficient since these problems involve the political, economic and cultural systems as well as education.

By definition education is a social institution committed to social change and innovation. Leonard (1968) says: 'to learn is to change. Education is a process that changes the learner'. In the late fifties the educational system demonstrated an ability to adapt its curriculum,
at least in some areas, in response to public concern. At the same time education is a conservative social institution concerned, as Parsons (1964) says, with pattern maintenance for society. Schools have assumed major responsibility for the preparation of youth for adult social roles. The demands of today are shifting and will doubtless change even more in the future, but many schools still place primary emphasis on values that are no longer relevant. Furthermore, bureaucratisation of the school system has aggravated this conservatism because of its resultant rigidity, inflexibility and stultification of education. Most of the criticism being directed at the education system today is aimed at its intransigence in the face of vastly different environmental conditions and altered expectations of parents and students alike. There is thus a great need to stimulate those elements of the system that will foster innovations and change.

The school confronts a serious dilemma in the requirement that it should educate all children without regard to ability, interest or prior preparation and often with fewer resources than are believed essential for such an ambitious task. It is expected to accommodate a student population with a wide range of attributes and social backgrounds. It is apparent from any study of the
present status of education that the school is expected to perform multiple roles in society, but insufficient attention has been given to consideration of the means to achieve these ends and their feasibility for all types of students in differing neighbourhood and communities.

It is generally accepted that the school's primary mandate is to prepare individuals to meet the requirements of adult occupational roles, but it is also expected to further the character development of the students and to prepare them for responsible citizenship in a democratic society. The school is made responsible for enhancing the educational attainment of all while providing varied educational opportunities for those who wish to take advantage of them. It has been viewed as the channel through which all youth, poor and rich, enter the mainstream of Indian society.

The importance of the educational system to a particular nation is highlighted by a report of the National Advisory Commission in the United States (1968) as follows:

Education in a democratic society must equip the children of the nation to realise their potential and to participate
fully in the national life. For the community at large, schools have discharged their responsibility well. But for many, and particularly for the children of the downtrodden, they have failed to provide the educational experience which could help them to overcome the effects of discrimination and deprivation.

Further, the report elaborates on the relationship between malfunctioning of the educational system and student disturbances that have taken place in many cities. The evidence of this and other research studies clearly indicates that many youths at the bottom or periphery of society are denied education that is appropriate to their needs. Problems result, because education has increasingly become a significant criterion for entry into the professional market. Educational failure for whatever reasons inhibits successful access to the occupational system and thereby induces frustration that makes people, young ones especially, prone to violent types of problem-solving. The status of education in a society like ours which is very fast becoming industrialised effects its development as a social institution, for it is viewed as a major social investment requiring a great commitment of resources over a long period of time. It has become increasingly obvious in recent
years that education is heavily involved in political processes at the state and central levels.

In accordance with the goal to prepare the students to be responsible citizens, the so-called school was developed in various countries. However laudable this objective, experience has brought certain problems to the fore. Among the more serious of these are the negative consequences of the tracking system. The school was developed so that students preparing for further education could be educated together with those preparing for immediate entry into employment. This necessitated a plan for tracking students into different curricula to meet variations in ability, interest and career expectations. Articulation with higher education was attempted and largely achieved but there was almost no articulation between the vocational track and the growing industrial structure of our society. Vocational education has not kept pace with the influencing day-to-day technological changes; neither does it provide adequate preparation for participation in a rapidly changing labour requirement.

The increasing complexity of our community life has affected
education as a social institution and in its turn education has not contributed much to the overall betterment of the community because of its over emphasis on specialisation, fragmentation and bureaucratic conformity. This situation can be attributed to the over-emphasis placed on individual and social needs, to the polar extremes, with little or no attention given to the polar extremes, with little or no attention given to the vitality of the groups that bridge the individual and society. Quite obviously, the alienation of the young today is at least partially attributable to the lack of institutional mechanisms for facilitating the participation of youth in significant societal decision making.

