

# PLANNING FOR THE 1960s IN THE 1970s : Part I

*A-review of some of the implications of three reports on the United Nations System in terms of the total network of organizations making up the world system and the complex network of interacting problem areas (\*)*

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## A. Study of the Capacity of the U.N. Development System (« Jackson Report »)

*(Quotes from this Study refer to volumes « I » and « II »)*

### INTRODUCTION

The Sixth Session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) designated Sir Robert Jackson as Commissioner to undertake a study of the capacity of the United Nations system to handle the resources made available by the UNDP first, at their present level, and second, if doubled over the next five years. The « Jackson Report » is the result of a study by a team of people in 1968-1969. The study originated with the UNDP's Inter-Agency Consultative Board. The importance of the report is due to its coverage of the major problems plaguing the operation of the UN family of organizations. Despite the emphasis on development, many of the problems clearly exist for non-development programmes. The Study is extremely forthright in its criticism of the UN structure and operations and for this reason the United Nations should be congratulated for permitting it to be published and circulated to the press, particularly in its « unexpurgated form ».

For the first time, an overall view of the United Nations operational mechanism is available. It reveals in a fairly systematic way many of the problems which hitherto have been known only partially by those people moving in United Nations or international organization circles, discussed as « corridor gossip », or cited in conversations as justification for a cynical

attitude toward UN effectiveness. Up until this report, these problems have not been adequately reported in journals or the press, because those people with the knowledge to write about them held positions which would be endangered by such disclosures. Books on the topic were discounted as the work of disenchanted individuals. The Study is therefore important because it for the first time looks behind the glossy public relations image of the United Nations — an image which is held dear by both members of the public, people in official positions and some academics in the field of international relations. Political scientists are particularly apt to undertake research as though the UN was a highly coordinated unit under governmental control via the General Assembly (see ALGER, C.F. Research on research : a decade of quantitative and field research on international organizations. Paper presented to American Political Science Association annual meeting, September 1969). It is now possible to acknowledge non-political weaknesses of the U.N., cite a responsible study of them, and investigate means of overcoming them. The Study considers procedures for planning and operating the development programme, by introducing the need for the concept of a United Nations Development Cooperation Cycle (UNDDC) and an information systems concept. The questions of organization, human resources and financial resources are also considered. The conclusions of the Study are now being considered by the Specialized Agencies and Member States. As it points out, many important decisions have been postponed « pending the publication of the Capacity Study ».

(\*) Extracts from: JUDGE, A.J.N. International, organizations and the generation of the will to change — the information systems required. Brussels, UAI, 1970, 89 pages (UAI Study Papers INF / 5)

The most important recommendations involve a complete restructuring of the UN development operations with considerably increased power for the UNDP. It is recommended that this should be backed up by a three part computer-based information system to deal with : technical and scientific information (documents), economic and social information (statistics), and operational and administrative questions (budget and project control).

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The world has been in need of a study of the international system of this quality for many years. It is most unfortunate that it was necessary to focus the Study on one set of problems — development problems — from the point of view of one organization, the UN — and more particularly the UNDP. These may be necessary evils, for otherwise the Study might have proved too broad to be actively considered by any group. Dangers arise because on superficial reading — and the length of the report encourages this — one obtains the impression that

- a) all important problems are development problems or may be considered so
- b) the UN — and particularly the UNDP — is the most important means of coping with these problems
- c) there are no other organizations of importance to the attack on world problems which are active internationally.

From a management perspective it is vitally important to recognize that

- the attempts to coordinate the UN system programmes represent the most general attempt at global development coordination in existence or envisaged;
- these coordination attempts are not the only areas of programme coordination within the world system. Much coordination has been achieved and is planned at the local, national and international level which is only indirectly linked to UN activity;
- these other networks of coordination " and information processing are however designed to cope with problem areas with which the UN is vitally concerned. In many cases, the UN is forced to work through these networks, whether they are international associations of specialists, world youth movements or the distribution system of a group of multinational business enterprises;
- unless the analysis of the global situation which the UN (and non-UN) programmes must face, is based on a management analysis of coordination and information networks in general, rather than a management analysis of the UN system, agency structure, or special problem areas, then the proposed solutions run the risk of recommending organizational structures, programmes and

information networks will duplicate one another as well as more efficient and better funded structures outside the UN system.

- A management approach to the UN system must, therefore, recognize a five level problem of data processing, coordination and management guidance of :
- each individual UN agency, which is one part of the
  - UN system, which itself is only one part of the
  - system of intergovernmental bodies, which is one part of the
  - international system of :
    - governmental bodies
    - multinational business enterprises
    - international nongovernmental, nonprofit bodieswhich form one level of the
  - world system of local, national, regional, and international bodies.

These networks of interacting bodies are both a source of problems, due to their own lack of coordination, and an important resource for the attack on the problems with which the UN is concerned.

It is important to avoid the assumption that improvement at either of the first two problem levels will necessarily produce an effective solution to the problems arising outside the UN system or interacting with it. Weaknesses in coordination and information systems, critical to the functioning of the UN and its programmes outside the UN system may not be detected unless the overall coordination problem is clearly determined in advance. The length and *apparent* comprehensiveness of the report diverts attention and resources away from the need for a broader perspective view of the world system as a whole. Such a study could well have been undertaken as a background to the Capacity Study, or because of the lack of such a study, should have been recommended by the Study.

The great danger lies in the probability that the United Nations system public relations and public information programmes will lead the informed public and many decision-makers to believe that the UN is doing all that can or need be done and has the attack on every world problem well coordinated. This automatically devalues the activities of other bodies, reduces the allocation of resources and support to them, dampens initiative from the local and national level which is not channelled through governmental and UN channels and effectively nullifies the type of constructive criticism which can lead to renewal of effort, new approaches, and galvanization of the political will necessary to the accomplishment of all international (and UN) programme objectives.

Given that the terms of reference require a focus on a particular part of the world system, it is then important to assess whether the Study attempts to uncover the interaction between the UN family of organizations involved in development and those outside the UN system with similar or related concerns with which it does or should interact. No systems study is complete if it restricts its attention to problems within the boundary of the system and does not consider the environment within which the system operates. This is the case here, it would appear.

## a) Subject areas interacting with development are ignored

The term «development» is a very loose one used to cover many problem areas. In the Study it is considered as a major subsection of economic and social questions. The world is, however, faced with a multitude of non-development problems: Mental health, urban decay, racial discrimination, etc. Much confusion is created when the advocates of development conceive of topics such as education, futures research, pollution, policy sciences, etc. as subsections of development. For the groups working in these areas often consider development to be merely a subsection of their own field of concern. What then constitutes an adequate mechanism for dealing with the problems and how is the evaluation to be made? It is clearly in the interests of the promoters of any change or project to imply that their proposed problem coverage *policy* is «comprehensive» — whilst soliciting funds — and then limit themselves at an *operational* level to what is manageable — once the funds have been obtained. This form of misrepresentation can lead to assumptions that a given project or programme will solve the comprehensive problems and to serious, but hidden, gaps which will only be detected years later (some projects, according to the Study, may take up to a decade before an evaluation report reaches the sponsoring bodies) and which the specialized system created will not be able to detect.

