

**VIEWS ON SOCIAL SECURITY:**  
**AN EXAMINATION OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO SOCIAL SECURITY**  
**IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND**  
**AND SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis looks at the relationship between public attitudes to welfare and social security legislation and policy. In order to understand this relationship fully it is necessary to consider the content of public opinion, what factors affect people's attitudes, the susceptibility of these attitudes to change and whether social security legislation, particularly the recent developments in this legislation, reflects the views of the public. The relationship between experience of unemployment and attitudes was a major concern. The content of public attitudes and legislation is assessed by examining the extent to which the welfare principles identified in the three models of welfare described by Titmuss, the residual, the institutionalised redistributive model and the industrial achievement performance model, are emphasised. The research was exploratory in nature. The views of the general public were solicited through interviews which were carried out with men resident in four areas specifically chosen to ensure a broad spectrum of the public were represented. Those interviewed were not randomly selected, thus they cannot be claimed to be statistically representative. A small postal survey of a random sample of men resident in two towns was also carried out but this formed a very minor part of the study. The nature of the sample does not allow firm conclusions about the content of public attitudes and their susceptibility to change to be reached but it does allow some existing assumptions about the nature of public attitudes to be questioned.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Titmuss (1968), discussing the subject of social administration, suggests that any attempt to offer a definitive explanation of the subject is liable to be invidious or boring or both. He suggests the subject is basically concerned with the study of a range of social needs and the functioning, in conditions of scarcity, of human organisations traditionally called social services or social welfare systems to meet these needs (1968, p.20). The hybrid nature of the discipline must be emphasised. Donnison states:

...the distinctive feature of social administration is neither its body of knowledge (for most of this could be incorporated in other disciplines), nor its theoretical structure (for it has very little), and it is not concerned with methodology for its own sake. We are concerned with an ill defined but recognisable territory: the development of collective action for the advancement of social welfare. Our job is to identify and clarify problems within this territory, to throw light upon them - drawing light from any discipline that appears to be relevant - and to contribute when we can to the solution of these problems. (Donnison 1968, p.27)

Roach and Roach (1972), discussing the underdevelopment of the sociology of poverty, say most of the theories are developed from a micro-level of analysis, usually concerned with social psychological aspects and written from the ideological standpoint of wanting a slightly more benevolent but still capitalist system. They claim that:

What is called for is a comparative macro-sociological analysis, focusing on the organisation of political and economic institutions and their role in causing and perpetuating poverty. (Roach and Roach 1972, p.15)

George and Wilding (1976) also stress the need for a macro analysis of

poverty since they claim social policy cannot be understood without an analysis of the social, economic and political framework in which it operates.

Several books have recently been published which go some way to rectifying this situation by looking at the ideology behind views of social welfare and its implication for the organisation of society. For example, Pinker (1979), Room (1979) and Taylor Gooby and Dale (1981) adopt a broadly similar threefold classification of theories of social welfare and its development, the individualist (Taylor Gooby and Dale, 1981) or classical liberal or neo classical liberal (Pinker 1979, Room 1971) approach, the marxist or neo marxist approach, and the reformist (Taylor Gooby and Dale, 1981) or the social democratic (Room, 1979) or mercantalist (Pinker 1979) approach<sup>1</sup>. The individualist perspective is most commonly found in the books and pamphlets produced by the Institute of Economic Affairs and emphasises individual responsibility and the importance of self help. State welfare services, if they are to exist at all, are for the residue. The social democratic or reformist perspective considers the development of welfare processes which enhance the rights of the citizen and tends to be the approach most commonly favoured by writers in social administration and is the perspective adopted by Pinker (1979) and Room himself (1979). Taylor Gooby and Dale (1981) and Gough (1979) adopt a neo marxist perspective emphasising the need to look at the structure of capitalist society when attempting to understand the role of welfare in society and its functions as a method of social control. This threefold classification is, it is suggested, useful but the perspectives described will clearly encompass a range of views.

Each of the perspectives referred to above vary in their description of the role played by the views of the general public in determining social policy. The individualist perspective tends to see anything other than minimal social welfare measures as contrary to public opinion. The need for individuals to be able to put forward their views through choice in a market situation is emphasised. Some writers classified under the marxist perspective see the welfare state as a method of exploitation and describe the public as falsely conscious, others see social policy as a minor victory for the working class. In both cases more working class self-determination is advocated.<sup>2</sup> The reformist view tends to see social policy as emerging (and rightly so in their view) from growing consensus developing among all sectors of society. The reformist view and one strand of the marxist view therefore see public attitudes as playing an important role in influencing welfare policy. The reformist view, however, sees existing social policy as satisfactory; the marxist perspective believes much more pervasive changes are required. The marxist and individualist perspectives both advocate more public influence, although their views on the content of public opinion and on how the public should exert an influence vary. It is this specific issue, i.e. the influence of public attitudes on social policy, which is the subject of this research.

In his description of the subject of social administration (1968) Titmuss suggests the gift or unilateral transfer is the mark of social policy and that social policy must look at identity and alienation since alienation threatens or destroys the system of unilateral transfer (1968, p.22). Investigation of the views of the



public is an essential element of social administration therefore and yet little empirical investigation of public opinion has been carried out.<sup>3</sup> In much of the literature statements about public opinion are put forward as unquestionably true or are supported by philosophical arguments. Plant, Lesser and Taylor Gooby (1980), discussing the use made of Rawls (1972) theory of social justice in social administration, (for example by Pinker (1971) and George and Wilding (1976)) suggest that Rawls' theory leads to the conclusion that:

...we can know what kind of consensus rational people would arrive at when laying down 'the foundation charter of their society', if only they would shelve their vested interests. Who needs citizens, when the social planner can construct the just world by thought experiment without bothering to consult their views. (Plant, Lesser and Taylor Gooby, 1980, p.151)

Clearly further investigation of public attitudes is required.

The methods, techniques and insights of various disciplines have been utilised in this study to investigate public attitudes to those in receipt of social security. The effect which public attitudes to social security have on the benefits system can be seen at various levels. The attitudes of the public affect claimants directly. An individual's decision regarding whether or not to claim is affected by the views of their family, friends and the wider community and the self-perceptions of those who do claim are affected by what they feel others think of them. Thus Pinker feels:

It may be that affecting changes in the social conscience of ordinary people is now becoming more important than further changes in the statute books. (Pinker 1971, p.174)

Public attitudes will also influence the attitudes of those who work on the social security administration and through this the way claimants are treated:

...such social assistance schemes are pervaded by the exercise of judgement and discretion and therefore embedded in traditions about the giving and taking of help and the citizen's relation to government traditions which reach back to the Poor Law and beyond. The 'culture' of social security is part of the wider social system, it varies a great deal from place to place changing such a service in a social and political process calling for changes in public attitudes to government and in the citizen's view of his duties to his neighbours. (Supplementary Benefits Commission 1977, 1.4)

Thirdly public attitudes may have an effect on which policies are pursued. Decisions about which policies are pursued are influenced by impressions of what the voters would support and considerations of their feelings both as consumers and as taxpayers:

Such concepts as, 'social pity', 'national unity', 'public enlightenment', 'the education of opinion' and 'social conscience' are used repeatedly to explain changes in social policy. (Hall et al 1975, pp.6-7)

Although Hall et al (1975) accept that public opinion is an important influence on policy they point out that:

...what it is thought to be by authorities is more important in the short term. (Hall et al 1975, p.484)

Policy makers they point out are influenced by the attitudes of their 'significant constituents' and they tend to confuse these attitudes with the attitudes of the general public. Various factors including legislation and policy influence attitudes and this must be considered.

It is this third area, i.e the relationship between public opinion and policy which is the major concern of this research. Both those who argue for the extension and the contraction of state welfare refer to public attitudes. Pinker, discussing two models of welfare, the residualist model which favours competition and self help thus advocating only minimum aid for the dependent poor, and the institutional model, which advocates co-operation and mutual aid and thus favouring maximum aid, suggests:

In both cases psychological assumptions are made about the attitudes of individuals towards welfare provision. Their common weakness is a tendency to confuse academic perceptions of social service with those of the ordinary users of social services. There is however no firm evidence as yet that sizeable sections of the community are strongly committed either to the ethic of mutual aid or to the liberties of the market. (Pinker 1971, p.166)

Banting (1979), tracing the development of child benefits, found little evidence available about public attitudes towards the poor in the 1960's and early 1970's but found politicians believed the public were unaware of poverty. Policy makers he argues, stated that the public distinguished between the deserving and undeserving poor.

Resistance to taxation was also believed to exist (1979, p.80).

Looking specifically at family allowances Banting claims:

According to policy makers, many voters believed that they were dissipated on bingo, cigarettes and drinks, or that they encouraged irresponsibly large families.  
(Banting 1979, p.91)

The survey data which did exist, he claims, suggests the level of hostility was exaggerated but the minority of critical voters induced caution.

Public attitudes (or what is assumed to be the attitudes of the public) seem according to the 1976 SBC Report to have played a major part in ensuring that the living standards of the unemployed (whom the SBC accepts are living at standards in much need of improvement) were not radically improved.

It does not disturb us if in a few cases very few at the moment our benefits exceed what may be the very low wages paid to some workers in this country. But democratic governments have to be accountable to the electorate as a whole and it is clear that the British people will not tolerate rates of supplementary benefit for the unemployed which exceed wages on a large scale. War pensions, retirement and widows' pensions, industrial injury benefits and indeed supplementary pensions - may exacerbate wages without promoting such hostility because those who get them are regarded as being outside the employment field. But for the unemployed at least, public opinion requires that

there should be a gap between the general levels of wages paid for less skilled work. (Supplementary Benefits Commission Report 1977, 1:13)

The rate of benefit we are required to pay should enable people to participate in the social system to which the working population belongs. That means, means-tested benefits must keep pace with changes in the net disposable incomes of wage earners and they should not fall much below the incomes paid to low paid workers. At the moment we believe supplementary benefit is often too low by these standards but it cannot be increased in an acceptable way if large numbers of wage earners think they would be no worse off on supplementary benefit even if we think they are often exaggerated. We understand and sympathise with public anxieties and governments ignore them at their peril. (Supplementary Benefits Commission Report 1977, 1:19)

The SBC's views on the content of public attitudes and their effect is clear from the above quotes.

Despite the acknowledged importance of public attitudes very little investigation of public attitudes has been undertaken. Pinker argues:

One of the most valuable contributions of social theory to the study of social welfare might be that of improving our understanding of public attitudes towards social services. We need better maps of the current levels of satisfaction and discontent and more convincing explanations of why people hold the range of attitudes which they do. (Pinker, 1971, p.110)

Writing in 1979 it appears that in his view the situation had not been rectified:

...a high proportion of social welfare theory is formulated with an insufficient examination of the moral beliefs of ordinary citizens and their actual behaviour. (Pinker 1979, p.4)

In the last analysis he argues:

...the study of social welfare is a study of human nature in a political context. (Pinker 1971, p.211)

Very different views of human nature are presented by Titmuss and Pinker. Titmuss, in The Gift Relationship, emphasises the importance of the unilateral transfer to society. He suggests:

If it is accepted that man has a social and a biological need to help then to deny him opportunities to express this need is to deny him the freedom to enter into gift relationships. (Titmuss 1970, p.243)

Pinker feels Titmuss is overoptimistic in his description of human nature (1974). Pinker sees human nature as being basically individualistic and Dacey's love of self he sees as still relevant. Altruistic acts he feels are rare:

The spirit of altruism, far from being a natural flowering of human nature must be seen as the product of rigorous discipline, of injunction to self denial and the repression of the grosser forms of self love. (Pinker 1971, p.211)

Comforting assumptions about the attitudes of the general public to the poor he feels are wrongly put forward as reasons for encouraging public participation.

The self interest of the privileged has always acted as a restraint upon policies that seek to redistribute benefits to the underprivileged. Since the poor are now in a minority it might be better to reform by stealth and be grateful for the stubborn apathy of the majority. (Pinker 1971, p.212)

Jordan also sees self interest as affecting which attitudes are held and sees the division of society into claimants and non-claimants as a possibility:

The worker tries to maximise his wants (through overtime bonuses, productivity, incentive schemes). He tries to minimise his contribution through rates and taxes. The claimant tries to maximise his income through claims and to avoid work, which may often reduce his income and which offers him no advantages. There is real danger that this divergence of interests may result in a hardening of attitudes so that two rigidly definite groups are formed each antagonistic to the other. (Jordan 1973, p.70)

Jordan (1973) refers to the part played by conditioning in affecting people's values and Pinker admits that children are taught the virtues of self help and work (1971, p.138), thus although they stress self interest, they acknowledge the influence of socialisation. Pinker

and Jordan however do not assess the extent to which socialisation has led to self interest being perceived in the way they suggest, or whether re-education would make much difference to attitudes. Whether and in what way social conditions and experiences and socialisation affect attitudes requires investigation.

Clearly in order to understand fully the relationship between public attitudes and policy on any issue a number of questions have to be examined. First it is necessary, to consider the content of public opinion, in this instance looking in detail at public attitudes to those on benefit and at the welfare principles important to the public. Views on attitudes vary as was seen above and the research undertaken to date on the subject provides no clear answers. The fact that evidence of the existence of both altruism and egoism can be found illustrates the difficulties which exist in assessing public attitudes to welfare; for example the level of consensus is likely to vary from issue to issue and secondly the attitudes of each individual may not be consistent. In looking at the content of people's views on social security the level of consensus and the degree of consistency in an individual's attitudes must be investigated.

The second issue to be considered if the effect of public attitudes on policy is to be properly examined is which factors affect public attitudes. Thus the effects of the family, education, peer groups, religion, opinion leaders, the mass media and legislation itself on attitudes must be discussed. In particular it is suggested, the effect of experience of unemployment on attitudes to those on benefit requires consideration. Having considered what factors affect public attitudes the susceptibility of attitudes to change can be better assessed.

Consideration of these issues is essential when looking at the relationship between public attitudes and policy. However when comparison is made between public attitudes and policy, the interrelationship of public attitudes with other factors affecting policy and the locus of power in society must be acknowledged. In this investigation of the relationship between public opinion and social security policy it is intended to examine social security legislation, especially the changes made in 1980. The principles central to social security legislation will be compared with those principles which emerged as important during the review of social assistance which took place in 1978 and those principles which are found to influence the views of those interviewed in this research.

In chapter 2 a detailed examination of theories concerning the relationship between public opinion and policy will be undertaken. Factors which may affect public opinion and theories concerning the effect of public attitudes on legislation will also be considered. In chapter 3 the principles of welfare which affect attitudes to those on benefit and the interrelationship of those principles will be discussed. In the fourth chapter a review of research on public attitudes to social security relevant to the issues to be investigated in this research, will be undertaken. In chapter 5 the methods utilised in this research will be discussed. In the sixth chapter the attitudes of those interviewed to those on benefit and the views elicited on the principles and models of welfare discussed in chapter 3 will be considered. In the seventh chapter the relationship found to exist between the attitudes of those interviewed and various background characteristics will be discussed. In chapter 8 social security legislation will be compared with the views

expressed by those interviewed and by the pressure and interest groups who responded to the recent review of social security legislation.

In the conclusion the relationship between public opinion and legislation is reassessed by drawing together the information obtained on the content of public opinion, factors affecting public attitudes, the susceptibility of public attitudes to change and the effect of public attitudes on policy.

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## CHAPTER 2

## PUBLIC OPINION AND POLICY

In the introduction the argument that some changes in the social security system are inhibited and others promoted by public opinion is discussed. It was suggested that in order to understand fully the relationship between public opinion and legislation, factors which affect public attitudes and the susceptibility of attitudes to change must be considered. In the following chapters, it is intended to examine views on the assistance given by the state to the unemployed and pensioners, and to look at whether recent social security legislation reflects these views. The validity of the claim that higher levels of benefit for, and better treatment of, the unemployed, would not be acceptable to the public will thus be considered. In this section, it is intended to discuss the meaning of the term 'public attitudes'; the effect of public attitudes on legislation; what factors influence public attitudes and whether public attitudes are susceptible to change.

Attitudes, opinions and beliefs

In looking at what is meant by 'public attitudes' it is intended to look firstly at the meaning of the term 'attitudes' and secondly at what is meant by 'public attitudes'. The terms 'attitudes', 'opinions' and 'beliefs' are closely related and there is much conceptual confusion in many discussions. Halloran suggests:

One could deal with this state of affairs either by treating all the concepts as synonyms or by attempting more refined distinctions and definitions.  
(Halloran 1967, p 16)

The former course is taken by Berelson and Steiner (1964, p 557) who, while acknowledging that some differences in the meaning of the terms do exist (for example, beliefs are more cognitive), argue that no hard and fast boundaries can be drawn when discussing their definition. Other writers attempt to make more refined distinctions. Secord and Backman (1964) differentiate between opinions and attitudes, suggesting opinions lack the affective component which is central to attitudes. In any research which investigates public views on some issue the answer given by one respondent to a question may be an opinion, in that it may lack the affective component, an attitude, in that the affective component is central, or a belief, in that it has a cognitive basis. When discussing the public response to an issue it is not possible to make a distinction between attitudes, opinions and beliefs, since the response from some individuals may have a cognitive base or an affective component, while the response from others may not. As Berelson and Steiner (1964) suggest, one man's opinion may be another man's attitude and another man's belief. In this discussion the terms will be treated as synonyms. However, the extent to which the views expressed are based on knowledge is an issue which will be investigated and this is discussed in more detail below.

#### The meaning of public opinion

The definition of what constitutes public opinion also presents difficulties. Blake and Haroldson (1975, p 98) discuss the concept of public opinion and identify five dimensions on which definitions tend to vary. These are:

- (a) whether public opinion must concern a public issue.
- (b) whether public opinion must be publicly expressed or, should the definition include latent opinion.

- (c) the degree of agreement required; how many persons must share an opinion for it to be considered public opinion.
- (d) whether an opinion must produce an effect of some kind to be considered public opinion.
- (e) whether the term 'opinion' is synonymous with beliefs and values.

The last dimension which refers to the definition of opinion has already been discussed.

With regard to the first point, that is, must public opinion concern a public issue, it is clear that all members of the public may not hold opinions on all issues and that their views on some issues may not be relevant. It is the researcher's job to show the relevance of the issue to the public, and of public opinion to the issue. In the case of this research, it is the public who finance social security benefits and the majority of the public receive them at some time in their lives. Thus, social security is clearly a public issue. Where those interviewed had no views this is recorded.

In answer to the second point, that is, whether opinion must be publicly expressed for it to be seen as public opinion, it seems that the fact that an opinion is latent does not prevent it being classified as public opinion; it only prevents it from being classified as a spontaneously expressed public opinion. Latent public opinion is important in terms of its potential power since politicians' assessment of latent opinion may influence their actions. This research, since it elicits people's views, will be considering opinion which has not been spontaneously expressed, although the views expressed in response to the questioning may have been spontaneously expressed in the past.

The third issue mentioned is whether there must be a certain level of agreement before opinion can be called public opinion. The level of agreement on the subject is an issue to be investigated and is not part of the definition of public opinion.

The final dimension mentioned was whether an opinion must produce an effect of some kind for it to be considered a public opinion. Plowman, in a discussion of the nature of public opinion, questions the validity of opinion polls and concludes by arguing:

- that government gets a better guide to public opinion through the current processes of the activities of interest groups and disinterested spectators, than it does from opinion polls. (Plowman 1978, p 102)

However, investigation of the views of the public is, in his view, worthwhile if, for example, expressed opinions are to be related to other factors such as personality. In this study, as has been said, it is intended to investigate the relationship between expressed opinion and a variety of background characteristics. Plowman refers to the claim by politicians and pressure groups to having 'public opinion' on their side. This, he suggests, is often unrealistic since the true position is unknown, or since opinion is clearly divided. This, as has been said, is the major concern of this study. The effect of opinion is thus an issue to be investigated; in particular, whether the views of those interviewed bear any resemblance to the 'public view' referred to by political actors.

To summarise so far, for the purpose of this study public attitudes are defined as those views put forward by the public when discussing, or when questioned on, issues of general concern. The degree of concensus and the influence of those views on legislation are issues to be investigated.

### The relationship between public opinion and policy

Consideration of the effect of public attitudes on policy leads to consideration of issues concerning the government of society. Some theorists emphasise the pluralist, others the elitist nature of government. Hall et al (1975, pp 130-160) suggest pluralist and elitist theories can be placed on a continuum from class through elitist to pluralist theories. Bachrach and Baratz (1970, p 3) suggest that the theories put forward by political scientists tend to be pluralist and those by sociologists elitist. Consideration of pluralist and elitist theories, it is suggested, will provide insight into the relationship between public attitudes and legislation and thus they are discussed in some detail below.

#### Pluralist theories

Those emphasising the pluralist nature of society, describe society as a system of checks and balances which prevent a concentration of power from developing. Conflict, where it does exist in society, is seen as non-cumulative. There is no single ruling group, it is claimed, and the ownership and control of capital are believed to be separate. Elites, it is accepted by some theorists, may exist in different stratification systems; for example social, political and economic elites may exist, but, it is argued, this leads to a situation of competing elites, not to the development of a single ruling group. Competition over resources, if any is seen as existing, is seen in positive sum as opposed to zero-sum terms; for example, competition over income can be seen in positive sum terms if one assumes economic growth.<sup>1</sup>

Pluralists see the role of public opinion as an important influence on government. Thus Dahl argues:

The relationship between leaders and citizens in a pluralist democracy is frequently reciprocal: leaders influence decisions of constituents but the decisions of leaders are also determined in part by what they think are, will be, or have been the preference of their constituents. (Dahl 1961, pp 89-90)

The power of the public is seen as lying in their numbers.

Though wage-earners lack social standing, they are not without other resources, including the ballot, and what they lack as individuals they more than make up in collective resources. In short, although their direct influence is low their indirect collective influence is high. (Dahl 1961, p 233)

The public's power as consumers and not just as electors, Rose argues, should be seen as important. (Rose 1967, p 225) Demanding reduced taxation, avoiding existing taxation, demanding better benefits and maximising one's own benefit rights, can all be classed as consumer actions. Pluralist theorists generally accept that when the public present unqualified contradictory demands, their influence is reduced. Several factors, in addition to the contradiction which sometimes exists in public demands, are seen as influencing the extent of the public's power. These include, public and government cohesion, the power structure, the nature and clarity of the issue and the timescale. Rose,<sup>2</sup> discussing policy making, in fact states:

Every model of the policy process is conditional: it will fit some problems but be inappropriate to others. The political influence of a group is not only a function of its own resources but also a function of the policy area. (Rose 1980, p 307)

Pluralist theories, as was said, vary in their assessment of the role of the public in government. Walker<sup>3</sup> (1968) in fact criticises Truman (1959), Key (1961) and Dahl (1961) for underemphasising the role of the public and overemphasising the role of the elite.

The less extreme the version of the theory, the more likely it is that the theorist accepts the possibility that a consensus does not

exist on all issues. However, the belief that there is consensus on abstract democratic principles is one of the central arguments of all pluralist theories. The universal belief in democracy is seen as preventing the existence of any systematic bias in society. Although some pluralists admit that some people have more resources and influence on social organisation than others, no systematic bias is believed to exist.

The existence of numerous pressure groups is cited as further evidence of pluralism in society and pressure groups are seen as playing a part in consensus politics. Pressure groups may be promotional groups such as Child Poverty Action Group or interest groups such as the British Medical Association. Both producer and consumer interests can be represented. (Beer 1965; Eckstein 1960) It is clear that pressure groups can lead to greater public influence, but critics of pluralist theories point out that this will not necessarily be the case. The membership of pressure groups is seldom representative of the public as a whole and may not even be representative of the section of the public it aims to represent. The power of a pressure group is not necessarily related to its representativeness. The strength of a pressure group depends largely on the resources of its members, e.g. their status and the information available to them. Pressure groups are not always established when several people hold similar views or are affected in a similar way by a situation (Olson 1965). The environment in which pressure groups operate will influence their success, e.g. the political complexion of the government, the state of the economy <sup>4</sup> In addition, although pressure groups can act as a check on the government's power and

enlarge the circles of political involvement, they can also limit power by the formation of inner circles (Moodie and Studdert-Kennedy 1970, p 96).

Politicians, according to pluralist theories, take party and public opinion into account. Critics argue, however, that perceptions of party and public opinion may be different from the actual opinion of the party and the public.<sup>5</sup> Thus it may be suggested that public opinion itself is of limited importance while perceived public opinion is of major importance in affecting policy. On the other hand, politicians may perceive the views of the public accurately but may not necessarily act in accordance with them. They may consciously go against the views of the public because of their own views, external constraints or a belief that the public's views are not relevant. Birch (1971) in fact states that politicians may act in accordance with what they believe the public would think if they were better informed. Thus he suggests, although the polls showed the public opposed to abolition of hanging,

It was widely believed that if only the public had a better understanding of the psychology of murderers, the public would be in favour of abolition, so that MPs who supported the reform could be said to be acting in accordance with the 'real will' of the people, i.e. with what the people would want if only they were better informed and could free themselves from irrelevant prejudices. (Birch 1971, p 110)

Politicians' ability to influence the public, stemming from their position and the fact that a law, once passed, tends to be accepted, contributes to the loading of the interaction between the government and public to the government side. Moodie and Studdert-Kennedy suggest:

The shape that the past imposes on the present whether it is maintained by unreflecting habits and undisturbed assumptions skilfully exploited by existing elites, or by constraint which individuals would challenge if they felt



that they had the power to do so is the complex premise within which we must pursue our investigation of the nature of socio/psychological man.

(Moodie and Studdert-Kennedy 1970, p 40)

Hall et al (1975), although they criticise the pluralist viewpoint, argue that the policy process can be regarded as pluralist in two senses.

First it exhibits diversity in a visible, structural sense; many different institutions are involved. Second, and more important, the policy process can be characterized as pluralist in practice. The structural diversity is reflected in the range of values, interests and viewpoints that can be detected in much policy-making.

(Hall et al 1975, p 127)

However, the chance of success of a proposed policy, they argue, will be influenced by its legitimacy, in terms of the existing political culture which varies with the ideology of the political party in power, its feasibility, and the level of support for it. Public support therefore is seen as important but they accept that even without public support a policy can come into force. The political process they warn, should not be confused with political power and this, they feel, tends to be the case in the image of society put forward in theories which emphasise its pluralist nature (1975, p 130). The political process, they argue, cannot be fully understood without considering power and they suggest that even in a pluralist society power influences the outcome of policy making.

### Elitist theories

The concept of power is central to theories which emphasise the importance of a ruling elite or class. These theories see social organisations as being determined to a large extent by the unequal distribution of resources and the fact that those with more resources are trying to maintain their privileged position. As Giddens (1973,

p 119) points out there has been much confusion over the terms 'ruling class', 'power elite', 'governing class' and 'leadership groups'.

He suggests that the relationship between an elite in society, using the term in its broadest sense, and the mass, may vary in terms of the method of recruitment to elite positions and the extent of social integration of the elite group. The role of property, the legal framework defining economic and political rights and obligations, and the institutional structure of the state may also vary. Finally, the power to influence policy formation and decision making held by members of particular elite groups where no overall ruling elite exists may differ from situation to situation. However the overall interests of elite groups are, elite theorists argue, similar. Theorists may vary in their views of how a particular elite is formed and the nature and extent of its power, but theorists who emphasise the role of the elite and agree that these two issues are central to our understanding of society are classified in this discussion as elite theorists. The elitist viewpoint therefore concentrates on two major issues, first the backgrounds of the political actors and secondly, the extent of power of the ruling group.

Members of parliament and party activists are not the only people who can be classified as political actors. Businessmen and civil servants can also have much political influence. The government in a market economy needs the support of those who have economic resources, especially the owners of the large amounts of capital necessary for investment in industry. Businessmen with capital to invest are thus often in a position to persuade politicians to act in their interests. The ability which civil servants have to determine policy has been stressed recently by politicians (Crossman 1975, 1976, 1977;

Benn 1980). Civil servants, despite the fact that they are not elected, can have a major influence on policy. Governments and government ministers change frequently while the staff turnover in civil service departments is relatively low. Although civil servants are theoretically neutral, in practice their beliefs can influence their behaviour. Through their role as political advisors they have a direct affect on policy, but they have a more subtle influence on policy through their role as gatekeepers which enables them to affect policy by the passing on, or withholding of, information and through their general presentation of information (Kellner and Crowther Hunt 1980).

The homogeneity of the influential people in this country, politicians, businessmen, civil servants, judges etc., has been well documented. Not only do they tend to have been educated at the same schools and universities, but they also tend to intermarry, thus strengthening the bonds which link them. Furthermore, it is argued, there is a shared desire among those with vested interests in the present organisation of society to maintain the status quo, even if their views on some issues vary. Social background can thus be seen as a major influence on actions. The influential people in society may be seen as forming one elite or class or a group of closely related and interlocking elites.<sup>6</sup>

Elitist theorists suggest that there is conflict of interest between the ruling group and the general public. They must, however, explain why, if this is the case, there has been no large-scale conflict or revolution in this country and this leads to consideration of the second issue referred to above, that is the extent of power. The lack of conflict is generally explained in terms of hegemony, that

is the ideological domination of society by the ruling groups. The general public, it is argued, are falsely conscious and this, it is suggested is the result of the process of socialisation and legitimisation.

For indoctrination to occur it is not necessary that there should be monopolistic control and the prohibition of opposition, it is only necessary that ideological competition should be so unequal as to give a crushing advantage to one side over the other. And this is precisely the position which obtains in advanced capitalist societies. (Miliband 1969, p 182)

Bacharach and Baratz (1970, pp 5-7) criticise the elitist view on three grounds. First, they say it assumes that there is always a power structure. Secondly, it assumes that this power structure is stable. Thirdly, they claim that the elitist view wrongly equates reputed power with actual power. They argue, however, that an investigation of policy making, especially consideration of in whose interests policy making operates is valuable. Other criticisms of elitist theories can also be made. Two major criticisms concern first the concept of hegemony and secondly the role of social policy.

It is difficult to prove that, as a result of their political socialisation, the public are falsely conscious. The concepts of hegemony and political socialisation are difficult to deal with.

Hall et al argue, however, that:

They should not simply be ignored as in much pluralist argument, but the problems of applying them should be ignored either. (Hall et al 1975, p 147)

Alternative views exist, therefore clearly there is not complete ruling class domination. A value-free assessment of the extent of bias is not possible. Runciman (1966, p 250) argues that one can show that the public's actions are not compatible with the ends they

wish to achieve. However, arguments concerned with the appropriateness of the ends the public desire are affected by values. Runciman himself claims

Only a theory of justice, therefore, can provide an adequate assessment of relative deprivation, and in so doing restate the 'false consciousness' argument in an appropriate form. (Runciman 1966, p 251)

Runciman's adoption of the Rawlsian theory of justice is discussed in more detail in chapters three and four.

Explanations of the existence of social policy are also difficult to prove. Hall et al argue that class conflict can be overemphasised.

Social policy is partly a history of conflict between interests; interests which have often been concentrated in different social classes. But it is also and even more clearly a history of conflicts being resolved, of accommodation, compromise and of agreements which cut across class boundaries. (Hall et al 1975, p 150)

Social policies are accounted for in elitist theories in different ways. Social policies can be seen as the result of the fact that the ruling group do not completely dominate society, or because of the humanitarianism of the ruling group. Alternatively it is suggested that social policies form part of a capitalist plot. This explanation is central to one particular type of elitist theory, conspiracy theory.

### Conspiracy theory

Conspiracy theory sets up an alternative to the view, generally found in social administration, that social policy arose out of a growing consensus on the need for more humanitarian policies (Hall et al 1975, p 6). Poor relief, it is argued, is provided because it serves a useful function in society, ensuring the maintenance of the existing capitalist order. Cloward and Piven draw attention to the weakness of the market system, especially its failure to provide full employment at all times.

The relief system we contend has made an important contribution toward overcoming these persisting weaknesses in the capacity of the market to direct and control men. (Cloward and Piven 1972, p 33).

Relief is seen by Cloward and Piven as having two functions. First, in times of economic distress to prevent and regulate disorder, and secondly, to instil the work ethic. As more people claim relief more emphasis is placed on the work ethic. The American antiscrounger campaign, they suggest, results from this emphasis.

Similar episodes in the past suggest that such calls for reform signal a shift in emphasis between the major functions of relief arrangements - a shift from regulating disorder to regulating labor. (Cloward and Piven 1972, p 342)

Incentives are maintained, they argue, by the degradation of the non-worker. Since many wage earners are treated badly, receiving low wages and working long hours, it is necessary to make non-workers suffer even more. Relief is seen as expanding to stop disorder and then turning into some form of work relief. Finally, when the danger of disorder is over, it contracts to almost nothing. During periods of contraction they argue those allowed to remain on the rolls, some of the aged, blind and orphaned, were subjected to the punitive and degrading treatment which always form part of systems of relief (Cloward and Piven 1972, p 348).

In some types of conspiracy theory social policy is seen as being used consciously by the ruling class as a means of social control. More recent Marxist explanations, Higgs (1978) argues, have been more complex, emphasising the problems created by the capitalist economic system rather than conscious exploitation by the ruling class (Gough 1975). A basic criticism of Cloward and Piven's analysis is that it does not correspond to reality, since relief does not always expand in periods of disruption and sometimes more overt forms of

social control are used (Higgins 1978). In addition, relief is given to non-disruptive groups, such as the disabled, who have little power. Cloward and Piven may have over-reacted to the domination of social administration by consensus theory, but Higgins argues, they provided a valuable service in reiterating so powerfully the significance of political factors in the creation of policy and undermining the naive faith in humanitarianism. (Higgins 1978, p 19)

### Syntheses of elitist and pluralist theories

Elitist and pluralist theories, as can be seen from the above discussion, have strengths and weaknesses. The possibility of synthesising elitist and pluralist interpretations of the policy making process, or of presenting an alternative model containing elements of both, to explain the evolution of social policies, has been investigated by several writers. In the general outline of pluralist and elitist theories presented in the preceding pages, a distinction was made between the two schools. Class theories were defined as a particular type of elitist theory. Although two schools can be identified, the distinction between the two is not always clearcut.<sup>7</sup> To summarise so far, those theories which cluster around the elitist end of the continuum emphasise the effect of inequalities of power on society, and the ruling group is seen as having the power to influence or determine, depending on the extremity of the theory, the organisation of society. Members of the ruling group have, it is argued, shared interests and a shared social background but the assessment of the strength of these ties varies from theory to theory. The ruling group, it is further argued, have resources available to them which enable them to ensure that their values are dominant in society. Theories at the class/elitist end of

the continuum suggest that there is a conflict of interest between the ruling and the ruled, even if the ruled, because of the ideological domination of the ruling group, are not aware of this. Theories at the pluralist end of the spectrum, when they acknowledge the existence of elites, tend to describe a situation in which elites have competing interests. In addition they do not see the elite groups as having the major influence on policy making. The shared belief in democracy, it is argued, prevents bias from existing in society. The belief that consensus rather than conflict exists is central to pluralist theories.

The majority of both pluralist and elitist writers present modifications to their interpretations. Miliband (1969) does not argue that ruling class domination is total and Dahl (1961) accepts that some people have more power than others. However, the tendency to over-predict remains. There is often a failure to recognise that as Bachrach and Baratz argue:

A variety of complex factors affect decision-making; the social, cultural, economic and political backgrounds of the individual participants; the values of the decision-making body as an entity in itself; the pressures brought to bear on the decision makers, individually and collectively by groups of interest and so on. To say, as some do, that these factors are equally important is as far from the mark as to assume, as others do that the only one is of overriding significance. (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, p 18)

Assessing the relative weight of these different factors in each decision making situation is difficult. Decisions may develop out of consensus or conflict. An open model in which conflict and consensus can be seen as variables, both influencing society's development, may therefore provide a useful tool.

For example Rex (1961) examines the roles played by conflict and consensus in our society: however his final model emphasises conflict



to a large extent. Although he posits the existence of a ruling class, he does not assume total domination but considers the interaction between the dominant and dominated groups.

The attempt to establish a legitimate order and its acceptance or rejection by those who are ruled indicates one of the ways in which the groups begin to interact.  
(Rex 1961, p.125)

Different factors, he says, affect the power of the dominated groups, such as their capacity for corporate action, their numbers and the importance to the rulers of the role they perform. Change can come about through advance in technology, revolution or compromise. Compromise, he argues, leads to a truce situation, that is cooperation between the classes. Welfare policies are seen as belonging neither to the working class nor to the bourgeoisie but to the truce situation. The acknowledgement of the fact that the power of the dominant varies from situation to situation, enables changes which occur without revolution to be explained. The truce situation is described by Rex as involving a balance of power.

- the cooperation of the truce can only be prolonged if the balance of power on which it depended in the first place is in some measure maintained.  
(Rex 1961, p 128)

Latent conflict, it is suggested, exists in a situation where a balance of power is being maintained, therefore the truce situation is precarious. The subjected class can passively resist, accommodate or revolt against the ideological legitimation of society put forward by the ruling class. The Weberian concept of legitimation is central to his analysis.

There clearly is a very important difference, especially in mass societies, between the acceptance and internalisation of an order proposed by the ruling class on the one hand

and the case in which consent is obtained by the manipulation of the sentiments of the subject group.  
(Rex 1961, p.182)

The process through which sentiment is manipulated is difficult to investigate and as the critics of elitist theories show existence of such manipulation cannot be conclusively proved. However, it can be argued that it must be included as a factor in any model explaining social change or the lack of it, and the evidence for and against it considered.

Bachrach and Baratz (1970) also present an open model of society, some aspects of which have already been referred to. When describing power, they differentiate between power, influence, force and authority. Power exists they argue, when there is a conflict of interests, when A bows to B, and A can threaten sanctions and B is aware of the situation, cares about the sanctions and cares more for the value which would be sacrificed should he disobey, than the one he is relinquishing by obeying. The situation is, Bachrach and Baratz argue, complicated by the rule of 'anticipated reactions', suggesting that those who seem to be exerting power over others only do so successfully because they limit their demands to those they know will be complied with (1970, pp.16-26). Not all those who have power exercise it, but they point out, power even if it is latent, can still have an effect, and power can be exercised unintentionally. Force differs from power in that objectives are achieved in the face of noncompliance. Authority differs from power in that it is legitimate and that it is related to the rules of the game. Finally, influence differs from power in that it does not depend on potential sanctions. Bachrach and Baratz stress the need to take an interactionist perspective, for example compliance may be intended to

occur through authority but may actually occur through influence. In looking at the organisation of society the major consideration, they argue, is who benefits from the present system. An important element in their discussion is their stress on non-decision. Through this concept they provide an alternative explanation of the policy making process.

Policy choices are frequently made in the absence of a clear-cut once-for-all decision. They simply 'happen' in the sense that certain steps are taken that are necessary but preliminary to a decision, and that sequence of steps acquires (as the saying goes) a life of its own.  
(Bachrach and Baratz 1970, p.42)

Thus Bachrach and Baratz talk about decisionless decisions which they say is an analogous concept to disjointed incrementalism as described by Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963), i.e. change occurs through step-by-step actions. Incremental decision making, they say, may or may not be deliberate. Change must be seen in the long term, and analysis of policy should look at the whole process and should not focus on the last incremental stages.

Higgins, discussing the concept of incrementalism in detail, suggests that by using the concept of 'incrementalism' an explanation of change in social policy can be provided.

The alternative explanation of change in social policy, adopted in this book, is by no means original. It has variously been described as 'muddling through' (Lindblom 1959), 'disjointed incrementalism' (Braybrooke and Lindblom 1963), 'piecemeal social engineering' (Popper 1963) or simply 'ad hocism'. These are not necessarily interchangeable terms but they so represent some of the main features of the alternative approach.  
(Higgins 1978, p.19)

Policy, she argues, progresses through compromise and adjustment.

The alternative model put forward by Higgins, centres round the notion of situational expediency. It does not really form a theory, she

admits, because predictions cannot be made, but she claims two general laws can be identified. These are 'the law of compulsive innovation' and the 'law of inescapable discontinuity'. There is, it is argued, no planned long term change. In this incremental process, means, it is claimed, often govern ends. Higgens adopts the interactionist perspective, acknowledging that their differing perceptions affect how people act. Her main reason for using the interactionist perspective is, she claims, analytical rather than evaluative.

That is, the prime task is not to determine whose viewpoint was right and whose was wrong but to show the weakness of any one theory of change and to demonstrate the effects of differing perceptions. (Higgens 1978, p.22)

By using the interactionist perspective and acknowledging that different people's views of the same situation vary the analysis is made more meaningful since exceptions can generally be found to any general theory.

The alternative approach, while explaining change primarily in terms of the perceptions and interests of particular groups of people in particular situations, also allows the possibility of limited generalisation, in claiming that in similar situations similar outcomes may result. (Higgens 1978, p.22)

Incrementalist policies can avoid major errors but they can be short-sighted. As opposed to the notion of conspiracy, the alternative model stresses compromise but inequalities of power are not ignored.

The emphasis placed on power varies from theory to theory. Higgens reiterates Lindblom's view that policy makers only consider a limited range of alternative policies. Hall et al criticise Lindblom for failing to stress the importance of the bias he notes.

Lindblom presents a picture of bias which is so integral to the society that conscious or planned exploitations of power need not be invoked to explain the malrepresentation

of different class interests in policy. Yet the passage is little more than a footnote to his general thesis and is not documented. (Hall et al 1975, p.146)

The mobilisation of bias is a notion central to Bachrach and Baratz's model:

Political systems and subsystems develop a 'mobilisation of bias'; a set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures ('rules to the game') that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups at the expense of others. Those who benefit are placed in a preferred position to defend and promote their interests. (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, p.43)

But they point out:

Elitism, however, is neither foreordained nor omnipresent: as opponents of the war in Viet Nam can readily attest, the mobilisation can and frequently does benefit a clear majority. (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, p.44)

A decision once made however, can be modified before the implementation or in the administration of the policy. The whole policy process, Bacharach and Baratz point out, favours the status quo since the innovators must win at every point if innovation is to occur.

Bachrach and Baratz see their open model as having three advantages. Any bias found to exist does not have to be proved to be conscious bias and they suggest that whether power is consciously implemented is irrelevant. Secondly the concept of the mobilisation of the bias can account for any bias that exists and not just the bias that appears to exist in capitalist countries. Thirdly they suggest, that a different mobilisation of bias may exist at different times and over different issues, thus the mobilisation of bias is seen as variable (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, pp.52-62). As Hall et al say:

What Bachrach and Baratz have done is to use part of the sociological critique of pluralist theories without assuming that a single elite or ruling class is the source of all major limitations on policy making. (Hall et al 1975, p.152)

Policy, therefore, can be seen as developing within outer limits which are set in accordance with the bias which exists in society. Pluralist theories emphasising democracy are likely to see the outer limits as being set by public opinion (Dahl 1961, p.324). However, as was said, politicians may not just accept these outer limits but consider whether they can go against them or mould them. Elitist theories see the outer limit as being set by the ruling elite. Hall et al, accept Miliband's analysis, in that they see the outer limits as being set by those who are dominant in society and the economic constraints within which a capitalist system must operate. They believe that these limits are, to a large extent, maintained by society's structural features.

- the making of day-to-day policy on social issues in Britain does operate within a distinctively pluralist process but the limits of policy making are set by elites which for many purposes are indistinguishable from what Miliband calls a ruling class. (Hall et al 1975, p.151)

Hall et al point out however:

Although we have chosen to characterise the policy process as bounded pluralism, one cannot assume that the class model completely explains the nature of the boundaries within which the process operates. (Hall et al 1975, p.151)

An open model therefore allows consideration of the extent to which outer limits are set by, and bias is mobilised in favour of, ruling elites and how this varies with the time, place and issue being investigated.

To summarise so far the synthesis of elitist or pluralist theories discussed tend to emphasise conflict and inequality and thus could be argued to be the elitist side of the elitist/pluralist continuum. Conflict and consensus however are seen as variables. It is suggested that dominant groups do exist, but, it is argued, the power of the dominant varies from situation to situation. The importance

of non-decision in the policy making process is emphasised. Bias, it is argued, exists in the incremental development of policy, as the range of alternatives considered is limited. The outer limits of the range of alternatives, some argue are set by public opinion, and others that they are set by the ruling class. Alternatively, it can be argued that they may be set by either public opinion or the ruling group depending on the situation.

This thesis is concerned in particular with the relationship between public opinion and policy. Pluralist theories see public opinion as an important influence, which gains its strength from the universal belief in democracy. In elitist theories the public are seen as having less power than the ruling group. Ideological competition it is argued, is loaded on the side of the dominant, thus the dominant class can affect, and to some extent determine, public opinion. In the synthesis of elitist and pluralist theories discussed, the power of the public is seen as varying from situation to situation and the mobilisation of bias, it is argued, is a variable requiring consideration; thus the extent to which policy is affected by public opinion must be considered in relation to each issue.

As was seen in the introduction, statements made by the Supplementary Benefits Commission in their report have suggested that legislation is strongly influenced by public opinion. The theories discussed above vary in their assessment of the relationship between public attitudes and policy, especially in their assessment of the effect of public attitudes on decisions and on the degree of consensus which exists in society. In this investigation, by considering the views of those interviewed, the views of pressure groups and the views embodied in legislation, these issues can be discussed. The following hypothesis presented in a null form will be considered:<sup>8</sup>

1. Consensus exists among those interviewed concerning which welfare principles are important.
2. Present social security legislation reflects the views of those interviewed.

#### Factors affecting attitudes

As can be seen from the above discussion the influence of public attitudes on the content of policy cannot be adequately assessed without considering which factors influence public attitudes. Attitudes may affect policy but other factors including policy itself<sup>9</sup> may affect attitudes. It is intended therefore to discuss explanations of opinion formation, looking briefly at some of the individual needs which attitudes can fulfil and then at some of the more social psychological and sociological explanations of why people hold the attitudes that they do.

#### The functions of attitudes

The problems which arise from the eclectic nature of social administration are illustrated by this discussion of the function of attitudes. The borrowed concepts used in this section and the discussion of them, fail to do justice to the research and analysis into attitudes, their formation and susceptibility to change, which has been undertaken by psychologists. However, the discussion also illustrates how analysis of an issue can be enriched by even limited use of models from other disciplines.

Psychological and social psychological explanations emphasise the individual. Reich and Adcock (1976, p.11), discussing psychologists interest in attitudes, suggest psychologists are interested in an



individual's need to hold certain attitudes and the susceptibility of attitudes to change. The functions which attitudes serve, they suggest, have not as yet been clearly defined.

– the proffered definitions being arbitrary and backed up with relatively little evidence.  
(Reich and Adcock 1976, p.128)

Functional approaches, Reich and Adcock argue, are severely limited both practically and empirically. Since the purpose of this discussion is to look generally at theories of attitude formation and not their practical or empirical implications and these limitations can be accepted.

Katz (1960) and Katz and Stotland (1959) outline some of the functions which attitudes perform for the individual. It should be noted that several categorisations of these functions can be made and thus as Reich and Adcock (1976, p.115) point out functional boundaries are arbitrary. Katz's model does provide a useful summary of the different needs which attitudes can fulfil. The purpose of discussing this model is simply to describe some of these needs. The fact that this model is only one approach used by psychologists in trying to understand attitude formation and change must be stressed.

Katz suggests four categories of functions which attitudes perform. These are the ego defence function, the value expressive function, the knowledge function and the instrumental adjustive utilitarian function.

Attitudes which are seen as helping the individual defend his ego are those which protect him from basic truths about himself and help him avoid reality. This function is closely related to psychoanalytical theory. Emotional conflict produces a situation in which ego defence is necessary and this can take several forms.

Responses to this situation are denial, identification with the aggressor, repression and projection. Scapegoating and people's need to define someone lower than themselves, are, it is argued, the result of the individual's emotional conflicts and part of an individual's ego defence mechanism. It should be noted that the same emotional conflicts can lead to different processes of tension reduction and thus different attitudes and that the same attitudes can be the product of different emotional conflicts (Sarnoff 1960).

Attitudes which can be seen as value expressive are those which help the individual construct his own self concept and express his central values and his self identity. New attitudes are learnt through identification with and imitation of, a favoured role.

Attitudes which perform the knowledge function contribute to the individual's understanding of society. These act as a frame of reference. Stereotypes and rumours (Allport 1965) are created to help the individual make sense of the world but the impressions formed go beyond the information given. Related to the knowledge function are the theories which emphasise the individual's need for consistency in attitude (Osgood et al 1957, Festinger 1964). There is a danger of over-prediction in these theories however Zajonc (1960) suggests that the theory of cognitive dissonance, like the theory of a vacuum, provides a good general rule.

Attitudes which perform an instrumental adjustive function are those which are positive to objects which satisfy the needs of the individual and negative to those which punish them. This function recognises individuals' needs to maximise rewards and minimise penalties and is developed from learning theory.

Negative attitudes toward another group therefore may arise as a result of an emotional conflict and the need to define someone lower than oneself (ego defence) or through the emphasising of positive aspects of one's own self image (value expressive function). The need to have consistent views can lead to the acceptance of a negative stereotype of a group, based on insufficient knowledge of that group (knowledge function). Finally the association of a group with something a person dislikes may lead to his dislike of that group (instrumental adjustive function). The theories discussed above are examples of attempts to explain why some people are more likely than others to adopt negative attitudes and which situations promote negative attitudes. Attitudes are formed as a person experiences life and are affected by the influences exerted on him in early and later life. Family, school, peer groups, religion, the media, opinion leaders and legislation all have some affect on people's attitudes. Social psychologists consider the process by which these socialising influences operate; here it is intended simply to discuss the nature of these influences.

#### Socialising influences and their effect on public attitudes

The family, it is generally agreed, is the most important early socialising influence (Lane and Sears 1964, Hennessey 1965). Children adopt partisan views before they have the knowledge to back them (Lane and Sears 1964, p.69). The influence of the family declines however as people move away from their family environment or as they become influenced by other factors. The education system shapes opinion through the conscious and unconscious teaching of values which in the main uphold the status quo. The education system

therefore socialises people into accepting their social position (Miliband 1969, Parkin 1972). The influence of religion on people's views, it is generally argued, is declining (Parkin 1972). Where it does have an effect (although there have been radical religious movements)<sup>10</sup> religion like education, tends to support the dominant values of society and thus helps maintain the status quo (Miliband 1969, p.205).

The influence of the media on the general public has been a major concern in recent years, and many differing views have been put forward concerning their effects. It is generally agreed that the media bring issues to the attention of the public. However, Key (1964) argues that the audience is self defining and, similarly Rose (1967, pp.173-194) claims that propaganda is seen through pre-existing views, therefore its major function is in reinforcing existing attitudes. The information presented by the media therefore, it is argued, can affect but does not necessarily determine attitudes and the processes of selecting information is influenced by the individual's needs. Key (1964), however, acknowledges that the constant repetition of themes is likely to influence people and Miliband (1969) points out that these themes tend to be those upholding dominant values. This, he argues, is because the content of the media is to a large extent determined by the owners of the media and the advertisers who provide much of the finance. Since both owners and advertisers usually occupy privileged positions in society, the views they put forward tend to uphold the status quo.

Papers sell by sensationalising issues and one of the ways of doing this is by playing on the public's moral indignation. Lane and Sears suggest:

When a particular issue is much in the forefront of public attention it is considerably more likely to draw irrational opinions. (Lane and Sears 1964, p.78)

Golding and Middleton (1978) in their analysis of the media coverage of social security argued that since the major concerns of the media are with crime and political disputes they tend to present all news from this perspective. Thus, in reports on the social security system the stress is on fraud and abuse. The process of selecting and presenting the news which has been described as 'agenda setting' influences and is influenced by other structural factors such as the economic and the political system and thus, generally upholds the status quo (Glasgow University Media Group 1976).

As was suggested in the introduction legislation also affects attitudes. If social security legislation focuses on the need to detect fraud and encourage people to work, then this will reinforce the public's views that this is necessary. Anomalies in legislation can also affect attitudes (Deacon 1978) and these can become good issues for the press and opinion leaders to take a stand on. Deacon (1976) describes the situation in the 1920's where, as a result of an anomaly, married women who had been working only because of the war effort were receiving unemployment benefit. If there had not been a war they would not have been working and thus would not have been in receipt of benefit. This anomaly, he argued, caused much hostility. In 1976, he argued, hostility was caused by the fact that the amount of tax rebate a person received depended on when they had become unemployed. In some cases people got large refunds as well as their benefits and it was these cases which were being publicised by the press.

Small groups such as workmates, friends, social organisations, have varying degrees of influence on a person depending on the value the individual places on the group, his personality and the issue under discussion. According to Lane and Sears (1964) groups which have most influence tend to be small, long-established, have frequent meetings, clear aims, much opportunity for members' participation, and a homogeneous membership to whom membership is important. The more relevant the issue is to the group, the more ambiguous the issue, and the less relevant the individual's experience, the greater is the influence of the group on his views (Lane and Sears 1964). Groups act as a reference point for people and can be seen as either normative, that is groups where norms are followed, or comparative, that is groups which people use to assess their position in society (Runciman 1966). The reference groups selected by people tend to be influenced but not determined by their position in society. The groups chosen for comparative purposes, Runciman (1966) argues, tend to be near one's own, but the media, it can be argued, are extending this range.