Indian society has always insisted on a protracted period of formal socialisation for its young people, and the school has been assigned the key responsibility for this so as to develop the 'Guru-Chela' relationship. Moreover, other problems have also arisen because of the total segregation of the slums in metropolitan centres and their reliance on local financing. Current plans for decentralisation of decision making in regard to schools are only partial solutions.
The student role behaviour has also been highly prescribed in a formal manner because all parents expect their children to achieve above the minimal level academically so as to compete with others to achieve entrance to professional courses and careers, and at the same time to conform to the traditionally specified behavioural codes. These role prescriptions are reinforced through a variety of mechanisms such as standardised examinations and elaborate behavioural control policies that are often linked to requirements for academic performance.

Given the situation of having to take all children irrespective of background personality or other attributes, the system has structured within it the potential for deviance. Not all students are adequately prepared, sufficiently motivated, or responsive to classroom behavioural standards; the school therefore engages in specialised efforts to implement educational goals for these students; within limits it seeks to increase the students' motivation to succeed academically, to ameliorate personal and social stress that circumscribes learning and hope with behaviour that jeopardize classroom processes.

When the source of the students' deviance may be the actual inability to conform to school requirements due to physical defects or inadequate intelligence, the system may assign him to a special class or school. Goals for
special education often represent marked departure from other goals of the school and this in itself may complicate problems in establishing goal priorities. In addition, some special education programmes may unwittingly aggravate the problems they were intended to solve.

The seriousness of the consequences of the school's failure to provide adequate education for substantial numbers of students is apparent in any examination of studies of elementary or secondary education and in the vividly written case reports of such people as Kozal (1967) and Silberman (1970). These failures cannot be attributed to a lack of innovative efforts, especially in large metropolitan communities where the problem is at least as serious as it is anywhere else. Much money and time has gone into a wide variety of demonstration efforts, but frequently these have been discontinued prematurely because expectations for outcome were placed inordinately high. Insufficient attention has been given to the problems of implementing innovative programmes, in particular to the use of organisational perspective in initiating and evaluating such special programmes.
There is now considerable criticism about the failure of elementary and secondary education, especially in urban schools, despite the availability of considerable resources. Serious underachievement and continuous misconduct interfere with learning, and the premature school drop-out rate is reported to be on the increase. Students as well as parents are exerting pressure on schools to improve educational opportunities and to do so by increasing their participation in decision making about curricula, personnel and policies. Demonstrations, boycotts, strikes and the like are becoming increasingly prevalent, sometimes initiated by teachers, sometimes by students and sometimes by residents in the community or by politicians for achieving their ulterior motives.

THE SCHOOL AS A PEOPLE CHANGING ORGANISATION

As a human service organisation the school is primarily concerned with processing people into new statuses and careers. Included in this general category of human service organisation are mental hospitals, general hospitals, juvenile courts, family and children's agencies, prisons and agencies for the retarded and the physically handicapped.
All of these are variously mandated by society, some for the socialisation of the persons so that they are enabled to fulfil social role requirements and others for the treatment and resocialisation of those who do not meet conventional social requirements. The school is classified primarily as a socialisation agency, although it also fulfils the functions of a social control agency. It is assumed that the majority of students are developing along normal gradients and are able to learn to fulfil their socially prescribed roles. In contrast, in agencies in which resocialisation is the primary mandate, it is assumed that their clients have demonstrated an inability to fulfil normal role prescriptions for given statuses.

This distinction breaks down in the process of analysis because all organisations involve their members in socialisation and resocialisation. For example, the bank, the factory and the university all require changes in those who participate in these organisations. The changes in attitudes and loyalties required of a bank employee, however, are necessary but not sufficient for organisational goal attainment. The changes sought by the school in the students are substantive goals of academic and social learning. Variations among schools are expected in the priorities assigned in these two
areas, but most teachers, administrators and students would agree that the student is not merely expected to acquire specific knowledge and skills; he is also expected to develop his capabilities in learning and meeting behavioural requirements for the enhancement of cultural values.

