

The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task

Shigetaka Uchida

Professor of political science

- I The Third Category of Social Science.
- II Characteristics of the New Stage in World History.
- III The Major Task of Futurology.
- IV Futurology and the Role of the Third World.

I. The Third Category of Social Science

Futurology is a newly rising discipline in social science. Accordingly, there is a serious question whether it is possible to be an established science or not. For, it is neither a science of facts of past or present, nor a philosophy of pure logical system of the world.

In my view futurology is a third category of social science which I call theoretic science. According to my opinion theoretic science means a synthesis of science and philosophy, reality and ideal, causality and teleology. Such theoretic sciences may indicate the new image of future society and principles of social planning and policies.

In truth can we find various kinds of theoretic science:

Theoretical sociology, like those of K. Mannheim's "Systematic Sociology." and of P. A. Sorokin's "Social Philosophies of an Age of Crisis";

Theoretical Politics, like those of H. J. Laski's "The State in Theory and Practice," E. H. Carr's "New Society" or "The Twenty Years' Crisis," and D. Easton's "Political System";

Theoretical economics, like those of J. M. Keynes' "The general Theory of Employment, Interest and Money," or "The End of Laissez-Faire" and G. Myrdal's "Beyond the Welfare State."

For instances of their theories:

J. M. Keynes' "the ideal commonwealth" as the theory of econo-

mic growth in his "General Theory" (p. 374).

G. Myrdal's "The democratic Welfare World as an international ideal in his "Beyond the Welfare State" (pp. 165-8).

H. J. Laski's "the competition of ideals" in his evolutionary theory of history (The State, p. 119).

P. A. Sorokins's the integral congition as "the third way of cognition."

S. Webb's the age of "the new synthesis" after "the disintegration of the old synthesis" in his Fabian Essay.

N. Sombart, says "the great synthesis . . . is planning theory and future science at the same time" (Krise and Planung. S. 67.)

The authers refered above, I believe, devote to formulate methods or scientific theories in their respective way. Therefore, it may be said that the theoretic sciences with such meaning, give a new scientific basis to the futurology, distinctive from religion or utopia in the field of social science. At the same time the theoretic science of this kind, I understand, is to be distinct from "policy making" which belongs to the field of social engineering.

. In this meaning policy making, I understand, is the making of a concrete design for social reforms or the administrative measures to put the philosophical principle or the general principle of law into practice in particular cases.

In my view, theoretic science may prescribe the future image of humane life of society by the following method:

Scientific analysis—theoretical criticism—higher rational synthesis.

(3) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task.

The first mode means pure scientific operation; The second is logical criticism to find some contradictions or deficits in facts or realities; the third is a higher synthesis according to principles of philosophy to exclude contradictions in realities and formulate a new image of future world.

My view of theoretic science is, I think, near to that of K. R. Popper's "the theoretical social sciences" in his "The Poverty of Historicism" which recognizes the important role of philosophy in social science.

In such a meanings, "philosophy," is a synthetic and logical system of world view which formulates an ideal image of society and state, and indicates principles of social planning and policies in concrete. The philosophy of this kind is to be distinct from the paradise of religion or an utopia which are not necessary to be logical, nor indicate practicable principles of their realization in the real world.

In conclusion, there is the question whether the prediction of social trend in society is to be judged or measured by the same variables with the forecasting of the weather in natural world or not. Speaking plainly, variables of them are not the same. At least, we may say the weather is changed mainly by the causality of natural law, on the contrary, social trend will be decided by the compound operation of causality and teleology.

In consequence, the prediction or forecasting of social change seems to be more difficult than that of natural affairs. Moreover,

in variable elements of social change the causality itself is not necessary certain, nor definite and the teleological elements are of very complexity. Among them we find many factors; feeling, want, expectation, ideal, ideology and other motives of human mind. Therefore, the probability of social prediction is to be depend on the more higher development of precise science.

II. Characteristics of the New Stage in World History

In general, the processes of human history are interpreted to have taken several stages of development. This view will be admitted by many of the evolutionary theory of history in a broad meaning. Roughly speaking may we find four stages of history as follows:

The Primitive, the Ancient, the Mediaeval, and the Modern.