Opinion leaders exert their influence on public opinion through organisations such as the church, the education system, the political party system and small groups. The content of policy and the pronouncements of the opinion leaders who promote it can be seen as affecting attitudes. Key stresses the importance of opinion leaders and their ability to shape opinion. Concluding his discussion he argues:

The argument amounts essentially to the position that the masses do not corrupt themselves; if they are corrupt they have been corrupted. If this hypothesis has a substantial strain of validity, the critical element for the health of a democratic order consists in the beliefs, standards and competence of those who constitute the influentials, the

opinion leaders, the political activists in the order. That group, as has been made plain, refuses to define itself with great clarity in the American system; yet analysis after analysis points to its existence. If a democracy tends towards indecision, decay, disaster the responsibility rests here not in the mass of the people. (Key 1968, p.244)

The media provides a platform for many opinion leaders allowing them to extend their influence. Opinion leaders can be found in all strata of society but those in the higher social strata tend to have more resources which can be used to extend their influence. This is stressed by Popay (1977) in her development of Cohen's discussion (1972) of the generation of moral panics. Those in privileged positions are likely to wish to maintain their privileged positions, thus the opinion leaders with most resources are those most liable to wish to uphold the status quo. Some opinion leaders, however, encourage the public to reject the status quo such as the leaders of some political parties. The effect of opinion leaders is modified by the public's evaluation of the opinion leader (Lane and Sears 1964, p.43).

Politicians perform the role of opinion leaders. Views on the role of politicians and parties in influencing public opinion vary as the literature on class consciousness makes clear. While some writers (Parkin 1972, Mann 1973, p.71) see a major role for politicians, trade unions and the Labour Party in awakening class consciousness, others (Moorhouse and Chamberlain 1974) argue that it is personal experience which will influence attitudes.

To summarise so far, with the exception of families, peer groups and opinion leaders, who may or may not uphold the status quo, there is a tendency among most of the other sources of influence discussed above to emphasise the dominant values. Dominant welfare values are legitimated through welfare legislation. These values are examined in more detail in the following chapter.

Experience of welfare and unemployment

From the above discussion it appears that attitudes which coincide with the dominant values are constantly being reinforced, but they may be rejected if they are contrary to the individual's experience of the welfare system. Views on the social security system are likely to be affected by the individual's own experience and the experience of his family, workmates and neighbours as well as by the values which are dominant in society. There appears to be general agreement that attitudes meet individual needs and that influences such as the family and education, affect attitudes. There is less agreement over how personal experiences such as experiences of unemployment affect attitudes. The extent to which a person's experience and life situation leads to their adoption of attitudes which contradict the dominant welfare values will thus be considered.

This research was carried out at a time when levels of unemployment were increasing. Experience of the labour market, especially direct and indirect experience of unemployment, it was felt, was likely to be related to attitudes to the welfare system. Sinfield (1970) found in his study of North Shields that in times of low unemployment there was stigma attached to being one of the long-term unemployed. It can be suggested therefore that in times of low employment when few people have had experience of unemployment, more people will resent the unemployed, and that as unemployment levels increase, this resentment will decrease. The recent anti-welfare backlash suggests this may not be the case. Jordan (1973) suggests high unemployment resulting from an economic crisis is likely to increase the division between claimants and the rest of the society. The effects of society's economic problems on public



attitudes are also mentioned by Donnison (quoted in Deacon 1978) and Pinker (1971). Donnison suggested that people are afraid of the fall in their own living standards and Pinker that people's attitudes harden when a recession follows a boom, since this situation increases relative deprivation. Thus, as can be seen, both high and low levels of unemployment have been associated with anti-welfare attitudes. Since this study is not longitudinal, the relationship between unemployment levels and attitudes through time, cannot be assessed. However, the relationship between unemployment levels in different areas and attitudes, will be considered and this is discussed in more detail below.

The relationship between personality, experience and attitudes is likely to be complex. Similar experiences can affect different people in different ways. Experience of unemployment may make people more sympathetic to the unemployed and increase their understanding of the situation. On the other hand experience of unemployment may make people less sympathetic because their experience of social security increases their awareness of fraud, either because there is fraud or because of the system's emphasis on the need to avoid fraud. Different people may be affected in different ways, however a general association between particular experiences and particular attitudes may exist. For example, more of those with experience of being unemployed may hold anti-welfare attitudes. Even if there is found to be an association between particular employment experiences and attitudes, it may not be possible to explain why that particular association exists. However, some of the comments made by those interviewed may suggest likely reasons.

In looking at the relationship between unemployment experiences and attitudes, in this research, firstly it is intended to investigate the relationship between personal experience of unemployment and attitudes, and secondly the relationship between indirect experience of unemployment and attitudes.<sup>11</sup> The relationship between personal experience of unemployment and attitudes will be investigated by comparing the attitudes of people who had been unemployed with those who had not and considering the following hypothesis in the null form:

3. Attitudes to welfare are not associated with whether or not the interviewee has had personal experience of unemployment.

#### Indirect experience of unemployment

People do not have to experience unemployment personally for it to affect their attitudes. However Nichols and Armstrong (1976), in their study of workers in a chemical factory carried out in 1970-73, suggest that unemployment may have to be very widespread before it affects the attitudes of workers who have not been directly affected by it. They found that it was not until 1973 that uncertainty about job security began to permeate the chemical factory they studied (Nichols and Armstrong 1976, p.32). At the time of this study unemployment was much more widespread than in 1973. Indirect experience of unemployment may affect people's attitudes through their altruism or their self interest. A person's direct and indirect experience of unemployment will be affected by both their occupation and their area of residence, since unemployment levels in different areas and different occupational groups vary. These factors were

thus used as indicators of indirect experience of unemployment. Thus the attitudes of those in different occupational groupings and resident in different areas were compared.

#### Immediate area and town of residence

Areas of residence can be looked at on a variety of levels. First, whether there is a relationship between the 'immediate area of residence', that is the smallest geographically definable community in terms of road, river, wall and canal boundaries, and attitudes, will be considered. The immediate area of residence is likely to house people of broadly similar occupational levels and the types of employment open to them in the area will be similar, thus their occupational experience and experience of unemployment will be similar. They will also have had similar experiences of factory closure.

The unemployment level of the town of residence will also be considered. Many people travel into the town to work, therefore the unemployment level of the nearest town may be more relevant and may have more effect on attitudes.

#### West of Scotland

Some people, however, travel quite far to work, thus the unemployment level of the larger going to work area, as opposed to the town, may be more relevant to people. The sample was selected from the West of Scotland only (and both areas were in Lanarkshire), thus both areas were in the same going to work area. The results of this research will be compared with the results of other research. Any differences found between attitudes in the West of Scotland and other

areas which cannot be accounted for by differences in the research method, may be due to cultural differences rather than differences in unemployment levels, but it can be argued that unemployment has strongly affected Scottish culture. The culture of the West of Scotland stems from its history as a depressed area and the needs of the inhabitants to fight for survival as much of its recent literature shows (e.g. McIlvanney 1966, Bryden 1972, McMillan 1974, McGrath 1977).

### Occupation

Although some industries are more prone to unemployment than others a person's degree of skill is more likely to affect their ability to find and keep work. The relationship between occupation and attitudes will be investigated. The occupational groups to be compared are discussed below. Before going on to consider them, it is necessary to refer to the relationship between occupation and area of residence, and class.

### Occupation, area of residence and class

Occupation and area of residence are indicators of class position. An individual's experience, as has been said, is related to his position in society and a person's position in society is generally referred to in terms of class. In examining employment experiences and immediate areas of residence, class experiences are in fact being examined. The term 'class' however is used in a variety of ways, some broad, some narrow. Aron (1969) suggests that definitions are ambiguous because ambiguity exists in reality. The more narrow definitions of class, following from Marx's analysis, define classes solely in terms of their relationship to the means of

production. In Weber's analysis of social stratification class is defined in slightly broader terms to include not only the ownership of the means of production but also the ownership of all types of property and skills. In English however, as Runciman (1966) points out, class is used to cover not only market position but also status, i.e. the prestige gained by a person through his consumption, life-style and interaction, and his power situation. Differences in class status and power in British society tend to reinforce one another. Thus class in its broadest sense can be seen, in the sense of a collectivity of those in similar market, status and power positions, and to define a group as a class it is not necessary to refer to their consciousness, that is, whether it is a class for itself.

Occupation can be seen as an indicator of a person's class position. On its own, occupation indicates a person's relationship to the means of production, that is class in the narrow sense. With other indicators, occupation acts as an indicator of class as a collectivity of those in similar market, status and power positions, that is class in its broader sense. People tend to live in areas which they feel are in keeping with their status, thus the immediate area of residence of an individual is a guide to their position in society even in areas designed to create a social mix. Heraud suggests:

It appears that a recognisable degree of social segregation is an invariable concomitant of any housing development, whether or not this is guided by attempts to reduce such segregation. (Heraud 1975, p.282)

Thus immediate area of residence can be seen as an indicator of status and as was said, class and status are both related to power. It is clear therefore that occupation and area of residence are not only

important in that they are likely to affect employment experience but related to this, they are also indicators of class in its broader sense. As has been said, both class and area of residence are related to a person's likelihood of experiencing unemployment. The main concern of this thesis is with the effect of the experience of unemployment on attitudes and the discussion of the results will be concerned with this issue. Some comments on the implications of the findings for class theory will be made if relevant, especially in the discussion of the relationship between public opinion and legislation.

### Occupation

In considering the relationship between occupation and attitudes the occupational groups to be compared must be considered. In Marx's analysis the most central division in society was seen to be between the owners of the means of production, who can be identified as the ruling class and whose ideas are the ruling ideas, and the rest of society. Within the rest of society, however, further divisions exist and Marx accepted that while the main division in society is dichotomous a plurality of classes did exist (Giddens 1973, pp.30-31). The clearest division, Runciman argues (1966) is between the manual and non-manual strata. The major difference between manual and non-manual strata lies in what Lockwood (1958) describes as their work situation. Non-manual workers are on the side of production where decisions are made; they have greater job security, less chance of unemployment, annual salary increments, a guaranteed pension and a shorter working week. In addition Runciman (1966) argues the manual stratum or working class tend to be collectivist and fraternalistic in outlook and the non-manual stratum or middle class

individualistic and egoistic. Although there may have been some convergence between the incomes of affluent manual workers and the lower paid non-manual workers the differences outlined above remain significant.

Thus neither the partial equivalence of earnings between the manual and non-manual class, nor their common propertylessness, should be allowed to outweigh the distinction in class situation between them.  
(Runciman 1966, p.48)

When considering the relationship between occupation and attitudes the attitudes of manual and non-manual workers will be compared. As was discussed earlier it is also intended to compare the attitudes of those interviewed with the attitudes embodied in the legislation. Thus whether there is a divergence of opinion between the ruling ideas and the ruled is also to be investigated.

#### Hypotheses concerned with indirect experience of welfare

The following null hypotheses will be used to focus the consideration of the relevance of the findings to the issues discussed above:

4. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to occupation.
5. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to their immediate area of residence.

As was said, area of residence will be considered on a variety of levels. Thus it will also be hypothesised that:

6. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to the town of residence.
7. The attitudes of those interviewed in the West of Scotland are the same as the attitudes found to exist in other parts of the country by other researchers.

Other background factors

Several other background factors may also be associated with attitudes. Due to the limited resources available only a limited number of variables could be investigated. Since experience of unemployment is the main factor to be considered and since the position of women in the labour market is less clear, it was decided that men only should be interviewed. A person's experience is clearly affected by their age, thus whether there is any relationship between age and attitudes will be considered. Thus it will be hypothesised again in the null form that:

8. There is no relationship between the age of those interviewed and their attitudes.

Pinker (1979), in his discussion of egoism and altruism, suggested that concern for one's family and their need was central to a person's values and took priority over his concern for the needs of others. Information on whether the attitudes of married men to welfare differ from those of single men will thus be considered and it will be hypothesised that:

9. There is no relationship between the marital status of those interviewed and their attitudes.

Consistency of attitudes

As was stated earlier, the formation of attitudes is a complex process. Not only do people have different experiences and react differently to the same experiences, but an individual himself may have contradictory experiences and this is important when considering the possibility of attitude change. As Mann states in a discussion of elitist and pluralist theories of government:



The conclusion is that both theories grossly overstate the amount of both value consensus between individuals and value consistency within individuals that actually exists. Cohesion in liberal democracy depends rather on the lack of consistent commitment to general values of any sort and on the 'pragmatic acceptance' by subordinate classes of their limited roles in society.  
(Mann 1970, p 423)

Bulmer (1975) suggests that people's images of society are fragmentary. The dominant values emphasised in society may be contradicted by people's own experiences, which themselves may be contradictory. Pinker makes a similar point, describing how people live in a society where the values of both the economic and the social market are evident, thus their experience involves contradictions (Pinker 1977). Mann (Bulmer 1975), in an analysis of working class consciousness, suggests people experience contradictions in their roles as producers and consumers. The extension of logic which would lead to these contradictions being made explicit, Nichols and Armstrong (1976) point out, seldom takes place. Mann (1973) suggests that the experience of the working class leads to the production of simplistic deviant ideas but no abstract view of an alternative society is created. The fact that there are contradictions in person's thinking may, as Nichols and Armstrong (1976) suggest:

afford a leverage to argument and to the pressure of experience which would not be there if his thinking was wholly consistent. (Nichols and Armstrong 1976, p.175)

The extent of contradiction is likely to vary from person to person and subject to subject. Whether people's attitudes to social security are consistent must be investigated. Thus the null hypothesis:

10. The attitudes of those interviewed to welfare  
are consistent.

will be considered.

### Knowledge of benefit levels

A person's experience of unemployment may increase their knowledge of the social security system but knowledge of the system may or may not affect attitudes. The relationship between experience of unemployment and the welfare system both direct and indirect, and the effect of the knowledge gained from this experience, has been discussed in detail. In addition, it is intended to consider in particular whether there is any relationship between knowledge of benefit levels and attitudes. Bennett suggests that:

- though people are aware of inflation, there is a sort of time lag in their reaction to it, so that it is hard to convince people that benefits of £25 or £30 a week are totally inadequate when on 10 years ago they would have been pleased to earn that much. (Bennett 1980, p.30)

It will be hypothesised therefore that:

11. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to their knowledge of benefit levels.

### Possibility of attitude change

In order to assess whether it is possible to change attitudes it is important to know the effects of the factors discussed above. Even when we have tested the hypothesis the reasons for the relationship may not be clear. It may also be difficult to separate out clearly the influences of the factors discussed since they are likely to be interrelated. The small size of the sample means investigation of the interrelationship is not possible. It is hoped, however, that some insight into the relationship between the factors discussed and attitudes, will be gained. If knowledge of unemployment and dependency produces greater sympathy for the unemployed then people may become more sympathetic if more information

on the problems of the unemployed is made available. Secord and Backman (1964) argue that changing individuals is relatively useless if the social conditions that produce the prejudice are themselves left unchanged. If deterrents remain as part of the system, social re-education may be unsuccessful, leaving attitudes unchanged. Thus if we find that people remain unsympathetic to the unemployed despite experience of, or knowledge of unemployment, it may partly be the result of the fact that the structure reinforces the belief that the unemployed are undeserving. Whether the emphasis placed on abuse in the social security system is necessary is debatable. These issues will be discussed again in the conclusion.

### Summary

In the introduction various statements made about public attitudes to the unemployed and their relationship to policy were considered. In this chapter the definition of public opinion, theories concerning the nature of government, in particular the relationship between public opinion and policy, and factors affecting public opinion have been discussed. Whether there is consensus among the general public on which principles should be central to the welfare system, and whether public attitudes coincide with the dominant values, will be investigated. The value issues which are to be investigated are discussed in chapter three. In looking at the factors which affect public opinion it is intended to concentrate on whether there is any relationship between direct and indirect experience of unemployment and attitudes. The extent to which knowledge of benefit levels, marital status and age are related to attitudes to welfare, will also be examined. These issues will be investigated with the use of the following hypotheses:

1. Consensus exists among those interviewed concerning which welfare principles are important.
2. Present social security legislation reflects the views of those interviewed
3. Attitudes to welfare are not associated with whether or not the interviewee has had personal experience of unemployment.
4. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to occupation.
5. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to their immediate area of residence.
6. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to the unemployment levels of the town of residence.
7. The attitudes of those interviewed in the West of Scotland are the same as the attitudes found to exist in other parts of the country by other researchers.
8. There is no relationship between the age of those interviewed and their attitudes.
9. There is no relationship between the marital status of those interviewed and their attitudes.
10. The attitudes of those interviewed to welfare are consistent.
11. The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to knowledge of benefit levels.

In the next chapter the principles of welfare which are central to the views of those interviewed and which are central to legislation will be discussed.

Chapter 11 is intended to discuss the individual principles of welfare which affect the treatment of those dependent on assistance, in particular whether stigma is imposed on the obligation of the content of public attitudes. This chapter is based on the models and principles discussed

above.

It is possibly assumed that there is a tendency to view welfare issues on related issues. The different views on welfare issues which exist have been discussed in terms of welfare by Titmuss (1974). Such models are based on a misunderstanding of public attitudes. As Titmuss says:

... in all forms of theorizing and model building is that sociologists may confuse the social with the collective reality of ordinary life. There is especially danger when the model is not only descriptively prescriptive and not only prescriptive but also prescriptive and prescriptive (1974, p. 101).

Any of the views of welfare outlined by Titmuss and the views of those interviewed will be considered in Chapter 12.

## CHAPTER 3

## PRINCIPLES OF WELFARE

The importance of examining public attitudes and legislation, both of which affect the treatment of welfare beneficiaries, has been stressed. In chapter 2 theories concerning the effects of public opinion and factors affecting public opinion were considered. In this chapter it is intended to discuss the individual principles and models of welfare which affect the treatment of those dependent on state assistance, in particular whether stigma is imposed or felt. The investigation of the content of public attitudes will then concentrate on the models and principles discussed.

Models of welfare

It is generally assumed that there is a tendency for people to hold similar views on related issues. The different orientations of opinion on welfare issues which exist have been discussed in terms of models of welfare by Titmuss (1974). Such models can be a useful tool in our understanding of public attitudes; however, they must be used with care. As Pinker warns:

The danger in all forms of theorizing and model building in social policy is that sociologists may confuse their own constructs with the subjective reality of ordinary users. This danger is especially strong when the models in question contain strongly prescriptive and moral elements. (Pinker 1971, p.98)

Whether any of the models of welfare outlined by Titmuss are reflected in the views of those interviewed will be considered. It is intended therefore in this section to discuss the models of welfare outlined by Titmuss and then go on and consider in more detail the principles which form the basis of these models

The first model which Titmuss outlines (1974, p.31) is the 'residual' model of welfare. Welfare needs, according to those whose views this model describes, should be met by the family and/or the private market. State services are seen as being necessary only for deviants, i.e. the residue. The exchange and price principles of the economic market are central to this model. The individualised actuarial process of welfare provision, the insurance principle, is favoured thus illustrating the acceptance of the principle of reciprocity defined in narrow terms by those who favour this model. The individualised actuarial system is based on four assumptions, that the agreement is voluntary, that the individual premium is related to individual risks, that the contract will be honoured, and that contingency determines the level of redistribution. Those involved in this type of group insurance believe that they have earned any assistance they receive. Although these assumptions have been questioned, the belief that they hold is strong and they are of central importance to this model. The emphasis which those favouring the residual model place on the economic market as a means of meeting the needs of the welfare consumer, is related to their concern with the principles of individual responsibility and reciprocity. Self-help is encouraged and although some assistance is advocated for those who cannot help themselves, their deviant status is emphasised.

The model of institutionalised redistribution (1974, p.31) outlined by Titmuss is, he argues, based on theories of the multiple effects of social change and the economic system and can be related to the principle of equality. A state welfare system which meets needs as a right of citizenship is advocated. Need can be variously defined and although equality is generally the ideal end state

associated with this model it too can be variously defined. There is room for disagreement therefore among those who favour this model on the operational definition of these principles, but there is agreement on the fact that the principles of meeting need, citizenship and equality require to be met outside the economic market.

The third model outlined by Titmuss is the industrial achievement performance model. This model is derived from economic and psychological theories concerned with incentives, efforts, rewards and the formation of class and group loyalties. Distribution according to this model should be on the basis of merit, work performance and productivity (1974, p31). Industrial efficiency is seen as a basic goal and the purpose of the welfare system, it is suggested, should be to perform the role of handmaiden to industry. Societal responsibility is stressed to the extent that it is seen as society's responsibility to provide incentives.

Pinker criticises the models presented by Titmuss arguing that they oversimplify the situation, forcing a choice between the economic and social market or capitalism and socialism. Titmuss, he says:

- defined the problem in such a way as either to exclude the middle way of the mixed economy from serious consideration or to place it firmly within the context of the economic market alternative. (Pinker 1979, p.233)

Both the collectivist and Marxist tradition he feels are left out of the debate by Titmuss. Pinker outlines a third approach which he feels has been neglected and which he offers as an alternative to the approaches which emphasise the economic or the social market. The third welfare model he describes involves a welfare system based on a mixed economy, and draws on the work of Keynes and Beveridge who, he says, saw that the profit motive was unlovable but felt that entrepreneurship was necessary in order to create the prosperity



needed to abolish poverty. This approach emphasises the importance of a pluralist society and the need for gradual reform which it is hoped will emerge from a consensus and increased social unity. British social policy analysts since the second world war, Pinker argues, have put forward a critical view of industry and industrial values.

The cause of national efficiency and the association of social policy with patriotic sentiment which Beveridge brought as an Edwardian legacy to his Report, have ceased to be dominant themes in social policy and studies. Yet within this tradition social policy and administration had a vitally important intellectual and practical role to perform. (Pinker 1979, p.248)

Pinker develops the mercantilist argument stressing the positive advantages of a mixed economy. This model stresses the importance of the economic market accepting some state intervention such as protectionist policies, but emphasising national efficiency as a goal. Reading The Idea of Welfare it can be argued that it is Pinker rather than Titmuss who oversimplifies the distinction between the economic and the social market presenting the choice between American capitalism and USSR socialism, if the mercantile model is rejected (1979, p.233).

The three models Titmuss outlines can each be seen as involving some sort of economic mix. The residual, model although it stresses economic values, does allow that those in need should be assisted although their deviant status is emphasised. In the industrial achievement model the values of the economic market are seen as influencing directly the way in which welfare needs are met. The institutionalised redistributive model concentrates on the welfare sector and does not examine how it relates to the economic market. This is particularly unfortunate since this model is closest to the

type of welfare system which Titmuss himself favoured<sup>1</sup> and which is thus given much attention throughout his work. However, Pinker's analysis can be similarly criticised. Pinker (1971, p.137) argues that people are socialised into the economic market and suggests that this will affect their response to the social market. In his later analysis Pinker (1979) advocates a model of welfare based on a mixed economy but this third model does not, as Pinker says, attempt to reconcile man's capitalist, democratic and welfare value (1979, p.251). Pinker therefore criticises Titmuss for failing to do adequately what he himself does not attempt to do. Despite their limitations Titmuss's models provide a useful tool for empirical research.

### Models and principles

The principles central to the models discussed above are discussed in more detail below. These principles as was said, are not always found in the combinations assumed in practice. Because of this it is intended to consider the major principles in detail separately. When looking at public attitudes, both which principles are favoured and whether the combination of principles favoured bears any relationship to the models discussed, will be considered.

To summarise so far the residual model stresses individual responsibility and a system of individualised actuarial insurance which is based on the principle of reciprocity and which is seen as enabling the individual to meet his own need. Blame is attached to those who fail to meet their own need. The principles of individual responsibility and reciprocity are thus central to this model. The industrial achievement model emphasises both incentives and

efficiency. It is the individual's as well as society's responsibility to promote industrial development and any welfare system must be compatible with this end. The institutionalised redistributive model emphasises the principle of societal responsibility and sees it as society's responsibility to meet need which is defined in relative terms. The concept of need and poverty must therefore be discussed. The principles of equality and citizenship are also central to this model and these too are discussed. It is intended therefore to look in more detail at the principles of individual and societal responsibility, reciprocity, incentives, meeting need, equality and citizenship. In the discussion of these principles the work of theorists from a variety of disciplines will be drawn upon in situations where their analysis enriches understanding of the concepts to be discussed.

#### Individual/societal responsibility

The residual model, as was seen, puts an emphasis on individual responsibility. The discussion of the models of welfare shows the term responsibility to be relevant in two senses, first responsibility in the sense of duty and secondly responsibility in the sense of causation. Both senses have been a constant focus for debate in the literature on social welfare and the following discussion is therefore selective.

Looking first at individual responsibility in the sense of duty it can be suggested that the growth of state welfare provision over the past century shows that there is acceptance of the fact that the state has some responsibility for meeting welfare needs. State intervention is now accepted but disagreement still exists about how

much and what kind of intervention there should be. The different views about the type of intervention which should exist are reflected in the fact that more than one system of welfare has developed. Titmuss (1963) describes three systems - the social, fiscal and occupational welfare systems<sup>2</sup> These relate to the models of welfare discussed above. The major issue on which these models differ is their assessment of the role of society and the individual in meeting needs. The views of the public on this issue will thus be investigated.

Individual responsibility for poverty in the sense of causation of poverty requires further discussion. The state has to some extent accepted the responsibility, in terms of duty, for meeting welfare needs, but the role of the individual in causing his dependency is still stressed and 'blaming the victim' (Ryan 1971) is still a common response to those in need. The welfare state stereotype (i.e. the idea of the welfare system dealing only with the lower classes whom it spoon feeds thus sapping initiative) which Titmuss discussed (1963, p.37) is still prevalent. The danger that the poor will accept this negative label, pointed out by Gerth and Mills (1954) and referred to by Titmuss remains.

Gans (1970) argues that the nineteenth century discussion of moral lapses has been replaced by discussion of pathologies and Kincaid that the

supposed necessity of re-educating the poor tends to be discussed less in the religious authoritarian language of moral improvement and more in the blander idiom of lay psychoanalysis. (Kincaid 1973, pp.171-172)

Some explanations, however, still refer to moral lapses. One of the most common is the 'layabout theme' that is the poor are poor because they do not want to work. This theme is prominent even or especially

in times of high unemployment. Hill (1972), in a review of Labour's record 1964-70, says that in 1968 the government were influenced by campaigns alleging abuses of the social security system by the unemployed and suggests that this was perhaps due to their unwillingness to accept the responsibility for a rising unemployment rate.

Some suggest poverty is partly or wholly the result of the mental state of the poor and see this as being either genetically or culturally caused.<sup>3</sup> Cultural and genetic explanations do not necessarily involve individual blame but often blame is attached. The culture of poverty argument (Lewis 1959, 1967) as its name suggests sees cultural differences as resulting in the poor's inability to meet their needs. This argument tends to be put forward in scientific terms rather than in the moralistic terms of the layabout theme. The poor, it is claimed are, apathetic, disorganised and not properly integrated. Their values differ from the dominant values of society and they accept dependency. Thus the poor are seen as possessing an alternative culture. Some dominant values are accepted by the majority of the poor however, thus the theory in fact refers to a subculture of poverty and not a culture of poverty (1967, p.xliv).

The different sexual practices of the poor especially the high incidence of the abandonment of wives and the tendency to have larger families is a cultural difference stressed by those who put forward a culture of poverty argument. The relationship between poverty and family size is often stressed. People's views on this relationship and the part which low wages pay in causing poverty is worthy of

investigation. Kincaid (1973, p.20) argues that calling the poverty of the low paid 'child poverty' implies that it is caused by large families as opposed to low wages.

In Britain more emphasis is placed on the related explanation of cultural deprivation than on the culture of poverty argument (Holman 1978, p.111). Rather than suggesting that the poor possess a different culture it is suggested that the children of the poor, due to inadequate socialisation, are not equipped with the tools to succeed. The concept of cultural deprivation gained political predominance when Keith Joseph (Joseph 1975) popularised the notion of the cycle of deprivation.

The culture of poverty and cultural deprivation arguments have been much criticised (Gans 1970, Holman 1978). The criticism of the research studies used to back up the culture of poverty arguments have been discussed in detail and criticised by Holman (1978, p.127). One general criticism is that many of the cultural factors referred to by theorists could be argued to be consequences rather than causes of poverty and dependency. Gans suggests that style of life would change with economic conditions and argues that this can be seen as having happened if we look at the historical data, e.g. European immigrants in America. In addition, not all the poor exhibit the characteristics described. Despite these weaknesses the culture of poverty and cultural deprivation theses remain popular.

Genetic explanations, although perhaps becoming less popular, still have some proponents. These explanations see poverty as being due to inherited inferiority especially with regard to the intelligence of the poor and to a lesser extent their mental health (Jensen 1972, Eysenk 1973). The research studies used to back up

genetic claims can also be criticised (Holman 1978).<sup>4</sup> While inequalities in life chances remain environmental factors are brought into play thus the hereditary argument can never be proved. Many of the factors referred to by those putting forward genetic arguments could also be argued to be the consequences rather than the causes of poverty. Furthermore even Eysenk states that genetic transmission is likely to produce differences between parents and children as well as similarities and that there is a regression to the mean.<sup>5</sup>

#### Societal responsibility and causation

Of the arguments which do not see poverty in the terms of individual responsibility some emphasise the inevitability of poverty, others blame the way society is organised. Just as genetic explanations emphasise the inevitability of individual inferiority, (although one can still ask why those judged as genetically inferior should suffer) so the stages of growth theory (Rostow 1971a, 1971b) emphasises the naturalness of poverty in some societies or sectors within societies and their individual members. Poverty is seen as one stage of a nation's development. For example Townsend discusses -

The stages of growth theory of development implies that the poverty of poor nations was relieved as their economies grew. It implies that the poverty of traditional societies is natural and encourages them to be patient until the preconditions for take off and industrialization are established. Yet this is no more convincing than the corresponding theory, which held widespread currency throughout the West in the decade or more following the second world war, that poverty within societies is gradually eliminated as their economies grow.  
(Townsend 1970, pp.11-12)

Thus nature or fate are emphasised and no solution is advocated.

This type of explanation which puts the needs of an industrial society before the needs of the individual is compatible with the industrial achievement model.

Titmuss also stresses inevitable processes to some extent although he stresses the need to act to assist the poor rather than leaving the outcome to fate. Dependency he suggests is due to natural social and cultural factors. Natural factors include childhood, old age and ill health. The social and cultural factors he argues are 'man made dependencies'.

They include unemployment and underemployment, protective and preventive legislation, compulsory retirement from work, and delayed entry of young people into the labour market and an infinite variety of subtle cultural factors ranging from the 'right' trade union ticket to the possession of an assortment of status symbols  
(Titmuss 1963, p.43)

Dependency not due to natural causes therefore is seen largely as a result of industrialisation and the increasing division of labour.

In cases of dependency which result from unemployment or industrial accidents it is not always possible to identify the wrongdoer.<sup>6</sup>

Social services Titmuss argues are necessary as compensations for the diswelfares which emerge as a result of our industrial society and whose causal agents cannot be identified. If the causal agents could be identified redress could be sought through the court.

But multiple causality and the diffusion of disservices - the modern choleras of change - make this solution impossible. (Titmuss 1968, p.133)

Some of those putting forward explanations which focus on societal causes point to the exploitation of the poor by the rest of society and of poor nations by the rest of the world. Townsend (1970) suggests that there is a need to look at the whole system of welfare and not just the financially dependent. It would, he claims, be naive not to recognise that the West have much to gain in the short term from the poverty of the developing countries even though policies



of exploitation may not be in the long term interests of the western world. The discussion, it is argued, must extend beyond poverty to inequality.

Poverty is not just a lack of resources required to live a normal life. It is a lack of resources in fact used and felt to be rightly used by the rich. (Townsend 1970, p.45)

Kincaid argues (1973) that the ineffectiveness of the social security system leads directly to the poverty of those who rely on it. Gans (1972) and Kincaid (1973) stress the part played by poverty in the maintenance of the values of a competitive and inegalitarian society -

So long as society is organized on a deeply competitive basis, it appears as indispensable that social failure should exist for individuals as a visible and possible fate. (Kincaid 1973, p.24)

Criticism of the emphasis placed on the responsibility of society by writers such as Titmuss exists. Reissman (1977) and also Pinker (1977) in his introduction to Reissman's book argue that Titmuss overestimates the social causes of poverty and underestimates the role of the individual. Titmuss it can be argued was well aware of the public emphasis on individual causes of poverty particularly in the case of the unemployed. In the thirties he argues there was safety in numbers -

The social system could still be blamed for its failure to give men the right to any sort of work. (Titmuss 1963, p.221)

In 1959 when the essay first appeared he felt it could not, and arguments must change. Pinker (1971, p.112) makes the point that justice must also involve punishment. When need exists however, it can be argued altruistic concerns predominate. In Titmuss's view this was the case. Titmuss was aware of the strong belief in individualism in society. He suggested that the lack of compensation for diswelfares is partly the result of the dominant values which exist in society.

...in the deeply held belief, for instance, that men who are poor deserve to be poor and sick and that those who are excluded from society merit exclusion.  
(Titmuss 1968, pp.156-157)

Despite this acknowledgement of the importance placed by the public on individual responsibility Titmuss still felt that it was feasible for a system of welfare based on the institutionalised redistributive model to exist.

In the paragraphs above views on individual and societal causation of and responsibility for poverty have been discussed. The following two general hypotheses, presented in the null form, will allow the discussion of the results to focus on the issues discussed. The first hypothesis refers to responsibility in the sense of causation, the second in the sense of duty.

1. All those receiving welfare benefits are seen by those interviewed as undeserving.
2. Those interviewed see the meeting of their own welfare needs as the responsibility of the individual.

In particular, since the majority of controversy surrounding welfare benefits focusses on the unemployed, the views on the deservedness of the unemployed will be investigated.

### Reciprocity

The residual model of welfare described by Titmuss sees welfare needs as being met through individualised actuarial processes. Individuals contribute in the expectation of a turn in the future. The principle of reciprocity is central to any welfare system based on an insurance system however reciprocity as a concept has been variously defined. It is now intended therefore to discuss the

concept in more detail. Pinker (1974) argues that there are no longer any non-welfare reasons such as fear of rebellion, or concern for one's soul, for meeting welfare needs. He does, however, emphasise the importance of concern for one's own welfare as a motive for the construction and maintenance of a welfare society. Reciprocity he feels is a central concept in peoples welfare views and he suggests that it has been neglected in social administration.

In Pinker's view the most legitimate welfare services and thus the least stigmatising services are those which involve reciprocity (1971, p.167). He sees three variables - depth, distance and time - as affecting the extent to which stigma is imposed and felt in any exchange relationship. The most important factor he argues is depth, i.e. whether or not the services will be reciprocated. Parker summarises his position:

The problem revolves round the notion of reciprocity. Professor Pinker (1971) has argued that in any system of exchange, self respect and the respect for others is maintained by the ability to make return for what is received. Where services are not reciprocated or where the return or contribution is not clearly linked to the benefit or service the recipient is stigmatised and the services themselves are likely to be of poor quality and neglected by public authorities. (Parker 1975, p.146)

According to Pinker propensity for reciprocity in the future, is given more weight by the public in assessing deservedness than past contributions (Pinker 1971, p.170-2). The poor quality of care for the aged can therefore be explained in terms of Pinker's analysis, by society's attitude to those who are unlikely to reciprocate. This it can be argued does not take into account the fact that in financial terms the elderly are better provided for, in that they receive higher rate of benefit than the unemployed whom one presumes in the long term will be able to reciprocate. The unemployed, as he says, can reject

the stigmatising label if they have the confidence, but this does not explain why, if propensity for reciprocity is important, stigma should be imposed on a group who may shortly return to the labour market.

Pinker does not think that people see taxation as a way of paying for the state benefits they receive and feels that individuals who have nothing to exchange are likely to be stigmatised or feel stigma.

Redpath (1979) discusses Pinker's view:

according to Pinker the internationalisation of the principle of 'quid pro quo' means that 'most applicants for social services remain paupers at heart' and are seen as such. Pinker's theory would seem to explain why people are unwilling to claim benefits they may have paid for through paying tax for many years and why they are also quick to blame those who do claim them. There is however one feature of public attitudes which Pinker's analysis does not explain. This is the distinction which people make between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' claimant. While the pensioners who have internalised the market ethos are perhaps unwilling to claim Supplementary Pensions there is no evidence that the public blame pensioners who do claim.

(Redpath 1979, p.48)

Redpath follows Pruger's (1973) argument, i.e. that there is a continuum of values from economic to social. Those in receipt of benefit are affected by both economic and social values but Redpath (1979) argues that attitudes to the unemployed who are still inside the labour market will be influenced more by economic values. The effect of one's position relative to the labour market is an important factor but further investigation is required and whether all the unemployed are equally stigmatised must be considered.

The second variable which Pinker (1971) refers to as affecting whether stigma is felt or imposed in exchange relationships is distance, that is the greater the distance between those able to give and those in need, the less compassion there will be. However although people tend to be more aware of the needs of those close to

them and thus may be more willing to give, this is not always the case. Pinker himself in his later book makes a similar point in his discussion of international aid suggesting that if we knew more about how the aid was actually used we might be less willing to give. He concludes however:

It seems reasonable to infer, however, that the less we know of other people's needs, the less incentive we will have to find out more and the less likely we are to feel either responsibility or guilt. (Pinker 1979, p.58)

He suggests that there is a lack of compassion shown by the rich living in the third world for their fellow countrymen. The failure of the rich in the third world to assist the poor has important implications for Pinker's analysis of people's motivation to assist others which he does not draw out. It suggests that culture may affect this motivation and that if people's motivation to assist others is examined it may be found that the residents of one country may be more willing to assist foreigners than residents in another country are to assist their own countrymen. Sahlin's (1974) analysis of anthropological studies of reciprocity shows the importance of the distance variable in affecting willingness to give but it also shows that the process of giving and exchanging varies from culture to culture. This issue is of relevance when comparing attitudes in one area with those in another. Within British society distance is clearly related to experience of welfare and this is discussed in detail in chapter 2.

The third variable Pinker (1971, p.174) sees as affecting the relationship between giving and receiving is time. The longer a person is dependent, he argues, the more likely he is to become adapted to the status of dependency and the less sympathetic people will be towards him. Again in his later work he applies his analysis

to international welfare. In the case of international aid he argues (1979, p.58) few nations who receive soft loans or free gifts ever become self-sufficient, but, he says it is difficult to say whether this is an indication of their extreme and intractable poverty or because they become adapted to the situation.

Reciprocity therefore is seen by Pinker as important in that ability to reciprocate improves the recipient's status. Pinker, (1972) in his empirical investigation of the attitudes to welfare of three groups of people with different degrees of dependency, suggested attitudes could be classified into three groups, first an altruistic model, secondly an egoistic model and thirdly an exchange model. It was the exchange model which he found to be the most popular among those he interviewed. However, his hypothesis that people tended to define themselves and others as givers or receivers was not supported.

The extent to which a system of welfare is based on exchange principles emphasising reciprocity can meet welfare needs must be considered and this requires a more detailed examination of definitions of reciprocity. As Pinker (1979) points out the two basic characteristics of exchange relationships which recent literature on the subject has considered are the numbers involved and whether it is social or economic in form. In looking at the concept of reciprocity in relation to social welfare definitions and theories which focus on social exchange and which involve several actors are clearly the most relevant. Ekeh (1974) discusses social exchange theories found in both anthropology and sociology. Although he was concerned mainly with the concept as it is used in sociology and social anthropology much of the discussion is relevant to social administration<sup>7</sup> and it is intended to develop his review of social

exchange theories outlining the implications for the understanding of social welfare systems. He discusses both the individualist and the collectivist schools of thought. He disagrees strongly with Parson's claim (1968, p.235) that there should be a synthesis of the two schools and illustrates the divergences which exist in exchange theory although accepting that there is some overlap. The individualist and collectivist approach he argues are related to each other in a continuing polemical confrontation which has led to the enrichment of the two types of social exchange theory and thus benefited sociological theory (1974, p.19).

The individualist approach which has its antecedents in British anthropology and which has been developed in American sociology is found in the work of Spencer (1896), Frazer (1919), Malinowski (1922), Homans (1961, 1962), Blau (1964) and Gouldner (1960).<sup>8</sup> The individualist approach traces the origins of social institutions to the psychological and/or economic needs of individuals.<sup>9</sup> As Ekeh points out their main concern is over what Weber has termed zweckrational action. Malinowski (1922) emphasised the individual's psychological needs.<sup>10</sup> Frazer and Blau saw exchange as being carried out in the main for economic motives.<sup>11</sup> Homans, as a result of using both economic and psychological reductionism, sees exchange in terms of Skinner's behavioural analysis and economics.<sup>12</sup> These writers tend to conceptualise reciprocity in dyadic terms.

Sociological theory has remained stunted, thanks in part to a common commitment by Parsons and Homans to a two-person interaction model, at the level of mutual reciprocity.  
(Ekeh 1974, p.204)

Homans sometimes included a third man but not permanently. The weakness of Gouldner's discussion of reciprocity lay, in Ekeh's opinion, in the fact that he too relied on a dyadic model.

The collectivist approach is found in the main in the work of French sociologists and anthropologists both past and present. Ekeh outlines the views of the major scholars. He suggests (1974, p.38) that just as Durkheim had set out to explain variations in suicide rates and in the process generated a theory of integration, Lévi-Strauss, in trying to explain variations in the kinship practices of cross cousin marriage, generated a theory of social exchange processes. The work of Mauss (1966) and Lévi-Strauss (1949) focussed on the social functions of exchange which had been demonstrated by Malinowski (1922). Lévi-Strauss's work, Ekeh argues, has been given insufficient attention in sociology although much of Homan's work is a reaction to Lévi-Strauss and much of Lévi-Strauss's is a reaction to Homan's. Lévi-Strauss, like Malinowski and Mauss, regards exchange as social, not sustained by self interest and independent of the objects being exchanged. Lévi-Strauss's social exchange theory, Ekeh suggests, assumes that social exchange is a human phenomenon and a supraindividual process (1974, p.43). The importance of culture is emphasised. In Weber's terms this would be *wertrational* as opposed to *zweckrational* action (Ekeh 1974, p.203).

For Homans, Gouldner and Blau, reciprocity usually took on the narrow meaning of mutual reinforcement by two parties of each other's activities. They accept the notion of indirect exchange with social norms, roles and institutions replacing the parts played by individuals but mutual reinforcement is still stressed (Ekeh 1974, p.208). Lévi-Strauss widened the concept. An individual, according to Lévi-Strauss, may feel obliged to reciprocate another's actions indirectly by giving to someone else. He differentiates between restricted exchange based on mutual reciprocity and generalised



exchange involving univocal reciprocity. Restricted exchange which is the only type of exchange discussed by the individualist approach can be of two types, isolated dyadic exchange relations,  $A \leftrightarrow B$ , or multiple restricted exchange relations,  $A \leftrightarrow B, C \leftrightarrow D$ . In the latter situation there is the possibility of an exchange of partners.

Restricted exchange involves individuals not groups and is emotion laden. Individuals are concerned about avoiding owing or being owed by their exchange partners. Generalised exchange is a much wider concept and different types can again be distinguished within it. Firstly, there is chain generalised exchange which involves exchanges from  $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \rightarrow D \rightarrow E \rightarrow A$ . Secondly, there is net generalised exchange which can be individually focussed  $ABCD \rightarrow E; ABCE \rightarrow D; ABDE \rightarrow C; ACDE \rightarrow B$  and  $BDCE \rightarrow A$ , or group focussed  $A \rightarrow BCDE; B \rightarrow ACDE, C \rightarrow ABDE; D \rightarrow ABCE; \text{ and } E \rightarrow ABCD$ .

In generalised exchange it is the group who reciprocates, therefore if A fails to be reciprocated by another, others in the group may compensate. For a system of generalised exchange to work there must be trust which in some cases is stimulated by a legally binding contract. In a generalised system of exchange if equality of partnership does not exist, the exchange situation is threatened (Lévi-Strauss 1949, p.266; Ekeh 1974, p.28). The relationship between reciprocity and equality is discussed in more detail below. Social exchange can involve exploitation which also threatens the exchange situation and this too is discussed in more detail below. Ekeh describes the morality of both generalised and restricted social exchange which he sees as influencing society at a broader level (affecting general modes of behaviour) than just the principle of

reciprocity which operates in the social exchange process. In restricted exchange a 'quid pro quo' attitude exists. In a system of generalised exchange the morality is different.

Trust of others; trust that others will discharge their obligations to the enrichment of society rather than for their exclusive narrow self interest; the willingness to give to others the benefit of the doubt: these are the true attributes of the morality of generalised exchange. Societies with a morality of generalized exchange enjoy a credit mentality: the belief that individuals are credit worthy and can be trusted to pay back what they owe. Similarly, contributions to causes that do not yield immediate and direct benefits to the contributor, with only the hope that they will ultimately and indirectly come to benefit him or his family after a lapse of time, are characteristic of social relationships in which the morality of generalised exchange operates.  
(Ekeh 1974, p.59)

In a system of generalised exchange the timing of the exchange and the amount returned depends on the needs of the person and the ability of the person to make the return.

Ekeh's discussion of exchange theories illustrates the wider applicability of collectivist models, in particular, the relevance of the generalised exchange model in understanding our society. Ekeh suggests a synthesis of Durkheim and Lévi-Strauss's work would provide a useful model for understanding society, arguing that a synthesis within a school is far more fruitful than any attempts to synthesise the individualist and collectivist schools. He suggests that the integrative processes of social exchange has a part to play in the emergence of organic solidarity. A full view of social solidarity, he argues, requires a synthesis of the description of the process of differentiation outlined by Durkheim with the exchange transaction as described by Lévi-Strauss which shows how the society can be integrated (1974, p.61).<sup>13</sup> A successful system of generalised exchange he suggests provides stability for the system. However this

argument has not yet been investigated in detail. Of particular relevance to the topic of this thesis is Ekeh's suggestion that individual focussed generalised exchange is an appropriate model for a welfare society since it emphasises the rights of the individual as opposed to his duties as is the case with group focussed generalised exchange (1974, p.60). He does not develop this idea in any great depth, however, his main concern being to bring the generalised concept to the attention of sociologists. In the next few pages the extent to which a welfare system based on exchange and involving an emphasis on reciprocity would meet the welfare needs of society and would foster integration is considered.

If the role of social exchange and of reciprocity in society is to be fully understood it is necessary to analyse the role which power plays in exchange relationships. Heath (1976, p.20), in his discussion of rational exchange theories,<sup>14</sup> criticises exchange theorists for neglecting coercive exchange. In considering the role of power it is intended first to look at the role of power in restricted systems of exchange and secondly its role in generalised systems.

Homan's theory of exchange which incorporates a conception of distributive justice supports the view that the existing social system is acceptable.

Homans' distributive justice rules represent the first sophisticated intellectual argument and justification for the exploitation of social exchange transactions to maintain the power structure in society.  
(Ekeh 1974, p.161)

Homans (1961)<sup>15</sup> justified inequality through his concept of distributive justice. Rewards he says are proportional to investments (i.e. status characteristics), leadership costs and

contributions. Inequality is seen as the natural order of things justly determined by background characteristics which are believed to be related to contributions.

Homans sees power as dependent on exchange while Blau (1964) sees power as being derived from exchange relationships. As Cohen points out, in seeing power as being derived from exchange:

...what Blau seems to underemphasise is the degree to which power constitutes a condition for determining the rate of immediate exchange of goods, services or intrinsic benefits. (Cohen 1968, p.123)

Men with power can create situations in which they are needed. Blau sees power as a limited good, i.e. as being in finite supply. Exchange relations are equally balanced according to Blau's theory by the inferior partner's recognition of the superior power over him, i.e. if 'A' is not able to reciprocate 'B's' services 'A' compensates 'B' by recognising 'B's' power over him. Whether one sees this as involving inequality and exploitation depends on the value-assumptions one makes. Thus Ekeh argues:

Blau's social exchange theory of power can be reversed by, say a Marxist, into a social exchange theory of exploitation by making the opposite assumptions on the justice of inequality that Blau makes. (Ekeh 1974, p.211)

Gouldner (1960) as was said also commentates on dyadic relationships. However, unlike Blau and Homans he sees inequality as illegitimate and exploitation as a problem. He replaces the term exploitation with reciprocity imbalance since, in his view, this term does not have such obvious value overtones. Following Durkheim he takes the view that unequal exchanges violate pervasive values, and are therefore disruptive. On the whole, however, he emphasises the positive functions of reciprocity. The emphasis placed on reciprocity varies from situation to situation and society to society

but Gouldner argues if people accept both rights and duties then reciprocity performs a stabilising function with stability being maintained through people's indebtedness. The norm of reciprocity he argues helps control the pursuit of self interest and thus prevents exploitation. It, he argues:

...engenders motives for returning benefits even when power differences might invite exploitation.  
(Gouldner 1960, p.174)

If the norm of reciprocity is strong in a society he suggests people may give in the expectation of a return as opposed to not giving at all.

As Max Gluckman might put it with his penchant for Hegelian paradox, there is an altruism in egoism, made possible through reciprocity. (Gouldner 1960, p.173)

The norm of reciprocity therefore it is suggested provides an additional moral sanction for performing certain status obligations. Gouldner admits that he does not look in detail at the disfunctions of reciprocity. In addition to his concern about reciprocity imbalance he does refer to other disfunctions. First there may be no agreement over a person's ability to reciprocate and there may be no common yardsticks against which equivalence can be measured. Secondly:

Moreover the norm may lead in individuals to establish relations only, or primarily, with those who can reciprocate thus inducing neglect of the needs of those unable to do so. Clearly the norm of reciprocity cannot apply with full force in relations with children, old people or those who are mentally or physically handicapped and it is theoretically inferable that other, fundamentally different kinds of normative orientations will develop in moral codes. (Gouldner 1960, p.178)

As an example of a society where the norm of reciprocity dominates Gouldner refers to the Phillipines compadre system:

Here the tendency to govern all relations by the norm of reciprocity, thereby undermining beaurocratic impersonality, is relatively legitimate, hence overt and powerful. (Gouldner 1960, p.171)

However in societies where patronage dominates (e.g. South America, Southern Italy) many disfunctions of reciprocity can be seen. It is generally less efficient than a meritocracy. Furthermore even in a society where patronage operates and performs a stabilising function it could be argued that it only does this through acting as a form of social control, that is by helping those with power to maintain their position and exploit the less powerful. Those in weaker positions can be exploited by being forced into unequal exchange relationships and dependent positions thus maintaining their weak position. Such a system is, it can be argued, inherently unstable and may at any moment be overturned (Freeman 1977).

It seems from the above discussion that dyadic exchange relationships and systems are likely to involve inequality and exploitation and sometimes in fact to promote them. In a generalised exchange model Ekeh argues, power can be exercised by several and not just one man. In such systems power is not seen as a limited good and is governed by various norms.

Exploitation in generalized exchange situations is attributable to the systems rather than to individuals. By making the imbalanced exchanges less visible, univocal reciprocity and generalised exchange make the visible exploitation more thoroughgoing and more effective. (Ekeh 1974, p.213)

The generalised exchange model shows the complexity of modern social systems. Heath (1966, p.155) points out that not everyone will use the power they have; norms can modify the way that power is used. As the analysis moves from a simple dyadic exchange relationship it becomes more difficult to discover who holds the power and how it operates.

Bachrach and Baratz (1970) have shown the complexity of analysing power and the part played by norms. They criticise both the sociologists who have consistently found power to be centralised and

the political scientists who have found it diffused and suggests that this is the result of the way they frame their questions. Bachrach and Baratz, asking whether the distribution of benefits and privileges is highly unequal and if so why, suggest that the answer lies in the way political systems develop.<sup>16</sup> They suggest political systems develop:

...a mobilisation of bias, a set of values, beliefs, rituals and procedures which can be exploited by beneficiaries of the unequal value-allocation to defend and promote their preferred position.  
Bachrach and Baratz 1970, p.105)

In most situations it appears the dominant groups are trying to maintain their power while the grievances of sub groups increase and may lead to violence. It would be wrong to ignore the importance of power just because it is difficult to discover how it is exercised.

Discussions of marriage systems illustrate the inequality of privilege involved in such systems of exchange. Lévi-Strass's (1949) analysis of generalised exchange was concerned in the main with the exchange of wives but we can consider his remarks about inequality and power in relation to other systems of generalised exchange. Leach (1970), discussing Lévi-Strauss's theory, shows Lévi-Strauss's recognition of the difficulties met in a generalised exchange system when inequalities emerge:

...he claims that in practice the marriage circles will always break down into hierarchies such that the intermarrying lineages will be of different status. The resulting marriage systems would then be hypergamous with the groups at the top receiving women as tribute from their social inferiors.

Starting out on this fragile base, exchange generalise is then developed into a principle which explains the evolution of egalitarian primitive society into a hierarchical society of castes and classes.  
(Leach 1970, p.109)

Inequality is not inevitable however, Within a generalised exchange system of marriage partners one way in which equalising can occur is through the introduction of an arbitrary element.