The nature of change in primary group members is what differentiates people changing organisations from other kinds of bureaucracy. These change goals are pervasive; that is, the range of activities in which the school seeks to influence students extends outside the organisation. This influence is expected to be relatively permanent in the form of new and different modes of behaviour, new identities and new self perceptions. The process of inducing change is also important because it has a moral and value laden quality. For example, it is generally accepted that one may use socially approved methods of inducing behavioural change. The process is further confounded because the student is a reactive organism capable of directly influencing the learning process at all points and in highly significant ways.

Reliance on professional for significant decision making
has been a characteristic of schools as it is of many human service organisations. Teachers, school administrators, social workers, counsellors and other special service personnel, all have substantial authority in the school. The statistics of parents and students differ in terms both of quality and quantity of authority they possess relative to that of the staff. It has been suggested by Clark (1968), Janowitz (1969) and others that professionalism has dramatically increased social distance among teachers, parents and students.

Until recently, teachers and administrators assumed that they had absolute autonomy in all crucial decision making about the operation of the schools. This authority is now openly challenged by the parents of all social strata. To solve this problem Janowitz (1969) suggests a model which he terms 'aggregation', which is focussed on and built around teacher-student interactions within the classroom and the community. Development of these interpersonal relationships is viewed as essential to education. The teacher is responsible for creating the conditions that enhance learning.
STUDENT MALPERFORMANCE:

The above discussion of education in the current scene would be incomplete, especially for social workers, if attention were not paid to student malperformance, to the individual and organisational factors producing or associated with deviant behaviour, to the failures of many schools and to the organisational strategies for solving the problems of students and school malfunctioning. These problems are of such serious nature in many communities today that they threaten the survival of schools. In some areas police and governmental officers are required to be present continuously to preserve law and order, as very often we read in newspapers about the break down of discipline in many universities and colleges.

It is known that norms of academic achievement and desirable conduct vary among schools and even within the same school. These variations mean that such types of malperformance as underachievement, poor classroom conduct, and failure to adjust are not identically defined. Because of variations among schools and to some extent among the teachers in the same school in standards of judgement,
the aspects of student personality, performance or ability presumably at issue in one situation are therefore not the same as those relevant in another situation.

In addition there are many differences among schools in terms of their curricula, resources, competence of teachers, students population and school organisation. These variations produce wide differences in the learning environment, in opportunities for achievement or adjustment and in conditions that shape the meaning of school experience for students. There are also significant differences among schools with respect to the procedures for identifying and coping with student malperformance. In one school students manifesting difficulty may become targets for the full complement of remedial services. In another school such students may encounter relative indifference; when attention is given, it may result in loss of status or privileges for these students, perhaps leading eventually to their exclusion from classes and even suspension from school.

The theoretical frameworks for the study of deviant behaviour developed by social scientists such as Cohen (1966), Lamert (1967), Friedson (1965) and Erikson (1964) are specially useful for analysing malfunctioning in the
school. Malperformance refers to behaviour that violates valued norms in the school and/or the community to the degree that, if it persists, will lead to the assignment of a status that has negative consequences for the persons whose behaviour is so defined. These consequences may be both of a long and short term nature, as Erikson (1964) suggests:

Deviance is not a property inherent in certain forms of behaviour; it is a property conferred upon these forms by the audience which directly witnesses them. The critical variable in the study of deviants, then, is a social audience rather than the individual actor, since it is the audience which eventually determines whether or not any episode is labelled deviant.

Within this framework student malperformance may be viewed as social or interactional in that it is a resultant of adverse interactions between characteristics of the student and school conditions. Given conditions of the school to interact with attributes of the student population to enhance or impede educational attainment, certain aspects
of school organisation and practice contribute, often inadvertently and unwittingly, to the very problems they are designed to alleviate. For example, special class rooms for malperforming students may have negative consequences in that they serve to stigmatise the student and may lead to consistent informal discrimination, or they may foster organised stereotypical behaviour. Thus, no type of malperformance must be considered either an 'unitary phenomenon' or 'inhering' primarily in the attributes of the students, but rather as a result of the interaction between school and student.

The school defines the conditions under which given behaviour becomes deviant as well as defining deviance as such. These definitions vary widely, making it possible for a behaviour that is formally proscribed in one situation to be ignored or even sanctioned in another.