Development does not take place in a vacuum. Development, whether agricultural or industrial or «economic and social», leads over an increasingly short period of time to environmental pollution. It might even be considered a major consequence. This question is totally ignored by the Study. The word pollution is mentioned once in attempting to

justify «non-country» oriented programmes. The requirements of a feedback information system to detect consequences of over-development and assist in handling them, are not discussed. Note that pollution does not only arise due to intensive industrial development but also in agricultural areas such as in developing countries a) where fertilizers are used for *crops* and b) where *farm animals* are reared.

The Study attempts to structure inter-Agency relationships, five year programmes, and the proposed information system in terms of the special characteristics and possibly temporary relative importance of development. This rearrangement may be entirely unsuited to the possibly even more dramatic problems of pollution and famine relief (both of which will according to some observers reach crisis importance within the period covered by the Study). Information systems and organizations cannot be rapidly restructured even under crisis conditions. It is very difficult to increase their response time to crisis.

National and international discussions are at the moment accelerating to the point where an international agency will undoubtedly be established to focus on pollution problems. It is highly probable that this will be a major issue at the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Sweden. What sort of information system is needed to ensure that development projects do not have cumulative or interaction effects on the environment? What sort of feedback mechanism from any such agency's field observers is required to guide development planners? What is the organization reaction time provided for in the case of a pollution or other crisis? How can the development level be balanced against the pollution level?

What other fields of activity, apart from pollution, may be affected by the consequences of development? How many relevant fields are not adequately covered by UN agencies, by whom are they covered, and what factors mitigate against using this information?

The Study ignores the implications in the arguments illustrated by the following quote

«The most probable assumption is that every single one of the old demarcations, disciplines, and faculties is going to become obsolete and a barrier to learning as well as to understanding. The fact that we are shifting from a Cartesian view of the universe, in which the accent has been on parts and elements, to a configuration view, with the emphasis on wholes and patterns, challenges every single dividing line between areas of study and knowledge.»

Implementation of the relevant recommendations of the Study would therefore lull the world into believing that the best was being done to attack world problems whilst due to the specialization on development, the system is rendered even more vulnerable to crises arising from different types of problem. The more problem oriented or specialized an organization becomes, the less easy it is for it to adapt to new circumstances.

It is not clear whether the Study advisors included persons from all fields which interact with development. That this should be possible is itself dangerous in view of the seriousness with which the recommendations of the Study will be considered.

#### **b) Organizations interacting with the UN development system are ignored**

The UNDP interacts with the outside world mainly through the other Specialized Agencies. It is their projects which are financed by UNDP funds. It is clearly important to consider the interaction between the UNDP and the Agencies. In addition, given the fact that the Specialized Agencies themselves are acting within the development framework of a maze of other organizations, then, clearly, equal attention should be paid to the effectiveness of the interactions of these Agencies with the non-UN bodies with which they are in contact, if any global strategy is to be formulated as the Study suggests.

The terms of reference request that the Study include « the use of inter-governmental organizations not only within but also outside the United Nations family... » Reference to such organizations is however very vague. It is not clear whether the authors are aware of the number of such bodies. There is no discussion of the problems of coordination with O.E.C.D. and the possibility that the UN and O.E.C.D. chains of national development information centres will duplicate one another. Casual reference is made to some of the development banks. These bodies are definitely not considered as an integral part of the overall development system.

The Study appears to be totally unaware of the existence of *international* nongovernmental organizations of which there are now some 2,600. This figure is expected to increase to 5,600 by 1985. The proportion of these in fields associated more or less directly with development namely : social welfare,

economics, finance, commerce, agriculture, industry, transport, travel, technology, science, health, medicine, amounts to 52 % (\*). Approximately 40% of these have *national* organizations as members, the remainder have individual members. (Yearbook of International Organizations 1968-1969, Brussels, U.A.I.; also Skjelsbaek, Kjell. Development of the system of international organizations; a diachronic study. Paper presented at the third conference of the International Peace Research Association, 1969).

The impression that the report creates, even accepting the limits imposed by its terms of reference, is that every single development project of programme is planned and carried out entirely on the initiative of the UN Specialized Agencies. If other organizations are involved, they are either « voluntary » or « national » and are under the closest of Agency supervision.

The Study may therefore be considered to be somewhat unsystematic in its examination of the organizational context in which the UN organizations carry out their development programmes. A systems study should examine or at least estimate the number and types of bodies with which the system in question interacts, in order to discover what such bodies supply to the system (inputs) and what they require from the system (outputs) — both at the present and in improved circumstances. This is not done and therefore the degree of dependence of the UN on these bodies is not known.

The conclusions of the Study are therefore based on a narrow perspective of how to improve the UN development capacity whatever the implications. Since even the Study acknowledges the secondary role of the UN development system, it would seem logical that some account should be taken of the effects of its programmes on the organizations with which the UN is in contact, firstly to ensure that their effectiveness will not be decreased, and secondly, to ensure that the effects of the changes on them will not create conditions which reduce the effectiveness of the UN programmes.

An objective of the UN, and surely the UNDP, is to accelerate development. The objective is not, however,

(\*) « What is the NGO interest in development ? I cannot think of a single NGO that has not expressed an interest in development...Many...would welcome identification of their own organizations' interests with...development. » (Roosevelt, C. The politics of development ; a role for interest and pressure groups. Paper presented at SID Conference, 1969)

to accelerate development *via UN channels* — this may be a strategy, it is not an objective. The Study ignores the possibility of a higher degree of interaction between the UN, other intergovernmental organizations and international nongovernmental organizations — with preservation of autonomy on all sides — leading to the creation of a much higher powered development network stimulated and catalysed by the UN system. It would appear that the UN (and the UNDP) wants to make the development problem entirely its own, however few the resources at its disposal. *Assistance* from outside is not required. The Study does however advocate increased *use*, by the UN system, of bodies outside the system, although it is not clear what bodies are meant by this. It is quite apparent that the UN is uninterested in any projects arising from initiative outside the system, but it is admitted that it may be necessary to delegate some of the UN workload in this way :

«...there is a degree of burden which the appropriate Specialized Agency is already supporting; if this is proving too great, there is an obvious case for having the project executed by a contractor outside the United Nations system, under international supervision. » (II, p. 183)

There seems to be a total lack of realization that many bodies outside the UN system are anxious to undertake projects and that adequate machinery is necessary to contact and encourage them to work on UN projects. Many bodies in fact find the UN to be far too slow to undertake development projects or to detect and respond to new problem areas. The UN should recognize the distinction between its programmes which have been approved by the long government administrative process and programmes initiated by outside bodies on topics which have not yet become of sufficient political importance to penetrate through the administrative machinery. By developing organizational and information systems to deal with the first only, the UN is in fact creating an operational definition of development projects as being those which have been approved by political processes. This process may not even detect problems which are significant from a development perspective. *The time lag between detection of, and action on, a growing problem by a non-political body and recognition of a problem by political bodies may be precisely the difference between a minor problem requiring few resources and a major problem requiring much more resources* (unnecessarily). UN machinery should facilitate the attack on both political development problems and pre-political development problems.