...an arbitrary element will be introduced into the system, a sort of sociological clinamen, which whenever the subtle mechanism of exchange is obstructed, will, like a Deus ex Machina, give the necessary push for a new impetus. (Lévi-Strauss 1949, p.475)

This is a swayamvera, a marriage of chance, merit or choice which he argues can only have meaning when it gives a girl of a superior class to a man of an inferior class.

...guaranteeing, at least symbolically, that the distance between the statuses has not irremediably compromised the solidarity of the group and that the cycle of marriage prestations will not be interrupted. (Lévi-Strauss 1949, p.476)

Pinker argues that just as market theories are inapplicable to primitive societies it is reasonable to suggest that theories of exchange in primitive society are not relevant to market societies (1979, p.50). Most primitive societies, Pinker argues, are poverty stricken and he says:

The extent to which their poverty is caused by lack of natural resources or lack of entrepreneurial skills and values is a debatable question. It is sufficiently open to question, however, to remind us of the considerable 'disservices' and 'diswelfares' we might suffer if we give too much scope to the free play of social market values. (Pinker 1979, p.51)

In 1971 he appeared to accept that lessons could be learnt from primitive society (1971, p.154). Social administration as Pinker admits is full of borrowed concepts. Surely the analysis surrounding such concepts should be utilised. It seems that the problem of generalised exchange breaking down into hierarchies as described by Lévi-Strauss (1949) can to some extent be compared to Titmuss's



discussion of the social division of welfare (Titmuss 1963, p.34).

It can be suggested that the three systems of welfare which have developed, the fiscal and the occupational and private systems for the better off and the state for the rest, all of which involve reciprocity, demonstrate the break up into hierarchies which occurs in welfare exchange systems because people tend to enter into exchange relationships with people of similar standing. Those with more resources are able to make better arrangements for themselves.

In a system of generalised as well as dyadic exchange therefore inequality seems likely to emerge, although the complexity of the system makes analysis of exploitation difficult. It seems from this discussion that reciprocity may not be a sufficient principle on which to base a welfare system which will not involve stigma and which will alleviate poverty. Pinker, as was said, makes the concept of reciprocity central to his work and believes it to be central to public opinion. He does not, like Titmuss (1970), see the unilateral transfer, the ultimate in redistribution, as being the hallmark of social policy. He is aware that in risk pooling some members pay more than they get but he argues that this occurs within a formal context of reciprocity and that there are contractual limits to such eventualities. Because associations based on reciprocity sometimes end with one party an outright beneficiary, he admits it is often difficult to make a clear distinction between unilateral and reciprocal exchange, but such cases he argues are exceptional.

The pursuance of the principle of reciprocity described by Pinker will not promote greater equality, nor will it ensure that all needs are met. An examination of Titmuss's writings shows that some of his arguments appeal to the principles of reciprocity but his values and

assumptions have led him to take a broader view of reciprocity than Pinker. Titmuss, like Pinker, suggests putting the principle into operation by giving in order to stimulate others into giving in the future, e.g. through providing education or a higher basic standard of living for all in order to promote a return. Titmuss's interpretation of what constitutes contributions includes contributing through paying income tax, working in general, and looking after children and the elderly. A related notion to the concept of reciprocity is that of compensation, that is a return given for an enforced action. The need for compensation is emphasised by Titmuss (1968, p.156). In Titmuss's view, for example, unemployment and pollution should be compensated for where possible.

The view of reciprocity presented by Pinker, like the residual model described by Titmuss, emphasises individual insurance. From the British experience we can see that a national insurance system is not sufficient to meet all needs since more and more people are being forced to rely on the safety net of supplementary benefit. Whether reciprocity even defined in broad terms is a sufficient principle on which to found a welfare system which would meet all needs, can also be questioned. Aid to the handicapped can be seen as compensation for an act of fate or a way of encouraging their development to their full potential, limited though that may be, but in reality the arguments for assistance for the handicapped are more likely to be based on altruism than on reciprocity. Beliefs about the worthiness of certain groups in society, e.g. alcoholics, the unemployed, would also affect whether or not they were assisted in a system based on reciprocity even if the principle were defined in broad terms to include compensation, i.e. how much they had contributed in the past

and whether it was believed that the individual or society was responsible for their situation, and secondly, whether it was believed that members of these groups would ever reciprocate. If the needs of all are to be met altruism must be appealed to

In relation to reciprocity the following general hypothesis will be tested:

3. Those interviewed see the principle of reciprocity as being the central principle of any welfare system.

The way those interviewed see reciprocity will be considered and compared to the conceptualisations of reciprocity discussed above, especially whether they see reciprocity in broad or narrow terms. In particular it is intended to look at whether those interviewed were unwilling to see benefits provided if the benefits concerned were not related to past contributions or future propensity for reciprocity or whether altruistic concerns were dominant. Whether the distance between giver and receiver and the length of time a person has been on benefit affects the attitudes of those interviewed to those on benefit, will also be considered. Finally whether those interviewed are less willing to claim benefit if the benefit concerned is not related to past contributions or where the individual has no propensity for reciprocity will be investigated.

### Efficiency and incentives

The industrial achievement model discussed by Titmuss centres on the need to ensure efficiency. Incentives, it is argued, must be maintained. Those stressing efficiency vary in their views about individual and societal causation of unemployment. Some arguments

stress individual causes of unemployment, suggesting it is voluntary. Others accept societal causes of unemployment some seeing it as inevitable, if the goal of efficiency is to be met. Both the right and the left in politics have argued that unemployment is needed in a capitalist society to cure inflation. This belief Pond (1977, p.91) argues has prevented the government from dealing effectively with the problem of unemployment. The argument that there is a trade-off between unemployment and inflation has its roots in the work of Phillips. Unemployment can be seen to keep down wages and thus prices.

While the relationship seemed to be quite strong in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries any association seemed to have evaporated when applied to other countries or to the post war data on wage rates and unemployment in Britain. (Pond 1977, p.93)

In many countries inflation and unemployment are found together. It has been suggested that this is because trade unions do not allow the wages of their members to react to the normal pressures of market forces. This, Pond argues, overestimates the strength of trade unions and he notes that inflation and unemployment have coexisted in any case despite stringent wage policies. It can be argued that in any case, if the theory can be modified by external forces then the inevitability of the trade-off between unemployment and inflation is brought into question. Pond concludes:

First it has been shown that none of the 'trade off' models based on the Phillips relationship including the most recent adaptations which include the role of price expectations actually conform to the most recent data (Henry, Sawyer and Smith 1976). Second one could point to their limited usefulness as positive guides to policy as opposed to negative constraints on action. (Pond 1977, p.97)

Sinfield (1976) looks for sociological explanations of why governments, both Conservative and Labour, do not pay sufficient attention to unemployment. The unemployment figures he says underestimate the importance of unemployment:

With the greater organisation and rationalisation in industry today, the better trade union organisation and many other factors, unemployment data probably relate less and less to the simple lack of demand for labour. We have come to regard unemployment "as a wind of inevitable exhaust of our economic engine. We fail to see that it is also a social process powered by the values we hold and the choices we make." (Sinfield 1976, p.226)<sup>17</sup>

Sinfield goes on to argue that unemployment is seen as useful by the government as a form of social control.

Economic journalists have referred to views said to be current in Whitehall particularly in the last Conservative government, on the use of unemployment to restrain trade unions from strikes and other industrial action. (Sinfield, 1976, p.242)

The argument that unemployment is inevitable if efficiency is to be maintained can be questioned but it appears to be popular in government circles and the extent to which it is accepted by the public requires investigation.

### Incentives and individual responsibility

It would be naive to suggest that none of the unemployed are undeserving. Some unscrupulousness however, like lack of motivation may be due partly to the way claimants are treated. Titmuss sees the most stringent measures of the welfare state rather than the more generous ones as affecting the moral character of the claimants.

We exaggerated the effects of welfare programmes on incentives to work and moral values in general, and helped to create what we feared by nourishing systems of 'policing' and 'punishment'. (Titmuss 1968, p.163)

The layabout theme which is related to society's stress on the work ethic is one of the themes from which incentives arguments can be developed.

The issue of incentives is frequently referred to in the political debate surrounding social security. The scrounger controversy, Deacon noted in 1977, had given way to some extent to a more reasoned discussion of incentives but the belief that unemployment may be voluntary was still in existence. Deacon (1978, p.121) points out, that the belief that loss of employment does not necessarily mean a decline in living standards gives added plausibility to stories of voluntary unemployment. Incentives arguments can also be seen as emphasising societal responsibility in that it is thought the state should take action in order to ensure that incentives are maintained. Previous research shows little evidence to back the view that laziness is a major cause of unemployment or that the work ethic is not strong among the long-term unemployed. In a study in three different areas Hill (1973) found that the significance of motivation in creating long term unemployment level was low. Therefore he says there is:

...some justification in arguing that unless employment can be raised in all areas to a level which is the same as that found in Hammersmith there is little point in being concerned about motivation. (Hill 1973, p.132)

Field (1977, p.46) quotes a 1973 Department of Employment survey which found that there was a negative attitude to work in areas of high unemployment. However the majority of those judged to be unenthusiastic about work had found a job within six months. The Department of Employment's finding does not necessarily contradict Hill's finding that lack of motivation was not associated with long

term unemployment since Hill was looking at its significance as a primary cause and not the association of lack of motivation with unemployment. The lower motivation to work said by some to be found in areas of high unemployment therefore may be simply a realistic assessment of the situation. Marsden and Duff (1975) in fact suggest that as a result of informal pressures which support work:

...some of the workless cling to a desire to work to a much greater extent than our society has a right to expect in view of what they experienced through work and unemployment. (Marsden and Duff 1975, p.264)

Marsden and Duff not only found that the unemployed still wanted to work but also that they were idealistic about the way in which work could be organised and made more fulfilling. The importance which those near retiral age place on work, suggests that even boring, low paid, low status work is important (Jahoda 1979). Jahoda argues that the recent literature on the meaning of work in industrial sociology fails to get at the importance which even menial work has to people. Alienation she sees as a response to the organisation of work and not work itself. It is important as a shared experience and as a tie to reality. Unemployment now, as compared with when she carried out her earlier research in the thirties, may she says involve less economic and physical deprivation but it is still an unpleasant experience.

Some groups are more vulnerable to unemployment than others. Among the most vulnerable are older workers, unskilled workers, the very young, workers who have some sort of physical illness, and those in depressed areas (Sinfield 1976; 1981). Not all those who have problems with their health receive sickness or invalidity benefit since some are classed by the Department of Health and Social Security as fit for 'suitable alternative employment'. Suitable alternative employment especially in times of high unemployment is often hard to find. Field points out:

...people become more or less employable depending on the demand for labour although their personal characteristics remain unchanged. (Field 1977, p.5)

Showler (1975) argues that the effect of narrowing the differences in income between the employed and the unemployed is influenced by the social status of work itself. In his review of research on the effect of the introduction of redundancy payments and earnings related benefits he concludes that:

...the social justification in terms of compensating those affected by economic changes more adequately is not offset by any serious disincentive effects.  
(Showler 1975, p.106)

The few who receive more on benefit than when working are generally the more skilled and are usually able to obtain work more easily in any case. It is often only in the early months of unemployment that they are better off. On the minority of occasions when work can offer neither an adequate nor secure income benefits may be more attractive than work. Two alternative solutions exist, benefits can be lowered (negative incentives) or the security and the remuneration available through employment could be improved (positive incentives).

The importance of lack of incentives as a cause of unemployment can be questioned. The need to maintain incentives and thus maximise efficiency is of paramount importance to the industrial achievement model. Whether the public sees incentives as a solution to the problem of poverty in general and unemployment in particular requires investigation. Thus is it hypothesised -

4. A belief in the need to maintain incentives and improve efficiency dominates the attitudes of those interviewed to welfare services.



If incentives are stressed, whether this involves an emphasis on incentives which are positive or negative in nature must be considered.

### Altruism and need

The third model of welfare discussed by Titmuss suggested that ensuring all members of a society had their needs met was society's responsibility. The right of a citizen to have their needs met, the need for redistribution and the principle of equality were also emphasised. The debate surrounding responsibility for welfare needs was discussed in relation to the first model. As was said earlier it must be accepted that some poverty is the result of individual failure but it can still be argued that in accordance with altruistic principles all needs must be met. Altruism for the purpose of this discussion is thus defined as putting the needs of all before any other consideration.

Titmuss, in outlining the different models of welfare which he felt existed in social administration, suggested that conflict within and between models of welfare often presented itself in dilemmas of altruism and egoism and individual equity and social equality (Titmuss 1974, p.131). The latter dilemma is discussed later. Pinker criticised Titmuss for using -

...the terms 'altruism' and 'egoism' in such a way as to describe the polarity of sentiments and motives, which in the real world are more likely to be interactive and conditional. (Pinker 1977, p.ix)

The egoist he says would have no friends, the altruist would be exploitable by all. To illustrate the complexity of the situation Pinker refers to family altruism. Family altruism he says cannot be subsumed under egoism nor can it be seen as purely altruistic.

All too often in discussions of self interest and egoism one gets the impression that the subject of concern, is a single individual acting exclusively on his own behalf. In everyday life, however, the majority of working citizens are trying to act in the best interests of their dependent and even their less favoured kin as well as themselves. Any model which makes it possible for familial altruism to be subsumed under the category of egoism is seriously defective. And it is equally misleading to class familial welfare practices under the category of altruism. (Pinker 1979, p.10)

It is possible however to differentiate between family altruism and family egoism; family altruism is a desire to meet the needs of one's family, family egoism is a desire to ensure that the interests of family come before all other concerns. Altruism and egoism can be used as 'bench marks', that is as reference concepts. As Pinker admits:

Outside the confines of academic and political debate one rarely encounters a confrontation between either individualism and collectivism or egoism and altruism in their uncompromising forms. In any case we shall discover more by looking at the various forms of qualified egoism or altruism which set the tenor of everyday welfare practices. (Pinker 1979, p.7)

As this comment implies the analytical usefulness of concepts emerge through discussion of the modification and qualification of them. The public attitudes which are found to exist can be compared with the theoretical concepts of altruism and egoism and the qualifications and modifications discussed.

Pinker, having stressed the role of family altruism in considering domestic welfare, goes on to consider the situation vis a vis international aid. Although the subject of this thesis is the national system of welfare rather than international welfare it is intended to discuss his arguments to some extent because in his discussion he develops his views on the extent to which altruism and egoism exist. Pinker argues that international theories of

capitalism have failed in the past resulting in imperialism where internationalism was achieved and that international socialism has never been tried. Rather than emphasising internationalism therefore he emphasises patriotism as a sentiment which if appealed to is likely to enable more welfare provision to be made. The Marxist tradition of social administration sees patriotism as part of the process of alienation but the non Marxist tradition Pinker argues largely ignores it. This, he says:

...is a strange omission, since the tradition is still strongly collectivist, and, given its non revolutionary socialist overtones, it is also redistributive in outlook. Any such philosophy of welfare implies sacrifices on behalf of one section of society by another and by one generation for the next, and hence the subordination of familial and local interests to some higher ideal. That ideal is more likely to be realized if it can draw upon the patriotic sentiments of ordinary people rather than the internationalist beliefs of intellectuals. (Pinker 1979, p.36)

He goes on to suggest:

When we substitute the concept of patriotism for that of citizenship the variable of depth can still be said to have some relevance to an understanding of the propensities of nations to give and receive, but it seems that there are many other devices and rationalizations whereby collectivities - as compared with individuals - are able to avoid loss of status in situations of dependency. (Pinker 1979, p.58)

The United Kingdom he argues relinquishes its economic self sufficiency without experiencing a drastic loss of status. Developed countries, he argues continue to delude themselves that they are economically great by aiding other countries. He discusses the aid received by Britain after the last war and suggests Britain came to terms with this by either ignoring it or by emphasising its past contributions. The argument that countries continue to aid less fortunate countries in order to delude themselves that they are great, suggests an egoistic motive for what could be seen as an altruistic

act. It can be argued, as Pinker admits, that Britain deserved American aid after the war and that they indeed deserved more for their contribution. Pinker however claims that it was American altruism which made the National Health Service possible.

The terms of the loan were indeed stringent but it is again too easily forgotten that it was made by a government having little if any sympathy for socialism or the collectivist social policies which the loan would make possible. When, we may ask, did a socialist government last make such a loan to a capitalist society tottering on the edge of dissolution? (Pinker 1979, p.63/4)

Thus for once Pinker does appear to cite altruism as a possible motive and yet in this case reciprocation was required. He also states however, despite the above comment, that if America had equated parliamentary socialism with communism the aid would not have been given.

Titmuss was aware of the fact that altruism in its pure form did not exist. The reference to the dilemma of altruism and egoism referred to earlier does not imply that models of welfare had to be based solely on one sentiment. In The Gift Relationship Titmuss states:

No (blood) donor type can, of course, be said to be characterised by complete, disinterested, spontaneous altruism. There must be some sense of obligation, approval and interest... (Titmuss 1970, p.89)

He was also aware of the fragile nature of altruism. He realised the importance of the principles of economic man in affecting attitudes and behaviour.

The Swedish dilemma suggests that it is easier for societies to abandon altruism as a motive for giving blood than it is to abandon principles of economic man once they have been institutionalised and accepted.  
(Titmuss 1970, p.187)

Titmuss realised the emphasis society put on the individual (1968, p.156) and that the selection and rejection process of the private

market tends to lead to consideration of self rather than collective interest. The emphasis put by the national press on egoistic values was also a concern of Titmuss.

A national press which as a whole has steadily taught the public for fifteen years to sneer at public order and public service and to admire cupidity and acquisitiveness has no doubt had some effect.... The Minister of Transport may now plead for more social discipline, order and collective planning to overcome the problems of urban congestion and road chaos, but the tide is running against him. He and other Ministers concerned with social amenity, town planning and a civilised design for living are now the prisoners of their own propaganda. (Titmuss 1963, p.218)

Finally he was also aware that pressure groups are often self interested groups (1963, p.242), but accepted pressure groups can also be altruistic, e.g. Oxfam, CPAG, etc. Titmuss believed it was possible to build on the altruism which existed in society to form a welfare society. In Titmuss's view unilateral gifts must be encouraged. The British system of blood donation he used as an example of altruism. Reissman (1977, p.109) questions the extent to which giving blood is a sacrifice suggesting that blood is easily renewable and that the giving of money would be a better test of altruism. The fact remains however that people gave without the expectation of a direct return. Titmuss's discussion of the giving of blood shows that altruism is a motive which can be appealed to. As was said earlier Titmuss admits that no-one is purely altruistic and that once the altruistic motive is abandoned in societies it is difficult to rekindle. Titmuss suggests:

First, that gift exchange of a non quantifiable nature has more important functions in complex, large scale societies than the writing of Lévi-Strauss and others would suggest. Second, the application of scientific and technological developments in such societies, in further accelerating the spread of complexity, has increased rather than diminished the scientific as well as the social needs for gift relationships. Third, for these and many other

reasons, modern societies now require more rather than less freedom of choice for the expression of altruism in the daily life of all social groups.  
(Titmuss 1970, p.224)

Unilateral transfers in his view therefore are important for social as well as welfare reasons. Sahlin's analysis (1974, p.215) shows that in primitive societies food and such basic necessities are seen as too important to be given an exchange value. In modern society subsistence could also be seen as a right and redistribution to ensure that a level of basic subsistence was achieved by all could be argued to be necessary.

The major differences between Titmuss and Pinker's analysis of welfare society can be seen as stemming from the different emphasis they place on different aspects of human nature. Both, as was seen, accept that altruism and egoism coexist but Pinker places more emphasis on egoism and Titmuss on altruism. As was said, Titmuss sees it as feasible that people should be concerned about the needs of others and felt that it was necessary to build on this sentiment for the good of society. Pinker on the other hand believes that:

Exclusively altruistic acts occur so rarely that they cannot serve as a viable basis for social policies. Men are most disposed to give in the expectation of a return. Even when there is a willingness to give the spontaneous dictates of compassion will be insufficient to meet the volume of needs. (Pinker 1971, p.162)

The extent to which people are willing to put the needs of others before other considerations will be investigated empirically and thus which view of human nature is more realistic will be considered. The following hypothesis will be tested:

5. Those interviewed think only of themselves.

Whether other principles modify altruistic concerns will be investigated as will the extent to which family altruism and family egoism is in evidence.

Definitions of need

If through man's altruism or despite his egoism it is agreed needs must be met in a socially just society no matter the cause of these needs, it is necessary to consider how need is to be defined.

Rein (1970) distinguishes three broad concepts of poverty, subsistence, inequality and externality. The latter externality concerns the needs of the community, that is the cost and discomfort of poverty to the community through lack of integration etc. The concepts of subsistence and inequality are related to the most usual classification of the concepts of poverty, that is absolute or relative concepts. As Roach and Roach (1972) point out the distinction between absolute and relative concepts is becoming blurred, however the absolute concept is generally associated with subsistence and the relative concept with inequality.

Absolute concepts of poverty define poverty as a lack of basic subsistence. The major criticism of the absolute concept is the rejection of the claim that subsistence scales are developed from scientific criteria. It is difficult to establish standards of adequacy for the essentials of living, even the purchase of food is influenced by custom. Furthermore those families with low incomes cannot afford to economise by buying in bulk, as families with more capital at their disposal can. In drawing up scales of nutritional need, Rein (1970) states that although age and sex are taken into account, the amount of physical activity a person is likely to undertake is not, and even if it were, to make an objective measure of this would be difficult.

What is important in all these controversies is not who is right and who is wrong but that even where presumably objective measures are available, the selection of minimum standards is of necessity arbitrary.

(Rein 1970, p.56)

The absolute concept of poverty is also criticised for being static in that it does not envisage any improvement in the situation of the poor. A distinction between primary poverty, that is poverty resulting from inadequate resources and secondary poverty, that is the poverty of those who have resources which are adequate if stringently managed but who fail to manage, is often made. The finding of large numbers in secondary poverty is sometimes used as evidence to substantiate the view that most poverty is the fault of the individual.

Those favouring the relative concept argue that poverty is related to the time and place in which they live and the standard of comparison used. The relative concept of poverty appears to have become more prominent in recent years. Since definitions of poverty depend on which standards of comparison are used the standard of comparison should be relevant to the problem. Thus it would not be relevant to compare the poorest in Britain now with the poor in the nineteenth century or the third world and conclude that there are no poor in Britain today, but one could conclude that third world countries and nineteenth century Britain were poorer than British society as a whole today. Thus Townsend argues:

Our standpoint then should be that those individuals and families are in poverty whose resources over time fall seriously short of the resources commanded by the average individual or family in the community in which they live whether that community is a local, national or international one. (Townsend 1973, p.48)

In his discussion of poverty Townsend (1970) says it is necessary to see poverty in both nation and world relational terms.

A wealthy society which deprives a poor country of resources may simultaneously deprive its own poor classes through maldistribution of those additional resources. (Townsend 1970, p.42)



The relative concept of poverty as we have seen is associated with the concept of inequality and the standard used to assess relative poverty is based on one's view of how much equality and inequality should exist. Parker states that although extreme poverty has not necessarily disappeared the discussion is moving from a discussion of poverty as defined by basic subsistence.

Perhaps it would be better to speak of a new problem - inequality - emerging as a matter of public concern and of public policy rather than of poverty being redefined.  
(Parker 1975, p. 3)

It can be argued that the relationship between relative poverty and inequality implies that there will always be relative poverty.

Kincaid discusses this point.

If the absolutely poor need not always be with us, surely the relatively poor, by definition cannot vanish. A refinement in formulation is needed. A relative notion of poverty implies that the extent of poverty in society can only be estimated in terms of the degree of general social equality that exists. The more inequality there is between standards of living and privilege at the top and the bottom of society, the larger is the number of people which it is reasonable to define as poor.  
(Kincaid 1973, p.173)

When poverty can still be seen to exist in our society, i.e. some people have insufficient resources to meet fairly basic requirements, it seems premature to replace the concept of poverty by inequality. People who agree that poverty should be viewed in relative terms disagree about how much equality is desirable, and relative definitions vary in their position in the subsistence/equality dimension. In practice complete equality is seldom used as a standard by which to judge the extent of relative poverty. Thus both those using a relative definition and those using an absolute definition tend to define those below a certain level as poor. The relative concept of poverty can thus be seen as being affected by

absolute standards and does not necessarily lead to a demand for total equality. Baran and Sweezy (Ginsburg 1972) criticise the relative concept, since it allows every definition to be put forward as applicable. The subsistence concept, they argue:

...varies historically but at any given time and place it can be identified and approximately measured. From this flows logically the definition of poverty as the condition in which those members of society live whose incomes are insufficient to cover for that society and at that time the subsistence minimum. (Baran and Sweezy 1972, pp.166-167)

The authors put this forward as an absolute definition and yet it is almost identical to the relative definition put forward by Townsend (1973, p.48) which was quoted above. The views of those interviewed will be examined to identify whether the relative nature of poverty is stressed. The level of inequality which is felt to be acceptable must also be investigated and in this context wider conceptions of social justice may be relevant.

### Social Justice

Myrdal adopts a value standpoint based on what he calls 'higher valuations', i.e. the dominant value premises he sees in society (Myrdal 1958). Egalitarianism he puts forward as one of these higher valuations, since a belief in the need for equality has been evident for centuries. He then shows that America today falls short of this ideal. A major defect in this argument is that other valuations can be found which conflict with egalitarianism, for example individualism. Clearly it is important that the relative weight given to different values is investigated.

Runciman used the contract theory of social justice outlined by Rawls (1972) to suggest a method of assessing the extent of inequality which is acceptable in society. If society is socially just Runciman argues:

...the principles appealed to in the name of justice must be principles by which everyone would be prepared for his enemy to assign him his place. (Runciman 1966, p.253)

Rational men in an 'original position' behind a veil of ignorance, it is suggested, would see need, contributions to the common good and merit as criteria for distribution of resources. The ordering, Runciman feels, is weak however and different people have different priorities. He says of the contract theory of social justice:

...if it can disclose the point beyond which disputes as to the principles of justice cannot be settled except by some reference extrinsic to justice itself then it will have served its purpose. (Runciman 1966, p.254)

Runciman suggests that the question should not be what risks would rational man undertake but what rights would he establish. Unless inequality could be justified in terms of need, contributions or merit, there would be constant redistribution which would increase equality. Arguments which suggest that egalitarianism restricts freedom do not apply to social justice since:

In a society where inequalities are permitted to the extent that they would have been agreed in advance as legitimate the virtues on which the individualistic tradition lays so much stress will be restricted only within limits acceptable to anyone who does not already have a vested interest in more liberty than he would concede to others. (Runciman 1966, p.291)

The principles of need, contribution and merit are not new to moral philosophy nor socialism. Runciman accepts that the ordering of these principles is weak (1966, p.266). Other theorists give each element different emphasis, e.g. Laski emphasised needs and effort, (George and Wilding 1976) which means that no rewards would be given for natural abilities. George and Wilding use the concept of social justice in their attempt to clarify the goals of reform. Their view of social justice, like the view put forward by Laski which they describe, puts stress on needs, and claims that needs are the only

criterion for distribution of social services (1976, pp.106-138).

They suggest that needs can be defined differently varying from basic to relative but suggest using populist and/or expert and/or comparative methods of measurement to define needs, whichever is the most socially just (1976, p.33).

In Runciman's argument decisions are seen as being based on rationality and not on values. Weale criticises Runciman's analysis and argues that it is not possible to assess the extent to which free and rational man would be willing to take risks.

Indeed I believe that no particular principle, be it utilitarian or egalitarian, could be preferred in the original position simply because it was more rational to opt for one type of social state rather than another.  
(Weale 1978, p.35)

He suggests that we should judge principles in terms of their ethical and not their rational appeal. The ethical appeal of equality he suggests is that it would compensate for the arbitrary distribution of abilities and the benefits which accrue to those who have these abilities, that is benefits would be pooled not resources.

### Equality

Weale differentiates between substantive equality which refers to outcome and procedural equality. He expresses procedural equality in the following double barrelled principle:

...a) Good reason has to be shown for treating one person or a group of persons differently from any other person or group of persons. In the absence of such a reason all persons or groups of persons should be treated similarly.

b) Like cases are to be treated as like, and unlike as unlike.

(Weale 1978, p.11)

Procedural equality as the name suggests is concerned with treatment rather than outcome. Weale argues that it places the emphasis on the manner in which we settle distributive claims between people. The

first part of the principle guarantees non-arbitrariness requiring a reason to be given for treating people differently. Whether or not the reason is justified is a separate substantive moral argument. The second part of the principle stresses the need for consistency if the principle of procedural equality is to be met. Weale sees the requirement for consistency as being identical to the principle of equity. This second part of the principle of procedural equality raises two questions. Firstly, what the treatment should be and secondly what groups should be used as reference groups when considering whether there has been consistency of treatment.

The point of an equity argument is not so much to stress the concept of consistency, but rather to indicate the proper reference groups between whom consistency should be maintained. (Weale 1978, p.28)

Equity could therefore lead to more or less equality of outcome depending which comparative reference groups are used. The conflict between equality and equity occurs mainly when situations where inequality already exists are considered. Whether everyone should be treated equally and thus the state of equality perpetuated or whether the existing inequality should be compensated for thus making everyone more equal must be considered.

Weale argues that procedural equality is a defeasible concept. It will hold unless a good reason is given as to why it should not hold. With the concept of substantive equality, that is equality of outcome, there is no built-in requirement for one principle to give way although it may be replaced by another principle (1978, p.13). Again, the need to look at the relative weight given to different principles of welfare and their interrelationship should be recognised. When looking at how need is defined by those interviewed the extent to which poverty is seen in relative terms and the level of

inequality felt to be acceptable are the two major issues requiring investigation. The following hypotheses will be considered:

6. Those interviewed define poverty in absolute terms as opposed to relative terms.
7. The present level of inequality is acceptable to those interviewed.

Any information obtained on how inequality is justified by those who find it acceptable will also be discussed.

### Citizenship

Equality in material resources may be obtained without the existence of equality of prestige. The concept of citizenship deals with the subjective feelings of the public as well as the objective distribution of resources. Parker suggests:

To argue for a distribution of services or resources based on citizenship principles is to assert that individual living standards should be safeguarded by political decisions which guarantee an agreed level of medical or social care, education, cash and so on irrespective of individual bargaining power. (Parker 1975, p.145)

This suggests a universal distribution of resources basic to human need and emphasises the rights of the public to have their needs met. The principle of citizenship is given much stress in the institutionalised redistributive model but citizenship rights may be linked to other principles especially the principle of reciprocity.

Welfare principles and their relationship to views on rights to benefit have been discussed above. Views on rights to welfare benefits may also be affected by the way they are administered. Discussions of citizenship often involve discussions of universality and selectivity. Pinker (1971, p.207) says the distinction between universality and selectivity is of little practical relevance.

Titmuss (1968) also felt the distinction to be naive. The administration surrounding benefit payment may still be a source of stigma, especially whether or not the benefit is means tested. The fact that means tests require the recipient to admit to being in poverty is seen as a major factor in the production of stigma. This Pinker argues is a:

...reflection of prevailing opinion which finds economic dependence reprehensive to a greater degree than sickness, homelessness or unemployment for instance.  
(Pinker 1972, p.151)

Blaxter (1974) makes a similar point saying that the disabled found benefits acceptable only if they could be looked upon as rights linked to a clearly defined category, i.e. when the emphasis was on needs as opposed to means. Selective benefits which focus on needs and rights therefore may be acceptable while those stressing economic dependency may be seen as stigmatising. The effect of methods of distribution on the views of those interviewed will be considered. The views of those interviewed both on others' rights to benefit and their own rights to benefit will be discussed.

### Models of Welfare

The institutionalised redistributive model it has been suggested emphasises societal responsibility, the importance of meeting need equality, and citizenship; the industrial achievement model stresses efficiency and incentives; and the residual model emphasises individual responsibility, reciprocity and the stigmatisation of those who fail to help themselves. These principles have been discussed in detail and hypotheses relating to the existence of these principles in the welfare views of those interviewed put forward. The inter-relationship of these views, as has been said, also requires

examination thus when the views of those interviewed are considered the hypotheses:

8. None of the models discussed above resemble the views of those interviewed.

will be considered.

To summarise so far having discussed the relationship between public opinion and policy and factors affecting public attitudes in this section, the principles likely to be found to be important when considering the content of legislation and public attitudes were discussed. The three models outlined by Titmuss, the residual, the institutionalised redistributive model and the industrial achievement performance model, and the principles these models involve, were discussed. The principles investigated were individual and societal responsibility, reciprocity, meeting need, equality and citizenship.

In relation to individual and societal responsibility the following hypotheses were put forward:

1. All those receiving welfare benefits are seen by those interviewed as undeserving.
2. Those interviewed see the meeting of their own welfare needs as the responsibility of the individual.

Attitudes to the unemployed in particular will be investigated.

The principle of reciprocity was also discussed and the hypothesis:

3. Those interviewed see the principle of reciprocity as being the central principle of any welfare system.

The way in which reciprocity is defined, that is whether it is defined in broad terms to include compensation or in narrow terms by those



interviewed it was suggested requires consideration. Even if the principle of reciprocity is defined in broad terms it was suggested it may not be a sufficient principle on which to base a welfare system and may promote inequality. The relative weight placed on past contributions and propensity for reciprocity also requires consideration. Whether the distance between giver and receiver and the length of time a claimant has been on benefit affects attitudes will also be investigated. How views on reciprocity affected people's reaction to claiming themselves will be noted.

The industrial achievement model emphasises efficiency and incentives. The hypothesis:

4. A belief in the need to maintain incentives and to improve efficiency dominates the attitudes of those interviewed to welfare services.

was put forward. In cases where the need for incentives is found to be stressed, whether the incentives envisaged are positive or negative in nature, will be considered.

The concepts of altruism and egoism it was argued should be used as benchmarks and the fact that altruistic or egoistic views may be modified by other principles recognised. In order to investigate the extent to which altruistic sentiments existed it was hypothesised that:

5. Those interviewed think only of themselves.

The extent to which the public's altruism was limited to their family can also be considered.

Definitions of need it was recognised vary, as do views on how much inequality is acceptable. In connection with this, the following hypotheses were put forward:

6. Those interviewed define poverty in absolute terms as opposed to relative terms.
7. The present level of inequality is acceptable to those interviewed.

Any information on how inequality is justified will also be discussed.

The principle of citizenship emphasises the importance of subjective views on rights. The principles with reference to which rights can be established have been discussed above. However it was recognised that the way in which benefits were administered may affect people's views on their own and others' rights to benefit. Views on the way in which the benefits system is administered will therefore also be investigated.

Finally the interrelationship of the principles discussed above must again be considered and the relevance of the models outlined by Titmuss assessed. In connection with this the hypothesis:

8. None of the models discussed above resemble the views of those interviewed.

was put forward.

## CHAPTER 4

## REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In chapter 2, having looked at the definition of public attitudes, the usefulness of elitist and pluralist models in explaining the relationship between public opinion and legislation was considered. The influence of various factors on public attitudes was then discussed; in particular the relationship between experience of unemployment and attitudes. In chapter 3 the models of welfare outlined by Titmuss were discussed and the principles central to these models considered in greater detail. In this section it is intended to examine those empirical studies of public attitudes to the British welfare system which have produced findings which are of relevance to the theoretical considerations outlined in chapters 2 and 3.<sup>1</sup>

Runciman (1966)

Writing in 1971 Pinker emphasised the need to investigate public attitudes:

One of the most valuable contributions of social theory to the study of social welfare might be that of improving our understanding of public attitudes towards social services. We need better maps of the current levels of satisfaction and discontent and more convincing explanations of why people hold the range of attitudes and expectations that they do. (Pinker 1971, p.110)

Pinker noted that very few investigations have been carried out in this area, one of the most impressive being in his view Runciman's study (Runciman 1966) of relative deprivation. Runciman's study was carried out in 1962. A stratified random sample of 2,000 was drawn from the electoral registers of two wards within each of fifty constituencies in England and Wales. One thousand, four hundred and

fifteen agreed to be interviewed. About two thirds of the sample were manual workers or the wives of manual workers and about one third non-manual. Runciman concluded that the comparative reference groups of those interviewed were limited in scope and that those interviewed felt less relatively deprived than they were entitled to feel, when their position was judged in terms of social justice.<sup>2</sup> Much of the inequality accepted by those interviewed in Runciman's study was not, he argued, justified in these terms. There was more evidence of resentment of narrow inequalities than of large scale inequalities and comparative reference groups tended to be chosen close to a person's own standing. Only a few of the questions put to the respondents by Runciman were directly concerned with state provision of financial assistance. Almost half of the respondents interviewed were in favour of the unemployed receiving benefit at the full rate for as long as they were unemployed provided it was means tested, and about a quarter were in favour of non-means-tested unemployment benefit. Over half the respondents were in favour of family allowances for the first child but over half of those in favour felt they should be means tested. Over forty percent totally rejected the idea of providing family allowances for the first child. Almost half of the respondents approved of a means tested subsidy for rents and around ten percent approved of non-means-tested subsidies. From the responses to these questions it appears that the majority favoured selective as opposed to universal assistance. The manual strata were more likely to be in favour of providing benefits and were more likely to approve of benefits being universal. In all the examples presented the majority felt those in need should be assisted.

Institute of Economic Affairs (1963, 1965)

Although Pinker felt the findings of Runciman's study were a valuable aid to the consideration of the attitudes to welfare held by the general public, he warned that Runciman's results must be treated with caution since so little comparable research was available. The little research which had been carried out at that time (1971) he argued, supported Runciman's findings. In support of this claim he quotes the study of attitudes to welfare which was carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs (1965). The Institute of Economic Affairs' most significant findings were in his view first that few respondents wanted to make a final choice between public and private forms of welfare provision and secondly that there was a widespread ignorance about the costs of state welfare (Pinker 1971, p.114).

## In Pinker's view:

Further theoretical studies of the subjective realities that motivate users of social services may confirm the hypothesis that if the cause of social justice is to be advanced and the allocation of social resources made more equitable, it would be better left to Dicey's small group of informed citizens, than to the gentle ebb and flow of public opinion. (Pinker 1971, p.114)

Pinker's discussion of public opinion especially his discussion of the existence, or non-existence of altruism was considered in detail in chapter 3. Since 1971 several studies of British attitudes to the state provision of assistance have been carried out. The methods used in each of the projects varied as did the issues they investigated and this obviously affected the results obtained. The results of these studies and the methods of investigation used are discussed below.

Institute of Economic Affairs (1963, 1965, 1970, 1978)

In recent years the Institute of Economic Affairs have carried out four studies of public attitudes to welfare provision (Institute of Economic Affairs 1963, 1965, 1970, 1978). Each study used similar key questions. Approximately 2,000 men were selected for each of the earlier studies and 2,000 men and women for the 1978 study, completing quotas defined in terms of age, class and geographical area. The three early studies look at three areas of state provision, education, health and pensions; the fourth study excluded attitudes to pensions but included more questions on taxation. The studies show a large percentage of those interviewed favoured voucher systems, i.e. state subsidy of private welfare provision rather than state provision. For the latest study (1978) 51% of men and 52% of women with children under eighteen said they were prepared to top up a voucher provided by the state by one third for education. The majority it was found wished taxation reduced and most underestimated the cost of state services.

The methods used in this investigation can be criticised. It is clear, as the researchers claim, that insufficient information may be available to those interviewed for an informed answer to be given but the information provided to respondents by the Institute of Economic Affairs was highly selective, .e.g the question:

In California recently two people out of three voted to reduce taxation and accept fewer services. If there was a vote in this country on the same issue would you vote for or against it?

In addition some of the questions could be claimed to lead those responding into giving certain answers since the alternatives

presented were limited. For example those interviewed were asked whether they felt taxes and contributions should be reduced and services should be provided to those in need only, leaving others to use private insurance, whether more should be taken in taxes, rates and contributions to pay for increased services for all, or whether we should continue as at present but allow people to contract out and pay less in contributions using the money saved for private services. The alternative of 'keeping the system the same' was not put forward. By excluding the option of paying the same proportion as at present in taxes and receiving the same services, the option of staying the same but allowing reduced contributions for those contracting out became the soft option and this must be noted when the fact that a large percentage chose this alternative is considered. The Institute of Economic Affairs not surprisingly found that the public emphasised individual responsibility and favoured private provision.<sup>3</sup>

### Pinker (1972)

In 1972 Pinker himself carried out a study of attitudes to welfare provision. He suggested that the relative acceptability of dependency to an individual depends on whether he is able to return quickly to the labour market. In the short term, earnings related benefits were paid for a limited period to those with sufficient contributions. In the long term he argued past contributions appeared to be less important than possible future contributions:

...past contributions looked at over the life span have had no discernible affect on producing a retirement pension which offers a reasonable standard of living without recourse to assistance benefits. Propensity for reciprocity amongst those currently and likely to remain within or likely to return to the labour market appears to

be far more salient a factor affecting the individual's relationship to the welfare state i.e. the kind of service, to be offered and his own willingness to make use of it.  
(Pinker 1972, p.7)

He suggested that the public would make a sharp distinction between givers and receivers and that relatively sophisticated notions such as 'paying one's way' through indirect taxation were alien to ordinary people. Propensity for reciprocity he suggested was of major importance to the public and even the insurance principle with its emphasis on past contributions in his view had been undermined by the fact that those who have made contributions are not guaranteed benefits which reach subsistence level.

Fifty men aged between forty and sixty from each of three groups, the chronically sick (bronchitics), the acute sick (coronaries) and a control group of healthy men were interviewed. The bronchitic group were the least likely to be able to reciprocate in the future therefore the members of this group he argued, would feel most stigmatised. Preliminary interviews were carried out and these were followed by more detailed interviews eliciting views on welfare philosophy. The response rate fell at the reinterview stage, to 60% of the chronically sick group, 68% of the acutely sick group and 32% of the control group. The low level of response from the control group, Pinker suggests, indicates that those who do not receive the services themselves have least interest in discussing them. The groups varied slightly in terms of background characteristics with those in the bronchitic group tending to be of a lower social class. This latter fact Pinker suggested may be because bronchitis is an illness which affects those in manual work more often or because those with bronchitis often have frequent absences from work and thus can only obtain less skilled work. From the evidence of their work



histories the former explanation appeared to be more likely. The bronchitic group, despite having least knowledge of welfare services, were found to make more use of them than other groups. He suggested two possible explanations for this; first the coronaries may have been more impaired than predicted and thus more sensitive to receiving benefits; secondly the coronary group may have had better informal sources of help. The first explanation seems unlikely and he produces no evidence to support it. The second explanation indicates the importance of a person's need in determining whether or not they claim benefit. It is clear from these results that the propensity for reciprocity of those interviewed was not related to their views in the way Pinker suggested, since those who were least able to reciprocate in the future were not necessarily those who saw welfare as most stigmatising.

Whether the propensity for reciprocity of claimants affected people's attitudes to them was also considered. The majority of those interviewed were found to be particularly sympathetic towards the low paid and sick pensioners. Sick pensioners have little propensity for reciprocity, and yet those interviewed were sympathetic towards them. Sick pensioners however are outside the labour market and it could be argued, are judged by different criteria from those who are potentially still within the labour market. It could be suggested that propensity for reciprocity is only significant when discussing those within the labour market. The low paid are within the labour market and thus may be judged in terms of propensity for reciprocity. Clearly they may be able to reciprocate in the future. The contribution of the low paid to society, judging by the rewards they receive is not valued very highly in terms of market

criteria, therefore market criteria cannot be said to be applied in an unmodified way when considering whether groups within the labour market are deserving. The propensity for reciprocity of those groups of claimants discussed it appeared did not always affect attitudes in the way Pinker suggested. Those with the greatest propensity for reciprocity were not always seen as the most deserving.

During the second set of interviews he found that although some of the interviewees rejected the welfare state some thought it should do more for people and others less. More of the comments made were of a favourable rather than a critical nature. Very few of the respondents felt there were no abuses of social security. The groups most commonly cited as abusers of the system were those avoiding work and those who were working on the side. Respondents were found to be confident of their rights. Stigma was generally felt to be attached to others who were not genuine. Much concern existed for those who had worked most of their lives and now through no fault of their own could not work, suggesting those interviewed valued past contributions highly. Motivation was also important to those interviewed. Pinker suggests it was less important that productivity was genuine than that productive efforts were genuine (1972, p.69).

Pinker was surprised at the sophistication of the welfare philosophy of those interviewed. He outlined three models of welfare which he found to be prevalent among those interviewed, the altruistic model, the exchange model and the egoistic model, and assessed the proportion of those interviewed who could be classified under each heading. His findings were as follows:

	Altruistic	Exchange	Egoistic
Control	5%	70%	23%
Bronchitic	12%	56%	20%
Coronary	13%	53%	34%

Little relationship between illness and attitude was found. The coronary group were in fact found to resemble the control group whose members were similar to them in terms of class more than the bronchitic group. Pinker suggests the strong emphasis put by the coronary group on independence may be due to the fact that it is a certain type of personality with a certain type of lifestyle who gets a coronary. The principle which was most important to the public he claims was not meeting need but justice with much emphasis being put on the work ethic. Inequality was seen as inevitable. Pinker concluded:

Our men demanded not revolution but the opportunity to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay together with a reasonable amount of protection against the financial problems related to illness, disability and old age, particularly during a period of rapid inflation.  
(Pinker 1972, p.70)

This seems to be a very radical, if not revolutionary demand and it does show that the public emphasised need.

#### Piachaud (1974)

Other studies have also found need to be emphasised. Piachaud (1974) examined public attitudes to pensions using a postal questionnaire. Questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 1,200 in England and Wales in February 1973 and a reminder was sent 1-2 weeks later. The response rate was 617 out of 1,044 (i.e. 59%), if allowance was made for those who were likely to have died or moved from the area. The study was concerned with the respondents belief

about the adequacy of pensions and their willingness to pay more to increase pensions. The questions did not differentiate between means-tested and non-means-tested benefits and fewer than 1% of those responding pointed out that there was a difference. Just less than 1% thought pensions were more than adequate and less than 7% felt that they were adequate. No significant differences were found when responses given by those who were working were compared with those who were not. People were asked how much more tax they would be prepared to pay to enable pensions to be increased and were told that each contribution of 10p would enable pensions to be increased by 30p. Eighty percent of respondents were prepared to be worse off, the average amount being 65p per week. One percent pointed out that the rich could be taxed more. A question on income was not included since this would have led to a lower response rate. A 65p increase in tax would enable pensions to be increased by £2 but the mean amount of increase desired was around £4 for a single person.

#### Age Concern (1974)

In the same year Age Concern, with the help of Research Surveys of Great Britain, carried out a similar survey of 2,000 men and women by attaching four questions to the end of a larger public opinion survey. They found that most people thought that pensions were inadequate and more than half were willing to pay 25p per week more in tax or insurance. The average amount the respondents to the Age Concern questions were willing to pay in tax to assist pensioners it can be seen was less than the average amount stated by respondents to Piachaud's questionnaire. This may have been due to the question's wording. The Age Concern respondents may not have known that for

their 25p a pensioner would be better off by approximately only 75p. Alternatively it may have been because those who responded to the Age Concern questions had already answered questions on a variety of subjects and thus the adequacy of pensions was only one of many issues to be considered. The fact that the Age Concern question was posed by an interviewer may also have affected the results; those interviewed may have suggested lower amounts because they could justify the amounts they suggested to the interviewer.

Both Piachaud and Age Concern found that those responding felt that pensions were at present inadequate and that they would be willing to contribute to the cost of higher pensions. The average amounts by which those responding were prepared to contribute varied in the two studies and this variation illustrates the importance of considering the effect which question wording and the methods used can have on attitudes.

#### Commission of European Communities (1977)

The Commission of European Communities carried out a study of the perception of poverty in Europe in the Spring of 1976 (Commission of the European Communities 1977). A questionnaire containing about 30 questions was used as a supplement to a more general opinion survey. Approximately half of the 8,627 interviewed were aware of having had to cut down their expenditure and 8% of them felt themselves to be poor. In Britain drink and laziness were mentioned frequently as causes of poverty by those aware of poverty, while in Italy and France societal causes of poverty were emphasised. In all countries with the exception of Italy the majority felt nobody was living in misery in their area.

The researchers concluded that subjective factors, i.e. national and cultural value systems were more closely related to attitudes than objective factors, such as income, profession and sex. Those who perceived poverty and stressed social causes (about 10% of the sample) were termed 'the militants for justice' and were argued by the authors to be similar personality types to the 'post materialist' type of personality described by Inglehart (1971). Respondents were asked to select the objectives their country should meet. The responses were used to classify respondents into post materialists and others within each country. Perceptions of poverty were found to correlate highly with post materialist values, i.e. the belief in freedom of expression, an emphasis on the importance of ideas, a belief that society should be more humane, a belief in the importance of public participation and a belief that people should have more say. Within countries the authors argue the value systems are a powerful filter which:

...prevents, reduces or magnifies perception and colours connotations differently, particularly the attribution of poverty to such and such a cause - the individual (guilty) or society (unfair).

(Commission of the European Communities 1977, p.101)

The discovery that people's views are affected by their value system is, it can be argued, tautologous and a circular argument.

This study suggests therefore that although the majority of those interviewed were aware of a reduction in their own living standards, stress, particularly in Britain was placed on individual responsibility. They argue experience gained from contact with the poor is a less important influence on attitudes than national, cultural and individual value systems. This finding is of limited value and further investigation of the factors affecting value systems is clearly necessary.

Deacon (1977, 1978)

Several other studies have looked at the extent to which individual responsibility is emphasised and the stress placed on incentives. The welfare backlash which occurred in 1976 awoke an interest in research in public attitudes to welfare. Deacon (1977 and 1978) examined public opinion as reflected by the press and the views of Members of Parliament. The incentives issue, he argues, was strongly emphasised and was at times associated with a concern about social security abuse and a resentment of scroungers. Concern about abuse appeared to fluctuate. Deacon suggests that it was at its peak in the media and public opinion in 1976 and early 1977. This suggestion was substantiated by a Marplan survey conducted in early 1977 in which 83% of those interviewed were found to believe that the unemployed had done well in 1976. At the time of the November uprating in 1977 Deacon suggests the atmosphere was more relaxed with very little comment in the press as compared with the hysteria which surrounded the 1976 uprating.

A substantial body of opinion had shifted from a blanket denunciation of scrounging to a more reasoned discussion of the incentives question. (Deacon 1977, p.356)

Deacon suggests however that a campaign of public education is necessary if public resentment of those on social security is to be greatly reduced. Deacon did not carry out a survey to substantiate his analysis of the media and public opinion, although he did refer to public opinion poll results.

Golding and Middleton (1978, 1982)

An empirical investigation of public and media attitudes was carried out in 1977 by Golding and Middleton (1978, 1982). The research carried out by Golding and Middleton covered many of the areas

investigated in this present study. They looked at people's perceptions of inequality, especially notions of justice and equity, their philosophy of welfare and the way they saw poverty. They suggest that the media affects public policy at two levels. First they shape the political climate in which legislation is passed and secondly, they shape the cultural context in which legislation is administered. Information about welfare which appears in the media is generally presented from a sex crime or political conflict angle, thus they argue the news has been categorised into a prearranged agenda.

The media coverage of welfare issues during the second half of 1976 in all national newspapers except the Morning Star and the Financial Times, the main evening television bulletins and two local papers and two local radio stations were examined. Several major themes in the coverage were identified. These included the claims that the abuse which had been detected was only part of a much more extensive problem, the distinction between taxpayers and claimants and between the deserving and undeserving poor, the misdemeanours of undeserving claimants, the inefficiency of the welfare systems and the cunningness of claimants. The period studied was one where the media coverages of welfare issues was more intensive than usual. However, Golding and Middleton argue the themes identified have more general validity.

The survey of public opinion was carried out in the Spring of 1977 and a stratified random sample of the public were interviewed in both Leicester and Sunderland, areas which were chosen because of their economic structures and history. The response rate was 72.2% and involved 650. In the responses made to open ended questions about



Family Income Supplements and Supplementary Benefit it was found that knowledge about these benefits was limited. In addition people were found to underestimate living costs and overemphasise benefit levels. The responses to other questions must be seen in the light of these findings. Golding and Middleton discussing their results suggest that anti-welfare attitudes were common. About half those interviewed felt that too much was spent on welfare. Although almost half of those interviewed emphasised the insurance principle, especially the older age group and manual workers, over half indicated that help should be reserved for the really deserving. Four fifths of those interviewed agreed with the statement that too many people were dependent on welfare, seven tenths agreed that welfare made people lazy and an eighth that poor people had only themselves to blame. Over half thought that benefits were too high, especially older and manual workers, but as was said they tended to overestimate the present level of welfare benefits. Using a thirteen point scale of various attitudes over a third of those interviewed were found to have high anti-welfare attitudes. Over fifty percent felt that claiming benefit was embarrassing. The belief that benefits were stigmatising was found to be most prevalent in the area with higher unemployment and thus the greater need for benefit. The young also, were found to be more likely to believe that benefits were stigmatising.