Students difficulties are social in that they are manifested within the social context of the school through the interaction of other students, with teachers and with academic tasks. These problems assume relevance as they
are assessed in terms of the social objectives and values of school personnel. Such behaviours have their own origin in and are currently shaped by social relations with other students, in experience in the school and elsewhere.

Once the student is identified as a deviant, it may significantly affect his public identity, his self image and his motivation to achieve. Furthermore, such identification has important implications for how the student is subsequently dealt with by the school, for how his school career is shaped and ultimately for his life chances.

THE TARGET GROUPS - FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE:

The objectives of social work in relation to the school's purpose must be based on principles of social work.

Essentially, the purpose of the school is to provide a life setting for teaching and learning and the attainment of competence. So the obligation of social work is to help make school a rich and stimulating environment for children, conducive to them to prepare themselves for the world in which they have to live. The school, then, must be related to the characteristics of its student body, the outside community and the social conditions
its students face and it must carry out its teaching in ways that contribute to needed social improvements. These objectives are, thus, the components of a definition of school social work.

If the school social workers are to meet their professional obligation they must move quickly to remedy the existing situation. One way to do this is to assure more active responsibility for consultation with administrators and teachers of the school in the formulation of school policy that directly affects the welfare of the students. This means examining the symptoms and determining the causes of the problems of students in the system, channelling knowledge about neighbourhood and other cultural and community influences on students' lives, encouraging and aiding administrators in developing cooperative working relationships with community agencies.

A second area needing the attention of school social workers is liaison among home, school and community. Many parents as well as children - in all socio-economic groups are alienated from the school and feel that they have no effective way to channel their concerns to the appropriate school personnel or to influence the functioning of the
Increasing attention is being paid to the rights of parents in relation to the schools their children attend; honouring these rights implies more than simply giving attention to parents when school personnel want their co-operation in carrying out a school plan or procedure in relation to their children.

There is evidence that too often school social workers' relationships with community agencies are ineffective, wherever they are available, to the detriment of troubled children. Such failures in communication between the community and the school social workers are mostly due to petty jealousies, lack of proper communication and understanding.

In addition to the need to develop more effective means of co-operation with existing community agencies, school social workers have the responsibility to provide leadership in bringing about needed extra-school programmes through work with other individuals and community groups and to interpret overall school needs and policies to those persons in the community who are in a position to support and enhance the school's effectiveness.

The earliest function of school social workers was to serve as an authentic liaison among home, school and community.
They must again be given considerable priority to this essential role. They must also continue to give direct services to students, singly or in groups.

The definition of school social work presented earlier placed major emphasis on case work with the individual child in relation to his emotional problems, with goals centered on attempts to help him control or express his feelings appropriately, understand his relationship with others, and gain an insight into his problems. In today's world the focus of school social work must be shifted from a major emphasis on emotion, motivation and personality to such cognitive areas as learning, thinking and problem solving. Goals should be centered on helping students to acquire a sense of competence, a readiness for continued learning and a capacity to adapt to change. There are several reasons for these shifts as follows:

1. A greater proportion of young people must be prepared to succeed in higher education, if they are to acquire the knowledge and skills required for technological and professional occupations where manpower is badly needed and where they will be able to share in the responsibilities of full citizenship.
2. A capacity to adapt oneself to change and to continue to learn is essential for the successful future of the country's youth. Regardless of what else may be predicted, it is certain that there will be change and stress in the world for a long time and that many of the solutions to life's problems will lie in learning and in developing capacities for problem-solving and decision-making.

3. Confidence that one can learn and succeed, a sense of competence acquired through learning, is an important contributor to individual mental health. In this connection, it can be said that one of the primary ego functions that sustains adaptation and that provides means of coping with stress and overcoming obstacles, is the capacity for formal, structured learning. The experiences of learning and the perception of the self as one who can learn, generate a sense of the self as an active being and as the carrier of power and competence. It also makes available a source of pleasure and satisfaction that is not directly dependent upon the quality of interpersonal relationships. Last, but not least, each instance of successful learning makes the world more intelligible. The target groups
for the school social work personnel are mainly three which are discussed hereunder according to priority.

