

Course Name- B.A.L.L.B. IVth Sem.

Subject- Political Science

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Topic- Welfare State

# **Features, Functions and Criticism of Welfare State**

Welfare State undertakes numerous functions which are divided into A. Regulative B. Protective and C. Welfare functions

## **Features of Welfare State**

The following are the basic features of the Welfare State

### **1. Emphasises the worth of man**

Welfare State emphasises the worth and dignity of the individual and helps and assist him to lead a respectable life in the society. It regards all individuals on an equal footing irrespective of their social and economic status.

### **2. Undertakes progressive measures**

Welfare State tries to implement progressive measures like land reforms, agricultural development, price control, public distribution system of essential commodities, provision of health, education, sanitation, communications etc.

### **3. Undertakes wide-range of Social Services**

Welfare State undertakes wide-range of social services for the betterment of its citizens. They include measures like eradication of untouchability, dowry, child marriage, sati, etc. It takes steps to abolish illiteracy, poverty and unemployment. It established schools, hospitals and other institutions to meet the needs of the people. It provides unemployment relief, maternity benefit, old-age and other social benefits.

### **Functions of Welfare State**

Welfare State undertakes numerous functions which are divided into

- A. Regulative
- B. Protective and
- C. Welfare functions

#### **A. Regulative Functions**

These include: (i) maintaining law and order, (ii) promoting peace (iii) curbing anti-social elements and their activities, (iv) putting down

communal, caste and class clashes, (v) checking exploitation of labourers by passing necessary legislation etc.

## **B. Protective Functions**

These include: (i) maintenance of internal order, (ii) protecting territorial integrity, (iii) maintenance of basic institutions, (iv) maintenance of sound net-work of postal system, transport and communication systems (v) regulation of trade, markets, weights and measures, (vi) prevention of theft, decoity and other criminal activities, (vii) conducting foreign relations with other countries, (viii) administering justice and punishing criminals, and (ix) safeguarding the country's territories sovereignty and independence against external attacks and invasions etc.

## **C. Welfare Functions**

These include: (i) eradicating the spread of contagious diseases like malaria, cholera etc. (ii) eradicating illiteracy by establishing educational institutions (iii) reducing the economic inequalities by taking steps for distribution of national income, (iv) providing employment opportunities to all qualified persons (v) improving the working conditions of the workers by fixing hours of work, compensation etc. (vi) creating healthy atmosphere in and outside industries. (vii) providing adequate social services such as unemployment benefits, disability benefits, maternity benefits etc. (viii) introducing jail reforms for speedy disposal of cases and reducing the cost of judicial litigation, (ix) introducing land reforms, (x) encouraging cottage and small-scale industries, (xi) undertaking Community Development Programmes, and (xii) checking social evils etc. In brief Welfare State provides full

employment, social security, housing, health and education for all people.

## **Criticism of Welfare State**

There are a few writers who criticised the idea of Welfare State on the following grounds:

### **1. Very expensive**

Welfare State, is an expensive state and is beyond the reach of poorer nations. Providing a wide range of social services involves a lot of expenditure.

### **2. Kills individual initiative and freedom**

It is said that Welfare State curbs the individual freedom, initiative and self-help. It retards moral development because it makes a man inferior and dependent on charity. It develops in him proper mentality.

### **3. Undue importance to Bureaucracy**

It is also argued that Welfare State gives undue importance to bureaucracy because it is bureaucracy which makes policies and implements them.

#### **4. Leads to inefficiency**

It is pointed out that Welfare State undertakes too many functions which in turn results in administrative inefficiency and mismanagement of human and natural resources.

#### **5. Retards the work of Association**

Finally, it is said that Welfare State regulates the work of voluntary organisations in the society. They are pushed back and the willingness to undertake social service activities on the part of the associations are undermined.

#### **Importance**

Most of the criticisms given above, are not correct. In order

to make the Welfare State an ideal system, some steps have to be taken. They are: (1) Defining the objectives and laying down the means to achieve them; (2) Avoiding red-tapism (3) Periodic evolution of Welfare Schemes (4) Checking totalitarianism and (5) Encouraging voluntary associations etc.,

If the above measures are adopted the Welfare State may certainly become heaven of peace because it reconciles individual freedom with the authority of the state, brings about a fair degree of equality of income among all people and recognises the dignity and worth of the human beings.