Golding and Middleton suggest that Parkin's revision (Parkin 1972) of Rodman's lower class value stretch (Rodman 1963) provides a useful framework for understanding public attitudes to social security. Dominant values can be modified by those who hold them in the light of their experience and a subordinate value system created. The moral

framework for understanding social security is, they argue, derived more from the dominant value system (1978, p.102). There is, they suggest, no source of oppositional values in the situational experience of claimants to challenge dominant views (1982, p.79). Experience of the welfare system with its emphasis on detecting fraud, they argue, reinforces the belief that welfare is frequently abused. This, they argue, explains their finding that:

The association between class and attitudes to welfare is thus a significant one, showing the extent to which living on the edge of the welfare state induces fears which are easily aroused by economic recessions, and which are most easily articulated in terms of the most readily available mythologies. (Golding and Middleton, 1978, p.98)

Only 2.3% said there was no abuse. However only 30% estimated the numbers who abused the system at over 25%. Higher estimates of abuse were made by the young, women, manual workers, people in inner city areas, welfare recipients and the low paid. Golding and Middleton suggest:

The massive moral panic about scroungers reached its highest pitch among those with the greatest need to stress the social distance between themselves and the pauper stratum. (Golding and Middleton 1978, p.103)

Not all the attitudes to welfare found to be prevalent were negative however. Two thirds of those interviewed felt Britain could be proud of her welfare system and this proportion was higher among the old, the low paid and the unskilled. This, it can be suggested, further illustrates the adoption by the public of dominant values and as they suggest, it may be a reflection of the emphasis on patriotism rather than an acceptance of a universal welfare system.

The fact that there are inconsistencies in the dominant values is important as is the finding that the public can accept contradictory values and should be noted when the possibility of changing attitudes

is considered. It may be possible to create positive attitudes to welfare by building on existing attitudes.

Much awareness of unemployment was found to exist; those interviewed in fact tended to overestimate the extent of unemployment. Even in the East Midlands, an area of traditionally low levels of unemployment people were found to be psychologically if not economically hit by its recent high levels. Greater awareness of unemployment existed as one would expect in the areas and among the groups who were most vulnerable to it. Unemployment was explained, by those interviewed, either by vague reference to world recession, the decline of British industry, etc., or by the wilful idleness of the unemployed. Poverty was most often explained by bad management or by people lacking the skills required to obtain an adequate living standard. Golding and Middleton reject the 'reductionist' explanation of attitudes, i.e. the explanation of attitudes in terms of personality factors, put forward by the Commission of European Communities. Their finding that attitudes are associated with class as indicated by occupation, wage level, area of residence, they argue, suggests that alternative explanations are more likely. Their results support Runciman's finding that people are more aware of, and resentful of narrow inequalities. Although less than 10% agreed that there were no rich or poor only a quarter of the low paid felt that they were worse off than average. When asked who they felt were better off than they were, most referred to those in better paid jobs, the low paid said families with two wage earners and pensioners referred to those who were working. Comparative reference groups were limited. Although manual workers had higher scores in

attributing poverty to injustice they were likely to be perceiving small injustices rather than expressing opposition to the class structure (1978, p.120).

The media, Golding and Middleton suggest, provides a framework which people can use to understand their society. Since stories of abuse are more newsworthy a negative picture of the welfare system tends to be presented and this is accepted even, or especially, by the low paid and welfare beneficiaries themselves. By emphasising the difference between themselves and the scroungers who abuse welfare their own lowly status is enhanced. Resentment, they argue:

..is turned down - to the unemployed and welfare claimants - rather than up, to an invisible privileged stratum or to relatively adjacent groups whose advantages are seen to be both limited and fairly achieved.

Golding and Middleton 1978, p.121)

Negative attitudes to welfare according to their analysis, arise from limited comparative reference groups, especially among the low paid, the unskilled manual workers and welfare beneficiaries who wish to distinguish themselves from the undeserving poor.

In summary, from the interviews with the public, knowledge was found to be limited and anti-welfare attitudes were found to be relatively common. However, variations in attitudes between groups were found to exist. Those interviewed who were close in status to those in benefit were found to be more likely to hold anti-welfare attitudes. Those from areas of high unemployment were more likely to see benefits as stigmatising. From this research it would seem increasing experience of unemployment either direct or indirect makes people more aware of possible abuse and less sympathetic to those on benefit. It must be stressed however that only a third of those interviewed had anti-welfare attitudes and many views favourable to

the welfare system were presented, although the emphasis is placed by Golding and Middleton in their analysis on the scrounger issue.

Golding and Middleton (1982, p.200) conclude that since structural explanations of poverty are absent and inequalities are more often explained by inefficient consumption of incomes rather than by their inegalitarian distribution, fundamental changes in social policy will remain unacceptable (Redpath 1974)

A study of public attitudes to welfare was carried out in Scotland by Redpath (1979). In 1976 he interviewed 100 adult employed people in Edinburgh. A random sample of names was selected and those who met the sample criteria were interviewed. The response rate was estimated at 67%. Redpath tested several hypothesis which he felt might explain variations in attitudes to the unemployed. First it was hypothesised that those who felt that they had paid more than their fair share of tax would resent those who benefited from it. Redpath suggested that those who felt that they paid too much in tax would be particularly resentful of assisting those who were seen as undeserving. The second hypothesis investigated, the better off hypothesis, concerned objective rather than subjective factors. Resentment of the unemployed it was suggested was caused by the overlap between benefit levels and wages, the low paid therefore it was argued, would be more likely to be critical of the unemployed on social security. The relative deprivation hypothesis was borrowed by Redpath from Runciman and Bagley (1969). Status inconsistencies it was argued lead to feelings of relative deprivation and those feelings affect attitudes. Redpath noted the danger of circularity, i.e. feelings of relative deprivation and negative attitudes to the unemployed may both be caused by particular personality types. He

felt however that the hypothesis was worth testing. The fourth hypothesis discussed was the economic stress hypothesis. Like the relative deprivation thesis it is a form of scapegoating theory. It was suggested that those who felt financially hard pressed were more likely to resent the unemployed in receipt of benefit. Feelings of financial stress and negative attitudes to the unemployed would, according to this argument increase in times of economic recession. Feelings of relative deprivation which were to be investigated by the third hypothesis would on the other hand be likely to increase in times of economic improvement. Redpath again noted that the feelings of economic stress which this hypothesis investigates may be affected by personality factors. The fifth hypothesis, the work ethic hypothesis, suggested that an emphasis on success and a belief that success attends upon effort will be related to resentment of the unemployed. Finally it was hypothesised that both experience of unemployment and education would be related to attitudes.

Redpath found that the majority of those interviewed held anti-welfare attitudes. Seventy-two percent agreed that a lot of people who are on social security could get jobs if they wanted to. Fifty-seven percent agreed that a lot of people on social security tell lies and 68% agreed that a lot of the unemployed have jobs on the side. On the other hand only 16% agreed that social security does not give people enough to live on and only 10% agreed that this country does not spend enough on social security. The statement:

...most of the unemployed on social security would like to get a job but can not find one,

was excluded from the scale as it had a low correlation with the other statements. The pilot suggested that in times of high unemployment people could not agree with this statement. This, it can be argued,

illustrates the complexity of public opinion and the fact that people can hold contradictory opinions.

All the hypotheses put forward by Redpath were disproved. The only relationship found to exist was that experience of unemployment among the better educated and the low paid was related to more sympathetic attitudes. Future research he suggested should not try to explain variations in anti-welfare sentiment but why so much anti-welfare sentiment exists. Golding and Middleton's study (1978) as was seen suggests that relationships between different factors, e.g. occupation and attitudes, can be found. Clearly more research is necessary.

#### Schlackman Research Organisation (1978)

The contradictions in the results obtained from different studies may be the result of the differences in the research instruments used. A more probing research instrument may be necessary. The research carried out by the Schlackman Research Organisation involved detailed interviews and discussions. The report 'Research on Public Attitudes Towards the Supplementary Benefit System' which was submitted to the Central Office of Information by the Schlackman Organisation is important not only as a piece of previous research but also because of its role as a background paper to the review of the supplementary benefits system carried out in 1978. The Schlackman Organisation stated that:

The greatest current gap in the existing information is some guide as to the views of the public at large. The sub-group on research for the Supplementary Benefit Review have agreed that some attempt should be made to fill this gap in background knowledge and the current document is an initial research proposal to meet such a requirement. It aims to investigate the views of the general public which

will include claimants, former claimants and non-claimants, some or all of whom will be or will have been tax payers. (Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.ii)

The research aimed to investigate public knowledge, experience and views of the system, especially attitudes to different aspects of the system including means tested and discretionary payments. Twelve group discussions and thirty-two individual interviews were undertaken. Quota sampling was used. The group discussions lasted between two and a half and four hours, the interviews one to two hours. As well as obtaining informants who differed in terms of sex, class, age and area of residence, they also attempted to obtain a 50:50 representation of informants holding pro and anti social security attitudes by asking whether they agreed with the statement:

Most people on social security really need it.

They argued:

Although we know from previous research that this question does in fact divide the population roughly 50:50, the form in which we had to ask it seemed unsatisfactory in some respects. (Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.iv)

For the recruitment of a sample for the in-depth interviews therefore they used a conservatism scale and interviewed 50% liberals and 50% conservatives. Using such a method of recruitment they argued would ensure a cross section of opinion was sampled and eliminate 'don't know's' whose lack of opinion would make them unsuitable for interview. By using attitudes as a basis for preselecting their sample they cannot help but present a predetermined picture of public opinion as a whole. Even if the attitudes of the public varied in the way they suggested the situation may have changed. The elimination of 'don't know's' leads to an unrepresentative picture being presented. There was also an underrepresentation of blue collar workers.



In order to obtain interviews with people in each age, sex, class grouping it was necessary to split the sample 50:50 between 'white collar' (ABC1) and 'blue collar' (C2DE) social classes. This results in 'blue collar' informants, who form nearly two-thirds of the population, being slightly underrepresented in the total sample.  
(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.v)

The underrepresentation of blue collar respondents leads to an underrepresentation of claimants since blue collar workers are more likely to become unemployed or be forced to claim supplementary benefit when a pensioner. This is an important influence on the overall picture given by the report especially since the presence of claimants or former claimants in the discussion groups was found to change the emphasis of the group discussion, although they argue the underlying pattern of belief was not altered. No-one from Scotland was sampled. It is necessary to bear the sampling frame in mind when considering the results. Nevertheless the importance of obtaining information of the views of different groups in society is acknowledged.

The groups were considered to produce a more relaxed situation and group dynamics could also be examined. However, the fact that some people dominate group situations will also have affected the results. The researchers refer to one of the disadvantages of the group discussions:

Because of the complex interlocking nature of the quota it was often difficult to assess whether variations in opinion were related to age, sex, class or geographical location. The overriding factor in forming attitudes and in determining the level of knowledge was experience of the social security system.  
(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.vii)

No figures were available on the numbers holding each view, therefore readers are forced to rely on the researchers' interpretation of the prevalence of attitudes and this too must be borne in mind when considering the results.

The study found that there was confusion over the term 'social security'. Sometimes it was being used in its correct sense of general state income maintenance and sometimes to mean supplementary benefit only. They found the most prominent problems in people's minds to be inflation followed by unemployment. Both these issues were often linked with comments about strikers and the unions having too much power. Some respondents stressed the interrelationship of these problems. Concern was also expressed about moral decline. No precise measure of how prevalent these attitudes were was given. Taxation was not referred to as a social problem although it was generally mentioned in relation to some of the other social problems discussed. When social security was referred to spontaneously the report says it was generally mentioned in relation to the unemployed and reference was made to benefits which were too high and too easily obtained. This, however, they suggest may have been the result of group interaction.

While opposition to the Government, unions or immigrants was usually accompanied by caveats 'scroungers' were felt to be fair game for criticism. This should be borne in mind when we come to discuss the difficulty which informants encountered in trying to define the difference between the 'scrounger' and the 'genuine case'/  
(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.2)

It is not surprising that everyone agreed in condemning the negative label 'scrounger'. In the individual interviews they found people less forthcoming about problems and less mention of social security was made.

They found that sympathy for pensioners, the sick and disabled, widows, single parent families and those who looked after elderly or sick relatives, existed. These groups were seldom divided into deserving and undeserving although sympathy for pensioners was found

to be linked in some cases to the view that they were better off now than they ever had been and they suggest:

There appears to be a time lag in public awareness with respect to the needs of different groups and the provisions made for them.

(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.4)

The unemployed were frequently classified as deserving or undeserving. Those who put effort into finding a job and were prepared to accept alternative unemployment if, after a while, no job suited to their skills was available, were seen as 'deserving' or the 'genuine unemployed'. People were unwilling to establish priorities between groups of beneficiaries. There was less sympathy for unmarried mothers than other groups of single parents but generally it was still felt the children must be helped. Those in the South East were found to be less sympathetic to the unemployed believing that jobs were available and citing as evidence jobs advertised in the press, 'black labour' and the experience of some of them as employers trying to fill vacancies. In other areas people were concerned about unemployment and aware of some of the details of unemployment benefit. They found:

...a universal acceptance of the legitimacy of claiming 'dole' in cases of genuine need.

(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.10)

This they suggest is largely because unemployment benefit is contributory. Many of those interviewed were unaware that a lot of people had to claim supplementary benefit on top of unemployment benefit (1978, p.27). There were mixed views on whether the unemployed should be given work of a social nature. Job creation was often criticised as being a makeshift scheme which did not get to the root of the problem.

There was much sympathy for unemployed school leavers since they were entering the work force at a bad time when jobs especially apprenticeships were in short supply. This view however was coupled with the feeling that since they had paid no national insurance or tax they were less deserving than other groups of unemployed. Some thought their parents should provide for them. There was concern about the morale of these youngsters and the government was criticised for not dealing with the problem of youth unemployment. The education system was also criticised for raising expectations and producing people who were over-qualified. Another group for whom there was much sympathy were redundant skilled workers. Many felt they should have a chance to be selective when seeking work but others felt that they should face reality and not be too fussy. Unemployed people who did not make an effort were were most criticised. The report differentiates between scroungers, idlers and fiddlers.

While fiddlers are seen to be flouting the law, and idlers are seen to be defying the work ethic, scroungers are defined by their attitude to the social security benefits which they receive, to the welfare state that provides them, and hence to the tax payer who finances the system. (Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.20)

In addition they found:

...that even in the case of the genuine unemployed there is considerable support for the view that he should still be worse off during his unemployment than when he is at work. (Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.xiii)

Claimants are criticised for drinking and dressing well but some pointed out that they must keep up appearances and that pubs were good places to find out about jobs. The cases which were found to be most controversial were the borderline cases, i.e. the low paid who were as well or better off on social security. They suggest:

The unwillingness to blame 'borderline' cases reveals an interesting conflict between two opposing moral principles -

- i) The requirement to 'stand on your own feet'
- ii) The obligation to do the best for your family by whatever means.

(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.24)

This seems to suggest that concern for one's family can lead to altruistic concern for others.

There was much sympathy for the low paid but respondents were unclear about what constituted a low wage and there was much confusion over the term 'average wage', e.g. whether it was gross or net and whether it included overtime. Estimates of what constitutes low wages in the North were lower than in the South. Manual workers were concerned about the low tax threshold and government policies relating to pay restraint. Ambivalent attitudes existed towards unions, some said that they had too much power and were yet at the same time concerned with their failure to represent the low paid. The most popular solutions to the problems of the low paid were the establishment of a minimum wage or modifications of the tax system. Child benefit was not favoured.

When child benefit featured in this discussion it seemed that being able to keep more of what one earns is more attractive than allowances of this type.

(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.xvi)

Groups containing significant numbers of former or current claimants were more sympathetic to those on benefit.

The recounting of the experiences of claimants would lead other members of the group to express sympathy and solidarity, and often to recount the experiences of friends or relatives.

(Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.34)

Experience, it is clear, affects attitudes.

It was the almost universally declared belief of informants of all types that those who were in least need would be the most likely to claim and the most successful in obtaining Supplementary Benefits, while those who were most in need

and most deserved to receive help, would be the most reticent in claiming and the least likely to receive help. (Schlackman Research Organisation 1978, p.34)

This was thought to be because of the complexity of the system, the fact that many of the undeserving were involved with other agencies who gave them information and the fact that the long term claimant would be familiar with the system. Most informants they said believed that a system to help the needy was required but that it is degrading to rely on it. Many thought benefits were higher than they were and were more sympathetic when they heard the real rates. The distinction between contributory and non-contributory benefits was felt to be becoming less important. People, it was generally felt, should be allowed to keep their own savings. Money designated for specific items was thought to be more degrading. Discretion was thought by some to be likely to favour the scrounger although it could also be argued that it would allow better screening of scroungers, depending on the faith people have in the officers. Claimants it was thought should not incur new hire purchase debts but some felt old agreements should be honoured. Disregards on unemployment benefits it was generally thought should be small but pensioners and wives and widows should be able to earn more. The administration was thought too complex and there was a call for its simplification. However there was also a strong demand for tightening up against fiddlers. Many more inconsistencies in views were found, for example, improve the quality and number of staff and reduce administrative costs; judge each case on its merits and treat everyone the same. However the report concluded that there would be public support for a simplification of the administration. Demands for harsher treatment they suggest were largely emotional reactions and tended to diminish

in force as the discussion proceeded and as respondents became more aware of the complexities of the system.

This study supports the view that people's views can be inconsistent and contain contradictory elements and that they are capable of modification. The respondents' views they argue tended to be based on informal sources and recent media coverage. They found memories were short however, e.g. the claims made about abuse by Ian Sproatt the previous year had largely been forgotten

The sample in this research was purposefully selected and cannot be seen as reflecting public opinion directly. The interlocking nature of the characteristics considered makes the assessing of differences between groups difficult. The group nature of the interviews made it difficult to compare the views of those from different class backgrounds and those of different ages. It did emerge however that those with more experience of unemployment both direct experience and experience gained through living in areas of high unemployment were more sympathetic to those on benefit. The more probing methods of research showed that inconsistencies in views existed. This it could be argued means attitudes are susceptible to change. The researchers argue that the demand for harsher treatment was only an emotional reaction and that below the surface concern for those on benefit could be detected. Information about those on benefit appeared to influence views. Changes in legislation which took public opinion into account need not according to this research involve harsher treatment. Greater simplification was desired however.<sup>4</sup>

Whiteley (1981)

Whiteley (1981) used British electoral study data from 1974 to consider attitudes to welfare. People he suggests felt unemployment and inflation to be more important issues than welfare. It can be argued however that unemployment and inflation are welfare issues. The needs and partisanship of those interviewed did not explain much of the variation in attitudes found to exist. Manual workers were found to be more pro welfare and older workers to be less generous. Reduced taxation was favoured but so was welfare provision. Whiteley concludes:

The general climate of public opinion in Britain will not accept a fundamental dismantling of the welfare state, as distinct from its erosion at the edges.  
(Whiteley 1981, p.473)

Beedle and Taylor Gooby (1983)

Beedle and Taylor Gooby (1983) and Taylor Gooby (1983) referring to the research carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs suggest further investigation into the interrelationship of views on tax and welfare is required. In early 1981 they interviewed 240 men and women in full-time work in eight electoral districts in Kent. The approach used was that of systematic door knocking after 4 pm and at weekends. Those interviewed were found to be representative of those living in the areas. Seventy-eight percent of those approached were interviewed. The public it was found saw income tax as the main source of income for public expenditure although in fact it only accounts for 34%. The present welfare system was seen by all groups as redistributing to others. The majority evaluated the system positively but distrusted the present set-up. Room for ambivalence exists and the authors suggest if researchers only ask about information on tax they do not get a true picture of the situation.



Taylor Gooby (1983) found that people were in favour of both maintaining the existing provision and developing private provision.

From an examination of images of welfare he suggests that:

Simple self interest may offer a firm basis for future defence of the welfare state.  
(Taylor Gooby 1983, p.53)

### Summary

To summarise so far, several of the studies show that knowledge about benefit levels was limited (Institute of Economic Affairs 1978, Golding and Middleton 1978, Schlackman Organisation 1978). The attitudes of those interviewed to pensioners were altruistic (Piachaud 1974, Age Concern 1974) but as far as the unemployed were concerned other principles appeared to intervene. Not all the studies investigated or touched upon all the principles discussed in chapter 3 but their findings are discussed where relevant, as far as individual responsibility is concerned. All the studies carried out found some awareness of abuse and a certain amount of emphasis on individual responsibility, although sympathy for 'deserving' cases did exist. Individual responsibility for dealing with and causing unemployment was emphasised to a large extent by those interviewed by the Institute of Economic Affairs 1978, the Commission of European Communities 1977, Golding and Middleton 1978, and Redpath 1979. Golding and Middleton also found some of those they interviewed emphasising societal responsibility for unemployment. The Schalckman Organisation found among those they interviewed particular sympathy for the unemployed school leaver and the redundant older worker.

The principles of incentives and reciprocity were found to be stressed by those interviewed by Deacon (1977, 1978), Pinker (1972) and the Schalckman Organisation (1978). Deacon (1977, 1978)

especially stressed the importance of the effect of the incentives issue on public attitudes. Pinker (1972) also found the work ethic to be important to those he interviewed. The Schlackman Organisation (1978) argued that the belief that a man must support his family is not always compatible with the stress placed on incentives. Inconsistencies in attitudes therefore may exist. Pinker (1972), although he did not find the ability to reciprocate of those interviewed and of those being discussed was as influential in affecting attitudes as he had suggested, he did find principles of exchange to be important to those he interviewed. The Schlackman Organisation (1978), Pinker (1972) and Golding and Middleton (1978) found that those who were interviewed in their studies stressed the insurance principle.

Despite the emphasis on individual responsibility discussed above those interviewed in some of the studies also saw meeting need as important. As was said earlier both Piachaud and Age Concern found those they interviewed thought benefits for pensioners should be higher and were willing to contribute towards this. Redpath (1979) found a high level of anti-welfare sentiment among those he interviewed. Golding and Middleton (1978) found over a third of those interviewed held anti-welfare attitudes. However, two thirds were proud of the British welfare state. The Schlackman Research Organisation (1978), although they found anti-welfare attitudes influenced initial responses, found much sympathy for those on benefit when more detailed discussions of welfare were undertaken. Inconsistencies in attitudes were found to exist by several studies (Golding and Middleton 1978, Schlackman 1978, Whiteley 1981, Taylor Gooby and Beedle 1983). Pinker (1972) classified the views of those

he interviewed into models of welfare. He found the majority of those he interviewed held an exchange model of welfare as opposed to an egoistic or altruistic model. The other studies discussed in this chapter did not detect clusters of attitudes forming models of welfare, but this may have been because too many inconsistencies existed or because the methods used did not lend themselves to that type of analysis. More research as to the interrelationship of principles affecting public attitudes is clearly necessary.

Various factors thought likely to affect attitudes were investigated by some studies but the findings of the studies are inconclusive. Golding and Middleton (1978) stress the importance of the media's affect on attitudes and the Commission of European Communities (1977) stress the importance of national, cultural and individual value systems. Redpath (1974) found none of the factors he investigated influenced variations in attitudes to welfare and suggested future research should not follow this line of investigation. Pinker (1972) looked at the influence of ability to reciprocate on attitudes by looking at three groups with varying health experiences. No relationship between health and attitudes was found to exist.

A major concern of this study was, as was seen in chapter 2, the effect of experience of unemployment on attitudes. The Schlackman Research Organisation (1978) and Golding and Middleton (1978) suggest experience of unemployment and occupation are related to attitudes, although the findings of the Schlackman Organisation (1978) suggest that experience of unemployment increases sympathy for the unemployed and Golding and Middleton (1978) that it decreases sympathy, making those involved more aware of abuse and more determined to distance

themselves from the pauper stratum. Occupation was also found to be related to attitudes by Whiteley (1981). Further investigation of the principles of welfare favoured by the public and the factors affecting their attitudes is necessary. It is hoped that this study will go some way towards investigating these principles and provide more information on the relationship between experience of unemployment and attitudes.

## CHAPTER 5

## THEORETICAL SUMMARY AND METHODOLOGY

In chapter 2 the concept of public opinion, the factors which may affect public opinion and the effect which public opinion has on policy was considered in detail. In the third chapter the principles which influence welfare provision were examined. In the fourth chapter empirical research relevant to this study was discussed. In this section the theoretical issues which are to be investigated will be summarised and the methods by which these issues are to be investigated will be outlined.

Theoretical Summary

This study was exploratory in nature aiming to shed some light on the complex nature of public opinion and the relationship between public opinion and legislation rather than to seek to identify conclusively its content. In considering the content of public attitudes the models of welfare discussed by Titmuss and the principles central to these models were assessed. The emphasis placed on individual principles by those interviewed and whether the combination of the views held by those interviewed reflected the models of welfare discussed, it was suggested, required investigation. The residual model of welfare it was suggested involved an emphasis on individual responsibility, reciprocity, defined in the narrow sense of individualised actuarial insurance, and self help; the industrial achievement performance model emphasised incentives and efficiency; the institutionalised redistributive model emphasised societal responsibility, meeting need, equality, integration and citizenship.

The principles of societal and individual responsibility, it was suggested can be seen in terms of their emphasis on duty and on causation. Theories emphasising individual causation see poverty as resulting from individual failure. Theories emphasising societal causation, either see poverty as resulting inevitably from natural processes, as a result of industrialisation or as a result of exploitation. In relation to societal and individual causation the following hypothesis was put forward:

All those receiving welfare benefits are seen  
by those interviewed as undeserving.

The extent to which self help was emphasised by those interviewed also required investigation and it was hypothesised that:

Those interviewed see the meeting of their own  
welfare needs as the responsibility of the  
individual.

The principle of reciprocity was considered in some detail. Whether ability to reciprocate in the future is given more weight than past contributions it was suggested requires investigation. The effect of distance and time on a relationship between giver and receiver was also considered. Theories of exchange vary in terms of the numbers seen as being involved and whether the exchange is social or economic in nature. In looking at the role of exchange on welfare it is exchange involving several people which is relevant and the social functions of exchange are important. The extent to which a welfare system based on reciprocity would allow welfare needs to be met and foster integration and the extent to which such a system would involve exploitation was discussed and it was argued that the principle of reciprocity even if defined in broad terms was not a

sufficient principle on which to base a welfare system. The emphasis placed on reciprocity by those interviewed it was felt required investigation however and it was hypothesised that:

Those interviewed see the principle of reciprocity as being the central principle of any welfare system.

The extent to which emphasis was placed on efficiency and incentives was also considered and the hypothesis:

A belief in the need to maintain incentives and to improve efficiency dominates the attitudes of those interviewed to welfare services.

was put forward. Where incentives were stressed whether they were positive or negative in nature was considered. When considering the existence of culture in society the extent to which meeting needs was stressed was investigated. The hypothesis:

Those interviewed think only of themselves.

was put forward.

Whether concern for others was mainly focussed on the family, as Pinker suggested, also requires investigation. Definitions of need it was acknowledged vary. Whether poverty was seen in absolute or relative terms and views on the level of equality desirable in society it was suggested should be considered. It was hypothesised that:

Those interviewed define poverty in absolute terms as opposed to relative terms.

and

The present level of inequality is acceptable to those interviewed.

Views on the process through which benefit is administered and on perceptions of stigma also require to be discussed. Finally, looking at the interrelationship of attitudes it was hypothesised that:

None of the models discussed above resemble  
the views of those interviewed.

The research studies discussed in chapter 4 varied in the extent to which they found those they interviewed emphasised the principles discussed above. An awareness of abuse, and an emphasis on individual responsibility, incentives and reciprocity was found to exist in most of the studies. The emphasis on need appeared to be limited, however the Schlackman Research Organisation (1978) found that although the initial response was negative, as discussion developed concern for those in need emerged. Inconsistencies in attitudes were found to exist by previous researchers and are considered in this research and it was hypothesised that:

The attitudes of those interviewed to welfare  
are consistent.

Whether the views of those interviewed differ greatly from each other is also considered and it was hypothesised that:

Consensus exists among those interviewed  
concerning which welfare principles are  
important.

When considering which factors affect attitudes the functions which attitudes perform for the individual and the effects of early socialising influences such as family, education, religion, the media, legislation, small groups and opinion leaders were discussed. The main concern was the effect of experience of unemployment on attitudes. Looking at the direct effect of unemployment it was hypothesised that:



Attitudes to welfare are not associated with whether or not the interviewee has had personal experience of unemployment.

Experience of unemployment is clearly related to area of residence. The views of those interviewed in this research may differ from the views of those interviewed in other studies and this requires investigation. It was hypothesised therefore that:

The attitudes of those interviewed in the West of Scotland are the same as the attitudes found to exist in other parts of the country by other researchers.

If the findings of this study differ from the findings of the studies previously discussed it is suggested this may be due to differences resulting from the experience and culture of those in the West of Scotland or due to differences in the methods used and questions posed by different researchers.

The effect of area on attitudes was also considered at a more local level. The unemployment level of the town of residence may, it was suggested affect an individual's indirect experience of unemployment - thus the hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to the town of residence.

was put forward.

As was said in chapter 2 those interviewed may be more affected by the experience of those in their immediate area of residence as opposed to their town of residence. Thus it was hypothesised:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not  
associated with the immediate area of  
residence of those interviewed.

Immediate area of residence, however, is also an indicator of a person's position in society and the inter-relationships of these two factors must be noted.

A person's occupation will also affect his direct and indirect experience of unemployment. In particular, it was argued that it was relevant to compare the views of manual workers with non-manual workers as their differing work situation gives them differing levels of job security. This distinction may be becoming less important since unemployment hits all sections when large numbers of factories and plants close down resulting in large scale redundancies, but the majority of non-manual workers are still less likely to remain unemployed or be forced to rely on just a state retirement pension and a supplementary pension. The interrelationship between occupation and class must again be borne in mind. The hypothesis that:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not  
related to occupation.

was put forward. Men's experience of the labour market and thus their experience of unemployment is less complex than women's position in the labour market. As a result of this and the fact that resources (and thus the number of those who could be interviewed) were limited, sex was not included as a variable. The relationship

between age and attitudes and marital status and attitudes both of which are likely to influence experience of unemployment were considered and the following hypotheses discussed:

There is no relationship between the age of those interviewed and their attitudes.

There is no relationship between the marital status of those interviewed and their attitudes.

Experience of unemployment would, it was suggested, be likely to increase a person's concern for those relying on social security benefit, in particular the unemployed. Thus in considering the effects of experience of unemployment we are considering the effects of knowledge in the broadest sense. Knowledge in a much narrower sense must also be considered. Thus it was hypothesised:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to their knowledge of benefit levels.

Previous researchers have had contradictory views on which factors influence attitudes, some researchers suggesting greater experience of unemployment will increase sympathy for the unemployed (Schlackman Research Organisation 1978), others (Golding and Middleton 1978, 1982) suggesting sympathy will decrease as a result of the need of those close to poverty to differentiate themselves from those in poverty. Further investigation is therefore necessary.

The major concern of this thesis was the relationship between public opinion and legislation. Pluralist explanations of

policy-making which emphasise the importance of several groups including the public in affecting policy and elitist explanations which emphasise the role of elite groups in affecting policy were discussed. The hypothesis:

Present social security legislation reflects  
the views of those interviewed.

was put forward.

The study, as was said, was exploratory in nature. The hypotheses were presented in the null form since their function was to focus discussion. The sample of the general public interviewed was not statistically representative; the analysis undertaken will thus be descriptive not statistical. Hypotheses cannot be proved but the results of descriptive analysis do allow us to question hypotheses presented in the null form..

### Research Method

In order to consider these hypotheses the views of the general public on the issues discussed had to be sought. The resources available were limited therefore it was important that the methods used allowed the hypotheses outlined above to be fully investigated. The need to investigate the complexity of attitudes has been stressed thus it was felt in-depth interviews were required. In order to ensure that the factors affecting attitudes could be properly considered it was necessary to ensure that the sample allowed comparisons to be made between different groups.

Four areas were chosen, each varying in terms of the housing tenure and the occupational status of those resident, and twenty men

were interviewed in each of the areas. There was no random selection of interviewees rather the sample was obtained by systematically knocking on doors until the required number of men from that area had been obtained. Three interviewers carried out the interviews.<sup>1</sup>

On only six occasions, when an approach was made, was an interview refused and of these refusals four came in a week when there had been much publicity in the area about bogus researchers who were using research as an excuse for looking houses over for burglary. All the interviews were carried out on Saturdays in the autumn of 1978.

As was said, those interviewed cannot be claimed to be representative of the public as a whole or even of men resident in that area. The value of this method is that it provides us with the possibility of examining in detail the views of 80 men from 4 areas which differed on factors important to the research. Any generalisations made can only be tentative but it was hoped that the findings would shed some light on the complexity of attitudes to welfare and raise questions worthy of further research.

In addition to the interviews a postal survey of a random sample drawn from the electoral register of 1,000 men resident in two areas was undertaken. The mail questionnaire consisted of a few precoded questions about attitudes to the unemployed and pensioners. Although a mail questionnaire can provide information on a large sample the percentage response rate for mail questionnaires is usually low. The information gained from the mail questionnaire it was felt would be useful, however the most important part of the empirical research was the interviews since it was hoped these would provide a deeper understanding of attitudes to welfare.

West of Scotland

The interviews undertaken by the reseachers whose studies were discussed in chapter 4, with the exception of those carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs (1978) and Redpath (1979), were carried out in England and Wales. Redpath's study was carried out in Edinburgh. Only part of the Institute of Economic Affairs sample came from Scotland, less than 9%, and no detailed comparison of the attitudes of those resident in different areas was undertaken. Consideration of the economic history of the West of Scotland suggests the experiences of those resident, especially in terms of employment experience, differed from those in other areas. Slaven, describing the depression of the inter-war years, when an average unemployment in Scotland was 20% and in the West 25% suggests:

The image of social and economic depression was branded on the minds of a generation and has coloured the attitude to every development in the area since that time.  
(Slaven 1975, p.13).

Unemployment was a particular problem for older workers and school leavers. World War II brought temporary prosperity but the region's basic economic structure remained unchanged. Some diversification took place but only a small proportion of the working population was employed in expanding industries. The coal, iron, ship building and later steel industries contracted. Scottish productivity remained low and although some new industries were attracted to the area the number was relatively small, and indigenous industries were not strengthened. With lower wages and higher unemployment the people in the West of Scotland had a lower standard of living than the British average. Housing in the region had always been poor.

Shortly after its formation Strathclyde Regional Council examined the census statistics in an attempt to consider the extent of

deprivation in the West of Scotland area. Statistics on population and employment were also considered.

The conclusion which emerges from the census statistics is that Clydeside has a higher proportion of the worst, 5% of the UK areas, that a higher proportion of the population lives in such areas than elsewhere and that the conditions in the very worst areas of the conurbation are more severe than elsewhere. (Strathclyde Regional Council 1976, p.13)

The following indicators were used: no bath, overcrowding, lack of amenities, male unemployment and no car. On a comparison with other conurbations it was found that Strathclyde Region fell well below the standards attained in other parts of the country.

Though these indicators may be only crude measures they point emphatically to the fact that deprivation is a major facet of the region and that the lower than average standards in the Region as a whole are underlined by the existence of areas in the Region where conditions are particularly bad. (Strathclyde Regional Council 1976, p.41)

The attitudes of those in the West of Scotland in particular may therefore differ from the attitudes of those in other regions which have not had such lengthy and constant experience of deprivation.

#### East Kilbride and Coatbridge

In the above paragraphs the recent history of economic and social conditions in the West of Scotland has been briefly sketched. Within the Strathclyde area itself geographical variations in experience of unemployment and thus attitudes may also exist. As was said in order to investigate such variations, areas varying in terms of housing tenure, social class and unemployment were selected and these are discussed below. East Kilbride and Coatbridge are both located in North Lanarkshire and yet have had significantly differing experiences of unemployment. In November 1978, when the interviews were undertaken, the male unemployment rate by unemployment benefit office,

calculated by Strathclyde Regional Council was 9% in Coatbridge and 4% in East Kilbride. At that time unemployment, according to the Department of Employment was 10.2% in Strathclyde, 8.7% in Scotland and 6.5% in Great Britain (Strathclyde Regional Council 1979).

Except briefly in the 1950's Coatbridge has had a higher than average unemployment rate. New industries have been attracted to the region.

The new jobs, however welcome, have been unable to fill the gap caused by job losses in the old traditional industries. (Drummond and Smith 1982, p.44)

East Kilbride was designated a New Town in 1947 under the control of a development corporation. Unlike some other new towns East Kilbride was not self-contained with many of its residents working in Glasgow. The town attracted the more ambitious and enterprising members of the working class (Smith 1979, p.148) and at first the development corporation resisted taking a lot of Glasgow overspill families. Smith suggested that had more been done to meet the needs of those in greatest housing need the region would have lost a major asset.

Had East Kilbride developed along very similar lines to the Glasgow Housing Estates, arguably some industry would have been lost to West Central Scotland but of equal and if not greater significance many people from West Central Scotland would have been denied a good - a very good - social, economic and physical environment in which to live. The growing concern to help the disadvantaged groups in society should not necessarily be used to prejudice the hopes and aspiration of the skilled and clerical workers and their families. (Smith 1979, p.152)<sup>2</sup>

In a Strathclyde Regional Council Report on Demographic Indicators, 1974-76(1979) vital statistics are used to establish the distribution of the groups most at risk of poverty was then considered. The statistics used were:



Family size	- % of legitimate live births to mothers with 3+ children.
Social Class	- % of legitimate births to mothers in social classes iv and v.
Young Mothers	- % of live births to mothers under 20 years
Illegitimacy	- Illegitimate births as a % of live births.
Still births and deaths under 1 yr	- % still births and deaths under 1 yr as a percentage of births.

East Kilbride does not score highly in these indicators, Monklands does, indicating consistently poor conditions by regional standards.

#### Immediate Area

The four areas from which those interviewed were selected varied in terms of the housing tenure of the area and the occupational status of those resident. One area with a high proportion of owner-occupied housing and one with a low proportion was selected from each town. No direct relationship between the proportion of owner occupation and the proportion of non-manual workers in each area was found to exist when all four areas are compared. There was a larger proportion of non-manual workers in both areas of East Kilbride than in Coatbridge. This is likely to be the result of the fact that East Kilbride is a newer town with different types of industries. Comparisons are made between the two towns, between each of the four areas and between the two areas with higher levels of owner occupation and the two with lower levels. Details of the owner occupation level and the proportion of manual workers in each area are recorded below.

COATBRIDGE A	Percentage of owner occupation	-	57%
	Percentage of non-manual workers	-	52%
COATBRIDGE LA	Percentage of owner occupation	-	4%
	Percentage non-manual workers	-	21%

E. KILBRIDE A	Percentage of owner occupations	-	38%
	Percentage of non-manual workers	-	67%
E. KILBRIDGE LA	Percentage of owner occupation	-	6%
	Percentage of non-manual workers	-	57%

In the postal survey respondents were asked for information about their age and occupational status. The results from the postal survey were relevant in the consideration of the relationship between the town of residence, age and occupational status and attitudes and in comparisons with other research. In the case of the interviews, the areas selected ensured that the sample included a cross section of people with varying employment experience. The results from the interviews were used when considering the relationship between experience of unemployment, occupation, immediate area of residence, town of residence, age, marital status, knowledge of benefit levels and attitudes, and in comparisons with other research. The hypotheses discussed above were used to focus the discussion.

The hypotheses on welfare principles were tested by using both the data obtained from the postal questionnaires and the interviews. In looking at attitudes to welfare it was decided to focus on the unemployed and pensioners as it was believed that examination of attitudes to those two groups would bring out the most salient issues. Stevenson (1973) argued that there was general agreement that the elderly were weak and deserved assistance, whereas society's ambivalence about meeting the needs of others could be seen as being most profoundly felt when considering the needs of the unemployed.

#### Postal Questionnaire

The postal questionnaire was similar to that used by Piachaud (1974) in his investigation of attitudes to benefit levels although the question wording was slightly adapted. In addition the postal

questionnaire used in this research covered views on unemployment benefit. The questions used included general questions on whether benefits were too much, too little or just enough. Those responding were asked how much benefit for the single unemployed and pensioners, pensioner and unemployed couples and an unemployed family with two young children should be. In addition they were asked if for every 10p they paid in tax or national insurance contributions, pensioners or the unemployed would receive 30p, how much extra would they be willing to pay. The 1:3 ratio was used by Piachaud in his investigation of attitudes to pensions. In the interests of comparability the same ratio was used for the unemployed although the ratio of 1:3 was not realistic in that situation. Information on age, occupation and employment status was also sought.

#### Interview Schedule

Similar questions were included in the interview schedule along with questions which focussed on the principles discussed. The interview schedule did not deal with one principle after another but was drawn up in what was believed to be the most natural order. The first section contained general questions on welfare, the second referred to pensioners, the third referred to the unemployed, the fourth section contained extracts from the media, the fifth vignettes and the final section contained general questions on social welfare and questions on the background of those interviewed.

A variety of questions were used to tap views on individual and societal responsibility. First a general question soliciting views about responsibility for poverty was put forward. Since the issues to be investigated were controversial many of the questions were prefaced by a statement which put forward both sides of the argument.

Some people say that it is a person's own fault if they are poor, others that it is because money is not shared out properly. What do you think?

People's views on methods of dealing with unemployment are likely to reflect their views on individual and societal responsibility. Those interviewed were asked: whether they felt that the amount of assistance given to the unemployed should be reduced so that the unemployed will go out and look for a job; if public work schemes should be introduced and if a reduction should be made in the working week. Respondents were also asked if there was anything they would like to see the government do about unemployment. Finally some examples of the media coverage of pensioners and the unemployed were presented to those interviewed and their views on the comments sought. From the responses to these questions the hypotheses on individual responsibility discussed above were tested

The views of those interviewed on reciprocity were also investigated. First they were asked:

Every week people at work have a percentage of their wages or salaries deducted as national insurance contributions to pay for pensions, unemployment benefit and other social security benefits. Do you think this is a good idea or should all benefits be paid for out of taxes?

Views on the insurance principle was further investigated by asking whether the unemployed and pensioners should be treated differently if they have made insurance contributions. An additional question was put to those interviewed concerning pensioners:

Some people say that if a person has seldom worked then they should not be assisted when they are too old to work. Others say that the past should be forgotten. What do you think?

In the discussion of reciprocity the more positive implications for example encouraging people to contribute through training were referred to. Respondents were asked if they approved of training the

unemployed for future work. A general question relating to both the incentives principles and reciprocity was put to respondents.

Some people getting national insurance benefits have an income below that prescribed as basic by the SBC. Should something be done about this?

The suggestions made were then considered. Respondents were asked about feelings of embarrassment when claiming contributory and non-contributory benefits. Finally five vignettes describing a long term unemployed driver, a redundant skilled worker, an unemployed school leaver, a retirement pensioner who lives with his son and a pensioner who has returned to this country after a lifetime abroad were presented. Those interviewed were asked if they felt the respondents deserved benefit or should get benefit and finally if they felt the situation was common. The responses to these questions were used to test the hypotheses on reciprocity presented.

The following questions were used to test a hypothesis on the incentives issue. First a general question on work motivation was posed. Those interviewed were asked why they thought people worked. Those who said money were asked if this was the only reason. Views on the relationship between benefit levels and incentives was directly tackled by asking those interviewed whether in their view there were many people who could get more on social security than they could when working and if so what if anything should be done about this. Following this question several possible solutions to the incentives issue were suggested to those who had not put forward these suggestions of their own accord. These were: operating a wage stop type system; supplementing wages; establishing a minimum wage; increasing child benefits.

As in the postal questionnaires the amount people were willing to pay in tax to assist the unemployed and pensioners was also examined. Those interviewed were asked how much additional tax or national insurance benefits they would be willing to pay if for every 10p paid benefits could be increased by 30p. Respondents were also asked how much benefit should be paid to unemployed and pensioner households. Those interviewed were asked what things they would take into consideration if they had to decide whether or not a pensioner and an unemployed person deserved social security. Thus the extent to which needs, means and work record were emphasised could be considered as could the extent to which the responses varied when the unemployed as opposed to pensioners were the group referred to. In an attempt to further investigate the importance placed on need, those interviewed were asked:

If a pensioner is really in need of financial assistance should they get some sort of help even if they do not really deserve it?

A similar question was put forward concerning the unemployed.

Finally to investigate general views on social justice following from the discussion in chapter 3 those interviewed were asked:

Do you think society has a duty to ensure that everyone has enough to live on before anyone gets any extra or do you think everyone should be free to earn as much as they can?

The responses to the questions discussed above and in particular the responses to the vignettes were used to assess the extent to which need was emphasised and to test the hypothesis which was designed to measure the extent of altruism.

Questions relating to need were discussed above. Further investigation was undertaken into the concept of poverty held by those interviewed. Those interviewed were asked who they felt was poor in

Britain today. In addition to the questions on benefit levels discussed above those interviewed were asked:

Should state pensions be just enough also to manage on or should they be related to the average wage being paid at that time?

A similar question relating to unemployment benefit was also posed. Those who said they felt benefits should be related to the average wage were asked what percentage of the average wage they thought the benefits should be. Finally in order to test their perceptions of living costs respondents were asked what they thought the average weekly wage of a working man was at that time. The responses to these questions were used when discussing whether those interviewed defined poverty in absolute terms as opposed to relative terms. Where the necessity of meeting need is emphasised whether equality is seen as the ideal end state must be considered. Those interviewed were thus asked:

Do you think differences in people's living standards within the country are too large, too small or just about right?

The responses to this question and to the question:

Do you think society has a duty to ensure that everyone has enough to live on before anyone gets any extra or do you think everyone should be free to earn as much as they can?

were used in considering the views of those interviewed on inequality.

The general views of those interviewed on the way the social security system treats the unemployed and pensioners were also sought and from the information provided their perceptions of stigma and citizenship gleaned. Specifically those interviewed were asked if they felt benefits should be paid to everyone over retirement age and all the unemployed or just those who would not have enough to live on without such benefits.

The interview schedule contained a mixture of open and closed questions, vignettes and a traditional attitude scaling device.<sup>3</sup> Respondents were given plenty of opportunity throughout the interview to add anything or make any reservations they may wish to make. Using those methods it was hoped would enable the research to get beyond the stereotypical attitudes so often referred to and investigated by some of the research studies discussed in chapter 4. Detailed information on individual attitudes also enabled an examination of the consistency of peoples' views on welfare to be undertaken. Finally having considered the principles separately the comments made to all the questions were considered and the applicability of models of welfare discussed.

#### Method of analysis

The analysis was undertaken using SPSS software. An initial analysis was undertaken but close interrogation of the material produced (particularly when crosstabulations were obtained) brought to light coding errors. At this time the interview schedules themselves were being examined in detail in order to obtain relevant quotes and to obtain information on the overall pattern of responses presented by each interviewee. From this examination the complexity of attitudes became clear. Some of the responses could be coded in a variety of ways and in some cases it was only by examining the context of the response that the real meaning of a reply could be identified. It was decided that a recoding and reanalysis of the data should be undertaken. A chart summarising the responses of each interviewee to each question was drawn up. Notes on the comments made by interviewees, especially when other responses were given, were made.



The chart allowed details of the various responses to each question and the responses given by each individual interviewee to all the questions to be easily identified. This information was then coded and analysed using SPSS. Any errors identified during analysis could be easily rectified by consulting the chart. The differences in the results obtained from this analysis when compared with the earlier analysis were small but it was important that the accuracy of the data and its coding could be checked. Through the use of SPSS it was possible to compare easily the responses given by various groups of those interviewed especially those from different areas and those with different employment experiences. It would have been difficult to undertake such detailed comparisons without the aid of computer analysis. The chart however provided a valuable tool which enabled the accuracy of the coding to be verified and the overall pattern of responses given by each interviewee to be quickly assessed.

#### Public Opinion and Legislation

Having looked at how factors affect public opinion and the content of public opinion were investigated it is necessary to consider the relationship between public opinion and legislation. In order to investigate this issue the content of social security legislation requires consideration. The developments in legislation which have taken place in the past two hundred years are traced briefly while the recent changes in social security legislation, the Social Security Act and the Social Security (No. 2) Act, are examined in some detail. The extent to which the attitudes embodied in recent legislation reflect the views of those responding to the review and of those interviewed can thus be considered. Those responding to the review

are not representative of the general public as a whole but are clearly interested groups and individuals and as such their views are important and require consideration when discussing the effect of public opinion and legislation. The two methods used to assess the views of the general public, the postal survey and the interviews, utilised different sampling methods. The postal survey covered a random sample but the response rate was low. The sample covered in the interviews was selected through systematic door knocking in purposefully selected areas. It cannot be claimed therefore that the results are representative of the general public as a whole. The results can be used to question the assumptions made about the views of the general public which were discussed in the introduction especially if the views embodied in the legislation do not reflect the views of those interviewed and surveyed, and also if the views of those interviewed are found to be inconsistent and complex.

### Summary

To summarise so far, this chapter outlines the theoretical issues regarding the content of public opinion, factors affecting public opinion and the relationship between public opinion and legislation which were discussed in chapters 2 and 3. The methods through which the issues identified in these chapters are to be investigated were then outlined. The two methods used were:

1. A postal survey of 1,000 men, 500 from East Kilbride (a town with low unemployment), and 500 from Coatbridge (a town with high unemployment).
2. Interviews with 80 men, 20 from each of four areas, 2 in East Kilbride, 2 in Coatbridge, each of which varied in terms of housing tenure and the occupational status of its residents.

The areas to be sampled were discussed in detail as was the way in which the samples would be utilised when looking at factors affecting attitudes. The questions to be used in the questionnaires and how they test the issues to be investigated when looking at the content of public opinion were also considered. Finally, it was suggested that in order to assess the relationship between public opinion and legislation the views of those responding to the review and the views of those surveyed and interviewed will be compared with the attitudes embodied in legislation. In chapter 6 the views of those interviewed are discussed, and in chapter 7 the factors affecting the views of those interviewed are assessed. Chapter 8 outlines recent legislative developments and assesses the extent to which legislation reflects the views of those interviewed and the views of those responding to the review.

## CHAPTER 6

## THE CONTENT OF PUBLIC OPINION

In chapter 2 factors affecting public opinion and the effect of public opinion on legislation were considered. In chapter 3 the models of welfare described by Titmuss and the principles central to them were discussed. Relevant research is reviewed in chapter 4. The methodology was outlined in chapter 5. The results relevant to the consideration of factors affecting public opinion and the effect of public opinion on policy are considered in later chapters. In this section the content of public opinion and how it relates to the models discussed and the principles they contain is considered.

Postal survey

As was stated in the methodology section, in addition to the interviews which were to provide the main source of data, a postal survey eliciting views on the living standards of the unemployed and pensioners was undertaken. The response rate to the postal questionnaire was low. Only 207 of the 1,000 questionnaires sent out were returned. When considering the results of the postal survey therefore it must be remembered that over 75% did not respond. Apart from the fact that postal questionnaires generally obtain a poor response rate two possible reasons for the low response are, first the fact that the postal questionnaire was sent in the summer, thus many of the respondents may have been on holiday and thought it too late when they returned and, secondly, the respondents may have been unfamiliar with the 'freepost' system used and may have thought a stamp was necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Postal questionnaires cannot involve complex questions therefore no attempt was made to differentiate between contributory and non-contributory benefits. Only two respondents referred to the fact that the contributory/non-contributory distinction had not been made, both stating that contributory pensions should be larger than non-contributory pensions so that pensioners who are entitled to benefit as a result of their contributions do not have to claim for supplementary pensions .

When the responses to the postal questionnaires were analysed it was found that, as expected, more of those who responded stated that pensioners got less than they should, than stated that the unemployed got less than they should. Similarly when asked to state the benefit rates which they felt should be paid, the rates of benefit suggested for pensioners tended to be higher than those suggested for the unemployed. In both cases however the amounts suggested by the majority of respondents exceeded the rates of benefit paid at that time.

None of the respondents felt that pensioners were getting too much and only 21% that they were getting just enough. In the case of the unemployed 29% said they were getting too much and 42% felt that they were getting just enough.

Table 1

Postal survey: Views on benefits

	Pensioners too little/ too much	Unemployed too little/ too much
Too little	163 (78%)	56 (27%)
Just enough	43 (21%)	87 (42%)
Too much	0 ( 0%)	60 (29%)
Other	2 ( 1%)	5 ( 2%)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	208 (100%)	208 (100%)

The responses to the questions on whether benefits were too large will have been influenced by respondents' beliefs about levels of benefit at that time, thus respondents were also asked exactly how much the unemployed and pensioners should get on benefit. At the time of the postal survey state retirement pensions were £17.55 for a single pensioner the supplementary pensions were £17.90 plus rent. Respondents were asked to tick the income band they felt to be most appropriate. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents felt single pensioners should get over £20. Ten percent felt they should get between £10 - £20. The rate for the single unemployed at that time was £14.70 in unemployment benefit and £11.60 in supplementary benefit or £14.50 plus rent for a single householder. One percent felt the single unemployed should get nothing, 13% between 1p and £10, 40% between £10.01 - £20 and 44% that they should get over £20, 4% of these saying over £30.