Pre-School Children:

The need for constructive programmes for the day time care and development of young children is of paramount importance, particularly in urban areas. The ferment regarding day care and pre-school education, reflected in attempts to reconceptualise day time programmes for pre-schoolers is growing. In planning and administering such programmes, the social work profession traditionally has stressed components of emotional care and protection and has termed its programmes day care services' implying that they are a form of supplemental family care. The educational profession, on the other hand, has given greater consideration to the child's social and intellectual development and has applied terms such as 'nursery school education' and more recently, 'compensatory pre-school education'.

For many years both professions seemed content with this administrative distinction - care and protection through social work, and social and intellectual development through education, and ignored the fact that these boundaries were artificial areas that contributed to insufficient and
unsatisfactory programmes on both sides. Hopefully, various developments are moving towards a more generic definition of programmes for the young child's day time care and development outside his own home. In a study (Ruderman, 1968) it was found that working mothers reflect the community as a whole and come from all its subgroups. The great majority were middle class Whites in with employed husbands and living/intact house-holds. Under the umbrella of 'working mother family' are a large number of both so-called normal and problem families, with children who have a wide range of individual characteristics.

What these young children often share are inadequate, make-shift and unstimulating forms of care and education during their mother's working hours. Only 3% of the child care arrangements of the working mothers in the study were informally organised day care or necessary school programmes.

The economy of any nation which has to develop has to make people face competitive life situations and has to require and encourage more mothers to work. How can then such a nation continue to ignore the necessity for attention to the development of millions of young
children who need an outside source of nurture, supportive emotional response and a variety of stimulating experiences that will contribute to their cognitive social development?

Another factor that helps to understand the day time programmes for young children is concerned with the learning handicaps of culturally deprived children. Much of the impetus for attention to cultural deprivation came from social forces and changes in society, such as changes in the economic system, a greatly enlarged reliance on technology - bringing with it jobs that require proficiency in the use of language, mathematics and problem-solving methods. It was psychological theory and changes in the conception of man's nature and his development, however, that provided the basis for a reasonable expectation that pre-school services could deal with cultural deprivation in a way that would increase substantially the average level of children's intellectual capacities. Certain changed beliefs based on psychological research showed the feasibility of manipulating the environment of children who were being reared in culturally deprived circumstances not only through social change and welfare provisions, but through day time programmes that would utilise an understanding
of the importance of a child's early sensory experiences -
the extent to which he has a variety of things to see, hear,
touch and respond to, with interest in the company of under-
standing and responsive adults. This kind of knowledge as to
how a child's intelligence develops provided the scientific
backdrop for the obligation of education and social welfare
to resolve the differences in their conceptions of day
care and pre-school education and to join forces to
provide stimulating pre-school programmes to all children.

A question may arise as to why social workers should get
themselves involved in this question when they have a lot
of other things to do? It is for the following reasons:

1. To ensure that when children enter school at the
age of 5 or 6, the school's purpose will not be
thwarted because of inadequacies in the children's
experiences.

2. Social work principles and methods have much to
offer, that is of importance in the conception and
design of programmes for children's day time care and
development.

3. School social workers occupy a pivotal position for
leadership between the institutions of public education
and public welfare.

In this connection, we may say, agreeing with some authors that the school is the strategic centre of child welfare work. We may take note of the fact that today an undesirable degree of professional separatism exists between the fields of child welfare work and school social work. Possibly this separatism based on professional interest has to narrow down in the interest of child welfare work.

Neglected and Deprived Children:

The second target group for school social work attention is the children between the ages of 6 and 12 who live in homes where they experience neglect by their parents and various forms of extreme deprivation - economic, cultural and social. These are among the country's most vulnerable children. They live in disorder which is reflected in the failure of their parents to perform the essential tasks that help to hold the family together - housekeeping, food preparation and health care. In addition, the parents have pressing personal needs that take precedence over the needs of the children. Interpersonal relationships within the family are unstable; there may be constant dissensions, absence of affection and trust, or extensive marital discord.
Parents and children are mutually alienated. Ostracism by the community and neighbourhood is common. Landlords, officials, businessmen tend to treat such families with disrespect.