The demarcation of these historical stages may be, I think, derived from the comparative study of the works of many prominent historians. Among them, Hegel's idealistic interpretation of history with a dialectic method; Comte's evolutionary theory of three stages of intellect as theological, metaphysical and positive; Marx's materialistic interpretation of history as history of class struggle, and so on.

Now, there is a serious question whether our present time is to be interpreted as a new stage of world history distinctive from the modern time or not.

In regard to this problem, we find various opinions. But in

(6) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task

this case, avoiding discussion about the problem, I should like to state my opinion briefly. I take a standpoint making a distinction between the modern time and the present.

Comparing characteristics of the present time with those of the modern, we find several distinctions as follows :

The Modern	The Present
1. The age of the first industrial revolution ; from the light industry to heavy and chemical industries.	The second industrial revolution ; The postindustrial society and the age of high mass consumption.
2. The system of capitalistic free enterprise ; the age of unplanned competition and the occurrence of periodic, economic depression.	The system of mixed economy, with variety of economic systems ; the age of planned and controlled economy in private and public sectors in order to attain the continuous economic growth.
3. The age of bourgeois democracy ; the system of limited suffrage and the government of bourgeois parties in the main.	The age of mass democracy with planned policies ; The popular sovereignty with the system of universal suffrage.
4. The age of bourgeois society ; modern industrial civilization and the nightwatch state.	The age of mass society ; the community of mass civilization and the welfare state.
5. The nation state and imperialism ; from nationalism to imperialism.	The age of true international community ; from the United Nations to a world federation and the democratic welfare world.

Such characteristics of the present time found their inception at the end of the first World War in this century and have deve-

loped themselves definitely more and more with the second World War; the emergence of atomic bombs, the Organization of The United Nations and the successive independence of developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Concerning the interpretation of history, I do not take simple materialism nor idealism. For, both of them are one sided view to see only one side of truth in history. According to materialism, matter determines monistically the process of history, in consequence, it can not recognize the creativity and planned activity of spirit. On the contrary, simple idealism asserts too far the absolute value and almighty of spirit without understanding the true nature or just function of matter in human life and history.

Then, I take "the pluralist interpretation of history" for granted to be true and scientific. In my view of history, human history proceeds its course of evolution or progress by the interaction among three factors; material or economic, spiritual or cultural and political in the main. Generally speaking, in the historical process, in the first, the change of economic life including a certain technical innovation arises; in the second, the cultural revolution including the renovation of science and ideas takes place; in the third, when new ideas or philosophies formulate the new image and logical system of society and indicate the new principle of politics and social planing, then organized political movements for reform or revolution of the old world occur with them.

Among these factors, the political factor takes the most impor-

(7) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its major Task.

tant role when the above-mentioned social change has reached at its climax to outbreak a drastic political change. Then, the organized political power, taking the leadership of all national movements for social change, takes decisive action to form a new government in place of old one in order to establish new social order in the first. Next, the new government, enacting the new system of laws with a new constitution, decides various kinds of fundamental policies for the new state, and enables the new society to advance a progressive course of the new line of life in accordance with higher principles of community.

These are the political role when a decisive social change takes place, though may the intensity and method of the change be full of variety in accordance with time and place.

III. The Major Task of Futurology

The task of futurology, with the above-mentioned method, is to formulate the model of future society or human world, and the planning theory or principles of policy in accordance with the characteristics of the new stage of world history. In the concrete can we find three problems, as follows :

The first is the formation of mass society based on the principle of social equality. This means that the present world evolves from class society to classless society. At least, it may be said that the present tends to abolish distinctions or discriminations derived from race, sex, religion, birth, job or profession in principle

and institutions, though are there much distinction in property or income among individuals or groups in economic life.

In other words, in the present world the great mass of people, with few exception, is becoming the working mass, whether they have small property or not. In reality, various kinds of population from laborers in factory or farm to retailers, small workshop owners including many white collars tend to belong to the working mass. Thus has this great mass occupied the overwhelming majority of population in society. In consequence, mass society of actual working people has raised itself on the foreground in the present world.

Thus, many problems about mass society have been raised, as follows:

The tendency of rapid urbanization of great mass of the population with many evils and public nuisance.