Table 2

Postal survey: Benefit rates for single claimants

	Single Pensioner	Single Unemployed
Nothing	0 ( 0%)	3 ( 1%)
1p - £10	1 (0.5%)	26 (13%)
£10.01 - £20	20 (10%)	84 (40%)
£20.01 - £30	148 (71%)	83 (40%)
Over £30	38 (18%)	9 ( 4%)
Other	1 (0.5%)	3 ( 1%)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	208 (100%)	208 (99%)
Retirement pensions (1978) were £17.55		Unemployment benefits (1978) were £14.70
Supplementary pensions (1978) were £17.90		Supplementary benefits (1978) were £14.50

When the amounts suggested for pensioners and unemployed couples are considered, it was found that almost all respondents suggested figures in excess of benefit levels at that time. At the time of the survey the retirement pension for a couple was £28 and the supplementary pension rate for a couple was £28.35 plus rent. Ninety-six percent of the respondents felt that pensioner couples should get over £30. Unemployment benefit for a couple was at that time £23.80 and the supplementary benefit level was £23.55 plus rent. Twenty-four percent thought an unemployed couple should get between £20.01 and £30, and 63% over £30.

Table 3

Postal survey: Benefit rates for claimant couples

	Pensioner Couple	Unemployed Couple
Nothing	0 ( 0%)	3 ( 1%)
1p - £20	0 ( 0%)	22 ( 11%)
£20.01 - £30	9 ( 4%)	49 ( 24%)
£30.01 - £40	97 ( 47%)	93 ( 45%)
Over £40	102 ( 49%)	38 ( 18%)
Other	0 ( 0%)	3 ( 1%)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	208 (100%)	208 (100%)
Retirement pensions (1978) were £28		Unemployment benefits (1978) were £23.80
Supplementary pensions (1978) were £28.35		Supplementary benefits (1978) were £23.55

In the case of an unemployed family the meagreness of present national insurance benefit rates when compared with the levels suggested by respondents is marked. At the time of the survey an unemployed couple with two children would receive £28.30 in unemployment benefit or £31.75 plus rent, minus child allowance, in supplementary benefit. Eighty-seven percent thought that unemployed families

should get more than £30, 64% suggesting over £40. Meeting the needs of children appeared to be important to the majority of those who responded. Two respondents however felt that it was not necessary to make any additions for children, one because he felt that child benefits met the needs of the children of the unemployed adequately, and the second because he thought national insurance benefits, which he assumed the question was referring to, should follow insurance principles strictly and that no extra benefit should be paid unless extra contributions were made.

Table 4

Post survey: Benefit rates for unemployed families

Unemployed Family with 2 children

Nothing	2 ( 1%)
1p - £20	3 ( 1%)
£20.01 - £30	19 ( 10%)
£30.01 - £40	49 ( 23%)
£40.01 - £50	79 ( 38%)
Over £50	53 ( 26%)
Other	3 ( 1%)

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208 (100%)

Unemployment benefits (1978) were £28.30  
 Supplementary benefits (1978) were £31.75

The finding that a greater percentage of respondents suggested higher benefit levels than the percentage who said the unemployed and pensioners got too little suggests that respondents may have thought benefit levels were higher than they were. Further evidence to support this view was the fact that many of the respondents underestimated general living standards. At the time of the survey the mean gross average wage for manual workers was £70 and for all workers £76.90<sup>2</sup> (Social Trends 1980 - figures refer to 1978). When



respondents were asked what they thought the gross average wage for all workers was, only 32% said over £70. It seems reasonable to suggest that had more of the respondents been aware of the wage levels they would have suggested higher benefit levels, thus increasing the discrepancy between the benefit levels desired by the public and actual benefit levels.

The questions on respondents willingness to pay tax were intended to give some indication of the strength of respondents commitment to increased benefit levels. The capacity of those responding to make increased contributions or pay more in tax was not ascertained. Respondents were told that for every additional 10p they paid, benefits could be increased by 30p.<sup>3</sup> Nine percent were not prepared to pay any additional money in tax. In order to increase the benefits paid to pensioners 44% were prepared to pay an additional amount ranging between 1p and £1 and 41% over £1. Eleven (5%) gave other responses, eight saying that they did not pay tax and three that extra money for pensioners should be obtained by cutting other government expenditure such as spending on defence. Although the 3:1 ratio is not realistic in terms of the unemployed it was referred to in the question on willingness to pay additional tax or insurance contributions towards increases in unemployment benefit in order to make the question comparable with the question on assisting pensioners. Forty-one percent were not prepared to pay any more to increase benefits for the unemployed. Thirty-four percent were prepared to pay between 1p and £1 and 19% over £1. Some respondents suggested employers should contribute more. As expected, more respondents were prepared to pay more in tax to assist pensioners than the unemployed, however, a majority was still prepared to pay some

more in tax or national insurance contributions if this would allow the benefit paid to the unemployed to be increased.

Table 5

Postal survey: Amount respondents were willing to pay  
in increased tax to assist claimants

	Pensioners	Unemployed
0	19 ( 9%)	86 ( 41%)
1 - 50p	42 ( 20%)	41 ( 20%)
51p - £1	51 ( 24%)	30 ( 14%)
£1.01 - £1.50	33 ( 16%)	25 ( 12%)
£1.51 - £2	36 ( 17%)	8 ( 4%)
Over £2	16 ( 8%)	6 ( 3%)
Other	11 ( 5%)	12 ( 6%)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	208 ( 99%)	208 (100%)

To summarise so far, the response to the postal questionnaire showed that increased benefits for pensioners and the unemployed was felt to be desirable by the majority of those who responded. Through the interviews it was hoped to investigate in more detail the models of welfare held by the public. Before considering this, the responses to the questions on benefit levels discussed above, made by those interviewed, will be considered. The responses made by the respondents to the postal questionnaire can thus be compared with the responses made by those interviewed. If a similar picture emerges from both investigations, each of which used a different research method and a different sample, confidence in the validity of the findings is increased.

### Interviews

The interviews were carried out about three months after the postal survey. Eighty men were interviewed, twenty in each of the areas discussed in chapter 5. Forty-eight of the respondents felt

pensioners got too little and twenty-five felt they got just enough. Only one respondent said they got too much. Six gave other responses, two saying they did not know and four saying that benefits should be related to wages.

Table 6

Interviews: Pensioners too little/too much

Too little	48 ( 60%)
Just enough	25 ( 31%)
Too much	1 ( 1%)
Other	6 ( 8%)
	<hr/>
	80 (100%)

When these responses are compared with those made by the postal respondents it can be seen that a smaller proportion of those interviewed than of respondents to the postal questionnaire said that pensioners got too little. Those interviewed were not less generous than those responding to the postal questionnaire in response to all the questions posed, thus this difference cannot be taken to suggest that those responding to the postal questionnaire were more generous. One possible explanation is that those interviewed had more opportunity to justify the views expressed. For example some of the respondents who suggested pensioners got just enough referred to their belief that pensioners were better off now than in the past. A toolmaker from East Kilbride felt that pensioners were well off since they received various concessions, for example reduced admission charges to cinemas, reduced bus fares etc. Some respondents referred to pensioners who were apparently well off, for example a manual worker from Coatbridge said:

...look at Mrs - across the road with her S registration car.

Another respondent, a local government officer from East Kilbride, felt that pensioners did not get enough but that they were more economical anyway. On the other hand some respondents voiced their concern about pensioners' well-being, especially as a result of inflation. Two respondents voiced specific concerns about the complexity of the system and the difficulty pensioners had in getting information about their rights.

Only nineteen respondents felt that the unemployed got too much, seventeen felt that they got just enough and twenty-nine thought that they got too little. Fifteen gave other responses, eleven of those saying it depended on whether the person being assisted was deserving, two saying benefits should be related to wages and two saying they did not really know what they felt. The concept of the deserving poor was investigated more thoroughly elsewhere in the interviews.

Table 7

Interviews: Unemployed too little/too much

Too little	29 (36%)
Just enough	17 (21%)
Too much	19 (24%)
Other	15 (19%)
	<hr/>
	80 (100%)

When these responses are compared with those obtained in the postal survey it can be seen that fewer of those interviewed said just enough, more saying too little or that it depended on circumstances. Again the fact that those interviewed could voice modifications may have affected the responses given. In this case however it appeared to have led to more of those interviewed being sympathetic to the unemployed whereas in the question referring to pensioners the

respondents to the postal questionnaire were more sympathetic in their responses.

Seven respondents referred spontaneously to the need to maintain incentives and this was accompanied by a claim that there was a need for higher wages not lower benefit levels in four of these cases. Views on incentives were investigated in greater detail elsewhere in the interview and responses on this issue will be discussed later. Of the eleven who referred to deservedness when responding to this question, only two mentioned the scrounger issue specifically; a factory worker from Coatbridge felt that a man who has been unemployed for a long time gets too much because he knows the ropes while the short term unemployed get too little and an engineer from East Kilbride felt that whether or not a person got too much depended on how well they can manipulate the system. As was the case in the postal survey, more of those interviewed thought pensioners got too little than thought the unemployed got too little but the evidence shows that as with the postal questionnaire there was a substantial percentage who felt that the unemployed got too little.

Those interviewed were asked about the amounts they thought single pensioners should get. In the interview situation, those interviewed were able to state the specific amounts they felt pensioners and the unemployed should get as opposed to selecting the appropriate band. Some simply said more than at present. The amounts stated by those interviewed were compared with the actual supplementary benefit rates, which are slightly more than national insurance rates, paid before November 1978. Again no allowance was made for the rent addition thus the supplementary benefits paid will in actual fact be larger than the income against which the amounts stated were compared,

however national insurance benefits will be smaller.<sup>4</sup> Of those who specified an amount, only two respondents mentioned figures which were less than the supplementary pension rates for single pensioners, three gave figures which were within £2 of that level and fifty-seven suggested higher amounts.

Table 8

Interviews: Single pensioner

More than at present	57
Same as at present	3
Less than at present	2
Other	18
	<hr/>
	80

Again in the interview situation several respondents took the opportunity to give other responses, nine saying that benefits should be related to wages, five that it depended on needs and four that they did not know what they thought pensioners should get. Because several respondents did not simply state an amount no simple comparison between the postal survey and the interviews can be made.

When asked how much they thought a pensioner couple should get none of those interviewed suggested an amount for pensioner couples which was less than they got. Five suggested a figure within £2 of the benefit level at that time and fifty-six suggested more. Nineteen gave other responses, six saying they should get what they needed, one saying that they should get 'this FIZZ' that he was always hearing about, six saying benefits should be related to wages and six that they did not know what they thought. It can be seen therefore that there was some consensus on pensioners' need for higher benefits.

Table 9

## Interviews: Pensioner couple

More than at present	56
Same as at present	5
Less than at present	0
Other	19
	<hr/>
	80

Eight respondents suggested benefit levels for the single unemployed which were less than the existing supplementary benefit rates for single householders, eleven figures within £2 of the existing rates, and forty suggested figures which were more than the existing rates. Twenty-one gave other responses, the majority of them suggesting that benefits should be related to wages. In addition many respondents made a distinction between the deserving and the undeserving, e.g. suggesting whether benefit is paid should depend on how long the individual had worked. The problem of maintaining incentives was mentioned by only two of those interviewed, a fridge erector from East Kilbride who thought the unemployed should get more than they were getting but felt that they should not get too much in case this encouraged them to remain unemployed, and a solicitor from Coatbridge who said:

At present the young get £6.50 and a single man £11. Its not enough. I don't want to encourage a man to be a scrounger but he shouldn't be put down, about £15 I'd say.

Even when the fact that an addition would be made for rent was taken into account it seems that a substantial percentage of those interviewed thought that the single unemployed should get more than the present supplementary benefit rates and thus also more than the basic national insurance rates.

Table 10

## Interviews: Single unemployed

More than at present	40
Same as at present	11
Less than at present	8
Other	21
	<hr/>
	80

When asked about benefit levels for unemployed couples, ten suggested figures less than present supplementary rates, two amounts which were within £2 of existing rates and forty-five amounts greater than existing supplementary benefit rates. Twenty-three gave other responses, fifteen saying benefits should be related to wages, six saying that they did not know how much unemployed couples should get and two that it depended on the situation. Although more people suggest higher amounts for pensioner couples than for unemployed couples the majority of those interviewed suggested benefit levels for the unemployed which were higher than the rates paid at that time.

Table 11

## Interviews: Unemployed couples

More than at present	45
Same as at present	2
Less than at present	10
Other	23
	<hr/>
	80

When asked how much an unemployed man with two children should receive in benefit, two of those interviewed suggested amounts for those families which were less than the supplementary benefit level, four suggested figures which were within £2 of supplementary benefit rates



and fifty amounts which were more than benefit rates. Twenty-four gave other responses. These included six saying benefits should be related to wages, four saying it depended on the situation and ten saying they did not know. As in the postal survey one of those interviewed thought that child benefit should cover the needs of all children. Of the remaining three replies one respondent, stressing the insurance principle, thought that all the unemployed should get the same, one respondent felt there should be more equality, while another thought unemployed men should be supplied with Durex if they were not prepared to work. These issues are discussed in more detail later. It can be seen that even when a notional rent addition is taken into account higher benefit levels for unemployed families would appear to be acceptable to those interviewed. In addition it should be noted that child benefits are fully taken into account when payment of supplementary benefit is made. Many of those interviewed may have assumed that it was not.

Table 12

Interviews: Unemployed family with 2 children

More than at present	50
Same as at present	4
Less than at present	2
Other	24
	<hr/>
	80

As was said when discussing the results of the postal questionnaire people's assessment of the average wage gives us some indication of how they perceive living standards. Of the eighty interviewed fifty-three said £70 or less and twenty-four said over £70. Most people, it can be seen, underestimate present day wage

levels and this should be borne in mind when looking at the suggested benefit levels discussed above. It could be suggested that had those interviewed had a more realistic notion of the average wage the levels of benefit they suggested would have been higher.<sup>5</sup> Some respondents, however, were sceptical or confused about the average wage as a concept and three refused to answer the question, for example, an engineer from East Kilbride said:

£50 I'd say, the government add on high wages to make it look more.

As in the postal questionnaire respondents were asked how much extra in tax or national insurance contributions they would be willing to pay to assist pensioners and the unemployed. As was said, this should not be seen as an attempt to test the feasibility of increasing benefits but as a means of investigating people's willingness to pay to assist the groups referred to. Twenty-two were not willing to give anything additional to assist pensioners. Eighteen were willing to give up to 50p and twenty were willing to pay more than 50p. Nine respondents who were not paying tax at the time said the question was not applicable to them, four said they did not know what they would give, and seven were imprecise about the assistance they would give. Some suggested that changes in the way government use the revenue they receive were necessary and some pointed out that the amount of tax you can pay depends on how much money you have.

Table 13

Interviews: Additional tax for pensions

Nothing	22
50p or less	18
More than 50p	20
Other	20
	<hr/>
	80

In the case of the unemployed forty said they would give nothing, eleven less than 50p and ten more than 50p. Four of those who said over 50p said they were prepared to give whatever was necessary to improve the living standards of the unemployed. Again the question was felt not to be applicable by nine respondents who were not paying tax at the time. As would be expected, there was a reluctance to pay more in taxes and fewer of those interviewed were willing to pay more to assist the unemployed than to assist pensioners. Those responding to the postal questionnaire appeared to be more generous and this again may have been partly due to the fact that those interviewed could qualify their responses. It is also likely to be due to some extent to the fact that the precoded responses in the postal questionnaire affected the responses given with some people not wanting to appear mean by selecting the lowest band.

Table 14

Interviews: Additional tax for unemployment benefit

Nothing	40
50p or less	11
More than 50p	10
Other	19
	<hr/>
	80

To summarise this section therefore, looking at both the responses to the postal questionnaire and the interviews, it is clear that the majority of those who responded to the postal survey and those who were interviewed felt that benefit levels should be higher than basic national insurance and supplementary benefit rates although they were reluctant to pay more in taxes. The slight differences in the responses elicited by the two methods it was suggested is likely to be

partly due to the greater freedom in the interview situation which enabled those interviewed to make alternative responses. The similarity in the responses obtained by the two methods increases the confidence which can be placed in the results of the study. From these responses it is clear that those interviewed and those responding to the postal questionnaire would not describe the present welfare system as unnecessarily overgenerous.

#### Individual and societal responsibility

The interviews, as was said, provided the opportunity for a more in-depth examination of attitudes and the welfare principles to be investigated were discussed in detail in chapter 3. The three models of welfare discussed by Titmuss, the residual model, the institutionalised redistributive model and the industrial achievement performance model all placed varying amounts of emphasis on different principles. The residual model, as was said, emphasised individual responsibility, self-help and reciprocity, the institutionalised redistributive model emphasised equality, integration, need and citizenship and the industrial achievement performance model emphasised efficiency and incentives.

In looking at individual and societal responsibility the extent to which individual responsibility was emphasised by those interviewed and whether or not recipients of benefit were seen as deserving were considered and the following hypotheses were outlined, the first emphasising causation, the second duty:

All those receiving welfare benefits are seen  
by those interviewed as undeserving.

Those interviewed see the meeting of their own welfare needs as the responsibility of the individual.

As was seen above, in responses to many questions references to whether claimants were deserving were frequently made. In addition specific questions on individual responsibility were put to those interviewed.

When whether or not the respondents felt that individuals were responsible for their own poverty was considered it was found fifty-three respondents felt poverty was caused by a failure on society's part, forty-six agreeing that poverty was the result of unfair distribution of resources and seven respondents suggesting other reasons for poverty which did not involve individual blame, e.g. society's failure to provide work. Only fourteen respondents felt poverty was a person's own fault. Thirteen gave other responses, ten saying that sometimes it was a person's own fault and sometimes it was due to a misallocation of resources, and three that no one was poor. The majority of respondents did not appear to see poverty as being the fault of the individual. In addition it should be noted that some of the respondents who said that poverty was a person's own fault may have thought that with our present level of state provision anyone who is poor is at fault for not claiming and not that he was at fault in that he caused his own initial need. One of the comments made indicated that this was the situation in the case of at least one respondent who said it was a person's own fault if they were poor.

If you apply for it you'll get it.

Considering pensioners, those interviewed were asked whether they felt that provision for a person's old age was the responsibility of

the person themselves, their family or the state. Fifty-five gave responses which included an acknowledgement of state responsibility, forty-nine saying the state only, five the individual and the state and one that the responsibility lay with all three. Four respondents placed the responsibility on the individual, five on the family and four on the individual and the family. Thus among those interviewed the majority stressed state as opposed to individual responsibility for financial provision of the elderly. Several of the minority who favoured individual responsibility referred to the insurance principle thus it seems likely that they too accepted state responsibility to some extent. The insurance principle is examined in more detail below.

Table 15

Interviews: Individual responsibility

Responsibility for poverty		Responsibility for provision for old age		Responsibility for unemployment	
A person's own fault	14	State included	55	Individual blame	18
Society's own fault	53	Other	25	Societal responsibility	39
Other	13			Other	23
	<hr/> 80		<hr/> 80		<hr/> 80

Those interviewed were asked whether they thought the unemployed were unemployed because they were lazy or because there were no jobs.

Thirty-nine of those interviewed felt that the unemployed were not unemployed through any fault of their own. Only eighteen explained unemployment solely in terms of the laziness of the unemployed. Two said it was because people got more on 'the Buroo' thus bringing up

the issue of incentives which is discussed below. The incentives explanation as was said in the theory chapter can involve a recognition of both individual and societal causes. Nineteen saw some unemployment only as being caused by laziness and two gave other answers. It is clear, therefore, that even when the unemployed are considered only a minority emphasise individual causation.

To investigate views on deservedness those interviewed were asked whether or not they felt any pensioners or unemployed who were in receipt of benefit did not deserve benefits. Only twenty-five respondents felt that there were undeserving pensioners, three felt that they were typical of pensioners and two that they were typical of pensioners who lived in their area. In the case of the unemployed fifty-eight thought that some of the unemployed were undeserving, twenty-two thought they were typical of the unemployed and eighteen thought that they were typical of the unemployed in their area.

Table 16

Interviews: Individual blame

	Yes	No	Don't know	Other	Total
Existence of undeserving pensioners	25	48	7		80
Typical of pensioners	3	70	7		80
Typical in their area	2	71	7		80
Existence of undeserving unemployed	58	16	6	0	80
Typical of unemployed	22	53	4	1	80
Typical in their area	18	54	7	1	80

Again a few of those interviewed focussed on the scrounger issue.

Three of those interviewed said that those who know the ropes get more

and the poor and honest less. It appears therefore that in the case of pensioners and even in the case of the unemployed only a minority of those interviewed felt that undeserving claimants are typical of these claimant groups. This issue was further investigated by discussing some examples of portrayals of claimants presented by the media.

No direct measure of the media's effect on public attitudes was made; however its impact to some extent can be illustrated by the fact that those interviewed often referred to it. One person who said that there were no undeserving pensioners added that he did not read the Daily Express. When referring to the existence of undeserving claimants some respondents referred to the media as providing examples of undeserving cases. Two of those who suggested there were undeserving recipients of state benefit cited newspaper reports of allegations made by Ian Sproatt. The importance of the media was further shown by the interview responses to extracts from a Scottish newspaper which they were shown.<sup>6</sup> Around half of those interviewed felt that the caricatures of the unemployed which they were shown were not typical of the unemployed. However more of those interviewed were prepared to accept that these caricatures were typical than the small number who had said that the undeserving unemployed were typical of the unemployed and this it could be argued illustrates the strength of the media's influence.

First, the following extract was presented:

Off to The Sun.

An Edinburgh reader had to go to Social Security last week. Two men in front complained bitterly they hadn't received last week's unemployment benefit.

The girl at the desk explained why and added, if they came back next day they'd get their money.

Sorry, they were off to Benidorm.



Thirty-two felt that the situation was a typical one, forty-three thought it was not.

The second extract presented referred to unfilled vacancies:

Pathetic

A linlithgow building contractor offered 18 jobs to bricklayers at £150 per week.

Only one man turned up for interview.

He told the boss he really didn't want a job, he was only there 'to keep himself straight with the buroo'.

Forty-six were not prepared to believe that this would happen, thirty-two were prepared to believe that it would.

A cartoon depicting two unemployed people tossing a coin to see who was to be unlucky enough to have to go after the one available job was seen as typical by thirty-seven of those interviewed and atypical by the same number. The second cartoon shown to the interviewees, which depicted a social security office manager asking a claimant for a loan, was seen as typical by forty-four respondents. Thirty-three saw this situation as atypical.<sup>7</sup> Although only a minority of respondents accepted the undeserving caricatures described there were fewer rejections of the belief that the unemployed were undeserving than in the responses to earlier questions.

An additional extract describing a "deserving" pensioner was also included:

Like it or not

A group of girls were discussing diets in a Grangemouth cafe.

One had spent a fortune on slimming biscuits.

Another was going to cut out all her sweets and cakes.

That's when an old lady leaned over from the next table, "I'm on a diet too" she said, "Its called the pension".

Forty-seven felt this description was typical and twenty-nine that it was atypical but some of those describing the situation as atypical did so because they felt pensioners would not complain and not because they felt pensions were high.

Table 17

Interviews: Media extracts

	Typical	Atypical	Don't Know	Other	Total
Benidorm	32	43	5	0	80
Linlithgow contractor	32	46	2	0	80
Pensioner on diet	47	29	2	2	80
Coin tossing	37	37	4	2	80
Social security manager	44	32	3	1	80

Most of the comments made during the discussion of the media extracts were made by respondents wishing the support their acceptance of the negative stereotypes of the unemployed.

I know someone who has just done that.  
(i.e. holidayed in Benidorm while in receipt of benefit)  
(East Kilbride engineering superintendent)

These folk exist, I'm a dentist I deal a lot with folk on social security payments, I know the dodges, selling gold teeth, its not exaggerated, the papers highlight the man with 17 kids but with the OAPs some of them won't take help.  
(Coatbridge dentist)

As can be seen from the second response quoted in many cases sympathy for some claimants is mixed with condemnation of others.

A few respondents who felt the caricatures of the unemployed were atypical cast doubt upon the source of the extracts. For example, one respondent said his son used to work for "that paper" and that he knew for a fact that it made up stories like these.

Several of the comments which were made in relation to the cartoon depicting the social security manager asking for a loan brought to the fore views on the need for incentives.

Social Security wages are poor so its near enough the truth. (East Kilbride electrical engineer)

Very true. I have heard my brother (who we heard in response to an earlier question was a social security clerk) say it but some cases are genuine, can't have people starving some people are undernourished but it is not always lack of money it's also bad spending. (Coatbridge teacher)

Could be true the way Civil Servants are paid. (East Kilbride scientist).

Had two men in, in the last two days getting £81 plus child benefit, but its not true literally, the manager would not ask for money, but it highlights the situation. (Coatbridge solicitor)

Many of those stressing the importance of incentives saw the solution as increasing low wages as opposed to reducing benefit levels.

Views on responsibility for dealing with the problem of unemployment were investigated in more detail by specific questions. Several possible ways of dealing with unemployment were suggested to those interviewed each, reflecting a different degree of emphasis on individual responsibility. Forty-three respondents disapproved of the suggestion that the money paid to the unemployed should be reduced so that they will go out and look for a job. Thirty-four approved of this idea. By far the most common comment made in connection with this question was that there was no point in this when there were no jobs and those interviewed often referred to recent closures. Introducing public work schemes and reducing the working week were two further suggestions for dealing with unemployment put forward. These solutions were concerned with the need to provide more employment and thus involved some acceptance of societal responsibility. Sixty-four

approved of introducing public work schemes but many added that they should not be used as forms of cheap labour. Forty approved of reducing the working week so that there were enough jobs to go round. Among those who disapproved the main concern was that this would have a detrimental effect on business and thus in the long term lead to more unemployment.

Table 18

Interviews: Solutions to unemployment

	Approve	Disapprove	Other	Total
Cut Benefit	34	43	3	80
Public works schemes	64	13	3	80
Reduce working week	40	38	2	80

Those interviewed were given freedom to suggest alternative strategies in the final part of this question which asked whether or not there was anything else they would like to see the government do about unemployment. Thirty-two had no additional comments or suggestions to make. Ten suggested that more investment was needed, some suggesting that the government should stimulate this, seven suggested early retirement and six suggested job creation. Several other suggestions were made by one or two respondents only and these illustrate the variation of views which exist on this issue. Two respondents felt immigrants should be deported. Four suggested providing more incentives for those working, two suggesting giving the long-term unemployed less money or making them do community work of some sort, one suggesting supplementing wages and one suggesting having direct taxation only and thus not taxing wages. A bus driver and an engineering supervisor both suggested that women should not be working and thus taking jobs away from men demonstrating that this

view is not confined to one occupational stratum only. One of those interviewed blamed the unions for unemployment, one inefficient management and one said that shareholders profits were too great. A solicitor from Coatbridge suggested that there was a need to cut public expenditure, stimulate private investment and thus create more jobs; on the other hand, others, a telephone engineer and a lecturer suggested increasing public expenditure by, for example, creating more agencies like the Highlands and Islands Development and the Scottish Development Agency. Only one of those interviewed said that unemployment was not the government's responsibility.

To summarise so far, the responses suggest that it is generally accepted that dealing with unemployment and meeting the needs of pensioners is the responsibility of the state. Only a minority mentioned the individual as causing unemployment and poverty. In the theoretical discussion of individual responsibility genetic and cultural explanations were examined as were explanations which were concerned with the extent to which the undeserving nature of the unemployed, in particular the laziness of the unemployed, caused their unemployment. In the responses to the questions discussed above individual explanations, that is, those emphasising cultural and genetic factors, were less often referred to than societal factors although some referred to the effect of large families on people's incomes and this is discussed later. In looking at societal explanations, explanations which emphasised the inevitability of poverty and those which stressed the exploitation of the poor by the rich were considered. Those emphasising societal responsibility tended to be concerned with the problems created by society's inability to provide employment, the general structure of society and

the ineffectiveness of the social security system in meeting needs rather than conscious exploitation. The need for society to respond rather than leaving the solution to fate also was emphasised. This was found when discussing both pensioners and the unemployed.

When asked about meeting the needs of pensioners, state responsibility was emphasised. When asked about solving the problem of unemployment, less than half approved of cutting benefit and thus the implication that the unemployed could find work if the assistance provided was less generous. Several referred to the problems created by low wages. Over half stressed the need for the state to provide more jobs by reducing the working week or introducing public work schemes but recognised the problems associated with such solutions. It is clear that the hypothesis:

Those interviewed see the meeting of their own welfare needs as the responsibility of the individual.

cannot be supported.<sup>8</sup>

From the responses above and the responses to the questions on the deservedness of claimants and to the media extracts it was clear that the majority of respondents saw both pensioners and the unemployed as deserving although a substantial minority were willing to believe the negative portrayals of the unemployed presented in the media. It must be acknowledged therefore that the concept of the undeserving poor remains important. The majority emphasised society's responsibility for causing poverty and unemployment. Thus the hypothesis that:

All those receiving welfare benefits are seen by those interviewed as undeserving.

is not supported.

Reciprocity

In discussing respondents' views on individual responsibility the references made by some of those interviewed to the insurance principle were noted. The importance those interviewed placed on the principle of reciprocity and how this relates to the imposition of stigma was investigated and the following hypothesis put forward:

Those interviewed see the principle of reciprocity  
as being the central principle of any welfare system.

In particular whether those who had not made contributions, those who had been on benefit for a long time, or those who could not reciprocate in the future were stigmatised, was considered.

Those interviewed were asked whether they thought national insurance contributions were a good idea or if they thought all benefits should be paid for out of taxes. Forty-eight felt benefits should be paid for out of contributions, twenty-five that they should be paid out of taxes, seven gave other responses, six saying that it made no difference as the public were paying for them in any case. Thus it is clear that the system of funding benefits through insurance contributions was favoured by most of those interviewed.

Those interviewed were asked whether they felt pensioners who had not contributed should be treated differently. Thirty said they should. Those interviewed were then asked whether pensioners who had seldom worked should be assisted when they were too old to work. Fourteen said that they should not be assisted. In the case of the unemployed, thirty-seven felt that the unemployed who had seldom made national insurance contributions should be treated differently, however thirty-six felt that they should not. Of those who said they should be treated differently, most of those who made comments said that they should get less but that their needs should be met, e.g.

They should get less but they've got to live even if they've never worked. (East Kilbride fridge erector)

Thus although some felt that those who have made contributions should be rewarded it appears also to be acceptable that the needs of those who have not contributed should be met.

Table 19

Interviews

Welfare funding national insurance/tax		Pensioner seldom worked treated differently	
Contributions	48	Not assisted	14
Taxes	25	Assisted	54
Others	7	Other	12
Pensioner not contributed treated differently		Unemployed not contributed treated differently	
Yes	30		36
No	37		37
Other	13		7
	<hr/> 80		<hr/> 80

The emphasis placed on positive aspects of reciprocity is illustrated by the stress placed on training. Sixty-three approved of the suggestion that the government should spend more on training and retraining the unemployed so that they could get a job, however several were dissatisfied with training schemes which did not offer the trainees a job at the end. Providing assistance in the form of training to enable people to make future contributions to society was thus felt to be desirable.

Table 20

Interviews: Training the unemployed

Approve	63
Disapprove	17
	<hr/> 80



Sixty-six, when they were told that national insurance benefits were below supplementary benefit rates, felt that something should be done about this. Only four said that this was acceptable, ten were not sure whether this could be changed. This finding suggests that there may be much public support for increasing national insurance benefits. However it seems politicians have not stressed the existence of a public desire that those making insurance contributions should be better rewarded, to the same extent as they have stressed the existence of the public belief that the unemployed should be worse off than those who are working.

Table 21

Interviews: National insurance below supplementary benefit level.  
Should something be done?

Yes	66
No	4
Other	10
	<hr/>
	80

Before going on to discuss the hypothesis relating to reciprocity it is useful to consider the responses made to the five vignettes as the responses given were influenced by views on reciprocity.<sup>9</sup> Much information on the principles of welfare important to those interviewed and their interrelationship was gained from the responses to the vignettes presented. Five situations were described to those interviewed and they were asked whether the person described in each case deserved assistance and whether they felt that the situation described was a common situation. This method was found to be particularly successful in encouraging those interviewed to express their views although it must be pointed out that two respondents

resisted this form of questioning, one refusing to respond to any of the five cases and one responding to the first case only.

The first case presented was that of a fifty-eight year old draughtsman who had worked for most of his life until the firm he worked for had closed down. He had been unemployed for two years. At most of the interviews he had been to he was told that they were looking for a younger man. He was married with two grown up sons who no longer lived in the area and a younger son who was still a student. His wife was the same age as him and had been unable to find work since she had no training or experience. Seventy-five felt that the man described in this case deserved social security and one felt that although he did not deserve assistance he should get it. Only one respondent thought that he should not be assisted. Respondents were then asked if they thought the case was common. No precise definition of what those interviewed thought of as common was obtained, but it was hoped that some indication of people's perceptions of the typicality of the case would be provided. Sixty-five felt that it was common.

Table 22

Interviews: Vignette 1

Redundant older skilled worker		Common situation	
Deserves assistance	75	Yes	65
Should get assistance	1	No	4
Not get assistance	1	Other	4
Don't know	2	Don't know	6
No answer	1	No answer	1
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80		80

From the findings referred to above and from the comments made it was clear that there was much sympathy for the older redundant worker, e.g.

He deserves full benefit since he is trying, it is common, definitely, a man that age has no chance.  
(East Kilbride, retired)

He should get earnings related benefit until he is 65, it is a genuine case, people don't become lazy at 50 odd. Its quite common I know one person like this.  
(East Kilbride electrical engineer)

I understand the employers case, on the other hand the man has problems, needs state aid, its common among certain sections of industry. (East Kilbride engineer)

The vignette emphasised the excellent past work record of the individual described, thus respondents who felt that he deserved benefit are acting in a manner which is compatible both with the principle of meeting need and the principle of reciprocity, the emphasis being on past as opposed to future contributions. The importance placed on past contributions is illustrated by some of the comments made.

Its a terrible way to treat people who have worked all their life. (Coatbridge, retired)

He deserves benefit at that age, he has been working all his life, there is not much else you can do.  
(East Kilbride electrician)

Several of those interviewed said it was the state's responsibility to find him a job while a few suggested that nothing could be done. The most common suggestions made for dealing with the situation were retraining and early retirement, e.g.

Retraining schemes should be provided.  
(East Kilbride fitter)

He would be better off as a pensioner, put him into retirement and then he would be entitled to all their benefits. (East Kilbride unemployed croupier)

They should bring down the retirement age to 60 and give him a pension. (East Kilbride toolmaker)

One respondent referred to the problems which those who had a relatively well paid job met when they became unemployed.

He must get benefit, all Her Majesty's subjects should get benefit this situation creates deeper problems, his standard of living drops, he could still live in an owner occupier house but owner occupiers are not helped much, he could sell it but he wouldn't get a council house. Failing him finding a job the government should retrain him. (Coatbridge solicitor)

Individual responsibility was not referred to as a cause of unemployment in relation to this case and when considering ways of dealing with such cases the suggestions made stressed societal responsibility. The need to maintain incentives was not stressed.

The fact that he had been unemployed for over two years was not referred to by those interviewed. Thus it could not be argued that those interviewed had less sympathy for the long term unemployed. Because this man had been unemployed for two years his entitlement to national insurance benefit would have been exhausted and he would be forced to rely on supplementary benefit. This does not seem to be in line with the views of those interviewed. In addition, although there were no dependent children involved there was still much sympathy.

The second vignette described Mr Hall, an unemployed father of three aged 10, 6 and 4, who had been unemployed for a year and a half. Those interviewed were told that before he became unemployed he had worked for several employers as a heavy goods driver and had several periods of unemployment. He says that every time he starts working his stomach ulcers get bad but when he is not working his stomach ulcers get better and so the doctor will not certify him unfit for work. He had been unable to find another job since driving is his only skill and his previous bad work record goes against him. He was offered a job as a night watchman but he refused it since it did not pay much more than he can get on social security. This case, it

was thought, might be seen as undeserving. The incentives issue is explicitly referred to in that it is suggested that there is little difference between the wages of a night watchman and unemployment benefit. The fact that few contributions had been made in the past to society by this individual would also, it was felt, elicit comments which would give some insight into the views those interviewed have on the principle of reciprocity.

Twenty-one of those interviewed said he deserved social security and a further thirty-two said that although he did not deserve assistance he should still get it. Only twenty-one said that Mr Hall should not get assistance. Even when a case whose deservedness is questionable is put forward the majority of respondents felt that he should be given state assistance, however it must be noted that a significant minority of those interviewed did not approve of providing any assistance in this case.

Table 23

Interviews: Vignette 2

Frequently unemployed lorry driver		Common situation	
Deserves assistance	21	Yes	38
Should get assistance	32	No	27
Not get assistance	21	Other	1
Don't know	4	Don't know	12
No answer	2	No answer	2
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80		80

Almost half of those interviewed felt this situation was common (thirty-eight) but this is fewer than the sixty-five who thought the redundant older worker was in a common situation. Several of those interviewed were critical of the individual in this case, e.g.

He's a waster. (Coatbridge telephone salesman)

...shyster. It is difficult to discipline these people you have to put up with these people there is so many of them, you could reduce his benefit. (Coatbridge, retired)

...make him take another job. (Coatbridge student)

Many of those who saw him as undeserving and as a waster still felt that he should be given assistance, e.g.

He should get social security but only just enough to keep him, some people just work for a couple of months and then they are unemployed. (Coatbridge solicitor)

...should cut his benefit to below what he would get if he worked. We should not allow him to do casual work because in most cases you can get more money drawing social security and working temporarily. We should withhold his money but pay benefit to his wife and kids. (East Kilbride quality controller)

He should get sickness benefit. He's not genuine but he should get some money. (East Kilbride slaughterman)

Some of those interviewed thought his claims to be ill should be investigated further, e.g.

Ill health, a lot make excuses like this but it is a feeble excuse. They should look at it very carefully before giving anything. It is not very common. (East Kilbride unemployed croupier)

They should give him a thorough check-up and then go on from there. He deserves social security even if he is not ill although they should look at it month by month. (Coatbridge store department manager)

They should send him to a psychiatrist, he deserves social security, we must assume that the doctor would not sign a false certificate although they often do you know. If the hospital find nothing wrong with him then they should look at his head. (Coatbridge solicitor)

Social Security should sort out his stomach trouble. (East Kilbride turner)

Several of those interviewed, however, accepted Mr Hall's claims to be ill, and one saw it as an example of the general relationship between ill health and low pay, e.g.

He should get benefit if the job affects his health. Low paid jobs and ill health often go together.  
(East Kilbride, unemployed)

The fact that the majority thought he should be assisted whether he was seen as deserving or undeserving indicates the emphasis placed on meeting needs. Several of the comments made further illustrate this, e.g.

They should give him the benefit of the doubt.  
(East Kilbride engineering supervisor)

Of course he should get benefit but he should tell better stories. (Coatbridge driver)

What do you do with him? There's a lot of unemployment so he might as well be unemployed as someone else.  
(East Kilbride grinder)

Little explicit reference was made by those interviewed to the principle of reciprocity or incentives, however consideration of these principles may have affected attitudes. Most of the comments made referred to whether the reasons for not working given by the individual were genuine. The principle of meeting need however in this case appeared to take priority in the view of the majority of those interviewed, over all other principles.

The third case of an unemployed person put to those interviewed described a school leaver with one O level and no other qualifications. Those interviewed were told he had been unable to find a job although he had looked quite hard at first. Now they were told, he feels as if he will never find a job and doesn't go to the Job Centre as often as he used to. The individual in this case had made no past contribution to society through working and paying insurance contributions and taxes but had some potential to make contributions in the future. The disillusionment felt by the unemployed which affects the efforts made to find employment is referred to in the vignette.

Fifty-six said he deserved assistance and a further eight that he did not deserve it but that he should get benefit. Sixty-seven felt that this was a common situation. It can be seen that more of those interviewed thought the two cases where the individual's responsibility for his situation is least in evidence, i.e. the redundant older worker and the unemployed school leaver, to be the most common. Many respondents stated that the unemployed school leaver should be retrained (twenty-four) or that the government should make greater efforts to provide employment for school leavers. Three suggested that national service should be reintroduced. Very few of those interviewed referred to individual responsibility.

Table 24

Interviews: Vignette 3

Unemployed school leaver		Common Situation	
Deserves assistance	56	Yes	67
Should get assistance	8	No	6
Not get assistance	9	Other	4
Don't know	5	Don't Know	1
No answer	2	No answer	2
	<hr/> 80		<hr/> 80

Among those who felt he should not be assisted were two who felt that his parents should keep him if they could afford it. A few felt that he was not trying hard enough.

This can't be true, the unemployment situation is bad and the job centre is bad but there are lots of jobs. The boy hasn't come to terms with his lack of qualification, if he keeps trying he should get a job even if its in a pub.  
(Coatbridge solicitor)

The majority of those interviewed, however, were more sympathetic.

It's soul destroying but he should keep trying.  
(Coatbridge foreman)

I can see why school leavers are disillusioned he deserves social security and training of some sort should be guaranteed. (East Kilbride scientist)



Training, it was suggested by several respondents, if it was to be given, should be relevant. There was much criticism of the way job creation schemes operated at the time.

The government should introduce an attractive scheme like job creation but more relevant and permanent.  
(East Kilbride engineer)

Another respondent felt

Too much emphasis is placed on qualifications by companies, he may have the best pair of hands in Britain, he needs help to prove himself.  
(East Kilbride company director)

The fact that little stress was put on the past contributions of the boy suggests that the insurance principle in this case may have been seen as less important than meeting needs. Few references were made to the need for incentives by those interviewed although as was seen above a few stated that benefits should not be so high that desire to work was reduced. The emphasis on training can be seen as compatible with the more positive implications of reciprocity as discussed in chapter 3, i.e. assisting people in order to promote future contributions. Undergoing training was said to be a condition which had to be met before benefit was provided by a few respondents only and the majority of those interviewed felt school leavers should be assisted even although they had made no contributions in the past.

Two cases of pensioners were also put forward and the relative importance of the principles discussed earlier when considering those outside the labour market can thus be considered. The first pensioner described was a retired bank manager with a substantial occupational pension who stayed with his son and his son's family. His son was a lawyer and in receipt of a good salary and thus refused to take any money from his father to pay for his keep. The

pensioner received an occupational pension which had been inflation proofed and which was equal to half his salary and had paid national insurance contributions all his life. In this case the pensioner described is relatively well provided for. It was possible, through the responses to this vignette to investigate whether those interviewed felt pensions should be paid only to those in real need. Sixty-seven felt that he deserved benefit and a further two that although in their view he did not really deserve assistance he should still get it. Only eight felt that the situation was a common one.

Table 25

Interviews: Vignette 4

Retired bank manager		Common situation	
Deserves assistance	67	Yes	8
Should get assistance	2	No	67
Not get assistance	9	Other	2
Don't know	0	Don't know	1
No answer	2	No answer	2
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80		80

The fact that he was entitled to benefit because he had paid national insurance contributions all his life was strongly emphasised by those interviewed. The insurance principle was thus seen as very important and the state it was generally felt should provide an income for those who had contributed even if the individual was quite well off. The right to independence was often referred to and the possibility that the son may at some later date be unwilling to support his father concerned some. It should be noted that nine said he should not get assistance although one of these said he should get his contributions back but not in the form of a pension.

The second vignette describing a pensioner which was presented was that of a sixty-six year old man with no private income who had recently returned to this country and who, due to his long absence abroad, had made few national insurance contributions. He had come back to live with his sister but had no private income and had only £200 savings. In this case the individual had made few past contributions and was unlikely to be able to contribute much to society in the future. Views on the relative importance of the principles of reciprocity and meeting needs could thus be investigated. In this situation providing incentives to ensure present willingness to work is irrelevant but whether those interviewed felt those who had not made contributions should be made an example of to ensure that other people pay insurance contributions could be investigated. Thirty-six felt that he deserved social security, a further twenty-two felt that he did not really deserve assistance but that he should still be assisted. Quite a large proportion, thirty-one felt that quite a few pensioners, particularly women, will not have paid sufficient contributions to entitle them to a retirement pension.

Table 26

Interviews: Vignette 5

Pensioner who worked abroad		Common situation	
Deserves assistance	36	Yes	31
Should get assistance	22	No	34
Not get assistance	20	Other	4
Don't know	0	Don't know	9
No answer	2	No answer	2
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80		80

Several of the minority who felt that he should not get a pension stressed the principle of reciprocity. A shop owner from Coatbridge felt that the individual described in this case should not have been allowed back into this country. Other comments made illustrating views on reciprocity were, e.g.

People can keep up their benefit payments abroad.  
(Coatbridge policeman)

He went abroad and left the country in the lurch some of those who have not paid contributions were too young and they should get the benefit but he should not.  
(Coatbridge solicitor)

Some suggested that those who had not paid contributions should be treated differently and thus maintain incentives to make contributions, e.g.

He should get some but not as much as those who have paid national insurance contributions  
(Coatbridge electrician)

The majority of comments however were concerned to show that no matter what the situation people's basic needs must be met.

I don't think its right but he can't be allowed to starve.  
(East Kilbride croupier)

We need to give him enough to live on.  
(Coatbridge factory worker)

I don't like to see anyone hard up.  
(East Kilbride grinder)

He must get a living. No one can be turned away.  
(Coatbridge factory worker)

Thus although in response to this question reciprocity and incentives were emphasised, the principle of meeting needs appeared to be given priority by the majority and this is discussed in more detail below.

Referring back to the theoretical discussion in chapter 3, Pinker argued that the principle of reciprocity was a central element in public opinion and that depth, distance and time were three variables

which affected whether stigma was perceived or imposed in an exchange relationship and that the most important variable was depth.

Distance is referred to in the next chapter when experience of unemployment is discussed. In this section it is intended to discuss how the findings relate to Pinker's discussion of depth and time. In Pinker's view propensity for reciprocity was more important to the public than past contributions and payment through taxation was felt to be less important in establishing rights to benefit than insurance contributions. Some concepts of reciprocity look only at the exchange between individuals, others look at group exchange also, however it was suggested in the theoretical discussion that the emphasis on equivalence in both individual and group systems of exchange means inequality is perpetuated and that all needs are not met. Titmuss, as was said, recognises the importance of reciprocity emphasising in particular the need to compensate individuals for diswelfares but he still felt it important to stress the necessity of 'unilateral transfers'. The responses from those interviewed showed potential for future contributions was of limited importance it appeared, since the redundant older worker and the pensioner who had worked all his life were clearly seen to be the most deserving cases. Past contributions, although important to those interviewed, appeared to be less important than meeting need since most felt the unemployed school leaver to be deserving and that the frequently unemployed lorry driver even if not deserving should get assistance. Even the person who had spent all his life abroad and thus had made no past contributions and had no likelihood of reciprocity in the future should, it was felt by the majority of those interviewed, be assisted.

Looking specifically at the insurance system it was suggested that the public might feel that only those who had made insurance contributions should receive assistance. The responses to the vignettes as was said above suggested that this was not the case. However, forty-eight favoured national insurance contributions as a method of financing state benefits and thirty felt that pensioners and thirty-seven that the unemployed who had not made contributions should be treated differently. Most still felt the needs, even of those who had not contributed, should be met to some extent. As was said the redundant worker described in the vignettes would not have been entitled to national insurance benefits but only supplementary benefits given the existing national insurance system, but in the views of those interviewed he deserved assistance as a right. Contributions it seemed were not defined in accordance with strict actuarial terms.

Looking at the time variable the finding that there was much sympathy for the redundant older worker who had been unemployed for two years shows that those interviewed were not necessarily less sympathetic towards those who had been on benefit for a long time.

Reciprocity it was also argued may be defined in broad and narrow terms and positive and negative aspects of the concept may be emphasised. From the discussion of these findings it seems that those stressing the principle of reciprocity appeared to stress more the positive aspects of the concept. There was an emphasis placed on the need for training. Those interviewed also tended to emphasise the view that those who had contributed should get more than those who had not made any contributions (i.e. rewarding contributions rather than punishing those who had not contributed) and only a minority of respondents suggested that those who had not contributed should get

nothing. When those interviewed referred to the welfare system it was a generalised exchange system, a system in which trust is important, as opposed to a dyadic exchange system which was being described. The emphasis did tend to be placed on the individual however, that is what the individual gives and receives to and from the group. Sometimes a broader concept was referred to for example in the case of the pensioner who had been abroad all his life, one of those interviewed suggested that even if he had not contributed to British society his parents had. As has been said the principle of meeting need appeared to be given a higher priority by the majority of those interviewed. Thus although it can be argued that the principle of reciprocity is important it cannot be argued to be the central principle in the views of those interviewed. In the theoretical discussion it was argued that welfare systems based on the principle of reciprocity would not meet all needs and yet it can be seen that meeting need was important to those interviewed. Need is discussed in more detail below. It is clear, however, that the hypothesis:

Those interviewed see the principle of reciprocity

as being the central principle of any welfare system.

is not supported.

#### Effect of reciprocity on views on stigma

Having looked at the importance of stigma the relationship between reciprocity and the perception of stigma can be investigated. In the theoretical discussion it was suggested that everyone feels stigma when benefit is not related to past contributions or when the individual has no propensity for reciprocity. Those interviewed were asked how they would feel about claiming different types of benefit.

Of the forty who had never been unemployed eight said that they would hesitate to claim unemployment benefit and twelve said they would hesitate to claim supplementary benefit. Only two felt unemployment was likely in their case. In the case of pensions, of the seventy-three who were not claiming a pension at that time, none felt they would hesitate before claiming retirement pension and seven said that they would hesitate before claiming supplementary pension. Fifty said they were members of an occupational pension scheme. If this is true it suggests that the occupational welfare system is widespread and this is likely at some point to have implications for the stigma attached to public welfare.

Table 27

Interviews: Hesitation claiming -

	Unemployment benefit	Supplementary benefit	Retirement pension	Supplementary pension
Yes	8	12	0	7
No	31	27	73	65
Don't know	1	1	0	1
Not asked	40	40	7*	7*
	—	—	—	—
	80	80	80	80

Think unemployment likely		Member of an occupational pension scheme	
Yes	2	Yes	50
No	32	No	18
Don't know	4	Don't know	5
Other	2	Not asked	7
Not asked	40		—
	—		—
	80		80

\* Only four are classified as retired under occupation because occupation was coded where possible. Seven were over retirement age but one was still working.

More stigma was attached to claiming benefit when unemployed than to claiming benefit when a pensioner and more of those interviewed felt



that they would hesitate before claiming non-contributory benefits. However only seven said they would hesitate in claiming supplementary pension and twelve in claiming supplementary benefit. Among those who said they would not hesitate some stated that "they'd paid for it" and this statement was made in connection with non-contributory benefits, as well as contributory benefits. Thus although reciprocity was important the relationship between giving and receiving was not seen solely in terms of the national insurance system. Several respondents who had paid tax and made national insurance contributions felt that this gave them a right to supplementary benefit also. The view of the forty who had been unemployed on unemployment benefit is discussed in more detail later. Since only a minority would hesitate to claim benefit and since this did not always seem to be determined by whether the benefit was part of a reciprocal relationship (i.e. related to past contributions or potential for contributions in the future) it can be agreed that perceptions of stigma are not always related to past contributions or propensity for reciprocity.<sup>10</sup>

### Efficiency and incentives

As was pointed out in the theoretical discussion efficiency and incentives are concepts which are central to the industrial achievement model of welfare. A belief in the need to maintain incentives is often related to the belief that unemployment is voluntary and is caused by lack of motivation. Unemployment however can also be seen by some of those stressing efficiency as inevitable and necessary if efficiency is to be maintained. The discussion of incentives is related therefore to the discussion of individual and

societal responsibility undertaken earlier. The extent to which these issues were referred to by those interviewed was investigated. The type of incentives advocated can be positive or negative in nature and this too was investigated. Through the interviews therefore, it was hoped to gain some insight into views on efficiency as a goal and the means of achieving that goal, and views on the effectiveness of incentives as solving the problem of unemployment. The following hypothesis was presented:

A belief in the need to maintain incentives and to improve efficiency dominates the attitudes of those interviewed to welfare services.

In order to get some idea of the factors believed to motivate people to work, these interviewed were asked why they thought people worked. Sixty-seven said for the money. When asked about the relationship between benefit levels and wages sixty of those interviewed felt that many people could get more on social security than they could when working. Eight gave other responses, six saying some only and two that they did not know. Only twelve, however, felt that it was usual for people to get more on social security than when working. It seems clear therefore that from the evidence provided by this question, almost all respondents saw the incentives issue as important and felt that money was the major factor which motivated people to work.