These families are generally labelled as multi-problem families. Their children are the children in trouble—seriously disadvantaged and in need of immediate help. These are children who have learned early the tragic truth that by the community and usually by their parents also they are regarded as surplus. Their families and others like theirs have too many children; such families have nothing to offer to society and society in turn does not need them. They cannot escape the recognition that in the main stream of society they are termed as problem families and that they have little chance for their recognition and help for success.

It is true that many of these families receive considerable attention from philanthropists and others who carry a particular service case load. But the traditional approach in protective services has been to focus on case work with parents posing demands and problems which are so great that their children seldom receive direct attention from the
welfare workers and others. These children require and deserve help in their own right. School should be a place where they can receive constructive and caring attention in relationships in which they can be deemed individuals. School social workers must not assume that they need not give social work services to these children simply because their families are known to other community agencies.

The Deprived Middle Class Group:

The last group of children is quite different from the neglected and disadvantaged children just discussed. These are middle class children with affluent parents in the cultural main stream of society. Sometimes their relative disadvantage is imposed from within their home where they may be overprotected, neglected, reared by rigid and dominating parents who are indifferent and give no guidance at all. Their adults' model may be shallow, unstimulating, insensitive or dishonest. Here, too, one parent may be missing because of marital discord, separation, divorce or in some cases death. Moreover, adequate parental attention may be lacking. The deficiencies in such homes are more easily concealed behind a facade of good neighbourhood, well kept lawns, comfortable homes, polite speech and other marital disguises.
Because of their favoured status and apparent success the parents fail to recognise children's handicaps and the school's effect on their development. Most of such children enter the school with a capacity and readiness to succeed, often find an outdated, mediocre educational system in which their talents are not cultivated. They may be required to study what is irrelevant to their daily lives and their future. As they turn away they are allowed to forego true learning and to settle for doing their assigned homework, passing their courses and accepting promotion through the system. They are kept in cultural ignorance of the world, its people, its social institutions, and yet how these young people meet their future responsibilities as citizens is crucial to the survival of society.

Some authorities on education of disadvantaged have included such middle class youth in their definition of the disadvantaged. These three groups of children and young persons are not the only ones who require new approaches. Among others who should be considered are, for example, pro-deliquent, aggressive youth between the ages of 14 and 16 who have hostile attitudes towards the school and who get into trouble in school and in the neighbourhood, where they often spend much time, possibly because they
have been expelled from school for their misbehaviour.

Implications
Various important implications flow from this analysis of tasks in school social work. School social workers must revise extensively the static model of service into which their field of practice has drifted. To be effective, a new model must recognise the interdependent relationship of the schools to other social institutions and functions of the community, some of which also have serious problems. Further, school social work service must be defined as a response to the most pressing problems of the school students and to the underlying conditions both within and outside the school system that impinge on large numbers of them. In redesigning school social work services, the purpose of the school must be kept clearly in mind; that is, to serve, not as a therapeutic centre, but as a life setting for children in which learning is possible and competence can be acquired.

Social workers in the schools must give up their traditional almost exclusive, reliance on case work and use all the social work methods and alternative approaches within each of these methods.

Greater weight should be given to the responsibility for
consultation with administrators and teachers in the formation of school policy that directly affects the welfare of children and their chances of succeeding in school. Equally important, the neglected role of liaison between home, school and community must be revitalised. As school social workers begin to re-define their functions and interpret their revised goals, it should help lessen some of the inter-disciplinary confusion that exists among the various school specialists. Changes such as these will make it possible to experiment with new staffing patterns and to break away from outmoded patterns of work. Indeed, if the school social work role is derived from a definition of function that reflects such crucial conditions and problems within and outside the school system, then the appropriate social-work-role in the schools will not only permit, but will also require, differential use of social work personnel with various levels of education and training. Conversely, if the definition of school social work is kept narrow, primarily to reflect the needs and abilities of the social worker, it will be difficult to break through the problem of the growing demand for school social workers in the face of continued dearth of those with a good post-graduate education in social work.