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THROUGH SOME LOOKING GLASSES: Reflections on Economic Planning In  
Academies Plazas and Corridors of Power

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On a cloth untrue  
With a twisted cue  
And elliptical billiard balls...  
-Gilbert and Sullivan

Words mean what I say  
They mean...  
-Red Queen (Lewis Carroll)

And never, never was seen again,  
For the Snark was a boojum you see...  
-"Hunting the Snark" (Lewis Carroll)

1.

### What Are We Talking About?

Presumably we are talking about three clusters of things and concepts:  
social sciences; their application; economic planning. Social sciences  
in this context can be seen as a body of knowledge and also as a way  
(or rather set of ways) of looking at, analyzing, struggling with  
selected aspects of reality.

Application of social sciences can mean three quite different  
things. It can mean "applied social science" in the academy's terminology -  
teaching about specific applications or cases rather than theory and/or  
carrying out applied research on particular instances or cases with or  
without any direct intent that the results will be used other than in

the extension of knowledge. Those are legitimate meanings of applied, but not the ones which usually occur to men of affairs. Applied in plazas usually means directed to mobilizing for some political or political economic cause, goal or leader. This is not the sense of applied that usually comes first into an academic's mind but it is an important and a valid one. True it is subject to abuse but so, too are all applications. Finally - and this is probably the sense of applied foremost in discussions of the applied role of social sciences - is application by holders or agents of power. Application in this sense is not homogenous - advising a Prime Minister on strategy; elucidating principles for a Price Commissioner; suggesting operating rules of thumb for a Corporate Manager; working out the effective incidence of sales tax for a Revenue Commissioner are all applied and applied within the corridors of power but neither the techniques useful, the form of presentation required, nor the balance between normative and value - neutral elements are uniform.

#### How Can We Organize Our Investigation and Reflection?

Planning is about organizing scarce resources so as to reach targeted progress over a given time toward a set of previously defined goals which are external to the planning process itself and usually very much normative. Hopefully a paper about it can benefit from making use of a planning format since time, space and attention spans are scarce resources. Planning is also about complexity and balancing (or synthesizing or trading off) since objectives are usually partly joint products, partly complementary, partly alternative and partly contradictory.

That unfortunately is very much the case with short papers on long, complex topics.

It is worth a passing comment that handling problems with multiple, less than complementary objectives appears to create more problems for academic social scientists than for men of affairs - whether politicians, managers or civil servants. The desire to set problems up as exercises in maximization of one output is remarkably deeprooted in the social sciences and, while it has its uses as an introductory pedagogical technique, is remarkably ill attuned to the needs of serious analysis or application. Very few "real" contexts can be represented and very few real "problems" handled within the one output maximization paradigm. Worse, users of that model have a tendency to condemn reality when it does not correspond to the model and to argue that any politician or manager pursuing multiple, less than congruent goals must be making an elementary mistake in defining his objectives. Politicians and managers (and other real people for that matter) are perfectly well aware that they normally pursue more than one goal and that maximum progress toward one ignoring the others is not (or rarely) what they wish to achieve. They view criticism of this contextual reality as betraying either "academicism" in the perjorative sense or a lack of common sense; the applied advice they wish from social scientists on the problem of multiple, partly conflicting goals, is how to handle balance - synthesis - trade off more effectively - not how to do away with most of the goals. In general social scientists have been less than forthcoming in meeting this need.

The consideration of applied social science and development planning needs to be prefaced with a consideration of social science and development. This is true partly because a number of the issues are not particular to planning but relate to social science/policy interactions in general and partly because for at least a decade there has been a crisis within the academic social sciences as to how to view development. The 1945-70 paradigm is quite clearly moribund, but no successor has emerged nor even a coherent struggle among rival contenders.

#### Social Science and Development

The crisis in social science thinking about development can be termed the "death of a paradigm". Over 1945-1970 there was a dominant way of looking at and thinking about development within the social sciences. Its key words were growth and modernization. Its apparent view of the dynamics of change was that the history of the industrialized economies was to be repeated in the outlands not as tragedy nor as farce but as triumphal march. This is, of course, to parody what was (and is) in many respects a sophisticated and nuanced body of thought.<sup>2/</sup> However, growth, modernization and universalization of history by successful copying were red threads running through the analysis and prescription. The paradigm - rather intriguingly - did have claims to universal acceptance. The Northwest and Northeast variants had far more in common than divided them, and even the main body of Southern thought until the 1960's (e.g. Mahalanobis, Prebisch) was at most in a different key around the same motifs.

That paradigm is moribund. It is not dead in that a majority of academic practitioners still use it - though not a majority of those attempting original research - and that the majority of applied social science advice given to men of affairs still flows from it. However, it lacks conviction by its proponents (with the possible exception of Soviet social scientists who seem to be the last of the growth men) and credibility to a growing majority of its auditors. Its death came not so much from intellectual breakthroughs as from the realization that change over 1945-70 (and more especially since) did not correspond very closely with what the social science analysis "predicted" and was in a number of critical ways highly unsatisfactory. At the centre this realization in the context of social science analysis-description-prescription about development interacts with much greater post-1960 questioning of the model's desirability there; a "development" which necessarily raises questions about its suitability as a universal export commodity.