Table 28

Interviews: Incentives

Why work		More on social security than working	
Money	67	Yes	60
Other	13	No	12
		Other	8
	—		—
	80		80

The fact that people felt that the incentives issue could be dealt with shows that the inevitability of unemployment was not accepted. The solutions to the incentives problem favoured by those interviewed were related to the extent to which they emphasised individual responsibility. Sixteen said benefit should be reduced, eleven said nothing should be done and thirteen suggested that wages should be increased. Although several respondents had mentioned large families only two suggested that benefit should be paid for a certain number of children only, one put the limit at four and one at five. Two suggested subsidising wages, four suggested having more checks to ensure that no one was working on the side and two said that the government should sort itself out. Six did not know what they felt and four gave other responses.

To investigate further how the incentives problem was perceived those interviewed were asked if they approved of some of the most commonly suggested ways of dealing with the problem of maintaining incentives to work. Views on 'wage stopping' which was one way used in the past to maintain incentives, were investigated. Those interviewed were asked whether they thought a man who could get a job at pay less than he gets on social security, should have his benefit cut to this amount. Thirty-one approved of this suggestion, however the majority forty-nine disapproved. Some of the comments made suggested that the belief that needs must be met had influenced the responses made.

...used to get the jail for not providing for your family. In the above situation not taking the job would have been the only way to make sure that you provided for your family. (East Kilbride bricklayer)

Don't take money off the unemployed because that's tied to the cost of living, we should reward workers though - we do need incentives. (East Kilbride engineer)

The pointlessness of cutting benefits in this way when there were no jobs was also mentioned by some, and this supports the argument that unemployment is not seen solely as the result of individual failings. It was seen earlier that forty-three of those interviewed disapproved of the suggestion that the money paid to the unemployed should be reduced.

Supplementing the wages of the low paid by a state benefit is in accordance with both the principles of maintaining incentives and reciprocity. Fifty-four of those interviewed approved of supplementing wages. Several of those who disapproved were concerned about the effects that having to claim an additional benefit to supplement their wages would have on the dignity of workers. Some of those interviewed were also critical of employers who paid low wages.

Views on establishing a national minimum wage were also sought. Sixty approved of establishing a minimum wage. Some of those interviewed expressed doubts about whether setting a minimum wage was feasible. From the responses it was clear that most of those interviewed accepted that some people do get more when on benefit than when working but in these cases it appears in many cases increasing wages was more acceptable than cutting benefits.

Table 29

Interviews: Solutions to incentives problem

	Wage stop	Wage supplement	Minimum wage
Approve	31	54	60
Disapprove	49	24	18
Other	-	2	2
	—	—	—
	80	80	80

Higher child benefits are favoured by the poverty lobby as a solution to the problem of low wages. This proposal was put to those interviewed and although the majority supported it the majority was not a large one. Forty-six only, favoured increasing child benefits. The responses to the question appear in some cases to be affected by religious views. Child benefits were seen by some to benefit catholic families more than protestant families since the catholic families were usually larger. Several of the respondents claimed that they were not religiously biased when presenting their views but the fact that they referred to religion suggests that religion has had some effect.

...it depends on the number of children. This isn't anything to do with religion but its something parents can control. (Coatbridge, retired)

Table 30

Interviews: Child benefit

Approve	46
Disapprove	32
Other	2
	<hr/>
	80

Some of those interviewed also felt that paying child benefit to someone who was being taxed was a waste of manpower.

Adjust tax levels instead, child benefits are a load of nonsense, bureaucracy gone mad. (East Kilbride scientist)

Its a con, a man's taxed on it its only worth it for single parents. (Coatbridge sales representative)

Again comments on the deservedness of recipients were made.

Women just use it for the bingo and pubs.  
(Coatbridge teacher)

I approve if kids benefit directly, they should issue tokens not cash. (Coatbridge lecturer)

In my experience through my dealings with delinquent children of deprived parents I found that they suffered even with child benefit, they need help not money. (Coatbridge solicitor)

You hear tales of family allowance being spent on bingo, but child benefits should be just for the child, I'm not a catholic but that's got nothing to do with it. (Coatbridge steelworker)

If it gets back to the kids but often it doesn't. East Kilbride engineer)

The belief that family allowances were being spent on the bingo appeared to be strong especially in Coatbridge and again this may have been related to religious views. Despite the strong negative feelings toward child benefits held by a minority over half those interviewed favoured increasing child benefits.

Although the incentives principle was found to be important to those interviewed, and this may partially explain why the public are more sympathetic to pensioners who are outside the labour market, it tended to be the positive implications of the incentives principle which were stressed, i.e. improving the situation of the employed rather than worsening the situation of the unemployed. From the responses to other questions, meeting need it appeared was particularly important to those interviewed, and although the need to maintain incentives and efficiency was stressed, so was meeting need. This is illustrated especially by the responses to the vignettes. Thus it appears the hypothesis:

A belief in the need to maintain incentives and to improve efficiency dominates the attitudes of those interviewed to welfare principles.

is not supported.

The meeting of need

In the theoretical chapter the extent to which altruism and egoism exists in society and the nature of these sentiments were discussed. The main issue to be investigated was the extent to which the necessity of meeting the welfare needs of others was emphasised. The responses to the questions discussed above illustrate the importance placed on meeting need. The following hypothesis which focusses on the extent of altruism was presented.

Those interviewed think only of themselves.

From the findings discussed above it is clear that although some people stress incentives and reciprocity and relate this to desert, desert is not the only principle which it is thought should determine distribution. Even among those who emphasised reciprocity and incentives in the majority of cases the principle of meeting need took precedence.

Further evidence of the importance placed on need was obtained when those interviewed were asked what was the main factor they would take into consideration if they had to decide if a pensioner deserved assistance. Twenty-five said that all pensioners deserved assistance and a further thirty-five that they would look at a person's needs and/or means. Although discussions on social administration generally differentiate between needs and means it was felt that many of those who responded to this question made no distinction between the two terms thus means and needs were combined into one category. Only seventeen respondents said they would take a pensioner's past work record into consideration. When asked what they would do if a pensioner was in real need but did not really deserve assistance, only six said that they would not assist them.

In the case of the unemployed six said that all the unemployed deserved assistance, and thirty-eight said they would take needs and/or means into consideration. Thirty-three said they would consider work record or the desire to work. Work record and the desire to work were combined because it appeared from the comments made that some of those interviewed who said work record were in fact referring to present willingness to work. Many of the comments made, showed the awareness those interviewed had of the difficulties the unemployed had in finding work. When asked what they would do if an unemployed person was in real need of assistance but did not really deserve it only thirteen said that assistance should not be provided for the unemployed in this situation. Many stated that needs must be met especially if there were children in the household. Individual responsibility, however, was still stressed.

Table 31

## Interviews: Need

Considerations deserving pensioners		Assist pensioners in real need	
All deserve	25	No	6
Needs/means	35	Other	2
Work record	17	Yes	72
Other	3		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80		80
Considerations deserving unemployed		Assist unemployed in real need	
All deserve	6	No	13
Needs/means	38	Other	4
Work record/ desire to work	33	Yes	63
Don't know	3		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80		80

Those interviewed were asked whether society has a duty to ensure that everyone has enough to live on before anyone gets any extra or



whether everyone should be free to earn as much as they can. Thirty-two thought that everyone should be assisted but the majority, forty-two, thought that freedom to earn was more important.

Table 32

Interviews: Social duty/free to earn

Meet all needs	32
Free to earn	42
Other	6
	<hr/>
	80

Two respondents complained about the question, one saying:

The weak only should be helped by society, typical bloody sociologist's question with Marxist rings round it. If a person is capable they should look after themselves.  
(East Kilbride scientist)

Thus although meeting needs is important individual freedom to earn is also emphasised. Despite this it was clear that especially when faced with real situations such as the vignettes discussed need is emphasised. The hypothesis:

Those interviewed think only of themselves.  
cannot be supported.

Pinker's discussion of family altruism was discussed in chapter 3. From the responses referred to above it is clear that people's concern extends beyond themselves and their families. Concern for one's family (that is family altruism as opposed to family egoism<sup>11</sup>) may, rather than restrict one's altruistic sentiments, lead to a concern for others who have similar problems. One comment showed that this had happened in at least one case. In response to the vignette presented about the school leaver one of those interviewed said:

I've got a son like this myself, I just don't know what can be done for them; its a tragic problem, tragic.  
(Coatbridge dentist)

### Poverty and social justice

In chapter 3 philosophical approaches to defining the just distribution of resources are discussed and the varying degrees of weight placed on needs and contributions was commented upon. The principles of incentives and reciprocity stress an allocation which is in line with the rewarding of merit and contributions. The discussion of the results gained from the interviews showed that, those interviewed stressed the principles of incentives and reciprocity, thus suggesting that allocation of resources should take merit and contributions into consideration. In most cases however, most stress was placed on meeting need.

The principle of need was further investigated by looking at how those interviewed defined poverty. Absolute and relative concepts of poverty were discussed in chapter 3. The extent to which those interviewed see poverty in relative terms was investigated as were views on what was a just distribution of resources and on how much inequality is necessary. In chapter 3 both procedural equality, which refers to equality of treatment and is based on a belief in the need for consistency and non arbitrariness, and substantive equality which refers to equality of outcome were considered. If need was seen in relative terms it was argued views on equality should be investigated. The following hypotheses were tested:

Those interviewed define poverty in absolute terms  
as opposed to relative terms.

The present level of inequality is acceptable to those interviewed.

When asked who was poor in Britain today only twelve said no one or very few, thirty-four said pensioners, nineteen said the low paid or the working class and five the unemployed. Ten gave other responses, two saying the middle class and two widows. It is clear that poverty was still seen as a problem. Those interviewed were asked if they thought benefits should be related to wages or just enough to live on. Sixty-six respondents thought that benefits for pensioners should be related to wages, four suggested that they should be 25% or less, thirty said they should be between 26-50% and twenty-nine between 51-100%. In the case of the unemployed, forty-three said that benefit should be related to wages with two saying take the person's own wage into account. Thirteen felt unemployment benefit should be 50% or less, twenty-eight more than 50%.

Table 33

Interviews: Concept of poverty

Pensions related to wages		% of wages	
Yes	66	1-25	4
Just enough	9	26-50	30
Related to contributions	2	51-75	19
Related to own wage	1	76-100	10
Other	2	Don't know	4
		Not asked	13
	—		—
	80		80
Unemployment benefit related to wages		% of wages	
Yes	43	1-25	2
Just enough	31	26-50	11
Other	6	51-75	18
		75-100	10
		Don't know	2
		Not asked	37
	—		—
	80		80

It seems therefore that needs are seen in relative terms by many and it was felt by over half of those interviewed that benefits should be related to wages rather than prices. Thus it can be argued poverty is not always seen in absolute terms and it was felt by those interviewed that the standards of living of pensioners and the unemployed should be compared with that of the employed. From the responses it is clear that the hypothesis:

Those interviewed define poverty in absolute  
terms as opposed to relative terms.

cannot be supported.

When investigating opinions about inequality views on the principles which define a just distribution of resources and views on substantive equality are considered. When asked for views on present inequality thirty-four felt the differences in people's living standards were too large, twenty-six felt the differences were just right, ten thought the differences were too small.

Table 34

Interviews: Inequality

Differences in living standards

Too large	34
Too small	10
Just right	26
Other	10
	<hr/>
	80

A large proportion therefore appear to favour more equality but as was seen earlier individual freedom was also emphasised. The fact that those responding felt benefits for the unemployed and pensioners should be higher also suggests that the present level of inequality is unacceptable. The hypothesis:

The present level of inequality is acceptable to those interviewed.

is not supported. Comparisons were made between the living standards of those working and those on benefit, however there was no evidence of a great desire for substantive equality, i.e. equality of outcome.

### Citizenship

As was said in the theoretical section it is necessary to consider not only whether welfare needs are being met but also whether the rights of the citizen to benefits are stressed. Views on how benefits were and should be administered especially views on universality and selectivity were investigated. As was seen state responsibility was accepted by the majority of those interviewed.

Table 35

#### Interviews: Universality

	Universal/selective pensioners	Universal/selective unemployed
Everyone	57	50
Those without enough	18	28
Other	5	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	80	80

The rights of citizenship were often appealed to especially in the case of the pensioner who had lived abroad all his life. Often related to the concept of citizenship is the argument that benefits should be universal.<sup>12</sup> When asked whether all claimants should receive assistance or just those who would not have enough to live on without it, fifty-seven respondents thought all pensioners should get assistance and five gave other responses, e.g. all who had contributed. In the case of the unemployed fifty thought that all

the unemployed should get assistance and a further two everyone who had contributed. Some added that people should not be forced to rely on their savings.

A general question on the administration of the benefits system was included. Those interviewed were asked if they were satisfied in general with the way the state treated the unemployed and pensioners and whether those interviewed felt the system emphasised rights and provided fair treatment was considered. Twenty-four of those interviewed said they were satisfied with the way the state treated pensioners, thirty-three complained that benefits were too low and nineteen were critical of the operation of the benefits system. Several comments were made. Two of those interviewed complained that additional benefits, such as dental expenses and optician's expenses, were means tested. Two at this juncture said that pensioners get too much even although only one had said too much when asked directly. An electrician said that his own work experience made him feel pensioners should have free electricity. Two respondents were concerned not only about pensioners material needs but also about their need for company. Concern was expressed about pensioners lack of knowledge of benefits and again the scrounger issue, i.e. the belief that

If you know how to apply its OK but you have to know the system, many don't.

was brought up by a few of those interviewed. Two respondents felt that there wasn't the right spirit among DHSS staff and criticised their penny-pinching attitude.

When those interviewed were asked whether they were satisfied in general with the way the unemployed were treated thirty-five respondents were satisfied and forty-seven were dissatisfied.

Eighteen respondents complained of the way the system worked especially the way the unemployed were treated by DHSS staff. Ten complained that benefits were too low. Thirteen complained that there was too much abuse and four felt that there were no incentives. Although more were critical of the recipients in the case of the unemployed than in the case of pensioners, the majority of criticisms were about the system, i.e. the treatment of the unemployed received and the low level of benefits.

Forty of the respondents had been unemployed and they were asked about their experiences when unemployed. Only six were satisfied with their treatment. People complained of the low level of benefits, legal problems, impolite treatment and lack of help in job seeking.

I'd rather be working but there's no jobs.  
(Coatbridge unemployed steel worker)

I was just another case.  
(Coatbridge sales representative)

Not getting enough was worst, you'd think it was coming out of his own pocket the way they treat you, think you are a lower class. I've done a lot to get a job, they've done nothing. (East Kilbride slaughterman)

From the views expressed it seems clear that the welfare system as it operated at that time did not satisfy the majority of those interviewed.

### Consensus

Before summarising the results so far the extent to which consensus was in evidence should be considered. Few differences in views between those interviewed existed in response to several questions especially the vignettes. A lack of consensus was evident in response to the questions on unemployment benefit levels and the

methods suggested for dealing with unemployment and in response to the questions on social justice and inequality. Some of those interviewed, as has been seen, placed more weight on the principles of reciprocity and incentives than others. The hypothesis:

Consensus exists among those interviewed  
concerning which welfare principles are  
important.

cannot be proved, however it should be noted a fair degree of consensus was found to exist especially on the importance of meeting need.

### Consistency

Often one principle was emphasised at one point and not at the next. For example, reciprocity may have been emphasised by the interviewee when responding to the vignettes but not in his responses to the questions on the way those who had not contributed should be treated or vice versa. It is clear from the results that when those interviewed discuss actual situations more sympathy is evident than when they discuss abstract principles such as the importance of insurance contributions and maintaining incentives. People were aware that manipulation and abuse of the system could exist. The media extracts were accepted by a large proportion and the belief that those who 'know the ropes' could get more from the system than others was frequently referred to. When the actual situations of some unemployed and pensioners were presented to those interviewed even although those described were not unambiguously deserving (the redundant older worker had been unemployed for two years; the school leaver had never worked; the lorry driver had been frequently



unemployed; the retired banker had his own pension; and the pensioner who had been abroad all his life had made little contribution to the British welfare system;) those interviewed still felt they should be assisted. It should be noted that of the five cases presented only the retired bank manager would be entitled to benefit as a result of his national insurance contributions. The evidence of inconsistency means that the hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed to welfare will be consistent.

cannot be supported and this has important implications when considering the possibility of changing attitudes.

#### Models of welfare

In the theoretical discussion the models of welfare described by Titmuss were discussed and the principles of societal responsibility, meeting need, equality and citizenship were seen as central to the institutional redistributive model. From the interviews it was clear that many of those interviewed saw as important the principles of societal responsibility, meeting need and citizenship and wanted more equality, although there was no evidence that complete equality was acceptable. Incentives and reciprocity, principles which were central to the other models of welfare discussed were also strongly emphasised and individual responsibility and individual freedom to a slightly lesser degree. It seems therefore that the views of some of those interviewed incorporate aspects of all three models. In order to investigate the extent to which each of the models discussed resembled the views of those interviewed each interview was considered separately.

Almost all of those interviewed expressed views which were related to more than one model at some time during the interview. Only three respondents had views which were compatible with one model alone and in all three cases the models of welfare held was the institutionalised redistributive model. It should also be noted that the views of those interviewed could not be classified into altruistic, egoistic and exchange models as was the case with the results obtained from Pinker's (1972) research. Nine did not make reference to meeting need, eighteen made no reference to incentives and seventeen made no reference to reciprocity at any stage in the interview. However incentives, reciprocity and meeting need were clearly popular welfare principles and in fact forty-one referred at some time in the interview to all three principles. Clearly the models of welfare discussed do not represent three distinct orientations of opinion. The models, however, are useful benchmarks against which to consider the views of the public. The hypothesis:

None of the models discussed above resemble

the views of those interviewed.

is not supported but the fact that many hold views involving more than one model must be stressed.

### Summary

To summarise so far it was clear that those responding to both the postal survey and those interviewed would have found higher levels of benefit for both pensioners and the unemployed acceptable. The interviews dealt in detail with the principles of welfare discussed in chapter 3. Looking at individual and societal responsibility it was found that although some of the unemployed were believed to be

undeserving the majority of those interviewed emphasised society's responsibility for causing unemployment and poverty. No reference was made to genetic explanations and few references were made to cultural explanations of poverty. The cultural explanation most commonly referred to was the problems created by large families but only a minority of such references were made. The hypothesis:

All those receiving welfare benefits are seen  
by those interviewed as undeserving.

is disproved. State responsibility for dealing with unemployment and poverty was also stressed by those interviewed, with the majority approving of public work schemes and reducing the working week, thus the hypothesis:

Those interviewed see the meeting of their own  
welfare needs as the responsibility of the  
individual.

is not supported.

Views on the principle of reciprocity and its relative importance in comparison with other principles was considered in some detail. The use of the vignettes was found to be particularly helpful in assessing the relative importance to those interviewed of various welfare principles. Potential for reciprocity in the future was found to be of limited importance in assessing whether a person deserved assistance and past contributions, although important, appeared to be less important than meeting need. The more positive implications of the principle of reciprocity such as rewarding past contributions and encouraging future contributions through training, appeared to receive more emphasis than the negative aspects such as not rewarding those who have not contributed or made insufficient contributions. The hypothesis:

Those interviewed see the principle of reciprocity as being the central principle of any welfare system.

is not supported but it must be acknowledged that reciprocity was seen as important.

Views on efficiency and incentives were also considered. Although such concerns were found to be important to those interviewed again concern about meeting needs generally took precedence. The hypothesis:

A belief in the need to maintain incentives and improve efficiency dominate the attitudes of those interviewed to welfare services.

is not supported.

The emphasis placed on need is important when considering the extent to which altruistic and egoistic sentiments are evident in society. Although freedom to earn was important and concern for one's family was evident, it was clear concerns extended beyond this. The hypothesis:

Those interviewed think only of themselves.

is not supported.

The views of those interviewed on poverty and inequality were also investigated. Poverty, it was found, was not always seen in absolute terms and although there was clearly not an overwhelming demand for equality a large proportion of those interviewed found the present level of inequality unacceptable. The fact that higher benefits for pensioners and the unemployed were acceptable is further evidence that this was the case. The hypotheses:

Those interviewed define poverty in absolute  
as opposed to relative terms.

and

The present level of inequality is acceptable  
to those interviewed.

are not supported.

Considering views on citizenship there was not a great demand for selectivity and concern about the present method of administering benefits was expressed. The views of those interviewed, although broadly similar in response to the vignettes, varied on several issues particularly questions on how to deal with unemployment and on social justice. Some placed more importance on the principles of incentives and reciprocity than others. The hypothesis:

Consensus exists among those interviewed  
concerning which welfare principles are  
important.

cannot be proved.

The attitudes of those interviewed it was found were not always consistent with more sympathy being evident when the vignettes were discussed. The hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed to welfare  
will be consistent.

is not supported.

The models of welfare outlined by Titmuss were found to be useful as bench marks against which the views of those interviewed could be compared. The views of many of those interviewed were found to contain elements of more than one model. However, the hypothesis:

None of the models discussed above resemble  
the views of those interviewed.

is not supported since some similarities were evident.

#### Comparison with previous research

Comparison can be made between the findings of this study and those of the studies discussed in chapter 4. The questions in this study which were similar to those on pension levels used by Age Concern (1974) and Piachaud (1974) produced similar results showing that higher levels of pensions would be acceptable. This study like those carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs (1978), the Schlackman Research Organisation (1978) and Golding and Middleton (1982) found knowledge of the benefits system to be limited. All studies found that awareness of abuse existed but those interviewed by the Institute of Economic Affairs (1978), the Commission of European Communities (1977), Golding and Middleton (1982) and Redpath (1979) appeared to place greater emphasis on both individual causation of and responsibility for dealing with unemployment and poverty than those interviewed in this research. Those interviewed were concerned about the need to maintain incentives and the importance of reciprocity as were those interviewed in the studies carried out by Pinker (1972), the Schlackman Research Organisation (1978), and Golding and Middleton (1982). There was evidence in the research by the Schlackman Research Organisation that there was concern about need. Sympathy for the unemployed school leaver and the redundant older worker was particularly clear. In this research those interviewed, although stressing the principles discussed above, generally appeared to give precedence to the principles of meeting need. This was especially so in the responses to the vignettes. Almost all the studies carried

out, including this research, found inconsistencies in attitudes and this it is suggested shows that the possibility of attitude change enabling the more positive aspects of the public's attitudes to be developed exists.

The major difference between this study and many earlier studies therefore is that there appears to be a greater emphasis placed on meeting need. Two possible explanations for this exist. First it may be the result of the different methods used. The Schlackman Research Organisation's research involved group discussions where actual situations were referred to, for example, redundant workers, unemployed school leavers. During such discussions the principle of meeting need was emphasised. This research with the use of vignettes also involved the discussion of real situations and it may be that need is more likely to be emphasised in this context than in response to questions eliciting views on more abstract principles. Secondly, the attitudes of those living in the areas of the west of Scotland investigated may differ as a result of the culture of the area, their employment experiences, etc. The effects of various factors on public attitudes are investigated in chapter 7.

## CHAPTER 7

## FACTORS AFFECTING PUBLIC ATTITUDES

In the previous section the content of public opinion and how it relates to the principles discussed in chapter 3 was discussed. In chapter 2 the effect of public attitudes on legislation, the factors which influence public attitudes and whether public attitudes are susceptible to change were considered. The relationship between public attitudes and legislation will be considered in chapter 8. In this chapter it is intended to consider whether anything can be learned from this study about the factors influencing public attitudes and the extent to which public attitudes are susceptible to change.

The process of attitude formation was discussed in chapter 2, in particular the functions which the adoption of various attitudes may perform for the individual and the possible effects of various stages of socialisation on the individual. The major concern of this thesis, it was stated, was the effect which both direct and indirect experience of unemployment would have on attitudes. In connection with the effect of direct experience of unemployment on attitudes the following hypothesis was presented:

Attitudes to welfare are not associated with whether or not the interviewee has had personal experience of unemployment.

Occupation and area of residence, it was suggested, would be likely to influence a person's indirect experience of unemployment. They could also be seen as indicators of a person's class position. The following hypotheses it was suggested would form the basis for the discussion of the relevant results:



The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to occupation.

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to the immediate area of residence.

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to the town of residence.

The attitudes of those interviewed in the West of Scotland will be the same as the attitudes found to exist in other parts of the country by other researchers.

In considering the latter hypotheses the interrelationship between the collective experience of those resident in an area and the culture of that area was referred to. It should also be noted that the findings of these three hypotheses are relevant to the considerations of the effect of distance on views on reciprocity.<sup>1</sup>

The hypotheses considered above refer to the experience of unemployment. The relationships between age and marital status and attitudes were also discussed. These factors are not only important as general indicators of life experience but also in that they provide information on the responsibilities and concerns of those interviewed. The following hypotheses were put forward:

There is no relationship between the age of those interviewed and their attitudes.

There is no relationship between the marital status of those interviewed and their attitudes.

The effect of knowledge gained through experience on attitudes has been discussed above; whether specific knowledge of benefit rates is

related to views on rates of benefit will also be considered and it is hypothesised that:

The attitudes of those interviewed will not be related to their knowledge of benefit levels.

The effect of the factors discussed above are likely to be interrelated. The small size of the sample makes the investigation of interrelationships impossible. The investigation therefore only looks at whether from the information available an association between the factors discussed and the views expressed can be identified. In addition, even where associations are identified it will not be possible to give reasons as to why the associations exist although some suggestions can be made. If when considering the relationship between experience of unemployment and the knowledge gained from this experience a relationship is found to exist, then the extent to which increased experience of unemployment will lead to changes in attitude can be discussed. The views expressed may also enable some comment to be made on the effect of the present structure of the benefits system on attitudes. Further research will clearly be necessary but this investigation it is hoped will develop the discussion and clarify some of the issues requiring investigation.

#### Postal Survey

The data from the postal survey provided general data on attitudes which formed a backdrop against which the results obtained from the interviews, which formed the major part of the study, could be viewed. The postal questionnaire investigated views on benefit levels only and did not provide information on the issues of principle which were discussed in chapter 3. The low response rate which was discussed in the previous chapter means that the results are far from conclusive.

Information on direct experience of unemployment was not available from the questionnaires. The numbers interviewed who were unemployed and under 65 at the time of the survey was 7.8% of those responding from Coatbridge and 2.4% from East Kilbride. The unemployment rates in those towns at that time were 9% and 4% respectively. The unemployed were therefore slightly under-represented. Because so few unemployed responded, no comparison could be made between the views of the unemployed and the employed.

The view of those from East Kilbride were compared with the views of those from Coatbridge. One hundred and twenty-four out of five hundred responded from East Kilbride and seventy-seven out of five hundred from Coatbridge. Apart from the fact that the overall response rate from East Kilbride was higher no major differences in the responses coming from each of the two towns were found although slightly more of those responding from Coatbridge suggested higher benefit levels.

Thirty-three percent of those interviewed from Coatbridge and 50% from East Kilbride were non-manual workers as compared with 25% and 44% who were indentified as non-manual workers in the 1971 census. Thus non-manual workers were slightly over-represented. When the responses made by manual workers were compared with those made by non-manual workers no major differences were found to exist although slightly more manual workers suggested higher benefit levels for the unemployed.

Thirty eight percent of those responding from Coatbridge were aged between sixteen and thirty, 31% between thirty-one and fifty, 13% between fifty-one and sixty-four and 18% over sixty-five. This was roughly similar to the age structure of the population as a whole in

that area.<sup>2</sup> From East Kilbride 40% were aged between sixteen and thirty, 30% between thirty-one and fifty, 24% between fifty-one and sixty-four and 6% over sixty-five. Again this was roughly similar to the age structure of the population as a whole in that area. Those in the different age groups did not respond differently to the questions posed.

When the consistency of responses was considered it was found that those who suggested higher benefit levels for the unemployed tended to suggest higher benefit levels for pensioners also. As would be expected, those suggesting higher benefit rates for pensioners did not always suggest higher benefit rates for the unemployed. The information obtained from the postal survey, although interesting, was of a limited nature and the low response rate means the representativeness of the views expressed can be questioned. The small variations found to exist did suggest further investigation into the views of different groups may be worthwhile.

### Interviews

The background characteristics of those interviewed are described in detail. No attempt was made to assess whether the group interviewed from each of the small areas mirrors those resident in that area since the issue of relevance to the research is whether there is any relationship between the area of residence and attitudes among those interviewed and not to claim that the attitudes of those interviewed in each area provide an accurate reflection of the views of those resident in that area. The relationship between each variable and attitudes is examined individually. Because of the small size of the sample no attempt was made to investigate the inter-relationship of the variables investigated and attitudes by

controlling for certain of the variables in the analysis. The interrelationships are described in detail enabling some tentative assessment of the extent to which a relationship between one variable and attitudes may be caused by another variable to be made.

### Experience of unemployment

The data from the interviews enabled the extent to which personal experience of unemployment is associated with the attitudes of those interviewed to be considered. Forty of those interviewed had had experience of unemployment and forty had not. When the characteristics of those who have had experience of unemployment are compared with those who had not, several differences between the two groups emerge.<sup>3</sup>

Table A

#### Employment Experience

	<u>Area</u>				<u>Occupation</u>		
	EKLA	EKA	CLA	CA	Manual	Non-manual	Other
Been unemployed (40)	13	7	14	6	20	11	9 (1 ret'd)
Never been unemployed (40)	7	13	6	14	21	16	3 (3 ret'd)
	20	20	20	20	41	27	12

	<u>Age</u>			<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Children</u>		
	16-30	31-64	Over 65	Married	Single	None or N/A	1&2	3+
Been unemployed (40)	17	19	4	29	11	17	13	10
Never been unemployed (40)	13	23	4	35	5	16	13	11
	30	42	8	64	16	33	26	21

The reasons for the selection of the four areas from which the men were to be interviewed were outlined in chapter 5. East Kilbride, as was said, had a low rate of unemployment and Coatbridge a higher rate of unemployment at that time. Within each of the two towns, two areas were selected, one having more manual workers resident and less owner occupation than the other. As would be expected, those who came from the less affluent areas were likely to have experienced unemployment.

From the information obtained on employment experience, however, it seems that, at the time of this survey, and in the areas in which it took place, a person's position in the labour market and the social status of his local area of residence is more likely to affect whether or not he has experienced unemployment than the unemployment rate in the town of residence. It should be noted however that East Kilbride is a new town and many of the residents may have experienced unemployment before their move to East Kilbride. In the West of Scotland at that time it was only some of the newer towns which had low levels of unemployment.

It is clear that slightly more of those who had been unemployed were in the younger age group, fewer were non-manual workers and more came from the less affluent areas. These differences may have contributed towards differences in attitudes found to exist when the views of those who had been unemployed are compared with those who had not been unemployed, and this should be borne in mind.

In comparing the attitudes of those who had been unemployed with those who had not, only differences of more than 20% are referred to. The method of sample selection meant that the use of statistical tests of significance were inappropriate. Twenty percent was

selected as the smallest difference worth mentioning but these differences should not be overemphasised. When two groups are compared this refers to eight people only; when more than two groups are compared, less than eight people are involved.

When views on pensions were compared it was found that those who have had experience of unemployment were more likely to suggest that payment of pensions should be selective. Only a minority of both groups felt that only pensioners without enough to live on should be assisted, however thirteen (32%) of those who had been unemployed favoured selectivity in the payment of pensions as compared with only five (12%) who had not experienced unemployment. Only a minority of those interviewed, twenty-six (32%), felt pensioners got just enough or too much, nineteen (48%) of those who had been unemployed and seven (18%) of those who had not. On the other hand, thirty-three (82%) of those who had been unemployed suggested higher benefit rates for pensioner couples than exist at present as compared with twenty-three (58%) who had not been unemployed. Finally, thirty-six (90%) of those who had been unemployed, when asked to consider what factors should be taken into consideration when considering whether pensioners deserved benefit, said either that all pensioners deserve assistance or that all those in need should be assisted and made no reference to whether insurance contributions had been made in the past or the past work record of those in need, as compared with twenty-four (60%) of those who had not been unemployed. Thus those who had been unemployed were more likely to emphasise need when discussing the rights of pensioners.

Table 1**Employment Experience and Views on Pensions**

	<b>Been unemployed (40)</b>	<b>Never been Unemployed (40)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Only pensioners without enough should receive assistance	13 (32%)	5 (12%)	18
Pensioners get too much or just enough	19 (48%)	7 (18%)	26
Higher rates for pensioner couples	33 (82%)	23 (58%)	56
All pensioners deserve or all in need	36 (90%)	24 (60%)	60

The views of those who had been unemployed on the way the unemployed were and should be treated, were compared with the views of those who had not been unemployed. In response to several questions, especially those eliciting views on incentives and reciprocity, little difference in the attitudes of the two groups was found to exist. As was seen in the discussion in the previous chapter only a minority felt unemployment was the fault of the individual. Five (12%) of those who had been unemployed said unemployment was the fault of the individual as compared with thirteen (32%) of those who had never been unemployed. Nineteen (48%) of those who had been unemployed felt that the unemployed got too little and twenty-four (60%) suggested higher rates of benefit than were being received by the single unemployed at that time, as compared with ten (25%) and sixteen (40%) respectively of those who had not been unemployed. There was little difference in the numbers from each group who suggested higher rates of benefit for unemployed couples and families. When asked about the undeserving unemployed a majority were found to believe that there



were undeserving unemployed. Of those who said that there were no undeserving unemployed twelve (30%) were from the group who had been unemployed and four (10%) were from the group who had not. Those who had been unemployed it appears were less likely to emphasise individual blame.

The interrelationship of the factors which may affect attitudes must not be forgotten especially between unemployment and occupation. More of those from manual occupations, which are generally less well paid and less secure, had been unemployed. This relationship was reflected in the finding that those who had been unemployed were more likely to underestimate the average wage, thirty-two (80%) of those who had been unemployed saying £70 or less as compared with twenty-one (52%) of those who had not been unemployed. Only eighteen (45%) of those who had been unemployed were members of an occupational pension scheme as compared with thirty-two (80%) of those who had not been unemployed.

Table 2

Employment Experience and Other Views on Unemployment

	Been unemployed (40)	Never been Unemployed (40)	Total (80)
Unemployment is the result of individual failings	5 (12%)	13 (32%)	18
The unemployed get too little	19 (48%)	10 (25%)	29
The single unemployed should get more	24 (60%)	16 (40%)	40
Average wage £70 or less	32 (80%)	21 (52%)	53
No undeserving unemployed	12 (30%)	4 (10%)	16
Member of an occupational pension scheme	18 (45%)	32 (80%)	50

The differences in attitudes found to exist between the two groups should not be overemphasised, and the fact that differences between the attitudes of those in the two groups may be accounted for by other factors such as the fact that more of those who had experienced unemployment were manual workers, must be acknowledged. It does appear from the responses to the questions posed that those who had been unemployed are more likely to emphasise need when discussing how pensioners should be treated and are less likely to attach individual blame to the unemployed. The hypothesis:

Attitudes to welfare are not associated with  
whether or not the interviewee has had  
personal experience of unemployment.

is not supported therefore.

#### Indirect experience of unemployment

As was stated indirect experience of unemployment is likely to be related to area of residence and occupation and the relationship between each of these factors and attitudes was also considered. Again it must be noted that the various factors may be interrelated to some extent, and because of the small size of the sample it was not possible to control for other variables when analysing the results.

#### Area of residence

The differences in background characteristics between those resident in each of the small areas are outlined in table B. Those interviewed from the more affluent areas, as well as being more likely to be non-manual workers and less likely to have been unemployed, were also more likely to have larger families. This brings into question the belief that it is the less affluent who have large families thus aggravating their financial problems.

Table B

## Area

	<u>Employment Experience</u>		<u>Occupation</u>		
	Been unemployed	Never been unemployed	Manual	Non-Manual	Other
EKLA (20)	13	7	14	1	5 (5 unemp.)
EKA (20)	7	13	9	9	2 (1 unemp.)
CLA (20)	14	6	12	4	4 (2 unemp.)
CA (20)	6	14	6	13	1
	40	40	41	27	12

	<u>Age</u>			<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Children</u>		
	16-30	31-64	Over 65	Married	Single	None or N/A	1&2	3+
EKLA(20)	13	7	0	14	6	10	8	2
EKA (20)	6	13	1	16	4	6	7	7
CLA (20)	7	9	4	16	4	9	7	4
CA (20)	4	13	3	18	2	8	4	8
	30	42	8	64	16	33	26	21

In looking at the association between the area of residence of those interviewed and attitudes, first the attitudes of those interviewed in each of the small areas were compared. Secondly the views of those interviewed from East Kilbride were compared with the views of those interviewed from Coatbridge. Finally the attitudes of those interviewed from the two more affluent areas were compared with the attitudes of those interviewed from the two less affluent areas. Differences in attitudes between those resident in different areas it was suggested are likely to be largely the result of different life experiences which are affected by area of residence.

Immediate area of residence

When considering the small area level situations in which the proportion of those holding a certain view in one of the areas differed from the proportion holding that view in other areas by over 20% were referred to.

Those from CA were more likely than other respondents to emphasise individual responsibility for need and were more likely to be less generous in the benefit levels they suggested as being appropriate for pensioners. Only nine (45%) from CA said poverty was the result of some fault in society as compared with at least thirteen (65%) of those interviewed from each of the other areas. When asked specifically about responsibility for unemployment only six (30%) from CA felt that unemployment was the result of the failure of the state to provide adequate employment as compared with at least ten (50%) of those from each of the other areas. When discussing pensions more of those from CA felt pensions should be paid to those in need only, nineteen (95%) as compared with fifteen (75%) at most from each of the other areas. Only eleven (55%) suggested higher rates for both single pensioners and pensioner couples as compared with at least fifteen (75%) from each of the other areas. Twelve (60%) of those interviewed from CA said pensions should be related to wages as compared with at least seventeen (85%) from each of the other areas. When asked what factors they would take into account when deciding whether or not a pensioner should receive benefit twelve (60%) from CA said everybody or everybody in need should be assisted and did not refer to past contributions as compared with sixteen (80%) in each of the other areas.

Seven (35%) from CA said benefits paid to the unemployed should be related to wages as compared with at least eleven (55%) from the other areas. No other differences between CA and the other areas were found to exist.

Table 3

Area of Residence: Differences between CA and Other Areas					
	EKLA (20)	EKA (20)	CLA (20)	CA (20)	Total (80)
Society is responsible for poverty	17 (85%)	14 (70%)	13 (65%)	9 (45%)	53
Pensions should be paid to all in need (universal)	11 (55%)	12 (60%)	15 (75%)	19 (95%)	57
Higher benefit for single pensioners	15 (75%)	15 (75%)	16 (80%)	11 (55%)	57
Higher benefits for pensioner couples	15 (75%)	15 (75%)	15 (75%)	11 (55%)	56
Pensions related to wages	19 (95%)	18 (90%)	17 (85%)	12 (60%)	66
All pensioners or all in need deserve benefits	16 (80%)	16 (80%)	16 (80%)	12 (60%)	60
Unemployment results from societal failure	10 (50%)	12 (60%)	11 (55%)	6 (30%)	39
Unemployment benefit should be related to wages	13 (65%)	12 (60%)	11 (55%)	7 (35%)	43

The views of those from CLA differed from those in the other areas in only one respect. Six (30%) from CLA said pensioners who had not made contributions should be treated differently as compared with at least ten (50%) in each of the other areas.

Table 4

Area of Residence: Difference between  
CLA and other areas

Pensioners treated differently if not contributed

EKLA (20)	11 (55%)
EKA (20)	10 (50%)
CLA (20)	6 (30%)
CA (20)	10 (50%)
	<hr/>
	37

Looking at the less affluent area in East Kilbride fewer of those from EKLA favoured funding the benefits from insurance contributions, eight (40%) as compared with twelve (60%) at the least from other areas. In addition more from EKLA were willing to pay an additional 50p or more in tax to fund higher pensions, nine (45%) as compared with five (25%) at the most from other areas. Differences in attitudes to the unemployed were found to exist between those from EKLA and those from the other areas. Fewer from EKLA felt that benefits should be paid to the unemployed in need only, three (15%) as compared with at least eight (40%) from the other areas. More of those interviewed from EKLA, although still only a minority, were sympathetic to the 'undeserving' unemployed. Fewer from EKLA felt that there were undeserving unemployed, eleven (55%) as compared with at least fifteen (75%) from each of the other areas. Fewer felt that cutting benefit was a possible solution to unemployment, five (25%) as compared with nine (45%) at least from each of the other areas. Finally more from EKLA agreed that everyone in need should be assisted before anyone should get any extra, twelve (60%) as compared with eight (40%) at the most from each of the other areas. It is clear that those from EKLA were generally more sympathetic to the unemployed in need.

Table 5  
Area of Residence: Difference between  
EKLA and other areas

	EKLA (20)	EKA (20)	CLA (20)	CA (20)	Total (80)
Favour contributions	8 (40%)	14 (70%)	12 (60%)	14 (70%)	48
Willing to give more than 50p for pensioners	9 (45%)	5 (25%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	20
Benefits for the unemployed should be selective	3 (15%)	9 (45%)	8 (40%)	8 (40%)	28
Believe undeserving unemployed exist	11 (55%)	16 (80%)	16 (80%)	15 (75%)	58
Approve of cutting benefit	5 (25%)	10 (50%)	10 (50%)	9 (45%)	34
All helped before free to earn	12 (60%)	5 (25%)	7 (35%)	8 (40%)	32

Those from EKA differed in attitude from those from each of the other areas in three respects only, two of which were not differences in attitude. Only two (10%) from EKA believed that some pensioners were undeserving as compared with at least six (30%) from each of the other areas. Eleven (55%) as compared with five (25%) at the most, from the other areas suggested that the average wage was £70 or more, and more were members of an occupational pension scheme, sixteen (80%) as compared with twelve (60%) at the most from the other areas.

Table 6

Areas of Residence: Differences between  
EKA and other areas

	EKLA (20)	EKA (20)	CLA (20)	CA (20)	Total (80)
Believe some pensioners undeserving	7 (35%)	2 (10%)	10 (50%)	6 (30%)	25
Say average wage is over £70	4 (20%)	11 (55%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	24
Member of an occupational pension scheme	11 (55%)	16 (80%)	11 (55%)	12 (60%)	50

To summarise so far, some differences were found to exist in the attitudes of those interviewed from each of the four areas. The main differences found were that those from CA emphasised individual responsibility and were less sympathetic to pensioners in need and those from EKLA were more likely to emphasise societal responsibility and to be more sympathetic to the unemployed. Those from the less affluent areas, where their views differed, did appear to hold attitudes which were more pro-welfare than those from the more affluent areas. This is discussed more below. Thus the hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not

related to the immediate area of residence.

is not supported. However, again the differences should not be overemphasised.

Town of residence

When the views of those from both the areas in East Kilbride were compared with those from Coatbridge, few differences in views emerged. As was said (see table A) there was little difference in



the proportion who had directly experienced unemployment in each of the towns. Again differences of 20% or more are referred to. The responses given by those resident in the two small areas from each town were combined and compared. The fact that the two less affluent areas and the two more affluent areas themselves varied in terms of their level of affluence will be likely to affect results, for example, the affluent area in Coatbridge was much more affluent than the affluent area in East Kilbride. There were in many cases greater differences between the small areas in each town than between those in the two towns. In all the cases referred to below differences are only referred to when the small areas in each town are more similar to each other than they are to one of the other areas in the other town.

A larger proportion of those from East Kilbride felt the pensioner who had been abroad should be given assistance. Thirty-four (85%) [seventeen from EKLA and EKA] as compared with twenty-three (58%) [ten from CLA and thirteen from CA]. More from East Kilbride felt that the single unemployed should have higher rates of benefit, twenty-three (58%) from East Kilbride [twelve from EKLA and eleven from EKA] as compared with seventeen (42%) from Coatbridge [nine from CLA and eight from CA].

Table 7

Areas of residence difference between  
East Kilbride and Coatbridge

	Higher rates for single unemployed			Vignette 5		
	Total	LA	A	Total	LA	A
East Kilbride (40)	23(58%)	(12)	(11)	34(85%)	(17)	(17)
Coatbridge (40)	17(42%)	( 9)	( 8)	23(58%)	(10)	(13)
	40	(21)	(19)	63	(27)	(30)

As can be seen few differences were found to exist. Where differences between the views of those resident in East Kilbride and Coatbridge were found to exist differences between the two areas in each town seem to be greater than the differences between the two towns. Since a few differences exist, however, the hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not  
related to the town of residence.

cannot be proved but knowing the town of residence would not provide much assistance in trying to predict attitudes. In addition, it should be noted differences in the attitudes of those resident in each of the towns may be the result of the fact that East Kilbride is a new town.

#### Affluence of area of residence

In chapter 2 it was acknowledged that area of residence and occupation were indicators of class. The study was concerned however with area of residence and occupation as factors in their own right as it was argued these factors were likely to affect experience of unemployment. As was seen above when the responses given by those interviewed from each of the four small areas were compared it was found that those from the less affluent areas were more likely to hold pro-welfare attitudes. When looking at the areas individually and considering where one area differed from the other three, situations where those in both of the less affluent areas held similar views will have been omitted. The two areas with a lower proportion of manual workers and owner occupied housing were compared with the more affluent areas and since area of residence can be seen as an indication of social class this may provide an insight into class differences. The two more affluent areas themselves differ in terms

of level of affluence. Again differences of over 20% where there is more similarity between the two areas combined than between one of them and one of the other areas, are referred to.

Seventeen (42%) from the less affluent areas (nine from EKLA and eight from CLA) felt benefits should be paid for out of taxes rather than by national insurance contributions as compared with eight (20%) [five from EKA and three from CA]. When views on welfare provision for pensioners were considered it was found that more from the more affluent areas said that there were no undeserving pensioners, twenty-eight (70%) [fifteen from EKA and thirteen from CA] from the more affluent as compared with twenty (50%) [eleven from EKLA and nine from CA] from the least affluent areas. When questioned about various methods of dealing with the incentives issue it was found that more of those from the less affluent areas approved of child benefit, twenty-eight (70%) [fourteen from EKLA and fourteen from CA] as compared with eighteen (45%) [eight from EKA and ten from CA]. In addition, more from the less affluent areas said that all the unemployed or all of the unemployed in need should be assisted, twenty-nine (72%) [thirteen from EKLA and sixteen from CA] as compared with fifteen (38%) [eight from EKA and seven from CA]. More from the more affluent areas emphasised work record and contributions. Finally more of the minority who said they would hesitate to claim supplementary benefit came from the more affluent areas, ten (25%) [four from CA and six from EKA] as compared with two (5%) [one from CLA and one from EKLA]. In the responses to some of the questions posed therefore, those from the less affluent areas were found to be more likely to emphasise rights to benefit.

Table 8

Areas of residence differences  
between more and less affluent areas

	Less affluent Total (EK) (C)	More affluent Total (EK) (C)	Total Total (EK) (C)
Fund benefits from taxation	17(42%) ( 9 ) ( 8 )	8(20%) ( 5 ) ( 3 )	25(31%) (14) (11)
Undeserving pensioners do not exist	20(50%) (11) ( 9 )	28(70%) (15) (13)	48(60%) (26) (22)
Approved of child benefit	28(70%) (14) (14)	18(45%) ( 8 ) (10)	46(57%) (22) (24)
All unemployed in need deserve	29(72%) (13) (16)	15(38%) ( 8 ) ( 7 )	44(55%) (21) (23)
Hesitate to claim supple- mentary benefit	2( 5%) ( 1 ) ( 1 )	10(25%) ( 6 ) ( 4 )	12(15%) ( 7 ) ( 5 )

Those differences which did exist suggest that those from the less affluent areas who it was argued are likely to have had more direct and indirect experience of unemployment are more sympathetic.

However, again it must be emphasised that the two more affluent areas and the two least affluent areas differed between themselves in terms of the extent of affluence, and it should be noted that the level of affluence is not something which can be precisely measured.

Occupation

The views of manual workers were compared with those of non-manual workers. Looking at the background characteristics of those interviewed it can be seen that a disproportionate number of manual workers were from the 16 - 30 age group and came from the less affluent areas.

Table C

## Occupation

	Manual (41)	Non- Manual (27)	Other (12)	Total
<b>Employment Experience:</b>				
Been unemployed	20	11	9	40
Never been unemployed	21	16	3	40
<b>Area:</b>				
EKLA	14	1	5	20
EKA	9	9	2	20
CLA	12	4	4	20
CA	6	13	1	20
<b>Age:</b>				
16-30	23	3	4	30
31-64	16	22	4	42
Over 65	2	2	4	8
<b>Marital Status:</b>				
Married	32	24	8	64
Single	9	3	4	16
<b>Children:</b>				
None or not applicable	18	7	8	33
1 & 2	15	8	3	26
3+	8	12	1	21

Since the numbers who were retired and unemployed were small they were excluded from the analysis. Thus the views of the four who were retired and whose occupational status it was difficult to classify, are not referred to in this section. The retired whose occupational status was known were classified accordingly. The attitudes of the over sixty-five age group are referred to when the association between age and attitudes is referred to. Again when the difference in the pattern of response was greater than 20% these differences were referred to.

A larger proportion of manual workers felt poverty was the result of societal failure, thirty-two (78%) as compared with fourteen (52%) of non-manual workers.

Table 9

Occupation and attitudes

	Manual workers (41)	Non-manual workers (27)	Retired (4)	Unemployed (8)	Total (80)
Poverty resulting from societal failure	32 (78%)	14 (52%)	2 (50%)	5 (62%)	53
Pensions got too little	30 (73%)	13 (48%)	1 (25%)	4 (50%)	48
Pensions should be related to wages	37 (90%)	19 (70%)	3 (75%)	7 (88%)	66
Unemployed couples should get more	27 (66%)	11 (41%)	1 (25%)	6 (75%)	45
Approve of child benefit	28 (68%)	12 (44%)	1 (25%)	5 (62%)	46
Differences in living standards too large	21 (51%)	8 (30%)	1 (25%)	4 (50%)	34
Hesitation in claiming S.B. when unemployed	4 (10%)	8 (30%)	0 ( 0%)	- -	12

When asked about benefits for pensioners thirty (73%) manual workers as compared with thirteen (48%) non-manual workers said pensioners got too little. There was no major difference in the amounts suggested by each of the two groups. More manual workers felt pensions should be related to wages, thirty-seven (90%) manual workers as compared

with nineteen (70%) non-manual workers. In considering their views on benefit for the unemployed only one difference was found to exist. More manual workers suggested rates of benefit for unemployed couples which were higher than they were at the time of the study, twenty-seven (66%) as compared with eleven (41%). When asked about methods of dealing with the problem of incentives more manual workers, twenty-eight (68%) approved of paying higher child benefits as compared with twelve (44%) of non-manual workers. It should be noted that manual workers, possibly because they were generally younger, were not likely to have larger families. More manual workers felt that differences in living standards were too large, twenty-one (51%) manual workers as compared with eight (30%) non-manual workers.

Thus manual workers were less likely to emphasise individual failure and were more likely to be sympathetic to the unemployed and pensioners when the responses given by the two groups varied. Manual workers were also more likely to be critical of the inequality which existed in society. The hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not  
related to occupation.

cannot be supported therefore.

### Reciprocity and distance

The comparison made between the areas with differing unemployment levels and between different occupational groups are important when considering the effects of social and spatial distance on the attitudes of the giver to the receiver. Some differences in the attitudes of the groups compared were found and more of those in situations where they are likely to have had more direct and indirect

experience of unemployment were sympathetic to those in need, the differences were small. The differences support the view that the greater the distance between giver and receiver the less sympathy will the giver have for the receiver.

### Social class

As was said the investigation was concerned with the relationship between occupation and area of residence and attitudes and these were used as indicators of indirect experience of unemployment. It was acknowledged however that they can also be seen as indicators of social class. Both local area of residence and occupation appear to be associated to some extent with the views of those interviewed. If the affluence of people's area of residence and their occupation are seen as indicators of social class, then it can be argued that attitudes are associated with social class, with those of a lower social class being more likely to reject anti-welfare attitudes.

### Age

Looking at the relationship between age and other factors affecting attitudes it was found that there were a smaller proportion of non-manual workers in the younger age group, a large proportion of those from EKLA were in the younger age group and a slightly smaller proportion were married.



Table D

	Age			
	16-30 (30)	31-64 (42)	65+ (8)	Total
<b>Employment Experience:</b>				
Been unemployed	17	19	4	40
Never been unemployed	13	23	4	40
<b>Area:</b>				
EKLA	13	7	0	20
EKA	6	13	1	20
CLA	7	9	4	20
CA	4	13	3	20
<b>Occupation:</b>				
Manual	23	16	2	41
Non-manual	3	22	2	27
Other	4	4	4	12
<b>Marital Status:</b>				
Married	14	42	8	64
Single	16	0	0	16
<b>Children:</b>				
None or not applicable	22	3	8	33
1 and 2	8	18	0	26
3 +	0	21	0	21

In comparing the attitudes of the different age groups identified again only when the differences in the percentage from each group holding each view is greater than 20% was it referred to.