The reappréciation of mass civilization.

mass communication and scientific information.

literature of mass society.

problems of mass education.

mass democracy.

Among these problems the foremost is politics of mass society. According to my view, political science means "public socio-controllogy." Therefore, politics is the public function of the state, with a law system and public power, contribute to form and develop the nation and international community through its rational and

(9) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task

planned control.

The main task of government in a mass society may be enumerated, as follows:

1. The complete democratization of mass society, including the combination of representative forms of government with a direct democracy holding a certain form of plebiscite system based on the popular sovereignty.
2. The driving of planned democracy to raise the higher development of the standard of living, both economic and cultural in mass society.
3. The functional change of the state from a negative or inactive state to the positive or active one; from a nightwatch state to a service state or welfare state.
4. The transformation of the nature of state from a class state to a commonwealth based on principles of equality or justice in all fields of social life; that is the formation of a democratic community.

The second major task of futurology is to recognize that the present is the age of socialization in its broad meaning. It involves the problem whether the long term continuation of economic growth and the building of welfare community can be reached at the same time or not.

This contains the problems; the high mass production of economic goods and services and the creation of high mass culture to be fostered on the one hand, and the broad socialization of economic and cultural values including their just distribution on the other.

About this concern, there are two questions. The one is the

question that the continued economic growth will be possible without great depression owing to overproduction.

Even today, there is no proof that any destructive great depression will not occur without the effective planning of international economy put into practice. But I commit the matter to the care of distinguished economists of theoretic economics and econometrics.

As a political scientist, I prefer to indicate that the establishment of the welfare state is becoming one of the most important task in the world at present.

To tell the truth, now the problem of the welfare state is prevailing as a universal task in every field of social science and practical politics from the capitalist world to the socialist one as well, though their principle and policy are full of variety.

For instance, E. H. Carr, in his "New Society" says the present time on the road of proceeding from the nightwatch state to the welfare state; that is, from the state of Laissez-Faire to the state of social servise.

D. C. Marsh says, in the Preface of his "The Future of the Welfare State."

"The phrase of 'Welfare State' epitomized for many of us the kind of society we hoped to see established; very different from that of 1920s and 1930s, and worth fighting for . . . to achieve a greater measure of social justice for all."

This suggests that the phrase of Welfare State has come to the

(11) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task

foreground as a epitome of new society after the second World War, and it means a greater measure of social justice for all in its essence.

According to my view, the welfare state, being a teleological view of the state, means to help the creation of economic and cultural values and the just distribution of such values for the welfare of all people and the human world. In short, it means a higher synthesis of economic community and cultural community as the comprehensive and integral purpose of the state.

In the practical field of policy, from the security of the right to live, to various kinds of social insurance, social and cultural services or reformed educational institutions for mass society. Thus, It may be said that the policy of social welfare includes almost of all human well-being.

IV. Futurology and the Role of the Third World.

The third is to realize the true and real internationalism of the present time which is the most important among the rest. It means the keen need to establish a world federation with a world constitution and the democratic Welfare World as suggested by G. Myrdal.

As practical process of this concern, I enumerate several tasks of international politics, as follows :

1. The amendment of "Charter of the United Nations" in order to form a world government with the executive under the General

Assembly with the power of taxation upon the member states.

2. As the question of the day, granting the Secretary General more executive powers, the functions of the Economic and Social Council, the Unesco and other subordinate organizations or agencies are to be animated and their practicable recommendations to member states to be put into practise as soon as possible.
3. The rational planning of international economy in the field of main peace industries with the policies for the expanding equilibrium of world economy to be put into practice in order to avoid economic panic or arms race.

In the second place, I have to indicate the rising new internationalism advocated by the third world. This new internationalism means what the third world of developing nations on the south of the earth stands up to seek the establishment of new world order with a new international division of labor including the industrialization of their national economies, clearing away many barriers between the north and the south, to raise the standard of economic and cultural living of them to the higher level of international community. Such is the essential idea of new internationalism which the emerging countries of the third world brings forward for the world innovation.

Such demands of the third world have been rapidly manifested after several conferences and their declarations;

Final Communique of the Asian-African Conference, 1955.