There is no understanding of the actual or potential relationship between governmental and nongovernmental organizations — which should be considered « partners for development ». It is instructive to compare this attitude with the following :

« At the same time we have been building a vast network of nonpublic organizations having a governmental character and self-assigned responsibilities. Each is organized upon an interest base, rather than a territorial one. Thus, trade associations effectively exert governmental constraints upon their corporation members, and professional associations govern the conduct of physicians, engineers, lawyers, and the rest. Trade unions, churches, and recreational groups have been similarly structured to serve the special interests of their members. All these groups are governments in the essential meanings of that term; they are regulative agencies with power to exert sanctions and enforce control. Increasingly, they have come to have nationwide realms for they have risen as manifestations of a society rapidly moving into the post-industrial, post-city stage of its development. Combined with the thousands of « public governments », they contribute to a complex network of policy and decision centers... The complexity of contemporary society leaves no group independent of the others, and the welfare of any one group is now unavoidably bound up with the welfare of the others. » (Webber, M.M. The Post-City Age. Daedalus, Fall 1968, p. 1106-1107. Issue on The Conscience of the City)

From the Study one would imagine, and many of its readers in the developing countries will be led to imagine, that the world system is composed of the UN, one or two other intergovernmental bodies, governments, a few national associations and individuals. That a UN document should convey this impression is extremely irresponsible. An educational opportunity has been effectively lost and misconceptions reinforced. In the light of this perspective, it would probably be reasonable to recommend a UN / UNDP structure like that in the Study.

Not only does the Study not manage to count up the bodies interacting with the UN, or alternatively express the need that they should be counted up, but it is made clear that it was not even possible to count up the decision-making bodies within the UN itself.

« The mere description of the present structure for development cooperation identifies its major shortcomings : it is far too fragmented, and has large areas of overlap which create major problems of coordination and an unnecessary degree of bureaucratic complexity...Yet the picture painted here may even be conservative; a deeper search would probably bring additional bodies to light...the structure is hampering accomplishment of the programme's objective of providing effective development cooperation. » (II, p. 283).

This confirms an impression that the United Nations system is so unwieldy and complex (I, p.iii) that anyone associated with it, is forced to spend so much time on internal communications and coordination (II, p. 93) that his time for examination of the non-UN parts of the world system is reduced to a bare minimum. His awareness of its complexity and fine-structure is therefore low and even his awareness of the importance of the unorganized public is not very high :

« ...a large number of officials in key positions in the UN development system must become more conscious of the degree to which the programme depends on public support » (I, p. 51)

Such a person would therefore have little motivation to interact with interest group development projects even if free to do so.

The consequence of this attitude over a long period of time is that effective non-UN nongovernmental bodies will tend to deliberately reduce the contacts with the UN and undertake separate programmes. Any contact with the UN would then become only nominal and passive, thus reinforcing UN opinions of the lack of importance of such bodies.

This may be one reason for the lack of interest on the part of international NGOs in the various NGO groupings associated with a number of Specialized Agencies which led in 1969, at each of them, to expressed NGO dissatisfaction concerning the value of the groupings and their machinery (cf. reports of : 11th Conference on International Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, 12th Conference of International Organizations in Consultative Relations with UNESCO, 15th Conference of International Organizations for the Joint Study of Activities Planned in the Field of Agriculture in Europe (FAO)).

c) Management problems of bodies outside (the UN system are ignored

There is an implicit assumption in the Study that the UN development system can be adequately redesigned without examining the management problems of non-UN bodies or systems.

The Study states for example that :

« Our enquiries revealed example after example where Departmental Ministers have advocated policies in the governing bodies of the particular Agency which concerned them (e.g. a Minister of Agriculture in FAO, or a Minister of Education in UNESCO) which were in direct conflict with his government's policies toward the UN system as a whole. » (I, p. 4)

but does not infer from this that *the coordination problems within national government systems may be as*

*great, or greater, than those shown by the Study to exist for the UN system.* Just as some observers imply that the UN is a body adequately coordinated by the General Assembly, so the implication here is that the situation revealed by the above quote does not suggest a fragmentation of coordination at the national level and below. *Government is not one body but a network of bodies and the deficiencies of the UN system are the reflection of weaknesses in such networks :*

« ...there is not much danger of a monolithic Federal adventure in environmental control. No less than thirteen Congressional Committees now have a piece of the environmental action. In addition, there are 90 separate Federal environmental programs, plus 26 quasi-governmental bodies and fourteen interagency committees already at work... » (Newsweek, (Jan 26, 1970, p. 31).

The effectiveness of international development programmes may be entirely dependant on links in an administrative chain or network which are in fact weakest at the national level, even further down the chain, or even in the gray area of interaction between nongovernmental and governmental bodies, or in the nongovernmental subsystem itself. There is no suggestion in the Study that this possibility might nullify the results of all the proposed improvements proposed for the UN system.

Is it not possible to design an information system (even as a « package ») which would help governments and hopefully other bodies, to get a clear overall view of their own structures as well as their relationship to international structures, including those of the UN ?

d) Administrative and operational processes on which UN development programmes are dependent, are ignored

The Study is primarily concerned with the general conception of the capacity of the UN system from a high level management point of view. It is very important that this should be stressed and is a breakthrough in this context in terms of its comprehensiveness.

But an organization's success depends on effective interaction with its environment, and in the case of development programmes, it is very much tied up with the administrative problems of the impact its programmes have on its environment.

To consider the UN system as a whole, as a management problem, this web of relationships must be considered as a whole. The Study does not do so nor does it comment on the following point. Current information on bodies using and supplying information to UN



(Photo: UNESCO. W. Hubbell 1961)

*Tibetan child attending the school for Tibetan refugees at Gangtok (India)*

bodies, whether they are within the UN system, the government system, the nongovernment (non-profit) system, or the commercial system, appears to be split between and within each agency, by geographical area, by sector and even by channel. The same body is likely to be listed many times in a totally uncoordinated manner leading to important and undetectable omissions.

Perhaps the main weakness is the total lack of mention of public relations information and its degree of integration with the proposed information systems. And yet the Study can acknowledge : . .

« The image. This is perhaps the greatest intangible and imponderable of all. In few areas -of action are governments so sensitive to public opinion as that which is generally referred to as « foreign aid ». UNDP, in particular, and the UN development system generally, are completely dependent on government support. Thus their public « image » is of immense importance. Capacity is directly related to public opinion. » (I, p. 50)

The UN depends to a large extent on its ability to influence and convince people and organizations that it is effective. It has to « sell » itself and the idea of development — many people are totally indifferent to both the UN and development (possibly with much justification if they are not deliberately involved in both the UN processes and the world problem solving process). The important point which arises here is the traditional distaste on the part of the last generation of managers, politicians, academics, and administrators for mundane mailing lists. And yet mailing lists ensure effective contact with the real world. Mailing lists may in themselves be totally lacking in interest, but an *organization's mailing list is a direct representation of the pattern of its contacts or the web of relationships into which it is embedded*. As such it is important for management purposes, for political and academic understanding, and to programme administrators. A flexible mailing list has tremendous potential for increasing the effectiveness of the organization. Skilled use of it can be seen as a process of maneuvering through information space and is a measure of the « livingness » of an organization — its openness to its environment.

The mailing lists within the UN system are however scattered by department, division and agency and there are considerable pressures, which have nothing to do with the external world, against collecting them together — even in the form of copies.

« Often the information required is known to one or other parts of the UN development system but is not readily available, either because communication facilities are inadequate, or because it is « hoarded » by the Agency concerned. » (I, p. 30)

It is therefore totally impossible to coordinate the interaction of the UN with one particular *outside* body for a wide variety of purposes. The Study complains of this sort of behaviour on the part of governments.