No conclusions can be drawn from the differences which emerged, when the views of the 65+ age group were compared with the views of those in the other age groups, since the numbers involved were so small. Some of the differences are worthy of mention however. More of those aged 65 and over were willing to accept that there were undeserving pensioners. Two (25%) of the 65+ age group said there were no undeserving pensioners as compared with nineteen (63%) of the 16-30 age group and twenty-seven (64%) of the 31-64 age group. Three (37%) of the 65+ age group felt pensions should be just enough to live

on as compared with three (10%) of the 16-30 age group and three (7%) of the 31-64 age group. In the case of the unemployed those aged 65 and over were again more likely to attach individual blame. Five (62%) of those aged 65 or more blamed the individual for unemployment as compared with eight (27%) of the 16-30 age group and five (12%) of the 31-64 age group.

Table 10

Age and attitudes 65 and over

	16-30 (30)	31-64 (42)	65+ (8)	Total (80)
Pensions should be just enough	3 (10%)	3 ( 7%)	3 (37%)	9
There were no undeserving pensioners	19 (63%)	27 (64%)	2 (25%)	48
Unemployment is the fault of the individual	8 (27%)	5 (12%)	5 (62%)	18

The 31-64 age group were more likely to suggest that all of the unemployed and not just those without enough to live on should get benefit, thirty-one (74%) as compared with sixteen (53%) of the 16-30 age group. Those in the 16-30 age group were more likely to suggest higher benefit levels for the unemployed. Twenty (67%) of the 16-30 age group suggested the single unemployed should get more than they got as compared with fifteen (36%) of the 31-64 age group. Twenty-three (76%) of the 16-30 age group felt unemployed couples should get more as compared with eighteen (43%) of the 31-64 age group. In the case of the unemployed families twenty-four (80%) of the 16-30 age group suggested that benefit rates should be higher as compared with twenty (48%) of the 31-64 age group. The 16-30 age

group also put greater emphasis on the insurance principle when discussing unemployment benefit. Eighteen (60%) of the 16-30 age group said those who had not made contributions and were unemployed should be treated differently as compared with sixteen (38%) of the 31-64 age group.

Table 11

Age and attitudes to the unemployed

	16-30 (30)	31-64 (42)	65+ (8)	Total (80)
Benefits should be paid to all the unemployed	16 (53%)	31 (74%)	3 (38%)	50
Payments for single unemployed should be higher	20 (67%)	15 (36%)	5 (63%)	40
Payments for unemployed couples should be higher	23 (76%)	18 (43%)	4 (50%)	45
Payments for unemployed families should be more	24 (80%)	20 (48%)	6 (75%)	50
Unemployed who had not contributed should not be treated differently	18 (60%)	16 (38%)	3 (38%)	37

The younger age group who had been unemployed were less likely to be satisfied with their treatment and those who had not been unemployed were less likely to think they would hesitate to claim benefit if unemployed. Fifteen (88%) in the 16-30 age group who had been unemployed were not satisfied with their treatment when unemployed as compared with eleven (58%) of the 31-64 age group who had been unemployed. Only one (8%) aged 16-30 who had not been unemployed said they would hesitate in claiming unemployment benefit and three (23%) that they would hesitate in claiming supplementary benefit. However, seven (30%) aged 31-64 who had not been unemployed

said they would hesitate in claiming unemployment benefit and eight (35%) that they would hesitate before claiming supplementary benefit.<sup>4</sup>

Table 12

Age and attitudes, perceptions of stigma

<u>Those with experience of unemployment</u>	<u>16-30</u> (17)	<u>31-64</u> (19)	<u>Total</u> (36)
Not satisfied	15(88%)	11(58%)	26
<u>Those without experience of unemployment</u>	<u>16-30</u> (13)	<u>31-64</u> (23)	<u>Total</u> (36)
Hesitate before claiming unemployment benefit	1( 8%)	7(30%)	8
Hesitate before claiming supplementary benefit	3(23%)	8(35%)	11
Think unemployment likely	1( 8%)	1( 4%)	2

To summarise so far, the 65 plus age group were most likely to see recipients of benefit as undeserving. The 16-30 age group were most likely to be critical of the treatment of the unemployed and to emphasise rights to assistance and in particular, the importance of the national insurance system in meeting the needs of the unemployed. The 31-64 age group were most likely to emphasise universality and to find benefits stigmatising although it should be noted that only a minority of all age groups felt benefits were stigmatising. Again the differences should not be overemphasised. For example, no differences in response patterns to the questions on incentives emerged. The interrelationship of background characteristics should also be noted especially the disproportionate number of manual workers in the 16-30 age group. However, the hypothesis:

There is no relationship between the age of those interviewed and their attitudes.

cannot be proved.

### Marital status

Sixty-four of those interviewed were or had been married and sixteen were single. The views of those who were married were compared with the views of those who were not, on a sample of questions only. The fact that only a small proportion were not married means only tentative comments can be made.

Table E

#### Marital Status

	<u>Employment Experience</u>		<u>Area</u>			
	<u>Been unemployed</u>	<u>Never been unemployed</u>	<u>EKLA</u>	<u>EKA</u>	<u>CLA</u>	<u>CA</u>
Married (64)	29	35	14	16	16	18
Single (16)	11	5	6	4	4	2
	40	40	20	20	20	20

	<u>Occupation</u>			<u>Age</u>		
	<u>Manual</u>	<u>Non-manual</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>16-30</u>	<u>31-64</u>	<u>65+</u>
Married (64)	32	25	7	14	42	8
Single (16)	9	3	4	16	0	0
	41	28	11	30	42	8

Views on benefit rates, the funding of benefits and causes and methods of dealing with unemployment and the incentives problem were compared. More of those who were married, forty-three (67%), felt benefits should be paid for out of taxes as compared with five (31%)

of those who were single. This may, however, be a result of the fact that more tax relief is available to those who are married rather than their views on principles. Little difference between the two groups was found to exist when attitudes to pensions were compared. When attitudes to the unemployed are compared more of those who were single were found to be more sympathetic. Twenty-nine (45%) who were married felt that the single unemployed should get more as compared with eleven (69%) who were single. Thirty-three (52%) of those who were married felt that unemployed couples should get more compared with twelve (75%) who were single. Thirty-seven (58%) of those who were married felt that unemployed families should get more as compared with thirteen (81%) of those who were single. Ten (82%) of the single felt that differences in living standards were too large as compared with twenty-four (38%) of those who were married.

Table 13

Marital status and attitudes

	Married (64)	Single (16)	Total (80)
Benefits paid for out of contributions	43 (67%)	5 (31%)	48
Single unemployed should get more	29 (45%)	11 (69%)	40
Unemployed couples should get more	33 (52%)	12 (75%)	45
Unemployed families should get more	37 (58%)	13 (81%)	50
Differences in living standards too large	24 (38%)	10 (62%)	34

The hypothesis:

There is no relationship between the marital  
status of those interviewed and their  
attitudes.

is not supported therefore, but the small size of the single sample

make relatively small differences appear larger in percentage terms. It should also be noted that a large proportion of the single group, were manual workers, were aged 16-30, and had been unemployed.

### Knowledge

Whether there was any relationship between knowledge of benefit levels and attitudes was also felt to be worthy of investigation. Only six knew the level of retirement pensions at that time, only seven knew the level of supplementary pensions and only six knew the level of unemployment benefit. Because the numbers involved are so small, meaningful comparisons of attitudes cannot be made. Thirteen knew the amount paid in supplementary benefit at that time but few differences in responses to questions on how the unemployed are and should be treated between those who knew and those who did not know the amount being paid in supplementary benefit at that time were found. The hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not  
related to their knowledge of benefit levels.

can neither be proved or disproved.

### Summary

From the analysis it is clear that some differences exist when the attitudes of differing groups are compared despite the fact that there was a high level of consensus on several of the issues raised. Clearly the factors which might affect attitudes are interrelated and as has been stressed throughout due to the small size of the sample no attempt could be made to investigate the interrelationship of factors. Any comments made regarding the relationship between the general background characteristics of those interviewed and their

attitudes are only tentative since the interrelationship of factors may be masking true relationships and suggesting spurious ones.

To summarise so far, there appeared to be some association between the factors investigated and attitudes. Those who were single appeared to be more generous in their views on benefit levels for the unemployed but it should be noted that only sixteen of those interviewed were single and those who were, were all in the younger age group. Several differences in attitudes were found to exist when the responses made by different age groups were compared. However, the fact that the younger age groups were mainly manual workers (only three were non-manual workers) should be borne in mind when considering the views expressed. The younger age groups were more likely to suggest higher benefits for the unemployed and to emphasise the insurance principle but only three said they would hesitate in claiming supplementary benefit as compared with eight of the 31-64 age group. The hypotheses:

There is no relationship between the age of  
those interviewed and their attitudes.

and

There is no relationship between the marital  
status of those interviewed and their  
attitudes.

were not supported.

When the responses given by manual and non-manual workers were compared, manual workers were found to be less likely to emphasise individual failure and in cases where the views of the two groups varied it was the manual workers who were more sympathetic to those on benefit. Finally manual workers were also more likely to be critical



of inequality in society although still only just over half the manual workers said differences in living standards are too large. The hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to occupation.

was not supported.

When comparing the views of those who had been unemployed with those who had not been unemployed, again it should be noted that more manual workers had experienced unemployment. Those who had been unemployed were more likely to say all pensioners or all pensioners in need deserved assistance. Those who had been unemployed were also less likely to emphasise individual responsibility for unemployment and more likely to suggest benefits should be higher. The hypothesis:

Attitudes to welfare are not associated with whether or not the interviewee has had personal experience of unemployment.

was not supported.

Looking at the relationship between area of residence and attitudes it was found that those from CA were more likely to stress individual responsibility and be less sympathetic to pensioners and those from EKLA were more likely to emphasise societal responsibility and to suggest higher benefits for the unemployed. Few differences were found to exist when the attitudes of those resident in each of the towns were compared. Finally those from the two more affluent areas put more emphasis on the past work record or contributions of claimants and were more likely to say that there were undeserving unemployed. The hypotheses:

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to their immediate area of resident.

and

The attitudes of those interviewed are not related to the unemployment levels of the town of residence.

were not supported.

In response to several questions no differences of over 20% between any of the groups compared were found to exist, for example, on benefit rates for single pensioners, willingness to assist pensioners in real need, whether unemployment benefit should be related to wages, views on dealing with the problem of unemployment, in particular the incentives issue and views on the way the case studies presented should be dealt with. It can be seen that the differences which were found to exist did not contradict and offered limited support to the view that more of those who appear to have had more direct and indirect (as indicated by occupation and immediate area of residence) experience of unemployment and the need for state assistance are more likely to be sympathetic toward those forced to rely on state assistance and emphasise the need for a state scheme. If immediate area of residence and occupation are seen as indicators of social class a relationship between attitudes and social class, with those in a lower social class having greater sympathy for those relying on state benefit, appears to exist. It can be suggested that in general, as knowledge of unemployment and poverty in its broadest sense increases, (not simply the knowledge of benefit levels but knowledge, gained from experience, of the problems experienced by the unemployed and pensioners who have no private source of income)

sympathy for and the wish to assist those groups also increases. This argument is strengthened by the fact that the majority of those interviewed felt that the needs of those described in the vignettes should be met. It can be suggested that when people are made more aware of the circumstances of those on benefit, more are willing to provide assistance.

#### Comparisons with previous research

There is clearly support for the view that increased knowledge leads to increased sympathy. This argument, it can be suggested, may explain why as was seen in chapter 6 more of those interviewed in this research placed more emphasis on need than those interviewed in studies elsewhere in Britain. Although criticisms of the unemployed were found to exist this was not as extensive as the criticisms made by those responding to other studies (Golding and Middleton 1978, 1982; Redpath 1979; Pinker 1972; Commission of the European Communities 1977). Possible explanations of these differences referred to in chapter 6 are the different research methods used and the fact that unemployment has been a problem in the West of Scotland for several years (thus more of those resident in this area will have had a direct or indirect experience of unemployment). It is clear that the evidence from this research does not support the hypothesis:

The attitudes of those interviewed in the West  
of Scotland are the same as the attitudes  
found to exist in other parts of the country  
by other researchers.

Comparisons between the finding of this research regarding what factors influence attitudes and the research discussed in chapter 4 can be made. This research, like the Institute of Economic Affairs

(1978), Golding and Middleton (1978, 1982) and the Schlackman Research Organisation (1978) found detailed knowledge of the workings of the benefits system to be limited. Redpath (1979) suggests that future research should concentrate on why the public have negative attitudes to welfare since he found none of the explanations of variation he investigated to be convincing. This research suggests much can still be learned by investigation of variation in attitudes. The Commission of European Communities's (1977) research explains variations in attitudes in terms of national, cultural and individual value systems but neglects the important issue of why the value systems have developed in the way they have. Pinker (1972) stresses the importance of a person's ability to reciprocate in affecting people's attitudes. Although important it is clear from his own and other research that this is not the only explanation of attitude variation. Clearly other factors are important. The media, it appeared from some of the responses given by those interviewed in this study, was important but as Golding and Middleton (1978, 1982) suggest, the influence of the media is likely to be modified by personal experiences.

Generally it appeared from the research reviewed that more manual workers are likely to notice injustices and to hold pro welfare attitudes (Whiteley 1983; Schlackman Research Organisation 1978; and Golding and Middleton 1978, 1982). The Schlackman Research Organisation (1978) found those with experience of the welfare system were likely to be more sympathetic to those on benefit and more critical of the system. Golding and Middleton (1978) however, suggest following Runciman (1966) that the injustices noted tend to be small not large injustices and they suggest low paid, unskilled

workers and claimants themselves tend to emphasise individual responsibility and the abuse of the welfare system by many of those in receipt of benefit. Unlike Golding and Middleton's research, this present study did not detect a need for those with living standards closest to those on benefit to differentiate their situation by defining those on welfare in negative terms and found more of those with more direct and indirect experience of unemployment to be more sympathetic to those on benefit.<sup>5</sup>

Further research is clearly necessary but it does appear from this research that experience of unemployment does affect attitudes. It is acknowledged that other factors are likely to influence the relationship between direct and indirect experience of unemployment and attitudes, such as personality (some, as a result of experience, may feel more sympathetic; others, as Golding and Middleton (1978) suggested, may feel the need to differentiate themselves from those in receipt of benefit), early socialisation, life experiences of all types, etc. However, looking at collective attitudes it seems that although as has been said more experience appears to lead to a decrease in anti-welfare sentiments, it should be noted that the relationship between experience of unemployment and attitudes to welfare may not be direct. Unemployment may have to reach a certain level before sympathy is engendered or prolonged local experience may lead to sympathy and concern being exhausted and an anomic response 'developing.

#### Possibility of attitude change

The findings discussed above are of relevance when considering the possibility of attitude change. As was said this research does not contradict, and offers some support to the argument that experience of

welfare needs increases the value placed on the welfare system. This experience it is suggested does not have to be personal. When the case studies were presented the knowledge gained from them also appeared to lead to more of those responding stressing society's responsibility for meeting need, even in undeserving cases. From the findings of this research it could be argued that were the public given more information on the problems experienced by the unemployed and pensioners relying on state benefits by governments, sympathy for those groups would increase. The complex relationship between public attitudes and the state welfare system is considered in more detail in chapter 8.

Public opinion will be discussed. The broad  
 present social security legislation reflect  
 the views of those interviewed.

is noted.

Some of the models of welfare were given  
 a brief outline. The welfare state could  
 be considered as a model and the industrial  
 model and consumer model and the industrial  
 the residual model it was suggested dependent  
 ability, the role of the economic system, individual  
 and self help. The industrial model was  
 to an equality, universal services, needs, all

## CHAPTER 8

## LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS AND PUBLIC OPINION

The three major areas of concern of this research were identified as the content of public opinion, which factors affect public opinion and the effect of public opinion on legislation. In chapters 5 and 6 the views of those interviewed on welfare and whether there is any relationship between various background characteristics, in particular those relating to direct and indirect experience of employment and attitudes were discussed. In this chapter it is intended to examine in some detail social security legislation and to consider which principles are reflected in recent legislation. The shaping of the most recent legislation will be considered in some detail and the extent to which the values embodied in the more recent legislation reflect public opinion will be discussed. The hypothesis:

Present social security legislation reflects  
the views of those interviewed.

will be considered.

In chapter 3 the principles of welfare were outlined and discussed in relation to the three models of welfare, the residual model, the institutionalised redistributive model and the industrial achievement model. The residual model it was suggested emphasised individual responsibility, the role of the economic market, individualised insurance and self help. The institutionalised redistributive model put stress on equality, universal services, need, citizenship, societal responsibility and the social market. The industrial achievement model emphasised incentives, rewards, productivity and industrial efficiency; society was seen as responsible for

maintaining incentives and if needs were to be met it was important that they were met in a way which would improve efficiency. Before going on to consider the principles central to recent legislation it is intended to discuss briefly developments in welfare legislation over the past two hundred years concentrating on the extent to which the principles discussed above have been reflected at different stages.

#### Nineteenth and twentieth century social security legislation

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries individualism and egoism have been emphasised. People it has been argued have responsibility for their own situation and the need to encourage self help has frequently been stressed. Incentives and reciprocity have also been emphasised to varying degrees at different times.

The debate on the Poor Law in the nineteenth century centred round the problem of pauperism rather than the problem of poverty. Concern was expressed about the increasing reliance of the poor on assistance rather than the problem of poverty. In particular there was resistance to providing assistance for the able bodied. Little recognition was given to societal causes of need for relief by those advocating Poor Law reform. Before the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 the existing systems of assistance in many of the counties of England involved subsidising wages, the most famous system being the one operated by the Speenhamland magistrates. A minimum level of subsistence was defined for each family by considering family size and the price of bread. Wages were supplemented by an allowance to this level. This system of assistance was criticised for reducing the incentive for self help and also because it was felt it put too much of a burden on the ratepayers. The 1834 legislation put a greater emphasis on the principle of less eligibility stressing the need to



make reliance on the state less attractive than self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup> In Scotland at that time the poor relief system relied on voluntary contributions. The development of a state relief system was resisted for reasons which were similar to those which led to changes in the English system, that is, because it was felt this would encourage dependence and also because it would cost the ratepayers too much (Freeman, 1977; Campbell, 1965). Thus it can be seen the principles of individual responsibility, self help and incentives were emphasised in both England and Scotland in the early half of the nineteenth century. The able-bodied poor in particular were discouraged from seeking assistance and a clear distinction was made between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving poor'.

The problem of industrial unemployment which could result in their being a large number of 'deserving' able-bodied poor was slow to be recognised. Although throughout the nineteenth century individualism was emphasised, awareness of poverty and the need for assistance increased. More and more charities came into operation. At the end of the nineteenth century there were many relying on charity.

London charities had an annual income of £2.25 million and though this underestimates the full amount by not including private individual charity it still exceeded the amount spent by Poor Law authorities in the capital.  
(Fraser 1973, p.116)

Being charitable appealed to the Victorians since mixing in the circle of 'do-gooders' enhanced one's social status. Fear of social revolution also made the Victorians willing to be generous. However, increasing awareness of poverty was leading to greater emphasis being placed on collectivity. A Royal Commission on the Poor Law (1905-1909) containing experts in the field of social administration was set up by the Conservative government to examine the need for

assistance. Disagreement existed between members of the commission and both a majority and minority report were produced. Although the minority report, which was largely the work of the Webbs, can be seen as having influenced social policy in the long term, in the short term the influence of both the minority and majority report on legislation was slight. Fraser in fact argues:

Lloyd George found neither report particularly attractive and indeed was well advanced in his plans before he read the reports carefully, yet he was fully aware that insurance would cut the ground from under the conservative remodelling of the majority and the Fabian socialism of the Webbs. (Fraser 1973, p.151)

The various pieces of legislation, dealing with the welfare needs of the public, which came into force at the beginning of the twentieth century, illustrate a greater acceptance of state responsibility for the welfare of the masses. Marshall suggests that by 1906:

The problem was to decide on the extent of the responsibility and above all on the means by which it would be discharged. And here consensus ended and political conflict began. And when we look more closely at the clash of opinions we shall see that the issues raised were fundamentally the same as they are now. (Marshall 1965, p.28)

The Unemployed Workmen's Act passed by the Conservative government of 1905<sup>2</sup> showed some acceptance of state responsibility for unemployment. Benefits were kept low however. Under a Liberal government in 1908 the Old Age Pensioners Bill provided non-contributory benefit. The 1911 National Insurance Act involved a health insurance scheme administered by approved societies and which was legally compulsory. Sick pay and medical treatment were to be supplied for the insured, however dependents of insured workers were not entitled to medical treatment. Part 2 of the National Insurance Act involved a selective compulsory unemployment insurance benefit for those in several industries. These reforms formed the basis of the

present welfare state and are evidence of the increased recognition of societal causation and of responsibility for need. Individual responsibility was still stressed however. Gilbert (1966) argues that the Liberal reforms did not seek to assist those in need by using charity, nor did they try and reform the worker or the economic system

Rather they required him by Law to provide for himself and his family so that he could better stand the vagaries of capitalism. Social insurance, compulsory self-insurance has provided the armour that allows the increasingly desperate but still free, human atom to live in an even more complex and oppressive industrial society.  
(Gilbert 1966, p.452)

Hay, describing the Liberal social service state, argues:

In it a limited range of services was provided for the poor in money and in kind. This marked a considerable step forward, since they had been either not available before or had been available only under very degrading conditions. But the Liberal reforms were also designed to make the minimum possible alterations in the working of the British economy, to ensure its survival at a time when it was subject to internal and external pressure.  
(Hay 1975, p.13)

The increasing acceptance of state responsibility may have been partly the result of increasing humanitarianism but it is likely that the legislation was also influenced as Hay suggests by fear that socialism would become increasingly popular. Contributions were flat rate and benefits were kept at subsistence level, thus the way in which the state insurance system developed resulted in redistribution within rather than between social classes. Poverty was solved therefore by compulsory horizontal redistribution and inequality remained. The principle of self help was still adhered to and individual freedom was emphasised, thus the compulsory state insurance system only ensured assistance up to subsistence level. Above that the individual was free to help himself.

The first world war made governments aware of the housing and health needs of the population. As was the case with the Boer war many of the recruits were found to be unfit. The problem of providing 'homes fit for heroes' was clearly recognised. During the inter-war years however unemployment increasingly became the major problem. In 1934 the Unemployment Act provided a contributory insurance scheme from which benefit was payable for six months, and a means-tested, non-insurance system. The local Public Assistance Committee for the unemployed was replaced by the National Unemployment Assistance Board.

The next major step in the creation of the welfare state in its present form came about after the second world war. During the second world war unity and universality were emphasised. It was believed that acceptance of state intervention which had been developed during the war would remain during the peace which followed. Beveridge himself argued:

It may be possible through sense of national unity and readiness to sacrifice personal interests to the common cause to bring about changes which when they are made will be accepted on all hands as an advance but which might be difficult to make at other times. (Beveridge 1942, p.460)

The Beveridge Report, written during the war, became the blue-print for the post-war welfare society. The Beveridge Report recognised the need for radical change and that social insurance was only one aspect of the social policy development required. Social security was seen as the responsibility of the individual and society together. Plans for a peacetime welfare system were seen as a good morale booster. Beveridge did not advocate egalitarianism or vertical redistribution but a flat rate system of contributions and benefits. The main change in the welfare system which the report

advocated was the emphasis placed on universality rather than selectivity. Social insurance was in his view what people wanted and the reforms consolidated the national system. People's rights to contributory insurance benefits were emphasised but the existence of contributory benefits helped accentuate the stigma attached to the non-contributory selective benefits which remained. The state responsibility for meeting need was clearly accepted however.

Beveridge's recommendations for social insurance were based on three assumptions, firstly that there would be a comprehensive health service, secondly that there would be full employment and thirdly that family allowances would be introduced. Family allowances were lower than Beveridge's recommendation and the first child was excluded. In addition, the problem of unemployment was found to be a recurring problem. The welfare system envisaged by Beveridge has not completely come into being.

Collective responsibility had been accepted during the war and the immediate post-war period, although within the state system self help was promoted and an emphasis on the responsibility to contribute remained. During the 1950's and early 1960's it appeared to many that people's needs were being adequately met. The welfare state was, it was argued by some, irrelevant in an affluent society and by others, an extravagance we could not afford. Market principles it was suggested must be allowed to operate freely and the emphasis was moving from the principle of universality which was central to the welfare system proposed by Beveridge. In the 1960's however awareness of poverty among pensioners began to grow. Concern existed about the national assistance system's assumption of a mass role and the apparent reluctance of pensioners to apply for means tested

benefit. 'New Frontiers for Social Security' published by the Labour Party in 1963 suggested setting up a new Ministry of Social Security incorporating the National Assistance Board and the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance. An earnings-related pension scheme was proposed as a long-term goal and the adoption of a system for guaranteeing income for the elderly by using information from income tax returns was suggested as a transitional measure. Hall et al (1975) analyse the development of Labour's proposals and the eventual policy outcome and this analysis is discussed briefly below.

The recognition of need for reform arose from growing awareness of poverty among pensioners. The Ministry of Pensions' own research had identified poverty caused by non-takeup of benefits. However, the needs of groups other than pensioners were also beginning to be recognised. When the Labour government came to power in 1964 no major reform of the social security system took place. Some reforms were carried out, for example national assistance rates were increased, redundancy payments and earnings related sickness and unemployment benefits, were introduced and prescription charges were abolished but no overhaul of the social security system took place. Harold Wilson had placed emphasis on their commitment to helping pensioners and in particular the need for an 'income guarantee' in his pre-election propaganda. These plans were not carried out despite the pressure put upon the Labour government when in power to carry out their election pledges. Hall et al suggest several possible reasons for this. These included the already high level of public expenditure and the inadequacy of Labour's planning in opposition especially with regard to administrative issues. The income guarantee scheme involved several departments, the Post Office, the

Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance, the National Assistance Board and the Board of Inland Revenue and this created administrative difficulties. Instead of implementing earlier proposals, a review of social security policy was proposed. Unlike the 1978 review, this review of the social security system was not public. A public review, Hall et al suggest, would have reduced ministers' opportunities to introduce solutions in an ad hoc way as they became economically and administratively feasible (Hall et al, 1975, p.437).

The 1966 Act which followed the review amalgamated the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance and the National Assistance Board and simplified the benefits system to some extent. The Act stressed the right of claimants to receive benefits and emphasis was placed on the principle of meeting need. The three main aims of the 1966 Act as summarised in the Review of 1978 are outlined below.

The first was to establish a new administrative framework within which universal national insurance benefits and selective means-tested benefits for the poor would be jointly administered so as to reduce the sharp distinction which then existed and which was thought to deter some poor people from claiming what they should have. The second aim was to award benefits as of right, so as to provide the necessary guaranteed income for the elderly. The third was to improve the level of benefit available to the elderly and others who needed help over a long period without detailed enquiries into their particular needs, which sometimes caused resentment and so to reduce dependency on discretionary extras. (DHSS 1978, p.12)

These aims were clearly not met. Many pensioners still had to rely on means-tested benefits. Despite the combination of schemes and the attempt to emphasise rights, stigma remained a problem and through time reliance on discretion grew.

Hall et al, (1975) argued that the National Assistance Scheme was reformed on the basis of limited data only and that the dangers of means-testing were not fully studied. They go on to suggest:

An obvious possibility is that a longer and more public period of policy discussion may have led to the proposal and testing of a wider range of policy options and the elaboration of a much fuller understanding of key factors like stigma. (Hall et al 1975, p.463)

Open phases they argue allow dissatisfaction to be communicated to policy makers who would otherwise remain ignorant about, or not be affected by, these views. However, they point out:

Only when there is a consensus of respected or powerful opinions in favour of a fundamental reform which authorities are trying to resist will 'open politics' be a necessarily radical force. (Hall et al 1975, pp.463-464)

Thus they say wider debate may not have led to a better result especially since the client groups were not powerful and since there was not a strong lobby of professionals at that time. Claimants, they argue, have now become more powerful and have higher expectations. This, they argue, rather than party policy making or research may be the force leading to future supplementary benefit reforms (Hall et al 1975, p.467).

#### Recent developments in social security legislation

The most recent legislative changes made in the social security system followed a very public period of policy discussion. The review which took place prior to the 1980 legislation was an experiment in open government. The review process, in particular the influence of pressure groups and academics on policy, is discussed briefly below. The developments in legislation which followed this period of open government and the extent to which they reflect the views of those interviewed, is then considered.

#### Supplementary Benefits Commission Reports

Before going on to consider the review it is necessary to discuss some of the policy discussions which took place immediately prior to



the review. The Supplementary Benefits Commission were invited to make a public annual report in May 1975 when the appointment of David Donnison as chairman was announced. The 1975 report was the first published report by the Supplementary Benefits Commission for several years and was seen by Donnison as an important tool for fighting the problem of poverty.

What an old-fashioned, Victorian Act, I reflected: to take on monstrous responsibilities for the poor, armed with nothing but the obligation to write a 'blue book' - an official report which very few people would read.  
(Donnison 1982, p.26)

The 1975 report described the scheme in detail, looking at the real value of benefits, error rates, appeals etc. Concern was expressed about the complexity of the scheme. The main purpose was to argue for the need for a review. As the first report was published (1976) it was announced that a review team was to be set up.

In the 1976 report some of the most important issues which it was felt the review should address were discussed. The Supplementary Benefits Commission welcomed the review but stressed the need for reform to extend beyond supplementary benefit to housing, taxation and other aspects of social policy (1976, p.114). The importance of public views on incentives was stressed.<sup>3</sup> and as a result of this the need for an examination of supplementary benefit to look beyond the supplementary benefit scheme itself was recognised. In fact the Supplementary Benefits Commission suggested that since incentives must be maintained, in order to help supplementary benefit claimants, improvements must first be made in the provision for the lower paid. In particular the 1976 report recommended that benefits should be related to earnings (1977, 1:10) even though this could result in claimants being worse off in times when prices were rising more

quickly than earnings; that child benefits should be increased and that a housing benefit available to both the employed and unemployed should be introduced. The need to look at national insurance rates in conjunction with supplementary benefit rates was also stressed. It appears, however, that by this time the mass role of the supplementary benefit system was to some extent accepted. In the 1976 report it states:

We need to change the basic structure of the scheme and this is one reason why we welcome the Secretary of State's comprehensive review and look to it for proposals to improve the standard of life provided by a service on which so many millions have to depend and will obviously need to rely for many years to come.

(Supplementary Benefits Commission 1977, 19:14)

As in the 1975 report, concern was expressed about the complexity of the system, in particular the need for special rates for over 80's and the blind and the exclusion of the unemployed from the long term rate were questioned, and about the overreliance on discretionary payments. Discretion it was argued always leads to inequality between claimants themselves and claimants and others. The Supplementary Benefits Commission recognised that present benefit levels were inadequate and that reform would be expensive. A new equilibrium in the making of discretionary payments was deemed necessary.

To try and bring about such a change at nil cost is bound to be self-defeating, for if large numbers of claimants previously regarded as deserving are left worse off than they were, their advocates and our staff will eventually find ways of ensuring that more money is spent on them.

(Supplementary Benefits Commission 1977, p.4:6)

### Social assistance

The review team's discussion paper entitled 'Social Assistance' which contained several proposals for reform of the benefit system was published in July 1978. Only informal consultations had been

undertaken by the review team prior to the publication of this report. The introduction to the report contained a request for the views of the public and pressure groups on its proposal.

We are publishing the report in accordance with the Government's pledge of more open government, and as a focus for wider public discussion of the type of provision which the community is prepared to make for its poorest members. - We think the report provides a useful basis for wider public discussion of the case for and need of a simpler clearer scheme. We want to hear the comments of all concerned - interested organisations and the public - before taking any decisions about the future shape of the scheme. (DHSS 1978, Foreword)

The major objective of the review was the simplification of the supplementary benefits system. However, any changes made were to be undertaken on a nil cost basis and the need for 'realism' was stressed throughout.

In their reports the Supplementary Benefits Commission had stressed the need to lift people off means-tested benefits, although as was said, they did appear to accept the mass role of the supplementary benefit. In 1965, 5.4% of the population relied on means-tested benefits, in 1979, 8%. The review team discussed its reasons for not considering lifting people off supplementary benefit.

The policy of successive governments has been to reduce the numbers on means-tested benefits. But against the background of continuing restraints on public expenditure and public service staff, there is no prospect of finding the massive sums for national insurance benefits or other services that would be needed to reduce the number of supplementary benefit claimants to a low enough level to permit a largely discretionary system to operate. (DHSS 1978, pp4-5)

Some of the wider requirements for reform, for example housing benefit, were referred to, however the review team concentrated on adapting the supplementary benefit system for its mass role. Given the nil cost basis on which proposed reforms were to be undertaken the scope for development was limited.

Simplifying the system at nil cost forced the review team to make decisions compatible with what they termed 'rough justice'. They accepted that if their recommendations were put into practice, some would gain a little, others would lose. In discussing the need for simplification they suggest:

The structure is too elaborate and could with advantage be simplified, even if this means a slightly less fine tuning of the scheme to individual needs. We found that many claimants had little, if any, margin in managing their financial affairs and this applied particularly to families with children. In our view any proposals that shift resources from one group of claimants to another should be tilted towards families with children and we have followed this precept in formulating our own recommendations. (DHSS 1978, p.8)

Not all their recommendations followed this precept by giving priority to children's needs. According to the discussion of children's rates in the review one option was:

...to readjust the age bands in the light of medical advice that, on growth and nutritional grounds there should be an increase in benefit at age 8 when there is a growth spurt for most children and at age 13 when growth during adolescence begins and children's needs change. This would give age bands of 0-7, 8-12 and 13-17 and would be even more expensive to introduce those without making any child worse off in real terms - about £48 million. (DHSS 1978, p.44)

Although these age bands were recognised as being the best if the needs of families with children were to be met the review did not recommend making these changes in the children's rates. The rates were eventually collapsed in the resulting legislation but not into the bands suggested above.

The need to maintain incentives was also emphasised by the review team although they suggested that lack of incentives was only one factor which contributed to the problem of increasing unemployment. It was suggested that the problems faced in meeting the costs of housing and heating were experienced by non-claimants as well as

claimants and thus it was suggested that the needs of claimants could not be met without bearing in mind how this would affect incentives.<sup>4</sup> Reduction in the making of discretionary payments was felt to be essential by the review team. The various discretionary payments made at the time were examined in detail and it was suggested that several of these such as special additions for diets could be discontinued. The possibility of making regular lump sum payments was discussed but no recommendation regarding the adequacy of existing scale rates was made. The position of women was also examined in detail and three proposals which would enable a woman to claim on behalf of her family in place of her husband were discussed.

The review team did not publish their remit and when the review was published it was unclear on whose instructions the nil cost approach was undertaken. Donnison, writing recently, states that:

The team had been given a wide open invitation to review the whole scheme and its relationship with other services but no authority to call for extra expenditure or staff. Indeed the Treasury and the Civil Service Department were only prepared to agree to the review on condition that they would do no such thing. (Donnison 1982, p.145)

The relative roles of politicians and civil servants in specifying the parameters of the review at the time of the review was unclear however.

#### Responses to the review

The responses made by agencies, pressure groups and individuals to the review team's proposals are analysed and summarised in a DHSS report (DHSS, 1979). Almost all those responding rejected the adoption of a mass role for the supplementary benefit system, the nil cost basis of the review, the concept of rough justice and the failure to deal with the adequacy of the suggested benefit rates. In particular it was suggested that while benefits remained at such a low

level discretion could not be reduced without increasing the financial hardship of many of those who are forced to rely on state assistance. This was a point the Supplementary Benefit Commission themselves had made in the 1976 report. The capacity of supplementary benefit claimants to bear the brunt of 'rough justice' was frequently questioned by those responding to the review. In addition many of those responding suggested that no restrictions should be placed on the making of payments in cases of urgent need. It is clear therefore that the principle of meeting need was important to those responding to the review. Several of those responding viewed need in relative terms suggesting that the benefit rates especially the children's rates should be related to earnings. The review team were criticised for failing to examine the supplementary benefits scheme in relation to the state benefits system as a whole or the income maintenance system in its broadest terms. Some of the specific proposals made by the review were supported however, such as the proposed extension of the long term supplementary benefit rate to the unemployed.

#### The response of the Supplementary Benefits Commission

The Supplementary Benefit Commission itself, after making some initial comments in defence of the review and thus causing some confusion about their role, waited until most of the comments on the review had been received before responding. Bull, writing before the Supplementary Benefits Commission's response was published, suggested:

If the SBC has listened at all carefully to, and is at all sensitive to 'what people have to say', then it must reject this nil cost approach; reassert the wider vision that has characterised its own response to Mrs Castle's invitation; and urge its new Conservative masters to do likewise.  
(Bull 1980, pp.49-50)

The SBC's response was published in 1979 (SBC, 1979). They summarised their response under three main headings. These were, changes outside the scheme, changes within the scheme which do not require additional resources and changes within the scheme which do require additional resources. Outside the scheme they suggested that jobs for the unemployed and higher child benefits were the most urgent of their proposals. They also suggested that there was a need for a comprehensive housing benefit, a comprehensive scheme for fuel rebates, improvements in the unemployment benefit scheme and improved measures to help one-parent families. Although they stressed that the nil cost approach would not work they supported the changes put forward by the review team which did not require additional resources, especially the recommendation that there should be full publication of the scheme's rules and that all rules should be approved by Parliament. They also accepted deferring the eligibility for benefit of school leavers until the end of the vacation following the term in which they leave school. The arrangements proposed by the review team for dealing with short-term claims if combined with a comprehensive housing benefit were seen as acceptable. However, the rough justice inherent in the proposals for a standard short-term addition for rent was not, they felt, acceptable.

Within the scheme they emphasised changes which would benefit the unemployed, single parents and claimants with children. The extension of the payment of the long-term rate to the unemployed was recommended, as was the reduction of the qualifying period for the long-term rate from two years to one year. The adoption of one rate was seen as a long term goal. They suggested two measures for helping families with children, first up-rating the children's rates

in line with earnings,<sup>5</sup> secondly awarding heating additions to all families with children under five years old or increasing scale rates for the under fives to the level of the rate for 5-10 year olds, or reducing the five children's rates to three. Additionally they felt the making of regular lump sum payments should replace exceptional needs payments for items covered by the scale rates and that there should be more generous disregards applied to the earnings of those under pensioner age. In looking at the treatment of men and women they suggested the nominated breadwinner approach described by the review team should be adopted. Finally they favoured the introduction of special case officers.

#### 1980 Social Security Act

The legislation following the review and the responses to it was passed by parliament in 1980. The review itself was carried out when a Labour government was in power. The legislation was drawn up and passed under a Conservative administration. The objectives of the new scheme which were set by the government were:

- (a) the creation of a clear legal structure
  - (b) the simplification and improvement of take up
  - (c) the redistribution of resources within the scheme particularly to families with children.
- (Social Security Advisory Committee 1981, p.40)

Several changes which would, it was argued, create a clearer legal structure were made. The Supplementary Benefits Commission was replaced by the Social Security Advisory Committee whose responsibilities included advising on contributory as well as non-contributory benefit. The Social Security Advisory Committee unlike the Supplementary Benefit Commission has an advisory role only. The responsibility of making decisions on claimants'



eligibility for benefit now lies with local officers advised by the Chief Supplementary Benefits Officer. Appeals can however be made to tribunals and on points of law to Social Security Commissioners and the Court of Session. Only as the new system develops and as case law is established can the clarity of the structure be properly assessed but some of the problems arising in the early stages allow the extent to which the new structure has achieved clarity to be questioned.<sup>6</sup>

The reduction in discretion was the major means through which simplification was to be achieved. Only those who are in receipt of supplementary benefit are now entitled to special payments.<sup>7</sup> The circumstances in which special payments can be made have been specifically detailed, for example, a payment can be made for a vacuum cleaner only if a member of the household is allergic to dust; no clothing grants can be made if the need arises as a result of normal wear and tear. Negative discretion remains in the scheme. Officers can pay less than the recommended price for an item if they believe it is possible to obtain it at the lower price in the area. Supplementary Benefit can be reduced by 40% if unemployment is voluntary or the result of dismissal for industrial misconduct.

Changes were made in the treatment of resources which also simplified the system. In the case of capital resources the system of using a sliding scale of cut-offs which existed at that time was simplified. Those with more than £2,000 were no longer entitled to benefit and those with more than £300 were not entitled to additional payments. In the case of income, £4 of the earnings of claimants was to be disregarded and £4 plus 50% of the balance between £4 and up to £20 disregarded in the case of single parents. Other sources of

income and the disregards to which they are subject, are clearly identified in the legislation. The total amount of income a person on benefit receives is not simply related to requirements but is affected by the source of the income also. Thus as was the case before the legislative changes there is not simply one minimum level of income which is related to needs but a variety of minimum levels established. The simplicity of the scheme can still be questioned.

In addition to simplification two additional steps were taken which may improve take up. First each claimant now receives a written notice of assessment. Secondly special case officers are employed to assist those who appear to be finding it particularly difficult to manage their benefit rates. The role of these officers was not made clear in the legislation, however ensuring that those who are experiencing difficulties are in receipt of all benefits to which they are entitled would seem to be a legitimate part of the role. Emphasis in the scheme was still placed on the detection of fraud and the need to rehabilitate the unemployed and the role of the special case officers may develop in this direction.<sup>8</sup> As has been said the stress on abuse and individual responsibility leads people to believe that abuse exists and the resulting stigma is likely to deter the potential claimants from claiming.

Although it was stated redistribution was to take place within the scheme especially to children with families, this did not always happen. As the review recommended, school leavers, as a result of the recent changes, will not receive assistance until the end of the vacation following the school term in which they leave. Their parents will be able to draw child benefit. This measure means money is being directed from rather than to families with children. The

number of child benefit rates in the supplementary benefit scheme were reduced from five to three. This did involve an increase in the payments made to some families, however the age bands which research had suggested were most appropriate and which were recorded in the review were not used. Young people in receipt of non-contributory invalidity pension are to have the period of time spent on non-contributory invalidity benefit counted towards the one-year qualifying period required for long term supplementary benefit. This concession was not extended to all those in receipt of non-contributory invalidity pension.<sup>9</sup> Benefits as a result of the legislative changes are no longer to be increased in line with prices or earnings whichever is the greater but in line with prices only. This measure means the scheme moves away from a relative definition of need.

One of the more positive developments was the reduction of the two year qualifying period for the long term rate of supplementary benefit to one year, however despite the recommendations of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, the review team and many of those responding, the unemployed are still not entitled to the long term rate under any circumstances. The failure to adopt this measure was contrary to the objective set by the government of redistributing resources within the scheme particularly to families with children.

#### Social Security (No.2) Act 1980

The Tory manifesto promised restoration of respect for work and the imposition upon trades unions of more responsibility for supporting strikers (Donnison 1982, p.159). The Social Security (No. 2) Act attempted to do this by measures which were designed to maintain incentives. Some of the aspects of this Act were not compatible with

the principle of reciprocity however. The changes made to benefit rates in the Social Security (No. 2) Act led to the reduction of benefit levels in real terms. Unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, invalidity benefit, injury benefit and maternity benefit were increased by 5% less than inflation pending taxation. The failure to increase short term benefit levels in real terms by increasing them by 5% less than estimated inflation until arrangements were made to tax these benefits has led to an increase in the numbers forced to rely on supplementary benefit.<sup>10</sup> Thus NALGO, commenting on the No 2 Act in its Bill stage stated:

The provident person who has throughout his employment paid contributions on an insurance basis will find that his contributions have bought for him from the outset of his claim an income which is less than the basic subsistence level. (NALGO 1980)

The intention to reduce and finally abolish earnings related additions for those under 65 was also stated: this measure increased the incentive to work by increasing the differential between those in and out of work. Finally in the case of strikers, strike pay of £12 is assumed and thus £12 is deducted from the benefit paid to strikers' families. In addition strikers are not entitled to receive an urgent payment under any circumstances.

#### Legitimacy feasibility support

In chapter 2 Hall et al's (1975) analysis of the importance of the legitimacy, feasibility and the level of support a policy receives in affecting whether or not it becomes law is discussed. Donnison (1982), with the benefit of hindsight, describes the process through which the social security legislation passed in 1980 developed and this description is drawn upon when discussing these developments and when assessing their legitimacy, feasibility and level of public support .

### Legitimacy

It is intended to consider first the legitimacy of the recent legislation. If a proposal for change is to succeed Donnison argues, it must not be adopted too closely by one political party since this would force the opposition to reject the proposals if a change of government took place. The review took place during a period of Labour government. It was carried out by civil servants and not politicians, and the issues raised in the review and the solutions advocated were not put forward as Labour policy. Following the change of government many of the recommendations of the review were put into practice. The first Act dealt with the supplementary benefits system and the issues discussed in the review. The second Act, the Social Security (No. 2) Act, was concerned in the main with contributory benefits. The Tory manifesto promised the simplification of the social security system, more generous support for the family, restoration of respect for work and the imposition upon trades unions of more responsibility for supporting strikers. The simplification of the social security system and the provision of more generous support to claimants with families were seen as objectives of the review. Thus the review proposals were largely compatible with Tory policy as stated, and thus legitimate. The other objectives outlined in the Tory manifesto were made law in the Social Security (No. 2) Act.

### Feasibility

The legislation was clearly feasible in that it did not involve an increase in expenditure. Increasing unemployment had led to more people relying on benefit and thus made changes which enabled the 'real' value of benefit to be reduced and prevent expenditure

increases, all the more appealing. The simplification of the scheme also made it possible to make adjustments in staffing and this further reduced costs by allowing the greater numbers on benefit to be dealt with without a large increase in staff.

### Support

In looking at the support the proposals for change received it is necessary to consider the views of pressure groups and the public. The views of pressure groups and those responding to the review were discussed above. In the main they were found to oppose the nil cost approach and the utilisation of rough justice, measures which were not in accordance with the principle of meeting need. The views of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, although not a pressure group, were also important as were their reports which had to a large extent defined the areas to be reviewed. The Supplementary Benefits Commission however supported the proposed legislation as a starting point on the road to improving the pensions system. Donnison stated:

We faced the usual dilemma of reformers: would this half loaf be better than no bread? In 1979 it was not yet clear that under this government a 'nil cost' reform would soon be regarded as a progressive triumph.  
(Donnison 1982, p.172)

The inadequacy of benefit levels were of particular concern to the Commission as was the failure to look at the social security system as a whole and the needs of the low paid. They decided to publicly support the Bill if it was made clear that it was part of a long term programme of reform which would eventually call for some increase in expenditure. Jenkins in his introductory speech to the Bill in fact failed to mention increased expenditure.

The most important actors in Donnison's view were the ministers, although the Treasury, the Civil Service Department, Trade Unions,

members of parliament, pressure groups, academic researchers and journalists were all seen as playing some part. The role of officials in the review was particularly important as it was the officials who produced the discussion document and who discussed the proposals at public meetings. Some research on public attitudes was considered, however in the main public opinion was assessed by the review team through their discussion of their proposals with social security staff, trade unions, claimants, social workers, academics and others. Donnison argues that although anyone could make themselves available to advise politicians during the Bill's progress through parliament (and that academic commentators, pressure groups and trade unions knew how to do this) the advice on pensions was not made available until after the section on pensions had been discussed (Donnison 1982, p.117), and no one came to represent the unemployed. Donnison states that although the influence which can be had by this method is limited, each minister makes some concessions. He is particularly critical of trade unions for failing to make use of this opportunity. The opposition to the legislation was clearly ineffective.

Previous Governments had made their cuts too, but always in fear of the storm of rage they would evoke from their Party and the pressure groups. The new team had shed the burden of a social conscience. (Donnison 1982, p.167)

Perceptions of public opinion were discussed in the introduction and it is clear that in Donnison's view the changes in legislation had public support or the support of middle England, whom he claims put Margaret Thatcher in power, at least. Donnison was prepared to admit that views in the North may differ.

Labour lost no ground among the middle classes, and in Scotland they even gained a little. It was the midland and southern English working class 'middle England' who put Margaret Thatcher in power. (Donnison 1982, p.160)

In his view the anti-welfare views of middle England are strong and powerful and he appears to see little likelihood of change.

Increased knowledge and experience as has been said may affect attitudes in the future. Donnison in fact emphasises the importance of experience in affecting the views of himself and like minded individuals.

The political reactionaries, the clever professors, the complacent people of middle England who contend, when they argue at all, against the social theories of committed egalitarians, are aiming at the wrong target. It is experience, not theory, which moves us.  
(Donnison 1982, p.228)

Experience, it has been suggested in earlier chapters, may move large groups of the public also, even 'the complacent people of middle England'.

The research projects investigating public attitudes in chapter 4 have obtained differing results.<sup>11</sup> The research carried out by the Schlackman Organisation which formed one of the review's background papers did not show a high level of support for the changes which the legislation brought about, nor did this research. This can be seen by considering the extent to which the new social security legislation reflected the attitudes of those interviewed in this research, on the principles of welfare discussed.

#### Individual and social responsibility

In considering the extent to which the recent legislation emphasises individual causation of and responsibility for poverty in general and unemployment in particular, several issues emerge. The first point which must be made is the fact that welfare needs are being met by the state indicates that there is a general acceptance that society has a role to play in income maintenance. Within the



general legislative and administrative framework a stress on individual responsibility and causation can be identified however, with much emphasis being placed on the need to avoid abuse. The government's inaction as well as its action affects the service provided for those in receipt of welfare benefit. The failure of governments to contradict effectively the media references to undeserving claimants and the blame which is often attached to those in receipt of welfare benefits illustrates a partial belief in individual responsibility for the causation of unemployment, or that it is in the interests of the government that the public believe that the need for financial assistance, especially as a result of unemployment, is the fault of the individual. The difficulty those who tried to contradict such rumours faced in getting media space must be acknowledged (Donnison 1982, p.66).

From the discussion of past welfare legislation it can be seen that the distinction made between the deserving and the undeserving has always existed. In the nineteenth century a distinction could be made between the able-bodied who were subject to the workhouse test and the rest of the poor who could receive outdoor relief. In the twentieth century a distinction can be made between those who have made insurance contributions and are in receipt of non-means tested benefits and those who have not. In 1966 one of the reasons for amalgamating the national assistance and national insurance schemes and making them both the responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Security was to make the distinction less marked and thus reduce the stigma attached to the former. The Supplementary Benefits Commission was set up to lay down guidance on how to determine entitlement to non-contributory benefit and to report publicly on

supplementary benefits issues. A distinction therefore continued to exist between those in receipt of non-means tested, national insurance benefits and those receiving means tested supplementary benefits. The recent legislation further reduces the distinction between the supplementary benefits system and the national insurance system. The Social Security Advisory Committee which was set up to replace the Supplementary Benefits Commission has advisory powers only, advising on the provision of contributory as well as non-contributory benefit. Furthermore, the termination of the payment of earnings related supplement in the insurance system will lead to more people who have paid national insurance contributions claiming supplementary benefit, further blurring the distinction between contributory and non-contributory benefit systems. But the distinction between the deserving and the undeserving may continue to exist with different groups being defined as undeserving. For example the labelling of all the unemployed as undeserving may be reducing the importance of the distinction between the deserving on contributory benefits and the undeserving on non-contributory benefits. Deacon and Sinfield suggest:

Within public programmes the distinction between the deserving on insurance benefits and the undeserving on social security has been the traditional one but recent attacks may be eroding this division.  
(Deacon and Sinfield 1977, p.13)

National insurance unemployment benefit is only payable for the first year of unemployment. Those who remain unemployed are then forced to rely on supplementary benefit. The new legislation reinforces the distinction between the unemployed and other supplementary benefit claimants in that the qualifying period for the long term supplementary benefit rate was reduced from two years to one year, but the exclusion of the unemployed from eligibility for the long term rate remained.

As has been said although the recent legislation has led to a reduction in discretion, it can still be exercised particularly in situations where the unemployed are being dealt with. Supplementary benefit is still reduced by 40% if unemployment is deemed to be voluntary or is the result of dismissal for industrial misconduct. Much emphasis is placed on the detection of fraud. Stress is also placed on the rehabilitation of the long term unemployed. These measures reinforce the belief that the detecting of abuse is a necessary and very important function of the system particularly where the unemployed are concerned.

The most clear emphasis placed on individual responsibility is in the treatment of strikers. As was said strike pay of £12 is assumed thus the benefit paid to the families of strikers is reduced by £12. In addition strikers are not eligible for urgent needs payments until they return to work. The needs of strikers are thus clearly seen as not the responsibility of society.

Although some of those interviewed in the research emphasised individual responsibility the undeserving were generally seen as being a minority only. The need for the state to assist those requiring assistance even those whose deservedness was questionable was accepted by the majority of those interviewed especially when individual cases were discussed. This may be true of the public as a whole, especially as experience and knowledge of welfare increases.