Belgrade Declaration of 25 unaligned countries, 1961.

Final Act of UNCTAD, 1964.

(13) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task

Charter of Algiers, 1967.

Among these manifestos "Charter of Algiers" of the group of 77 nations is the most prominent, in the Charter declares :

"The international community has an obligation to rectify these unfavorable trends and to create conditions under which all nations can enjoy economic and social well-being, and have the means to develop their respective resources to enable their peoples to lead a life free from want and fear.

In a world of increasing interdependence peace, progress and freedom are common and indivisible. Consequently the development of developing countries will benefit the developed countries as well.

This is the principal part of the Charter. In principle it imposes upon the international community in general, and the developed countries in particular "an obligation" to rectify international injustice and to assure economic and social well-being for the peoples of the developing countries. In other words this demand means the assertion of the third world to seek the basic reform of world order as their international right.

Based on these principles, the Charter enumerates international policies, as follows :

1. The global policies for development to be adopted as convergent measures of both developed and developing countries.
2. A new and dynamic trade and development policy to be put into practical action.
3. The stabilization of the price of primary products for the benefit of the developing countries.

4. Trade liberation ; the open door policy for the output of the developing countries, and a general system of preferences for the trade of products of the developing countries should be adopted by the developed countries.
5. Development finance and technical assistance with the target of a minimum 1 per cent of each developed countries' Gross national product; and so forth.

These policies or measures, of course, have to be put into practice by the primary responsibility of the developing countries with the co-operation among them.

Considering all these policies and their effective practice to have been taken, how far would the national income and the standard of living be raised? In this connection I may cite a comparative prediction of the raised income among the nations of the world at the end of this century by Harman Kahn (Toward the Year 2000, p. 87) :

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. The preindustrial | \$50 to \$200 per capita |
| 2. Partially industrialized or transitional | \$200 to \$600 per capita |
| 3. Industrial | \$600 to perhaps \$1,500 per capita |
| 4. Mass-consumption or advanced industrial | perhaps \$1,500 to something more than \$4,000 per capita |
| 5. Postindustrial | something over \$4,000 to \$16,000 per capita |

Comparing the annual income of the 1 group with that of the 5 group, it seems too far to overcome the large gap between them. Consequently, as the problem of the present day pessimistic outlooks

(15) The Scientific Basis of Futurology and its Major Task

arise among many observers.

In fact the United States and USSR as advanced industrial state, taking the lead of other high industrial states, set about to increase trade and their economic aid including finance and technical assistance or even the offering of various arms for the development of the developing countries.

But their aid or assistance is far beyond the reach of overcoming the gap between the developing countries and the developed.

Therefore, the decisive action has to be taken in order to correct the international inequality or injustice and to establish the welfare world. In concrete, the construction of a world federation without war, as above mentioned. As practical policy a larger part of \$200 billions of world military expenditure are to be allocated for the economic aid and the development of the developing countries in the broad scale.

Concerning the serious problem, I cite the words of M. K. Gandhi and J. Nehru: Gandhi says,

“What is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason, to believe that there is one law for families, and another for nations.

History, as we know it, is a record of the wars of the world.

... If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive today. (Indian Home Rule, pp. 85—86.)

and Nehru says.

“If our ideal is to be one of social equality and a world federation, then perforce we must work for a socialist state. (Selected Writings of Jawaharlar Nehru, p. 333.)

These words are worthy of note as representative opinions of leading men among the emerging nations. The one is the prospect of the peaceful world without war from the standpoint of world community, the other asserts progressive socialism in the domestic, and a world federation in the international, based on the principle of equality.

Anyhow, it may be said that the greatest task of futurology is not necessary depend upon the greatest state with the highest standard of living, but rather on the shoulders of the third world of emerging countries.

In such a meaning, we must say that the future world is that of the third world and the next century is the century of the third world.

In this connection I remind the words of Secretary General of the U. N., U. Thant; he says,

“The U. N. is weak and inadequate today, but it is the only hope for mankind to get out of the thermonuclear jungle and to a civilized world community.”

Keeping these words in their mind, leaders and peoples of the third world have to exert with their majority power and aspirations in international politics to strengthen the structure of the U. N. and to construct a new peaceful world community.