This sort of approach is only acceptable if the non-UN system is considered irrelevant to UN operations, or where non-UN bodies only need to be *told* something, or *requested* for something using mass mailing techniques which do not require any fine control.

## CONCEPT OF FUTURE UN STRUCTURE

The Study makes the important assumption that development problems are and will, for the next 30 years, be the most important problems. It also affirms that the UNDP is the most appropriate body to take care of these problems :

« Not only does (the UNDP) exist as an active programme, it operates in a hundred countries...in fact is the embodiment of the United Nations to villagers and townspeople, as much as to senior civil servants and ministers. » (I, p. 8)

From these assumptions it quickly follows that the governing bodies of the WFP and UNICEF should be merged into a more powerful UNDP. Then

« other measures which could be contemplated at a later date might aim to reduce the number of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly which deal with matters of economic and social development. The purpose of this would be to make ECOSOC the unmistakable focal point for the coordination and policy orientation of *all* the economic and social activities of the UN system and for *all* development cooperation operations undertaken by the system. Logically the governing bodies of UNCTAD and UNIDO should also be brought under the aegis of ECOSOC....A concentration of this kind would effectively transform a suitably constituted ECOSOC into a one-world parliament, pledged to a unified attack on poverty, disease, hunger and ignorance, and to the corporate achievement of economic and social progress. » (II, p. 331).

It is not quite clear why ECOSOC should be the world-parliament rather than the General Assembly, or just how much influence UNDP would have on ECOSOC or where the World Bank and IMF would fit in. (The Study does not discuss their operations « because they are independent and well managed » (I, p.iii)). It does however appear that a considerable amount of power is being concentrated in the agency which sponsored the Study, UNDP, with little recognition of the problems of controlling such power. It is not sufficient to give the UN system a « brain », it is necessary to ensure that the brain will be a

healthy one (other than in its own view). It is clear from the preceding sections that the brain has very poor eyes, in terms of its ability to detect and take into account the non-political processes in the world system — this is dangerous.

This move is dangerous in another way as well. It is intended that the improved UNDP should make use of all the new long-range planning techniques with computer assistance (II, p. 255-6). The dangers of this situation have been very neatly described in the following quote about a similar problem at the city planning level. It is sufficient in the quote to replace « city » or « urban » by an elastic term stretching from « UNDP-system » through « UN development system » to « world system », and « citizen » by « ECOSOC or General Assembly delegate » or « delegate, citizens and international bodies » to realize some of the *unconsidered problems to which implementation of the Study recommendations could lead* :

« Long-range planning will be an unprecedentedly complex activity because the urban condition is complex and planning technology is increasingly using sophisticated economic and social theory, applied through systems analysis, program planning and budgeting, and the like. Since knowledge of this sort will be the basis for city management, it will also be central to attaining and maintaining political and bureaucratic power.

These circumstances presage new problems. In brief, long-range planning requires continuity and some unknown degree of stability to reap its fruits, but at the same time small percentages of the population will increasingly have the ability or indination to upset the « system ». *Planners and those responsible for managing the city will tend to do what they can to prevent their long-range plans from being upset. More often than not, this will involve partisan interpretations to the public of the purposes and prospects of the planning goals and their implementation.* Given the complexity of both the planning process and the urban situation, the citizen will probably be unable to find out the implications of pursuing one plan rather than another. His option then will be disrupting protest, political withdrawal, or ritual participation.....

It is commonplace today to recognize the necessity for moving in this direction (use of computers and long-range planning techniques) in order to deal more adequately with the operating requirements of day-to-day government...But using the computer for long-range planning in a context of social perturbations will demand a *collaboration among planners, policy-makers, and politicians that will threaten the practice of democracy.* This threat can, perhaps, be mitigated by using the computer in (other) ways..... Information will provide an increasingly potent basis for « adjusting » the outside world so that it is compatible with the survival and growth aims of the agency

and for internally adjusting the agency so that it can respond to what it perceives as pertinent to it in the evolving complex environment...the politician (and I include the agency chief and the advocate planner), working in tandem with his technological advisers and program designers, is in a position to put forth *interpretations of s urban reality* », *programs to deal with it, and evaluations of those programs as implemented based on knowledge either unavailable to those who might challenge him or unavailable at the time that a challenge might be most effective.*

The concerned citizen's discomfort will be increased in a new way : He will know he is unskilled in manipulating and evaluating the information from which the computer-based options are derived. Not only will he realize that he lacks some of the fact; he will know that he is unable to work with them, even when he has them. »

(Michael, D.M. On coping with Complexity : Planning and Politics. Daedulus, Fall 1968, p. 1179-1185)

Not one of the above problems has been considered. It is not possible to avoid the above issues by arguing that the UN is not a political body in the same way as a city or local government council. The UN is a political body swayed in the same way by short term political issues and split into voting blocs, and it is as a political body that it is examined with such fervour by political scientists. The Study argues that « countries should be able to participate in UN programmes... in the sure knowledge that no strings are attached, nor any ulterior motives aspiring to the extension of political, economic, commercial or cultural influence. » (II, p. 108. «9). But it also states that «...very real political pressures now surround many of the Agencies. Their good intentions are not in doubt, but in practice it is almost impossible for them to subordinate sectoral interests to collective policy. » (I, p. 33)

The centre of interest becomes Agency oriented, or even department oriented, rather than objective oriented once an organization reaches a certain degree of complexity in the eyes of its personnel. Quotes included in the Study illustrate this :

«...what exists today is 'inter-Agency rivalry for projects', each Agency insisting, almost as a matter of right, to get a slice of the country pie, regardless of the value and the propriety of the project from the country's point of view. » (II, p. 76)

«... each United Nations body was 'pressurizing' its opposite technical ministry, which, in turn, was pressurizing the planning and development ministries. » (II, p. 76)

It is ironic that the processes which could lead to a solution to the problem of democratising the computerised planning process, are the very processes which

the conceptual filters used in the Study have been unable to detect. If a democratic society is considered as a political system, it is immediately clear that it is the function of pressure groups and unofficial « interested parties » to influence the government decision-making process to protect and further their own interests or the interests of minorities which are believed to need protection or furtherance. Government responds to and has its policies reviewed and supported by individuals represented by the leaders of such groups. At the national level they are considered a normal and essential part of the democratic process. At the international level this process also exists.

The article quoted earlier points in the direction of a solution.

«...in principle, the means for such citizen involvement exist today, operating in the form of multiple-access computer systems in which many people use the same computer and share one another's programs, data, thinking, and solutions....With access to all the data the government agencies will have about what is happening to their areas of responsibility, it can be expected that the citizens various interests will result in one or another group scanning each pertinent situation, alert for new data revealing unexpected gains or losses that can be attributed to the working out of one or another plan. These continuing monitoring efforts could force the agencies not only to appropriate programmatic responses to what the citizens discover, but also to collect new types of data needed for improved evaluation of the programs.