### Incentives

The Supplementary Benefits Commission attempted to dispel the belief that the unemployed are undeserving. Their emphasis on the need to maintain incentives however may have unintentionally reinforced the belief that people can deal with unemployment

themselves if motivated sufficiently. Deacon (1977) suggested that an emphasis on incentives is more acceptable than an emphasis on scrounging. However, pursuing the goal of maintaining incentives can have both positive and negative implications. The abolition of earnings related additions and the increasing of short term national insurance benefits by 5% below the estimated level of inflation in the 1980 uprating, were two measures introduced in order to maintain incentives (CPAG, 1980). The argument that the latter measure was implemented in order to maintain incentives cannot be applied to the 5% reduction in the real value of maternity and widows allowances which were made. The changes in the rules regarding the earnings of single parents, that is the fact that single parents could keep up to £12 of their earnings, is a more positive application of the incentives principle. No plans exist, however, to extend this concession to all claimants or claimants' wives.

The Supplementary Benefits Commission's reports, the review and the first report of the Social Security Advisory Committee, although admitting that research shows very few people are discouraged from working by lack of incentives, all claim that public opinion demands that steps be taken to ensure that incentives are maintained. In chapter 6 however it was shown that even though incentives were believed to be a problem, those interviewed in this research were more likely to stress the positive aspects of incentives. Although some felt that benefits should be reduced, more of those interviewed approved of more positive measures such as retraining the unemployed, introducing public work schemes and reducing the working week.<sup>12</sup> Those methods of dealing with unemployment, although they would all have problems in their application, suggest a recognition of societal

responsibility for unemployment exists. The problems which people would experience if benefits were cut to ensure incentives were maintained were recognised by many of those interviewed and the reduction of benefit was less popular as a solution to unemployment than the other measures discussed. Whether legislation reflects public opinion on this issue can therefore be questioned.

### Reciprocity

The principle of reciprocity it is clear is central to the national insurance system and yet it can be argued that it is the more negative aspects of this principle which are stressed in the existing system. Although the need to examine critically the rights of those who have not contributed is stressed within the system, the need to meet the state's obligations to those who have contributed is not always recognised. Those in receipt of contributory benefits are generally financially no better off than those on non-contributory benefits unless they have additional sources of income. Insurance benefits are not means tested and are paid to those who have made sufficient contributions when they move into a situation which they are insured against. The main advantage of being in receipt of national insurance benefits as opposed to supplementary benefit is, it appears, the fact that the administration of the national insurance system is less stigmatising. The Supplementary Benefits Commission in their report suggested that the contributory benefit system should be improved thus enabling people to be lifted off supplementary benefit but as a result of the recent changes in the social security legislation the national insurance system has been weakened. Further, it can be argued that as a result of some of the changes in social security legislation the insurance contract has been

breached. The earnings related element is to be abolished despite the fact that the people who paid the higher contributions did so in the expectation of a higher rate of benefit. The failure to increase short-term benefit levels in real terms, by increasing them by 5% less than estimated inflation pending the taxation of benefits, has led to an increase in the numbers forced to rely on supplementary benefit and is at odds with the principle of reciprocity. Those unemployed and over 60 who are in receipt of an occupation pension have had their benefit reduced by the amount which their occupational pension exceeds £35. In addition the compulsory uprating of the amount which men under the age of 70 and women under the age of 65 who are in receipt of retirement pension may earn without their benefit being affected was abolished. These developments contradict the insurance principle. Those who have not contributed to the national insurance system must rely on the supplementary benefit scheme, the administration of which can be stigmatising. However, those who have contributed are also in many cases forced to rely on supplementary benefit.

In this research, although cases where those involved have made few contributions are generally described as less deserving, most of those interviewed still felt that needs should be met. Thus meeting need appeared to take precedence. The more positive implications of the principle of reciprocity, that is, rewarding those who have contributed, were stressed however and what constituted a contribution was not defined in strictly actuarial terms.

### Need

The Supplementary Benefits Commission in their reports consistently referred to the need to see poverty in relative terms. The recent legislation which links long term benefits to prices only

as opposed to earnings or prices which ever has increased more means that there is no longer any legal obligation on the government to ensure that relative poverty does not increase. The government have pledged that they will allow long term claimants to share in society's increased prosperity when it comes. The lifting of the legal obligation however, is contrary to the principle of combating relative poverty which the Supplementary Benefits Commission emphasised. The majority of those interviewed in this research felt poverty should be seen in relative terms.

The extent to which several of the changes made are in accordance with the principle of meeting need can be questioned. For example the reduction of the two year qualifying period to one year for long term supplementary benefit has been beneficial to some claimants however despite the arguments put forward by the Supplementary Benefits Commission, the review team and those responding to the review, the unemployed remain ineligible for long term rates. The Social Security Advisory Committee, writing since the changes in legislation, stated in their report:

Both the present government and their predecessors have publicly accepted the case for extending the long term rate to the unemployed. The obstacle is said to be simply one of cost.

(Social Security Advisory Committee 1981, p.26)

Thus although this need has been recognised no action has been taken because of cost. As has been said the reduction made in the number of child scale rates although benefitting some did not follow the recommendations from research outlined in the review about which groups were most in need. Although those under 21 in receipt of non-contributory invalidity benefit will now have their period on this benefit taken into account when assessing their eligibility for long

term supplementary benefit the 1980 legislation did not make similar allowances for those over 21. Thus again although a need has been recognised steps have not been taken to fully meet the need.

As has been said a major objective of the review team and the new social security legislation was to reduce the amount of discretionary assistance available within the scheme. The simplification of the scheme without increasing benefit levels leads to many claimants having unmet needs. The statement of clear rules is beneficial to claimants to some extent, however several of the restrictions made on the payment of additional benefits have caused hardship for some claimants; for example the fact that additional payments cannot be made to cover clothing which requires to be replaced as a result of normal wear and tear. The effect which the reduction in the number of discretionary payments can have on meeting needs led Bull (1980) to question Donnison's emphasis on proportional justice and suggest creative justice is also needed. The reduction in the level of discretion without an increase in benefit levels is not in accordance with the principle of meeting need.

The Social Security Advisory Committee suggest that many changes in the social security system:

...were designed expressly to yield savings and were part of the public expenditure cuts.  
(Social Security Advisory Committee 1981, p.8)

The changes in the social security No. 2 Act in particular, led to reduced expenditure. The 5% cut in uprating short term benefits pending taxation, and the abolition of earnings related supplements decreased the ability of the social security system to meet the needs of those forced to rely on benefit. In addition by taking child benefits fully into account an overall reduction of the additions for



children took place. Although it can be argued that emphasis should be placed on the role of the child benefit in meeting the needs of children, whether this should be the case when benefits are so low can be questioned. The most blatant rejection of the principle of meeting needs however is the reduction of benefit for strikers and their families by £12. In addition strikers will not be entitled to urgent needs payments under any circumstances. Thus as was said earlier stress on individual responsibility takes priority over the principle of meeting needs.

Those interviewed it was clear felt benefit levels for pensioners and the unemployed should be higher. This finding becomes even more significant when we bear in mind the fact that there is a time lag in people's consciousness when considering living costs and wage levels, that is prices and wages advance quicker than people's awareness of them. It seems that there could have been a substantial amount of public support for the raising of benefit levels provided they were made aware of just how little claimants at that time actually received. Those interviewed did not hold well constructed theoretical models of welfare but the principle of meeting need was emphasised especially in response to the vignettes. Although many accepted the caricatures of the undeserving unemployed even when faced with an undeserving case, the majority still felt needs must be met and yet if the social security system is operated without flexibility and if there are no increases made in benefit levels needs will not be adequately met.

### Equality

The principle of substantive equality it is clear plays no part in the present social security system. As was seen from the interviews

the idea that it should received limited support. This may have been partly due to the fact that this issue so seldom appears on the agenda of the public debate on social security and the fact that social security has never been centred around the principle. Procedural equality, especially the principle of equity however, is frequently referred to in public discussions of welfare. The Supplementary Benefits Commission in their 1976 report suggested:

If the scheme is to be fair that means first and foremost that the general level of benefits set and revised every year by parliament should be sufficient to keep people out of poverty. Next it means that the benefits available should be distributed as fairly as possible among different kinds of claimants. The scheme should be fair when comparisons are made between claimants and non-claimants. (Supplementary Benefits Commission 1977, p.2)

Arguments based on the principles of incentives, views on relative poverty and the principle of equity are clearly related. The principle of equity can have positive and negative implications. The review team in fact emphasised the principle of equity to the detriment of the principle of meeting need.

The need for equity as between claimants in similar circumstances coupled with administrative constraints, dictates that a scale of rates is used rather than benefit being based on each individual's needs. (DHSS 1978, p.35)

Further it was argued in the review that financial assistance to those with fuel problems if given, should be given to all those with low incomes. However since such a step was found not to be financially feasible no assistance was provided. The more negative aspects of the equity argument are emphasised in the claim put forward by the conservative government when discussing the uprating of benefits, that is, that those on benefit must share in difficult times (Lister 1980). Those interviewed did not appear to place a similar emphasis on the negative aspects of the principle of equity and although substantive equality was not emphasised as has been seen meeting need was.

### Citizenship

The review looked at how to fit the scheme for its mass role. If the principle of citizenship is to be adhered to then rights to benefit must be emphasised. In the existing system the extent to which this is done can be questioned. Although only a minority of those interviewed said they would hesitate to claim benefits many complained about the way the benefit system was administered and the treatment they received when they claimed. The new supplementary legislation through simplification and the reduction of discretion was intended to reduce the pressure on the scheme and improve the administration. The comments received by the Social Security Advisory Committee, which were discussed by them in their first report, and comments made by social workers, claimants and welfare rights officers, suggest that administrative problems remain. The Department of Health and Social Security believe the initial problems are the result of the fact that change has taken place, not the changes themselves.

The comments made by the Social Security Advisory Committee show that in their view the scheme remained complex.

We share the general concern at the complexity of the social security system and shall do what we can to further the quest for simplification and the removal of anomalies.  
(Social Security Advisory Committee 1981, p.63)

They suggest however there is no cheap route to simplification. The Social Security Advisory Committee feel more people are seeing the benefits system in terms of rights but feel this too is creating problems.

The shift in attitudes and the effects of the welfare rights movement can mean that staff in some social security offices encounter claimants who are better informed and advised than usual. The staff concerned are not always

sufficiently well equipped to cope with such demands, for example they may sometimes have too much to do, or may work in poor office accommodation.

(Social Security Advisory Committee 1981, p.57)

It seems therefore that despite legislative changes the administrative problems those interviewed referred to remain. The views of those interviewed emphasised the rights of citizens particularly when discussing individual cases. Even although the clear legal structure is an improvement the failure to raise benefits and the reduction in discretion has led to more people being forced to rely on even more discretionary schemes, for example local authority grants, voluntary organisations etc. Whether the new scheme has put more emphasis on the rights of citizenship can therefore be questioned.

#### Public opinion and policy

It was stated earlier in this chapter that pressure groups opposed the nil cost basis of the review and the concept of rough justice but these were largely accepted in the recent legislative changes. The inconsistencies in attitudes found to exist in this research and the differences in the findings obtained by the various research studies discussed in chapter 4 illustrate the complexity of attitudes. The view generally attributed to the public in the course of the development of the recent legislation appeared to stress their emphasis on the need to avoid abuse and to emphasise the more negative implications of the principles of incentives and reciprocity. In this research, although such views existed, they were found to exist alongside greater emphasis on societal responsibility, need and the more positive implications of incentives and reciprocity. The recent social security legislation cannot be said to reflect public opinion

as represented by the views of pressure groups or those interviewed in this research. The hypothesis:

Present social security legislation reflects  
the views of those interviewed.

cannot be supported therefore.

In chapter 2 elitist and pluralist theories of policy-making and theories which synthesise these two approaches were discussed. A detailed analysis of the social security policy making process has not been undertaken<sup>13</sup> but from the discussion of the recent legislative changes in the social security system and how they relate to the views expressed by pressure groups and those interviewed in this research it seems clear that the claim that public opinion determined the content of the recent legislation can be questioned. Even if those interviewed in this research are found to be unrepresentative of the public at large the fact that experience and knowledge of those on benefit does appear to lead to the development of pro welfare attitudes means that public opinion on this issue could be changed. To understand the present policy developments a synthesis of elitist and pluralist theories seems necessary. The pluralist analysis of policy making is clearly relevant in that, as Donnison says the existing Conservative government were elected by "middle England" and its policies were approved of. The questions put forward by elitist theorists regarding public and government interaction and the bias which exists in the government's favour are relevant. The information provided to the public on the social security system and those who rely on it has tended to emphasise misuse and abuse of the system. Whether, if more information was provided to the public

about the circumstances of those on benefit, they would be prepared to accept (and may even demand) improvements in welfare provision, must be considered. The failure to provide such information rests not just with the government and the media but also political parties and trade unions. As unemployment increases people's indirect experience of welfare will also increase and this may influence attitudes. Whether, without a relevant ideological framework through which to interpret these experiences, attitudes will remain unchanged remains an open question (see chapter 2) and one which is returned to in the conclusion.

### Summary

In this chapter the extent to which the views of the public particularly those interviewed are reflected in the recent legislative changes is considered. The developments in legislation through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the principles embodied in legislation were discussed. Looking at the recent legislative changes the issues identified by the Supplementary Benefits Commission and further investigated in the review of social assistance are discussed. The extent to which the legislation which finally emerged was influenced by the responses made to the review and reflected the views of those interviewed in this research is then considered. Recent legislation, it is suggested placed great influence on individual responsibility and abuse and the extent to which this emphasis results from public pressure can be questioned. The effect such an emphasis has on attitudes as has been said, should be noted. Those interviewed, it was suggested, while seeing the principles of incentives and reciprocity as important were more likely to emphasise the positive implications of those principles than the negative

principles which were emphasised by the legislation. Those interviewed were found to emphasise need and yet many of the legislative changes go against the principle of meeting need. It is suggested therefore that the recent legislative changes did not reflect the views of those interviewed. The evidence provided from this study, although only tentative, is sufficiently strong to bring into question claims that public pressure will not allow the development of a welfare system which is better geared towards meeting the needs of those forced to rely on it. In situations where anti welfare attitudes do exist the extent to which these can be influenced by education has not properly been investigated.

## CHAPTER 9

## CONCLUSION

In the introduction it was suggested that an analysis of social welfare required to look at the role which social welfare played in society. Although in recent years more analysis has been carried out at the macro level in all of the main approaches identified, the marxist, the classical liberal and the reformist, empirical investigation of the role played by public attitudes in determining social policy has been neglected. Assumptions which have been made about the views of the public by social theorists and by politicians were discussed. In order to better understand the relationship between public attitudes and policy it was suggested several areas required further investigation. First, the content of public attitudes, the public's views of the welfare system and those who make use of it and the principles of welfare which affect these views, required consideration. Secondly it was felt that examination of the effect of various background characteristics and experiences on attitudes and the susceptibility of attitudes to change was necessary because only then can the relationship between public opinion and policy and the view that policy is determined by public attitudes be properly assessed. Thirdly, having examined the content of public attitudes and assessed the influences on them, the principles emphasised by the public can be compared with the principles embodied in legislation. The extent to which recent legislation reflects public attitudes and the role played by public attitudes in the policy process can then be discussed. In the following section it is intended to summarise the contribution this research makes to the



understanding of the issues discussed above. Areas requiring further research will then be briefly outlined.

#### The content of public attitudes

Public attitudes were investigated through the use of a brief postal survey of a random sample of men resident in two towns in the West of Scotland and more detailed interviews which were conducted with eighty men, twenty from each of four areas which were purposefully selected to ensure that people with varying experiences of unemployment would be interviewed..

The content of public attitudes to welfare was examined by focussing on a number of principles and assessing the importance which those interviewed placed on these principles. The models of welfare outlined by Titmuss, that is the residual model emphasising individual responsibility, reciprocity and the economic market, the institutionalised redistributive model emphasising societal responsibility, equality, need, citizenship and the social market and the industrial achievement model emphasising incentives and efficiency, were, it was suggested, a useful way of considering the interrelationship of welfare principles. The principles central to these models of welfare were also considered individually.

#### Individual and societal responsibility

The responses to the questions which focussed specifically on views on individual and societal causation found that societal responsibility for causing unemployment and poverty was accepted. Few of those interviewed felt poverty was the result of individual failure and only a minority of those interviewed felt the unemployed were lazy and thought pensioners and the unemployed were typically

undeserving. About half accepted the negative stereotypes of the unemployed put forward in the media however. No reference was made by those interviewed to cultural or genetic explanations of poverty although a few of those interviewed did suggest large families exacerbated the problem. Although societal causation for poverty appeared to be accepted very few explained it in terms of purposeful exploitation, the majority seeing it as arising from the problems of industrialisation.

The responses to the postal survey and the questions on benefit levels posed in the interviews suggested that societal responsibility, for meeting the needs of the unemployed and pensioners was accepted and that increases in benefit, if properly explained, would not be resented. In addition, the majority of those interviewed stated it was the state's responsibility to meet the needs of pensioners. When asked how unemployment should be dealt with few of those interviewed favoured methods which attempted to resolve the problem by concentrating on the behaviour of individuals. Over half of those interviewed rejected the suggestion to cut benefit, on the other hand the majority found the development of public work schemes and the reduction of the working week acceptable solutions to unemployment.

### Reciprocity

Those interviewed felt that insurance contributions were an appropriate method of funding benefits. Only a minority of those interviewed however felt pensioners who had not contributed should be treated differently and about half of those interviewed felt the unemployed who had not contributed should be treated differently. Many of those who said they should be treated differently still emphasised the importance of meeting need. More emphasis was placed

by those interviewed on the positive as opposed to the negative aspects of reciprocity, such as training the unemployed so they are better able to contribute and rewarding those who have contributed. Looking at the responses to the vignettes it could be seen that past contributions were seen as important. This was evident in the sympathy which existed for the redundant older worker and the retired bank manager. The payment of national insurance contributions was felt to be important but views on rights resulting from insurance contributions did not reflect the way in which the system operates at present, the redundant older worker would not have been entitled to national insurance benefit since he had been unemployed for over two years. Length of unemployment appeared to be of limited importance in this situation. Although past contributions were seen as relevant, needs seemed to be more important to the majority of those interviewed when considering whether benefit should be paid to an individual and they felt the needs of the unemployed school leaver, the frequently unemployed lorry driver and the pensioner who had lived abroad most of his life should be met. The type of welfare system favoured by those interviewed could be described as a generalised system of exchange, (i.e. indirect exchange, giving to one and receiving from another) although the rights and duties of the individual were emphasised. The effect of the principle of reciprocity on peoples own views about claiming appeared to be limited since only a minority said they would hesitate to claim non-contributory benefits and few felt stigma was attached to such benefits.

Incentives and efficiency

The majority of those interviewed saw money as the main motivation for work and the maintenance of incentives as an area of concern. When possible solutions to the problem of maintaining incentives were discussed. Concern about meeting needs was evident however. The majority disapproved of the wage stop approach to the incentives problem and approved of supplementing wages and of establishing a compulsory minimum wage. Views on child benefit were mixed with only half of the respondents approving of child benefit. (Views on child benefit, it was suggested, were related to views on individual responsibility and religious views.) Despite this, it was clear that the views of those interviewed on solutions to the incentives problem emphasise the positive as opposed to the negative implications of the incentives principle. As was the case in the response to the vignettes the meeting of need appeared to be important.

Needs/equality and citizenship

The stress placed by those interviewed on needs has already been referred to. When asked what factors should be taken into consideration when deciding whether or not pensioners or the unemployed should receive benefit, need was stressed. Even among those who did not emphasise need, very few said that they would not help even those they felt to be undeserving if they were in real need. When asked about the relative importance of freedom to earn and meeting the needs of all the emotive appeal of the term freedom was evident.<sup>1</sup> It was clear, however, that those interviewed did not think only of themselves and that their concern for others extended beyond the family. Although those interviewed stressed need, merit and contribution were also seen as important as

can be seen in the emphasis placed on the principles of incentives and reciprocity. Poverty, as was stated, was seen by many in relative terms. In addition it was found that many of those interviewed favoured more inequality. However, only a minority appeared to feel complete equality of outcome was desirable. People's right to benefit it appears, especially when discussing the case studies, was recognised by the majority of those interviewed. The way in which benefits were administered also appeared to be important and concern about the welfare system's treatment of those in need was expressed. Those interviewed generally approved of universal benefits for pensioners and the unemployed and were worried about the imposition of stigma on claimants.

#### Consistency and models of welfare

Inconsistencies in the attitudes of those interviewed were found to exist; in particular they were found to be more sympathetic when responding to the vignettes. Some general patterns of attitudes it was suggested may exist thus having looked at the principles of welfare individually the interrelationship of principles emphasised by those interviewed and whether they resembled the models of welfare outlined by Titmuss were investigated. It was found that the models were useful as tools for comparing attitudes, however most of those interviewed held views involving more than one model.

#### Factors affecting public attitudes

When considering which factors affect public attitudes and the susceptibility of attitudes to change four functions which attitudes can perform were briefly discussed. These were the ego defence function, the value expressive function, the knowledge function and

the instrumental adjustive utilitarian function. Various socialising influences and their possible effects were then described. These were the family, education, religion, the media, legislation, small groups, opinion leaders, and political parties. Most of these influences upheld the status quo but life experiences, it was suggested, would also affect attitudes. Whether experience of life leads to the adoption of attitudes which contradict dominant values, it was suggested required consideration.

#### Direct and indirect experience of unemployment

Of particular importance in a time of growing unemployment it was suggested was the effect of experiences of unemployment on attitudes. Both direct and indirect experience of unemployment were considered. The attitudes of those who had experienced unemployment were compared with the attitudes of those who had not. The differences found when the attitudes of the two groups were compared were limited, however those with direct experience of unemployment were found to be more likely to emphasise need and less likely to attach individual blame to the unemployed. Area of residence and occupational status could, it was argued, be seen as indicators of indirect experience of unemployment. The two small areas selected in each town varied in terms of the housing tenure and the occupational status of those resident. Those from the more affluent area in Coatbridge emphasised the importance of individual responsibility more strongly than those resident in other areas. Those from the less affluent area in East Kilbride placed less emphasis on individual responsibility. Those from the less affluent areas in both towns were less likely to hold anti-welfare attitudes. Comparing the attitudes of those resident in each of the towns few differences were

found to exist. The differences found when the views of those resident in different areas are compared should not be overemphasised. The differences which do exist however support the view that those who come from areas with a large proportion of manual workers where unemployment is likely to be relatively common are less likely to hold negative attitudes to those on benefit.

When the views of manual workers were compared with non-manual workers, manual workers were found to be less likely to emphasise individual failure as a cause of poverty and unemployment and more likely to feel the unemployed should be better treated. Manual workers it was argued were more likely to have indirect experience of unemployment thus although the differences between the two groups should not be overemphasised the findings supported the view that those with more indirect experience of unemployment were less likely to hold anti-welfare attitudes.

The responses to the vignettes tended to be more positive and sympathetic and this further supports the view that knowledge of unemployment and the problems which emerge is likely to promote positive attitudes to welfare. Several cautionary comments must be made regarding this finding. First the sample was small and was not randomly selected. Secondly the factors discussed above may be related to other factors. Thirdly experience of unemployment will not affect each individual in the same way. The effect of experience of unemployment on an individual's attitudes will be affected by their personality and individual needs and by the value systems to which they have been exposed. This latter point may explain why those interviewed in this research were found to have more radical attitudes than those interviewed in other studies, in that those resident in the

West of Scotland have been traditionally exposed to a more radical working class ideology than those resident in other areas. The relationship between the emergence of such an ideology in an area and its experience of unemployment and deprivation is discussed in more detail below. Although these points must be borne in mind, experience of unemployment both direct and indirect, does appear to affect attitudes and this suggests that anti-welfare attitudes are susceptible to change. Thus it can be suggested that if more information were provided for the public regarding the causes of unemployment and the level of assistance provided for the unemployed and pensioners, anti-welfare sentiments would be reduced.

#### The effect of public attitudes on policy

In the final chapter the development of social security legislation was considered. In particular the recent review of the supplementary benefits system, the opinions of those responding to the review and the recent changes in the social security legislation and how these relate to the views of those interviewed were discussed. The legislation passed in 1980 did not it was found reflect the attitudes of those interviewed. Those interviewed emphasised the more positive aspects of reciprocity, particularly the rights of those who had contributed. Several of the recent legislative measures were not compatible with the principles of reciprocity, overlooking the rights of many citizens who had made national insurance contributions. The majority of those interviewed accepted the relative nature of poverty but the change in policy regarding the uprating of benefits was not in accordance with this. Several of the changes, particularly the restrictions placed on the making of discretionary payments, resulted in a reduction in the scheme's ability to meet



need. Finally, since the system remained administratively complex the improvements which could be made in the service given to claimants was limited and many of the problems in the scheme referred to by those interviewed remained. It can be argued therefore that the legislation does not reflect the views of those interviewed.

Those interviewed it is clear cannot be claimed to be representative of the British public as a whole or even of those resident in the West of Scotland since the sampling was not random. It has been shown that the views of some of the public at least are not in accordance with those embodied in the legislation and in addition it is clear from the discussion of factors affecting attitudes that attitudes are susceptible to change especially if knowledge of the experiences of those on benefit is increased, therefore the claim that present social security system operates in the way it does because public pressure will not allow a more generous system to develop can at least be questioned.

#### Recent developments

Since the empirical research was carried out unemployment has increased as has public discussion of the problem. There is now more discussion in political circles, in the academic literature and the media of the problem of unemployment and the problems facing particular groups of the unemployed, e.g. school leavers and redundant older workers. If, as has been suggested, increased knowledge of unemployment leads to the development of more pro-welfare attitudes then the increasing unemployment should have led to increased sympathy for those on benefit. Sympathy may have increased but there has been no evidence of pressure being placed on governments to improve the welfare system. As was suggested above, possibly the public must

have access to a radical alternative ideology before anti-welfare attitudes are rejected. In the West of Scotland such an ideology has been relatively popular, although far from pervasive, since the turn of the century and this may partly account for the emphasis found on need. This is not to deny the importance of the experience of unemployment however. The interrelationship between such an ideology and experience of unemployment must be recognised. It may be because of the long experience of unemployment in the West of Scotland that such an ideology has developed and remained relatively strong. In areas where such an ideology is not in evidence it may be some time before increasing unemployment leads to the development of less negative attitudes to welfare and the unemployed.<sup>2</sup>

The individualist, the marxist and the reformist approaches to the study of social welfare, it was argued, made assumptions and recommendations about the relationship between public opinion and social policy with the individualist perspective suggesting that extensive provision of social welfare inhibited the public in their attempts to express their views through their market behaviour, the marxist perspective suggesting either that the public did not demand improved social welfare because of false consciousness or seeing social policy as the result of small working class victories and the reformist perspective describing social policy as emerging from growing public consensus. Thus only the reformist view and one strand of the marxist view suggested that public attitudes played an important role in influencing policy. The evidence presented in this thesis allows this view to be questioned.<sup>3</sup> As was said in the introduction the marxist and the individualist perspective both advocate greater public influence, the former by developing state

welfare services in a socialist regime, the latter by restricting state welfare services and developing the private market. The findings from the research suggest slight support for the development of state welfare but it would be wrong to overemphasise the strength of feeling on this issue. This research was exploratory in nature and further research is clearly necessary.

The theoretical and philosophical analysis of social welfare has developed greatly in recent years but relatively little empirical research has been carried out. The research studies into public attitudes to welfare reviewed in chapter 4 were far from conclusive and this, it was suggested, was partly due to the complexity of public attitudes. This research illustrates this complexity. Although this study provides evidence which allows the assumptions about the effect of public attitudes on social policy discussed in the introduction to be brought into question, the need for further research into public views and factors which affect them is also clearly demonstrated. Without such research the potential for developing a welfare system capable of meeting the needs of all members of society cannot be assessed.

## FOOTNOTES

Introduction

1. Consideration of the differences in the classifications presented by the writers would be interesting but this is not the concern of the present study.
2. According to the marxist approach false consciousness must be overcome.
3. See chapter 4.

Chapter 2

1. See discussion in Hall et al 1975, p 132.
2. The models he describes are all essentially pluralist. Even the ruling clique model which he sees as being most appropriate to describing foreign policy making refers to the constraints placed upon the ruling clique.

One constraint upon the ruling clique in foreign affairs is the dependence of British foreign policy upon limited manpower and public money.  
1980, p 306.

The ruling clique he suggests may not necessarily agree. The other models he describes are balance of power pluralism, segmented pluralism, amorphous pluralism, the populist model and the veto model.

3. His main criticism is of the normative assumptions of theories such as those put forward by Key, Dahl and Truman which emphasise the role of elites in defending the democratic creed from the instability caused by public participation. The theories generally classified as elitist in British sociology are not based on the same normative assumptions.
4. Whiteley and Winyard (1983) analyses the relevance of pressure group influence on social security policy.
5. The comment from Dahl 1961, p 90, already quoted illustrates his awareness of this fact.
6. For a fuller analysis see Urry and Wakeford (1973) and Stanworth and Giddens (1974).
7. Dahl is described as presenting an elitist interpretation by Walker (Luttbeg 1968).
8. The hypotheses are presented in the null form since the study is exploratory in nature and provides information which, although it allows hypotheses to be disproved, would not provide sufficient proof to enable hypotheses to be accepted.

9. See introduction.
10. Parkin cites Martin Luther King as an example.
- 11 Personal experience or direct experience was defined as the individual's own experience and excluded the experience of close family.

### Chapter 3

1. This model is in fact central to social administration (Hill 1980a, p 9) and the general failure of social administrators to relate their analysis to the economic market is commented upon by Hill (1980b). Pinker (1979), Room (1979) and Gough (1979) have attempted to do this but much work in this area remains to be done.
2. More recently Field has outlined five systems, the national insurance system, the tax allowance system, the company welfare system, benefits gained from insured income and the private market (Field 1981).
3. For a fuller discussion, see Holman (1978).
4. Burt's research on which those emphasising inherited intelligence as a cause of poverty draw heavily has been largely discredited.
5. In his dedication of the book to his children he hopes that the regression of intelligence towards the mean has not dealt with them too harshly.
6. Dependency due largely to natural causes such as dependency resulting from old age or handicap it can also be argued are partly man made dependencies explained by the fact that modern society fails to define a useful role in society for the elderly, the handicapped, etc.
7. Pinker refers to Ekeh's work in the Idea of Welfare (1979).
8. Although Blau himself claims to be presenting a synthesis of the two approaches he does emphasise the individual, and Gouldner's discussion of reciprocity although he refers to Durkheim and Malinowski is mainly concerned with how they have developed in American sociology which is generally individualist in approach.
9. It should be noted that theorists classified as individualist can emphasise an individual's psychological needs while criticising other theorists' overemphasis on an individual's economic needs, e.g. Malinowski's (1922) view of Kula exchange (see Ekeh 1974, p 28).
10. Malinowski emphasised the individual's psychological needs although he recognised the social nature of exchange.

11. Frazer, looking at exchange of wives, emphasised the economic reasons for such exchange and although he accepted Malinowski's emphasis on the social functions of exchange (Ekeh 1974, p 28) he tended to see social exchange as a subset of economic exchange (Ekeh 1974, p 44).
12. Ekeh (1974, p 98) argues that Homan's most successful explanations have resulted from him being false to psychological reductionism.
13. This diagram represents an amalgamation of Ekeh's diagrammatic illustration of social solidarity resulting from interaction between social exchange and the division of labour and the integration and differentiation processes.

		Division of Labour (Differentiation)	
		Simple (structural)	Compound (functional)
Social Exchange (Integration)	Restricted (structural)	mechanical solidarity	dysharmonic solidarity
	Generalised (functional)	traditional organic solidarity	industrial organic solidarity

14. Heath (1976) presents an argument for the value of rational exchange theories when used in conjunction with other theories.
15. See especially chapter 12 Homans (1961).
16. See chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of Bachrach and Baratz (1970).
17. The quote is from Leibow.

#### Chapter 4

1. Studies of claimants' attitudes such as the study carried out for the DHSS in 1979 (Bowles and Holmes 1979) and by Briggs and Rees (1980) are excluded since they are concerned with claimants only and deal with specific details of the welfare system rather than general principles.
2. Following Rawls' model of social justice, inequalities were only seen as acceptable if they were justifiable to the losers (see chapter 3 for a fuller discussion).
3. Golding and Middleton (1982, p 181) also list several criticisms of the Institute of Economic Affairs Studies.
4. The Review for which this study acted as a background paper is discussed in chapter 8.

Chapter 5

1. A comparison of the responses made to each of the three interviewers was undertaken. No interviewer bias was detected.
2. If the residents of East Kilbride share this view cultural differences are likely to exist.
3. In addition to the questions discussed it was intended to use some sort of attitude scale to investigate attitude to the unemployed, pensioners and the manual workers and to compare the results obtained by each method. The semantic differential was chosen for three reasons. First the Likert, Guttman and Thurstone scales to be drawn up reliably would need a great deal of pilot work. Secondly they take more of the respondent's time and since the scale was only to be one part of the questionnaire this was not feasible. Thirdly the presentation of attitude statements might have suggested or influenced responses to the open-ended questions which formed the bulk of the questionnaire.

The interview schedule was piloted on 12 members of the general public resident in the Stirling area. The semantic differential was the only area where problems arose. There was a resistance on the part of those interviewed to respond to the semantic differential although all agreed. Despite these problems it was decided to retain it, however it was dealt with at the end of the interview so that any resistance to it would not affect the rest of the interview. After 20 interviews it was abandoned as there was clear resistance on the part of respondents to participating.

Some of those interviewed who read the extracts and cartoons from the 'Sunday Post' without difficulty claimed they could not read the words in the semantic differential. Those interviewed however were clear and articulate at expressing their views when asked direct questions and when presented with the vignettes and the responses obtained provided a richness of data which more than adequately compensated for the failure of the semantic differential.

Chapter 6

1. This system means the recipient pays the Post Office for the postage of the replies he receives provided they are marked 'Freepost'.
2. Social Trends 1980. Figures refer to 1978.
3. Following from Piachaud (1974), see chapter 5 for fuller discussion. The results from this study were compared with the study carried out by Piachaud and it was found that those responding to this study were slightly more likely to be willing to pay more in tax. Eighty-five percent of those who responded to this study were prepared to be worse off to assist pensioners as compared with eighty percent of those who responded to Piachaud's study. Forty-one percent were prepared to give over £1 as compared with one third in Piachaud's study.

4. It should be noted that assistance with rent and rates was available from local authorities to claimants and non claimants alike.
5. When asked about benefit rates the knowledge of those interviewed was found to be limited. This is discussed again in chapter 7.
6. The importance of newspapers and the familiarity of those interviewed with such articles was illustrated by the fact that one of the respondents who could not read the introductory letter because he did not have his glasses could read these extracts without difficulty. The newspaper from which the extracts were taken is reputed to have a circulation rate in Scotland of over 70%.
7. See questionnaire in appendix.
8. References made to individual and societal responsibility in response to the vignettes are discussed in more detail below.
9. These responses also provide further insight into the views of those interviewed on other principles discussed and are thus referred to throughout this chapter.
10. The concept of citizenship is discussed in more detail below.
11. See chapter 3 for discussion.
12. The concept of citizenship need not always be accompanied by a belief in universality and it was argued that benefits limited to a defined category of need and paid with an emphasis on right could avoid stigma.

## Chapter 7

1. See chapter 3 and chapter 6.
2. The proportions were compared with data from the 1981 census.
3. Those unemployed at the time of the interview were classified separately. In the case of those who were retired their occupational status before they were retired was recorded where possible. In four cases where the retired person had held a variety of jobs or where the precise nature of the occupation was not clear their occupational status was recorded as retired.
4. Thirty-three (74%) of the 31-64 age group were members of an occupational pension scheme as compared with sixteen (53%) of the 16-30 age group but this may be because a higher percentage of non-manual workers were in the older age group.
5. These results are not necessarily contradictory as it may be that the manual workers who hold anti-welfare attitudes are the least skilled. The manual and non-manual workers were not further classified by degrees of skill in this research.



Chapter 8

1. For further discussion see Fraser 1973, Blaug 1963, Rose 1972, Flinn 1968, Golding and Middleton 1982.
2. The Liberals came to power in December 1905.
3. See introduction.
4. A housing benefit scheme covering claimants and non-claimants, administered by local authorities has since been introduced but many problems in the scheme have arisen and many local authorities have claimed that the government have failed to provide them with sufficient funds to take on this responsibility.
5. This would not help if price rises exceeded earnings.
6. This statement is based on information gained from discussions with claimants, welfare rights officers and social workers.
7. Urgent needs payments are available to everybody except strikers.
8. In recent months there has in fact been an increase in the numbers of staff employed on fraud detection.
9. The invalidity trap was abolished in the 1983 budget.
10. The cut in unemployment benefit has since been restored (November 1982) following the taxation of unemployment benefit (the taxation was introduced six months before the 5% cut was restored). Taxation of the other short term benefits has not yet been introduced and the 5% cut has not yet been restored.
11. See chapter 4, chapter 6 and chapter 7.
12. Emphasis was placed on the need for such schemes to be more than cosmetic or forms of cheap labour. Training schemes have in recent years been expanding but have been open to much criticism.
13. See Bolderson (1982) for a useful discussion of the process of the Social Security (No 2) Act.

Chapter 9

1. What was meant by freedom to earn was not investigated.
2. Further research investigating views on welfare and their relationship to other areas of working class ideology would be useful.
3. In Room's analysis of the social democratic approach Titmuss is seen as a major exponent of this tradition. The only element of the social democratic approach being questioned by this thesis is the emphasis placed on the part played by public opinion in influencing social policy. (The findings largely support Titmuss's views on the content and potential content of public

opinion.) Room in fact admits his description of the social democratic tradition as embodied in the works of Marshall (1965) and Titmuss, is best seen as 'hailing from the immediate post war era' which was the social democratic "heyday" (Room 1979, p 65). Since then Room argues their optimism regarding the development of welfare services has varied and suggests:

Likewise, their confidence declines over the capacity of citizens, by virtue of their political and social rights alone, to exercise and retain control over the dynamics of social policy development.  
(Room 1979, p 66)

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## ATTITUDES TO PENSIONERS AND THE UNEMPLOYED

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SPONSOR I am employed on a research project sponsored by the Social Science Research Council which is trying to discover men's views on the way pensioners and the unemployed are treated in this country, especially by the Social Security system. We only want to interview men at present so that we can compare our results with other studies which have been done. We want to interview a sample of men from this area and I would be grateful if you could spare the time to be interviewed. It is important that we get the views of as many different men as possible. The interview should not take more than half an hour and any views you express will be treated confidentially and the names and addresses of the people will not be revealed to anyone.

TOPIC

MEN

SAMPLE

TIME

CONFIDENTIAL

*If a women answers say*

SPONSOR I am employed on a research project sponsored by the Social Science Research Council which is trying to discover men's views on the way pensioners and the unemployed are treated in this country, especially by the Social Security system. We only want to interview men at present so that we can compare our results with other studies which have been done. Are there any men in this house who would be willing to be interviewed? It wouldn't take more than half an hour.

*When man appears repeat main introduction.*

Firstly I would like to ask you a couple of general questions

1) Who would you say was poor in Britain today?

2) Some people say that it is a person's own fault if they are poor, others that it is because money is not shared out properly. What do you think?

own fault  
badly shared  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

3) Every week people at work have a percentage of their wages or salaries deducted as National Insurance contributions to pay for pensions, unemployment benefit and other Social Security benefits. Do you think this is a good idea or should all benefits be paid out of taxes?

contributions  
taxes  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

I would now like to concentrate on your views on the financial provision made for pensioners and ask how you think they should be treated.

- 4) Some people say that it should be a person's own responsibility to provide financially for their old age, others that it should be their families and others the states. What do you think?

own  
families  
states  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

- 5) Do you think that state pensions should be paid to everyone over retirement age or just those who wouldn't have enough to live on without one?

everyone  
those without enough  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

- 6) We are interested in your views on how much those over retirement age get in social security benefit at present. Some people say that they get too much, others too little and other just enough. What do you think?

too little  
just enough  
too much  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

- 7) At present what do you think should be the amount of pension for a single pensioner per week?

If the respondent gives the answers to questions 7 and 8 in % of the average wage miss out question 9

- 8) And what do you think should be the amount of pension for a pensioner couple per week?

9) Should state pensions be just enough to manage on or should they be related to the average wage being paid at that time?

just enough  
related to wages  
d.k.  
other

*If they say related to wages ask*

What percentage of the average wage do you think pensions should be?

*comments*

10) If for every 10p additional income tax and national insurance contributions you paid the pensions paid to the elderly could go up by 30p, how much more would you be willing to pay?

*comments*

11) Do you think those who have paid very few or no national insurance contributions should be treated differently when a pensioner, from those who have?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

12) Some people say that if a person has seldom worked then they should not be assisted when they are too old to work, others say that the past should be forgotten. What do you think?

not assisted  
past forgotten  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

13) What things would you take into consideration if you had to decide whether or not a pensioner deserved to get social security?

14) Do you think there are any pensioners getting social security who do not deserve to?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

If yes ask

- a) Are they typical of pensioners?
- b) Are they typical of pensioners around here?

If their definition of deserve is not need and if they think that there are some pensioners who do not deserve benefit ask

- c) If a pensioner is really in need of financial assistance should they get some sort of help even if they don't really deserve it?

15) Are you satisfied or dissatisfied in general with the treatment of pensioners by the social security system in this country at present?

satisfied  
dissatisfied  
d.k.  
other

If they say dissatisfied ask

What exactly do you find unsatisfactory?

I should now like to ask you some similar questions on your views on the financial provision made for the unemployed and how you think they should be treated.

16) Some people say that the unemployed are lazy and do not deserve assistance, others say that it is not their fault that there are no jobs. What do you think?

lazy  
no jobs  
d.k.  
other

comments

17) Do you think benefit should be provided for all the unemployed or just those who wouldn't have enough to live on without it?

everyone  
those without enough  
d.k.  
other

comments

18) We are interested in people's views on the amount of money which the unemployed get in social security benefits at present. Some people say that they get too much, others too little and others just enough. What do you think?

too much  
too little  
just enough  
d.k.  
other

comments

19) What do you think should be the amount of benefit paid to a single unemployed man per week?

*If they answer questions 19 and 20 and 21 in % then miss out 22*

20) And what do you think should be paid to a couple neither of whom is working and who have no children?

21) What do you think should be the amount of benefit paid to a couple neither of whom is working and who have two young children?

22) Should the amount of benefit paid to the unemployed be just enough for them to manage on or should it be related to the average wage paid at that time?

just enough  
related to wages  
d.k.  
other

*If they say wage related ask*

What percentage of the average wage do you think unemployment benefit should be?

23) What do you think the average weekly wage of a male person at work is?

24) If for every 10p additional tax you paid the benefit paid to the unemployed could go up by 30p how much more would you be willing to pay?

25) Do you think that those who have paid little or no national insurance contributions should be treated differently from those who have?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

*If yes then ask*

In what ways?

26) Several policies have been suggested for dealing with unemployment. Will you tell me if you approve or disapprove of each of the following?  
a) Spend more money on training and retraining the unemployed so that they could get jobs.

approve  
disapprove  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

b) Reduce the amount of money paid to the unemployed so that they will go out and look for a job?

approve  
disapprove  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

- c) Introduce public work schemes and make the unemployed work on these so that they are not getting money for nothing?

approve  
disapprove  
d.k.  
other

comments

- 
- d) Reduce the working week so that there are enough jobs to go round

approve  
disapprove  
d.k.  
other

comments

- 
- e) Is there anything else you would like to see the government do about the unemployment?

- 
- 27) Why do you think most people go to work?

If they say money ask

Is that the only reason?

.

- 
- 28) Do you think there are many people who can get more on social security than they can when working?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

If yes then ask

What if anything should be done about this?

---

Use the following questions if the respondent has not already mentioned the points when asked what should be done or if he answered other than yes to question 28

(WAGE STOP)

- a) Do you think a man who could get a job at pay less than he gets on social security should have his benefit cut to this lower amount?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

comments

comments continued

**(WAGE SUPPLEMENT)**

- b) Do you think the government should pay benefit to workers on low wages while they are working?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

comments

**(MINIMUM WAGE)**

Do you think there should be a minimum wage?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

comments



*(CHILD BENEFITS)*

- d) Some people are suggesting that the state should pay higher child benefits to ensure that no children are in need, neither the children of the unemployed or of the employed. Do you think this is a good idea?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

- 29) What things would you take into consideration if you had to decide whether or not an unemployed person deserved to get social security?

- 30) Do you think there are any unemployed getting social security benefits who do not deserve to?

yes  
no  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

*If yes ask*

- a) Are they typical of the unemployed?  
b) Are they typical of the unemployed who live round here?

*If their definition of deserve is not need and if they think there are some unemployed who do not really deserve help ask*

- c) If an unemployed person is in real need of financial assistance should they get some sort of financial help even if they don't really deserve it?

- 31) Are you satisfied or dissatisfied in general with the treatment of the unemployed by the social security system in this country at present?

satisfied  
dissatisfied  
d.k.  
other

*If they say dissatisfied ask*

What exactly do you find unsatisfactory?

- 32) The newspapers often contain references to social security. I would like you to look at the following extracts and tell me if you think the incidents they refer to are fair to the people on social security.

*Hand them the examples*

*Note any comments they make.*

ask while they are looking at the written newspaper extracts

32) Do you think the situations described are common or uncommon?

a) common  
uncommon

b) common  
uncommon

c) common  
uncommon

comments

---

Ask while showing them cartoons

Some people have said that these cartoons are too near the truth to be funny. What do you think?

comments

a)

---

b)

- 33) The Department of Health and Social Security and the government are often criticised for failing to publicise information about social security provision. In order to find out if this criticism is justified we have included a few questions about rights to and rates of benefit.

Do you know roughly how much basic state retirement pension a single person would get per week at present if he had worked all his life?

- 34) If he had seldom paid national insurance contributions roughly what would a single pensioner get from social security per week?

- 35) How much benefit would an unemployed man get per week if he is married with two young children, if he had never been previously unemployed and if he had only recently become unemployed?

- 36) If he had seldom worked or paid national insurance contributions do you know how much an unemployed man with two young children would get per week?

Now I would like you to listen to some cases of people receiving social security and I would like you to tell me how you think they should be dealt with

#### CASE 1

Mr Rodger worked as a draughtsman for most of his life until the firm he worked for closed down. This was two years ago and he was then 56. Since then he has been unable to get a job. At most of the interviews he has had he was told that they were looking for a younger man, at others he was given no reason for not being offered a job. He is married with two grown up children who no longer live in the area and one younger son who is still a student. His wife is the same age as him and has been unable to find a job since she has no training or experience. In any case her husband does not want her to work since he feels that he should be the bread-winner.

What would you like to see done in this case?

*Encourage respondent to respond freely but if he is not talkative or if he doesn't make his views on the following issues clear use the following prompts.*

- a) Does he deserve to get any social security?

*If he answers no to a) ask*

*Should he get any benefit at all?*

- b) Do you think this situation is common among the unemployed?

---

CASE 2

Mr Hall has been unemployed for a year and a half. He has a wife and three children aged 10, 6 and 4. Before he became unemployed this time he had worked for several employers as a heavy goods driver and had had several periods of unemployment. He says every time he starts working his stomach ulcers get bad but when he is not working his stomach ulcers get better and so the Dr. will not certify him unfit for work. He has been unable to find another job since driving is his only skill and his previous bad work record goes against him. He was offered a job as a night watchman but he refused it since he thought it might be bad for his health and since it doesn't pay much more than he can get on social security.

What would you like to see done in this case?

Use prompts as above

- a) Does he deserve to get any social security?

If he answers no to a) ask

Should he get any benefit at all?

Do you think this situation is common among the unemployed?

---

CASE 3

Mr. McLean is 68 and has retired from his job at the bank where he has worked all his life. When his wife died 2 years ago he went to live with his son and family. His son is a lawyer getting a good salary and doesn't like taking money from his father to pay for his keep. Mr. McLean senior receives an occupational pension which has been inflation proofed and is equal to half his salary and he has paid national insurance contributions all his life.

What are your views on this situation?

Use prompts as above

- a) Does he deserve to get any social security?

If no to a) ask

Should he get any benefit at all?

Do you think many pensioners are as well provided for as Mr McLean?

#### CASE 4

Robert Mair left school last year when he was 16 with in 'O' Level in English at D grade and no other Qualifications. He has been unable to find a job although he looked quite hard at first. Now he feels as if he will never find a job and doesn't go to the Job Centre as often as he used to.

What would you like to see done in this case?

*Use prompts as above*

- a) Does he deserve to get any social security?

*If no to a) ask*

Should he get any sort of assistance at all?

Do you think this situation is common?

#### CASE 5

Mr Fergusen has spent most of his life working abroad. He returned to his home town last year when his wife died and he stayed with his sister until he managed to get a place of his own. He is now 66, has no private income, apart from £200 which he has saved and he has paid very few national insurance contributions.

What would you like to see done in this case?

*Use prompts as above*

- a) Does he deserve to get any social security?

*If no to a) ask*

Should he get any benefit at all?

Do you think there are many pensioners who haven't paid enough national insurance contributions to entitle them to a retirement pension?

- 37) Some people getting a national insurance benefit have an income below that prescribed as basic by the Supplementary Benefits Commission. Should something be done about this?

- 38) Do you think society has a duty to ensure that everyone in it has enough to live on before anyone gets any extra or do you think everyone should be free to earn as much as they can?

everyone  
free to earn  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

- 39) Do you think the differences in people's living standards within this country are

too large  
too small  
just right?  
d.k.  
other

*comments*

Now, can I ask you some questions about yourself?

- 40) What is your occupation?

*If they don't specify ask*

Are you employed at present?

- 41) Are you married?

*If yes ask*

How many children do you have?

- 42) a) Have you ever been unemployed?

*If yes to a) ask the following questions, if no go on to 43*

b) How long for?

c) Were you satisfied with your treatment?

*If no to c) ask*

Why not?

Ask those who have never been unemployed

- 43) If you were unemployed would you have any hesitation about claiming unemployment benefit?

If yes ask

Why?

- b) And would you have any hesitation about claiming supplementary benefit if you were eligible?

If yes ask

Why?

- c) Do you think it likely that you will become unemployed?

---

Ask those who are not pensioners

- 44) Are you a member of an occupational pension scheme?

- b) Would you have any hesitation about claiming a state retirement pension when you reach retirement age?

If yes ask

Why?

- c) And would you have any hesitation about claiming a supplementary pension?

If yes ask

Why?

---

Ask those who are pensioners

- 45) Are you happy about the way the state treats you as a pensioner?

If no ask

Why not?

Finally, we are trying to discover what sort of picture people have in their heads when they are asked to consider groups like pensioners, the unemployed, etc. We have made up a list of adjectives and would like you to use them to give us an idea of your impression of a typical pensioner, etc. e.g. If the adjectives given were happy and sad, and you thought the typical pensioner was generally very happy, you would put a cross in the box beside happy, if you thought they were generally very sad, then you would put the cross beside sad. If you thought the answer lay somewhere in between put the cross somewhere in the middle. We are trying to get at people's first impressions, the picture that springs to their mind when the word is first mentioned so we would be grateful if you could tick the boxes as quickly as you can.



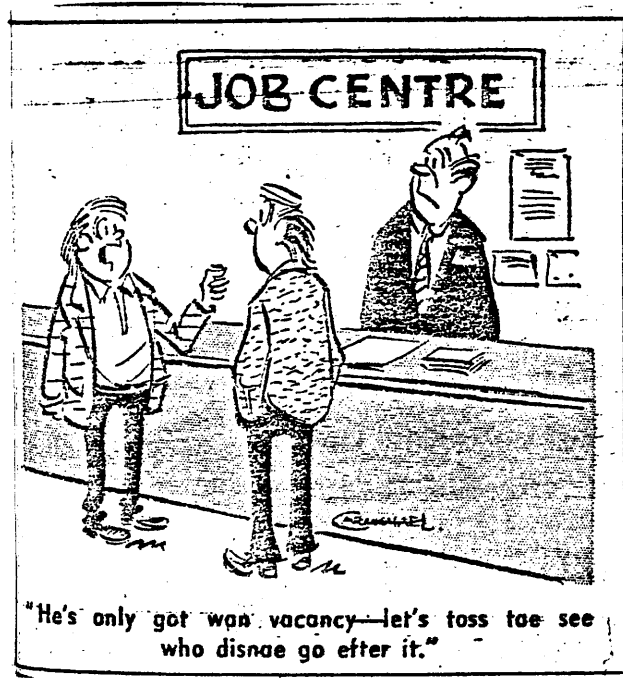


### Off To The Sun

A N. Edinburgh reader had to go to Social Security last week. Two men in front complained bitterly they hadn't received last week's unemployment benefit. The girl at the desk explained why and added, if they could come back next day, they'd get their money. Sorry, they were off to Benidorm!

### Pathetic

A LINLITHGOW building contractor offered 18 jobs to bricklayers at £150 a week. Only one man turned up for interview. He told the boss he didn't really want a job—he was only there "to keep himself straight with the burrow."



### Like It Or Not

A GROUP of girls were discussing diets in a Grangemouth cafe. One had spent a fortune on slimming biscuits. Another was going to cut all her sweets and cakes. That's when an old lady leaned over from the next table. "I'm on a diet, too," she said. "It's called the pension."