*We really have no choice in the matter if we wish to maintain the reality of democracy... (In the absence of such an approach) the citizen would be less arid less able to assess the implications of what the government proposes in his best interest. Being unable to assess his interest, he would be forced either to abdicate political participation based on a knowledgeable assessment of the situation or to accept out of ignorance what the planners and politicians offer him. And in the urban world of 1976 these alternatives would, I hope, be unacceptable.* » (Michael, op. cit. p. 1187-1191)

The above argument and solution apply incidentally to the related topic of protecting national data banks against abuse by their controllers and users. As data on individuals and organizations at the national and international level becomes accessible through directly linked computer data banks — now quite practicable — some control on the controllers is necessary. Governments are at present hesitating to implement such data banks because of the lack of adequate control mechanisms. *Again it is ironical that the conception of such national systems and us users excludes use by citizen interest groups when it is through the active participation of such groups*

that the solution to the « privacy / democracy » problem may be obtained. Such an approach to a solution also avoids the legitimate accusation that government is once again opting for procedures which exclude the public.

The ongoing debate on the need for the greater participation of the individual in the decision-making process by which his future actions are circumscribed, needs to be considered far more seriously. It is not confined to processes at the national level but also extends to the international level.

## CONCEPT OF THE FUTURE UN DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

The proposals for an information system are a key feature of the Study. It points out that each Agency functions in a similar fashion. Each has to deal with : programme planning and budgeting, formulation of projects, programme information and evaluation, data on projects.

« But, despite the broad similarities, numerous differences prevent UN bodies from having a unified information system.

«...As a result, governing bodies and senior officials throughout the UN system do not have the information required in order to make rational system-wide policy and programme decisions. *In short, there are now simply too many separate, inconsistent, incomplete information systems relating to some facet of development cooperation activities, and these systems are undirected or uncoordinated by any central authority.* » (II, p. 222-3)

### a) Development bias

The above description of the current situation is extremely important. The Study then goes on to describe an information system to resolve these difficulties. This is of course achieved by focussing on the development cooperation activities. It is nowhere recognized that the reason for the lack of coordination in the current system is the variety of topics with which the UN is forced to deal and the variety of ways in which topics must be approached. Priority cannot necessarily be given the development aspect of a project, although there may be development side-effects. There has been no study of a system which could cope flexibly with the variety of information needs.

*By opting for the proposed system, the Study is therefore creating the sort of problems which it criticizes* in the quote above. Unless an information system is designed for the multi-purpose solution of general problems, it must give rise to the need for other information systems. The Study can ignore this, because non-development problems (like pollution) are not

within its terms of reference — but can the UN as a whole afford to ignore this and be led into a cul-de-sac ?

The importance of the interaction between fields of activity and problem areas was dealt with in an earlier section.

No investigation appears to have been made of whether a new information system could not be made to deal with both development and nondevelopment problems so that the current political interest would not jeopardize information needs of the future.

## b) Country bias

The whole information system is organized in terms of countries.

« The overall systems concept and information flow... shows the country as the starting point, the focus, and the end point of all activities. It is in the country that primary subject-matter collections of statistical data would be generated, and it is in the country that the data would be finally used. » (II, p. 255)

Is all economic and social information (even of relevance to development) directly linked to a country ? Is it all easily divisible by country ? National political boundaries are quite arbitrarily related to the geography of the regions across which they cut. It may be useful, mainly for political purposes, to be able to attempt to split data by country but even the development of a country is not of the country as a whole but of geographical regions blocked out by the political barriers. The approach is certainly not scientific, particularly where geographical regions crossing political frontiers in different parts of the world have similar problems.

No investigation appears to have been made of whether a new information system could not be made to deal with both country-based *and* non-country based perspectives on a basis of equality, and according to need, so that the current political needs would not jeopardize the information needs of the future and non-politically oriented research.

## c) UN / UNDP bias concerning control information

In reading the description of the proposed information system, one becomes less and less certain for whom the system is being created and from whom information is to be obtained. It is encouraging to read that :

« The development cooperation activities of the United Nations system require ready access to a large body of technical and scientific information in a variety of subject-matter fields...including development cooperation activities carried out by external inter-governmental, nongovernmental, and bilateral organizations (encompassing research and other scholarly activities)... » (II, p. 233)

« Many other users — governments, individuals, educational institutions, students — would take advantage of the technical and scientific information maintained by the UN system. » (II, p. 235)

But this availability applies only to published *data*. « And many documents are restricted and thus not available for wide distribution and use. » (II, p. 237) It does not show *what is being done*. Information on the corrective actions planned and underway through the different Agencies — namely the project information — is not to be made available for consultation by non-UN bodies.

Clearly a, hopefully diminishing, proportion of the operations data must remain confidential. But the Study makes no mention of interaction with non-UN bodies during the life of the project. Some projects may last years. How is an organization conducting a project in a given area to determine whether this will interact disastrously with a UN project ? The Study infers that the UN system will take into account *all* other projects (but only at the moment of formulating the project — not after). But will the initiators of these other projects (perhaps under bilateral or even national schemes) be able to take into account UN projects ? And what will happen when a project is going wrong (inside or outside the UN system) and there is pressure to make its activities even more confidential ?

Many situations can be envisaged, particularly as the rapidity of change increases, where development and pollution projects interact in an uncontrollable manner because one does not know the action being taken by the other. Such interaction can be very rapid — which would render the planned reporting mechanism useless. It must not be forgotten that there is an appreciable time delay — disastrous for control purposes — before all the appropriate decision centres in different parts of the UN-system (*and* -outside) are informed and can coordinate their response. « Moreover, because of delays in project implementation and report preparation, project results are not immediately available. » (II, p. 237) It would appear that the responsibility is placed on the government to coordinate and control. But the very countries in which most aid is required will be those in which the coordinative apparatus is probably poorest :

« ...many developing countries...had not solved the for midable problem posed by the sheer size of the information-distribution functions, and the related need for timely consultation, which arose in connexion with the multifarious points of contact between their countries and the international system... » (E/AC.51/25, para 78)

If the terms « non-UN » and « external » aid projects are interpreted as is occasionally implied to cover all the development projects in existence, thus including the projects initiated by international nongovernmental organizations, it becomes unclear as to what procedure is to be adopted for gathering the information in question. This problem is not considered. It is implied that the UNDP programme planning will take into account such aid. Since no estimate was made of the amount and nature of such aid, or the sources of such information, it would seem that such analyses will not be particularly effective. If such non-UNSD projects are included, and the information system is to be for the benefit of all, who will decide whether a given project is a « development » project and should be included ? What will be the status of external development projects not covered by a UNDP programme or by the current UNDP political definition of development ? If they are excluded, how will the effects of interaction be detected and avoided ? What will be the status of UN and non-UN non-development projects which might interact with development projects ? How will such projects be detected ?

It is indicated in the conclusion to the information section that in fact the users of the information have not yet been specified.

« ...the important initial need is to decide on the information needed in support of UN development cooperation activities, where it shall be obtained, and to whom it shall be provided. » (II, p. 276)

It is generally considered impossible to design an information system without a very clear idea of the users and suppliers, *their needs* and logical interface problems. If these have not been determined, except by consultation within the UN system, then quite clearly the system is being optimized in terms of the UN/UNDP needs. This is logical within the terms of reference. But suppose it were possible to produce a system that would provide all the information needs of the UN and also provide the information needs of users outside the UN — in the form they would want it, not in the form in which the UN wishes to supply it to them ?

By focussing closely on the UN system and vaguely implying that others will be served, one is faced with the conflict as to whether the Study sees the UN system as a world system for the benefit of all, or merely as an administrative system of value to a few bodies with their own special mandate. Clearly it can be conveniently argued either way. If in practice it proves to be a « UN-oriented » information system

inconveniently structured for other users — governmental or not —, then clearly each such group of users will have to create its own information system, and the same problem will enter another cycle, leading to the same degree of fragmentation of effort.

#### d) Operational information bias

The Study frequently emphasizes the need for management and a system within the UN. Management needs should therefore be reflected in the design of the information system. The Study advocates five phases in the UN Development Cooperation Cycle : country programme, project formulation, implementation, evaluation, follow-up.

There are several stages in the determination and allocation of UNDP resources

- governments allocate funds to UNDP
- UNDP Governing Council approves distribution between the various classes of programmes and expenditures (country, global, regional, programme support, etc.)
- UNDP Administrator establishes funds available for individual countries, « initially » (II, p. 379) on the basis of Governing Council criteria, for a five year period, subject to Governing Council approval.
- country programme formulation phase — UNDP in consultation with government
- project formulation.

At each stage, a management decision has to be taken in selecting between alternative ways of using the funds available. A management information system should, logically, facilitate the process by which such decisions are made by juxtaposing relevant items of information and drawing attention to exceptional trends. *The first three stages of the decision-making process are, however, not mentioned in the Chart on the United Nations Development Cycle — or as being served by the information system.* Within each country, through bilateral and non-UN organizations, whether governmental or nongovernmental, a similar situation probably exists. *At each decision-making stage therefore, a small group of people must allocate resources in the face of a maze of unknowns.* Even the channels through which the funds flow are not clearly established. The proposed information system would document individual projects and provide feedback and reports on projects. It would provide the necessary pile of administrative documents or microfiche equivalent — but *there seems to be no provision for resolving the complexity on which the decision-makers have to sit in judgement.* As an earlier report to the UN pointed out, reports analysing problem and programme relationships contribute little to the maintenance of an up-to-date clear

and comprehensive picture of the existing operational and research programmes and contacts which could be used to improve future programmes. (Walter M. Kotschnig, United States Member of the United Nations Enlarged Committee for Programme and Coordination. Development of modern management techniques and use of computers. E/ AC.51 / GR/ 1.9. 7 October 1968) It is only at the highest decision-making levels that the programme is integrated, below them it is the concern of specialized departments with an uncertain effectiveness of interaction.

Such conditions immediately recall the warnings cited earlier concerning the power of the planners in a complex situation where the totality of information is not held in a comprehensible form. Such a situation is dangerous because the decision-makers will have to decide without adequate awareness of the options or side-effects. There is no democratic checking process of *adequate simplicity* built into the system to provide planners with other views on their recommendations.

It is questionable therefore whether the information system is a management information system rather than an *operations* or *administrative* information system which provides operations information to management.

In addition, by tying the information to country project operations, given the acknowledged slowness of the project approval cycle, the whole system is made inflexible in terms of speed of response to new types of problems which cut across pre-established UNDP or country programmes. A current grave weakness of the UN programme system is that a potential project which comes under the jurisdiction of several programmes, cannot be processed or considered except by the Head of the Agency.

An appropriate new programme can only be formulated after a lengthy cycle of political deliberation at the national level, or within the Agency and its General Assembly. This is not effective in a fast moving situation. New approval and control techniques are required.

There is no facility for processing projects which come under the jurisdiction of several Agencies. This situation will not be improved with the new information system. It will not facilitate treatment of projects which are only « 10% development » oriented. The information system is geared up to handle projects and low level programmes *after the important decisions have been taken* — and it does not increase the sophistication with which such decisions are taken.

## f) Bias against some categories of operational information

The recurring theme of all discussion on the development decades is the problem of influencing people to want development, to become involved in it, and to vote funds for it. It is impossible to influence people without making contact with them in terms of their special interests. This requires an information system. The Study makes no mention whatsoever of such an information system. Yet some such system would be required to circulate project reports, both within and outside the UN system and to act as an interface with organizations which might become intimately involved in UN projects, purchase UN publications (possibly for educational purposes), etc. Such a system could perform an important coordinative function between people involved in similar UN projects — the major current problem.

The proposed system will not ensure that a body involved in a given type of project will receive the report of that project, the report of subsequent related projects, invitations to participate in new projects, or other material distributed by the UN related to the interests indicated by its initial involvement in the project. Nor will it assist non-UN bodies to inform UN bodies of reports or activities of possible interest to them. The need for maintaining contact with organizations for the benefit of future programmes and projects, as yet unformulated, is not considered.

The key question here is once more the status of the mailing address of a body. Traditional UN procedure has been to wait until a programme or project was voted and then to attempt to collect all relevant addresses, starting from scratch. In the case of International Cooperation Year, for example, this procedure was not well advanced *three months before the end of the year* — and the termination of the associated programmes.

The possibility does not seem to have been considered that by integrating the files on the basis of which decisions are made, with the files on the basis of which distributions are made, that the period between the decision and possession of all the necessary addresses for a given type of contact or programme (survey, questionnaires, meeting invitations, report distribution, etc.) can be reduced to insignificance — instead of being a major important delaying factor in project implementation.

## f) Lack of interest in effects of programmes

The Study creates an impression which is reflected in the design of the information system, of lack of desire

on the part of the UN to recognize the full consequences of its activities or their significance in the eyes of people who place much hope in the UN formula. The missing attitude is well summarized in the following :

« *The program of a large organization, whether intended or not...affects a wide sector of the organization's environment, one much wider than the organization may understand to be its surrounds. Groups that are essential to an organization's continued functioning most likely make themselves known....Feedback information from groups whose support is essential may come too late, to be sure, if the organization does not make special efforts to get it...only some of them will respond directly or spontaneously. Organizations that wish to deal responsibly with their social surrounds must be capable of eliciting and evaluating responses from those who realize they are affected but who are ordinarily silent, and from those who are affected but may not realize it....*

(Rosenthal, R.A. and Weiss, R.S. Problems of organizational feedback processes. In : Bauer, R.A. (Ed.) Social Indicators. Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 1966, p. 309-326).

### g) Documentation bias

The information system is split into three sub-systems. The technical and scientific sub-system is concerned entirely with published material, namely, internal documents, project progress and technical reports, country published material, non-UN organization hooks and periodicals (II, p. 233-234). The economic and social sub-system « is concerned mainly with the statistical data generated and reported by governments » (II, p. 231).

The information system is conceived in terms of documents or data that has been produced at some time in the past — the *information produced* rather than the *producers of the information*. The information produced is essential, but should not be considered the keystone of a management information system — it is detail required when necessary. An overall clear and comprehensive picture can only be obtained by focussing on the producers of information (in the broadest sense), their resources and their coordination of their current and planned activities.

The proposed information system omits one whole level of information handling which is vital for decision-making and understanding. A management information system requires information on : bodies controlling, evaluating, formulating, and implementing programmes; and on bodies coordinating resources and memberships (in the broadest sense), relationships and information networks linking them to problem areas. The proposed system does not solve the problem of the unknown number of such

bodies, how they are to be sorted out, and how to see which is the key body in a given situation. The Study indicates that no one knows how many bodies there are *within* any given Agency or within the UN system as a whole. Knowledge of the situation in the non-UN part of the system is likely to be worse. Collecting together the piles of documents produced by some of these bodies, if they produce documents (for if they do not, the proposed system will be totally unable to detect them), does not give a picture which can be comprehended by a decision-maker — such information cannot be adequately juxtapositioned for comprehension if it requires hours of reading.

The Study does not recognize that the period covered by the proposed system is one in which increasingly, if the decision-maker waits for all the relevant information, it will be too late for him to make a useful decision ; if he gets all the relevant information in the form it currently takes, he will have neither the time, the training, nor the inclination to read it all ; and if he reads and comprehends it all, he will not have the time or the ability to convey his understanding to those whose support he must obtain to carry a vote on the matter or, ultimately, to the man in the street (whose support the Study recognizes to be vital).

These are the problems which are becoming more acute with the increase in the amount of information, its degree of specialization, the difficulty of locating it (and justifying its expense), the increasing rapidity of change, and the onlooker's despair in the face of complexity. These problems are not solved by delegating some of the decision-making functions because then all the problems of communication between individuals and departments with their own purposes and perspectives arise. Any attempt to divide up the task merely poses once more all the problems of adequate coordination and integration of programmes and the need for a clear overall perspective. This cannot be conveyed in a report. The shorter the report, the less depth and detail it can contain. The longer the report, the less likely it is that it will be read and understood.

« ...the sessions and methods of the Council and its Committee for Programme and Coordination have not given their members the time or continuity of experience that is necessary for resolving coordination problems in so complex a framework as that of the United Nations family of organizations. *The copious documentation provided...loses much of its value if it cannot be mastered by the government representatives for whom it is intended.* »

(Enlarged Committee for Programme and Coordination. Final Report. E/AC.51/GR/25 2 October 1969, p.9)

This dilemma is partially acknowledged by the Study in connection with the Study report itself : « Few Ministers will have time to read this Report... » (I, p. viii). The people who have to read relevant documents are not necessarily the people whose time is occupied by the meetings in which the decisions are actually taken, and the two groups do not necessarily communicate very effectively.

These are the problems of decision-making today and the acute problems of tomorrow. To solve them, they must be treated objectively today. The system shows the *projects* in which given organizations have decided to become involved and not the *organizations* which (a) are currently involved in projects, (b) are not, but which are potentially interested in particular projects in the future. This is the recurring blind spot in the Study.

The fundamental weakness in the bias towards a library system as the basis for a management information system is that the library system cannot collect together all the information relevant to a particular topic.

« It is estimated that by the end of 1970, about 100,000 document references will be stored in the FAO, ILO and UN documentation centres. After 1970, the volume in these libraries may grow by 15,000 to 20,000 documents each year, which will represent only that fraction of total available documents of particular interest to development cooperation. » (II, p. 236)

The *UN developing system collection of scientific and technical information will stand at 3% of that of a university library and will not increase at a similar rate.* The 3% may be the « cream of the cream », but even with the best expertise selecting such material is nearly impossible as material in this field dates quickly. The non-UN material may on the other hand contain a « hodge-podge » of donated, national government, and publishers' free copies. Some measure of the comprehensiveness of this service is indicated by the following :

« ...but all relevant documents do not enter into these documentary facilities...in FAO, for example, it has been estimated that only 10 per cent of the relevant documents are published. Moreover, because of delays in project implementation and report preparation, project results are not immediately available. And many documents are restricted and thus not available for wide distribution and use. » (II, p. 237)

Chart 6-5 also indicates the criteria by which documents are chosen for inclusion :

UN : \* Any relevant document issued under UN authority. Material from non-UN sources on issues before the Organization.

FAO : « ...technical documents produced by FAO... reports of FAO/UNDP projects...Technical... documents in FAO fields... »

ILO : « Selected documentation related to Organization major programmes — from internal and external sources. »

UNESCO : For the proposed system : « All UNESCO documents... By 1973, documents of other organizations and Member States relating to specific UNESCO activities. »

Briefly, if there is as yet no programme on the topic, the document will not be sought, obtained and included even if it is recognized as a problem elsewhere. *The UN technical and scientific information system, as a management system aid, is therefore totally unprepared for any topic which is not yet covered by a UN system programme.* Once a new topic programme has been approved by political processes, one must then add the delay during which the system locates all relevant references and acquires the relevant materials published elsewhere on the topic. Then, and only then, can decisions be taken using information from this particular sub-system. It can surely only be dangerous to create the impression that this narrowly oriented information system is adequate to meet the complex interacting problems of the future. *In the effort to locate and acquire documents — which are a record of past activity — the system loses sight of the importance of keeping track of the organizations, individuals and information systems which are active now, plan to act, or might be convinced of the necessity to act, in the near future.* It is this network which is producing information now. And it is this network which is tapped for expert advice on new areas the organization is moving into. Here one sees the operational weakness of a documentation system for management purposes. Up-to-date information must be sought by processes which do not form part of the information system — whence the somewhat lengthy process of establishing expert commissions and missions to obtain information in a particular form. Such bodies are based solely on the organization's immediate contacts and not on an objective determination of the key person or group in the network. It is of course the information produced by points in this network which will eventually be detected by the library system at some undetermined point in the future. *It is the picture of what this network is doing now or might do that is the basis of a management information system. It is only by maintaining this picture as up-to-date as possible that a global strategy for anything can be adequately elaborated and quickly implemented.*

(The following remarks are based on the French edition. Quotes have therefore been translated.)

The Report is based on the efforts of a team of World Bank experts to study the effect of aid over the past twenty years and to propose strategies which could lead to more rapid progress in the future. The major points criticized in the Jackson Report find their equivalent here, namely :

- a focus on development with no apparent awareness of the context and consequences of development;
- a narrow focus on the UN family, OECD and the development banks in most sections without fully recognizing the dependence on other bodies if the recommendations are to be successfully implemented (the interesting exception is dealt with below).

And yet the Report makes the context oriented point : « Who can ask where his country will be in a few decades, without asking where the world will be ? » The first chapter of the Report has the interesting title « A Question of Will ». This is not taken up in the text however, which, whilst apparently recognising the problem of persuading public opinion and ensuring the creation of political will (which the Secretary General of UNCTAD has stressed as being of the highest priority « in order to avoid a second Development Decade of even deeper frustration that the first » (TD/96)), merely goes on to suggest as a strategy for the future that the following are required : improved exchange facilities, foreign capital, evaluation of effectiveness, increase in aid, solution to the problem of increasing debt, improved aid administration, improved quality of technical assistance, reduction in population increase, increased aid to education and research, and increased multilateral aid. Presumably the question of « will » is whether the governments will want to do this. The problem of how to overcome the increasing lack of interest in development aid, noted by the CESI Report, is not touched upon. The possibility that the solution to this problem might in fact influence the strategy chosen — as would be the case in the operations of a business faced with a similar problem — is not considered. Once again, we are faced with a partial approach to a problem.

One chapter in the Report is entitled « Partners in Development » (also the title of the English version of the Report). The partners are the governments

supplying financial aid and the governments receiving such aid. No other bodies would appear to be considered as partners in the development process. In a chapter concerned with more effective aid, there is however a section on private and benevolent aid which (freely translated back from the French) runs as follows :

« Only too often it is forgotten that private non-profit or benevolent organizations make a very appreciable contribution to development aid. Here again, problems of effectiveness are taking on increasing importance and present many points in common with those which we have examined in the public sector. According to DAC estimates, the total resources of (« dont disposent ») non-profit organizations equal more than 1000 million dollars per year, of which 700 million dollars at least come from private funds....The results of this financial effort are multiplied by the tasks accomplished by a multitude of workers who offer their services free or whose remuneration is purely symbolic...Thus in 1968, some 25,000 citizens of the rich countries worked unpaid in low income countries. This figure has quintupled in six years and represents today more than a quarter of the total technical assistance personnel working in foreign countries on official programmes. These figures, of course, give no indication of the efforts made by the nonprofit organizations and by the volunteers in their own countries to sensitize political circles to the importance of government aid programmes. (\*) *In the last analysis, it is the feeling of individuals that they have an obligation towards a world community in the process of development which, expressed in words and acts, has been the motor for the effort accomplished in the domain of public aid.* » (emphasis added)

How non-profit bodies do not, generally, and in many cases it is so stated in their constitutions, accumulate funds. The income is balanced by the aid dispensed. From this and the quote, one may conclude that :

- a) non-profit bodies have *similar* problems to public sector bodies;
- b) the \$ 1000 million channelled yearly through non-profit, nongovernmental bodies is in fact *greater* than the total average annual *multilateral* government aid over the period 1964-1967 to developing regions, namely \$ 784 million (Table 28). This last figure represents 14% of the total of multilateral and bilateral (from the Development Assistance Committee member countries) aid. The nonprofit figure can also be compared with that for the financial aid supplied by multilateral institutions to developing countries (calculated on a different basis), namely: World Bank group, \$ 851 million; Regional development banks, \$ 336 million; and UN Specialized Agencies, \$ 3000 million (Table 25). (In what direction the \$ 1000 million per year flows, the Report does not

As a potential source of development aid, it is quite obviously highly important. (\*) )

- c) there is a *multiplier effect* on the value of the financial aid due to the number of voluntary workers, and this is increasing;
- d) members of non-profit bodies and volunteers are a *key factor* in increasing government aid.

The implications of this conclusion have certainly not affected the Capacity Study team. From the context they have apparently not affected the Pearson team. The quote is *not* from a section which forms part of the main argument concerning future strategy, but from one on aid effectiveness. Despite the figure for aid from private sources, these sources are not discussed elsewhere in the report or the tables. Nor is there any suggestion that they should be discussed. As mentioned earlier, the problem raised in the first chapter was that of « will ». The key to this problem has apparently been recognized in the quote above. No comment is made on how to obtain a will to develop, given this recognition. The Report states a goal and a strategy with no idea of how that strategy should be implemented. We are back to a position of « If only the rich nations would... »

And consider the following views :

« ...a strategy is not an economist's ten year global plan but essentially a political instrument, a call to action... » (Martin, Edwin M. The Strategy for the Second Development Decade : a challenge to donors. An address to the Vienna Institute for Development, 1969).  
« To be real such action must be backed by « political will ». Speeches at the United Nations citing the mobilization of public opinion have become almost routine. For several years we have heard the need for political will stated by many people...stressing the absolute necessity for public understanding of the inter-relatedness of our world and thereby supporting government policies which reflect this reality.... In exploring a role for interest and pressure groups we need both realistic assessment *and* an attitude which recognizes the high stake in the game of development. People are undoubtedly influenced by the written word and audio-visual communication. In complex Western industrialized countries, however, it is through groups

(\*) This point is also made by a past Minister of Overseas Development of Great Britain (Reg Prentice, MP. More priority for overseas aid. International Affairs, vol. 46, January 1970, p.4, but also: « A most impressive development has been the growth of Third World First in the universities — a movement in which students sign bankers' orders committing one per cent, two per cent or even three per cent of their grants to the aid of the charity of their choice. Throughout Britain, growing numbers of people are recognising that the fight against poverty is one of the biggest issues of our time. But...they are not taken seriously enough by those in positions of power... »).

that most people identify their interests. *Using organized groups (non-governmental organizations)* can be a major tool in this identification process. Certainly these groups are already organized in every conceivable expression of human interest. Can we take advantage of them ? » (Roosevelt, Curtis. The politics of development : a role for interest and pressure groups. Paper presented to an SID Conference, New Delhi, 1969, emphasis added.)

How does the Pearson Report handle this possibility ? Recognizing the importance of volunteers, and ignoring the structures they themselves have built up, it recommends (in agreement with ECOSOC) that an international volunteer corps should be created. It is not clear whether this is supposed to be governmental, but it seems quite clear that the other nongovernmental structures are considered *de trop*. This approach of course ignores all the « non-volunteer » nongovernmental bodies and their functions which a political scientist (see above) or a sociologist would consider vital. One can see here the consequences of a study by economists. The volunteers represent manpower — therefore they must be brought under the UN development aegis. The nongovernmental structures have no significance in economic terms — therefore they may be ignored. This attitude recalls some of the early disasters of development aid, when it was thought that Western man could fix any developing country by pouring in money and techniques and ignoring the social structure and customs. The important constraint could only be detected with another discipline — which was then considered to be irrelevant in that context. Only time and lack of success could bring the point home. How does a UN Agency determine whether a topic is being evaluated in the light of *all* the relevant discipline perspectives ? How often do sociologists check the recommendations of economists, etc ? Does the World Bank have non-economists on its staff? Why are high-powered teams set up on such important matters with only the insights of a single discipline to guide them ? Some requirements of an integrated approach to the control, management or understanding of change are illustrated by the following :

« Although political scientists, economists, and sociologists have concerned themselves with organizational structure, there is as yet no organized body of theory or doctrine of practice on which a unified disciplinary or interdisciplinary applied-research activity can be based... . In most problems involving...(such)...systems each of the disciplines we have mentioned might make a significant improvement in the operations. But as systems analysts know, few of the problems that arise can adequately be handled within any one

discipline. Such disciplines are not fundamentally... biological, psychological, social, economic, political, or ethical. These are merely different ways of looking at such systems. »

And each « way » highlights different features which are significant and critical.

« Complete understanding of such systems requires an integration of these perspectives. By integration I do not mean a synthesis of results obtained by independently conducted unidisciplinary studies, but rather results obtained from studies in the process of which disciplinary perspectives have been synthesized. *The integration must come during not after, the performance of the research.* \* (Ackoff, R.L. Systems, organizations, and interdisciplinary research. General Systems Yearbook, vol. 5 (1960), Society for General Systems Research, p. 1-8)

This approach also saves a great deal of confusion, time and resources. Because if strategies, recommended as a result of the perspective of one discipline, ignore certain critical factors (and constraints) which can only be detected by another, then the inadequate strategy can be eliminated at an early stage of strategy formulation. Without this, the corrective can only be brought to bear through the lengthy and muddled process of report and counter-report. But only if representatives of other disciplines consider the original unidisciplinary report worth criticizing (for, by definition, none is equipped to detect the significance of another). And only if administrative structures are so arranged that *all* the other relevant disciplines are brought to bear on the problem (\*).

(\*) À technique for systematizing the determination of relevant disciplines under such circumstances forms part of a project proposed by Clark, Jere W. and Judge, A.J.N. Development of transdisciplinary conceptual aids; simple techniques for education, research, pre-crisis management, and program administration highlighting patterns of information transaction and sub-system interdependence, New Haven, Southern Connecticut State College, 1970.

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