To imply that the "development crisis" is a crisis of academics would, hopefully needless to say, be absurd. The direction of causation is quite the other way. However, the crisis as perceived by political decision takers and managers (and by ordinary participant in victims of the development and/or underdevelopment processes) is rather different from the academic perception. On the one hand, a significant number of political leaders and managers never accepted the paradigm or recanted it earlier. On the other, a larger number still find certain aspects of it quite consonant with their class, context or national interests and cling to it with rather more tenacity and faith than its

original academic proponents.

### Social Scientists, Social Science and Social Reality

Two other clusters of issues or problems also are broader than economic planning (or indeed development) but apply to it. The first is perhaps most handily termed communications. Communications within a country among academicians, managers, political decision takers and the general public are always problematic and nowhere more so than in countries to which applied social science as a separate body of thought pursued by a separate priesthood of specialists is quite new. Cross-country communications pose additional problems. While the most commonly considered one is North-South because of historic patterns of domination and reaction to it, South-North, South-South, Northeast-Northwest, Northeast-Northeast and Northwest-Northwest communications also raise issues additional to those within individual countries. Finally, a number of conceptual issues are perhaps best seen as intra-academy communications problems.

The uses (or abuses) of the social sciences as analytical guides to and tools for use in social action are a highly controversial and a very complex topical cluster in themselves. What is striking is the very different degree to which the social science disciplines are applied and the almost equally divergent degree of "leadership" (as opposed to instrumentality) they enjoy (or are burdened with) in applied fields. Economics is widely applied (in season and out) and has considerable influence as an organizing principle or body of principles. Law is widely used but almost totally functionally, with very little general

intellectual influence. Sociology and psychology are not commonly applied functionally nor generally notable for intellectual impact on social and political action. Beyond these differences among social sciences is the broader point that academic, managerial and political (including, for this purpose, "ordinary" human beings as well as decision takers) perceptions of the applied role of the social sciences either as it is or as it ought to be differ significantly.

#### Economic Planning: Definition and Content

"Economic Planning" is not an entirely satisfactory category because its use begs several questions. National planning is not in practice purely economic even if one substitutes political economy for "economic science". Nor is it by any means evident that this is a weakness; on balance it is arguable that most national planning is too economic rather than too preoccupied with non-economic concerns. From a social science point of view the use of the term "economic planning" implies the appropriateness of a hierarchy with economics at the centre and on top and other disciplines called on by the economists to make functional contributions to a whole both intellectually and functionally dominated by economics. Whatever else that approach may be, it is not conducive to fruitful involvement of other disciplines in planning !

Therefore, hereafter planning - unmodified - will be substituted for "economic planning." An alternative formulation would be national development planning. Apart from prelixity, that set of adjectives has the disadvantage of placing too much weight on macro and centralized aspects and too little on micro (enterprise) and decentralized ones

and of conjuring up slightly unreal visions of planning in a closed economy. (One of the drawbacks of economics is that it has a greater tendency than most social sciences to conjure up closed units not open to outside influences for pedagogical or exploratory purposes and then neglects to relax the artificial constraints when turning to articulated analysis or application!)

A central issue in respect to planning is one of definition. Can planning be equated with collecting data and analysis for, and organizing the writing of, plans? It is only slightly unfair to suggest this as the academic social science definition and one which has gained considerable political decision-taker and manager acceptance (possibly to encapsulate or neutralize the academicians at least as often as to give a central role to analysis and authorship!) However, it is by no means a self evidently valid or operational definition. To take a somewhat parallel case, budgeting is not normally defined as the writing of budgets. The budgetary process is usually perceived as including the operation, revision and assessment stages as well as the analytical and formulative ones. That perception is common to social scientists specializing in public finance and is clearly quite contradictory to the standard academic view as to what constitutes planning. The contradiction is only made starker by the fact that the budgetary process is a major organizing focus and operational nexus of planning under any technique other than pure material balances planning backed by rationing and directives.



Context necessarily is at least partly consequential on definition. If planning stops with the publication of a plan, one set of techniques is appropriate; if like budgeting is a continuing process with plans (like budgets) recurrent stages in (rather than the whole of) the process, rather more techniques are critical. Further there is need to consider the possibility that quite different techniques are appropriate for different uses and users.

It is arguable that the most disastrous contributions of social science to planning flow from reductionist misapplication of the Harrod-Domar-Feldman models linking fixed investment, growth and employment. In practice their influence has been economistic, fixed investment centered (to the exclusion of working capital), contextually abstracted and indifferent to political, economic - let alone social or political - realities and goals. But the Harrod-Domar strands were and are useful analytical and modeling tools for employment and growth planning in industrial capitalist economies so long as they are not regarded as complete or adequate by themselves. Similarly, the Feldman model was a relevant tool for gaining insights into the parameters of central resource allocation within a closed socialist economy starting from initial low levels of productivity/productive forces.

Quite possibly pedagogy, exploration, analysis and operations require divergent types of models and of techniques for manipulating them. A common thread is the need to remember that a model - by definition - is a simplified abstraction from reality and can produce "results" no better than the initial selection of key variables (issues, forces)

to be studied and the initial contextual parameters set out as a substitute for actually analyzing other factors.

Similarly, different users require rather different tools in respect to planning (or most other areas of theoretical or applied social science). A teacher, a researcher, a political actor, a manager, a civil servant, an "ordinary" participant do not have the same concerns with, the same needs from, nor the same interactions in planning. It would, therefore, be somewhat surprising if the same content was appropriate to all.

#### Steps Forward

Consideration of steps forward will be limited to two clusters: intra-academic and joint academic/operational actor. This is not a choice based on any particular view of relative importance but on the primary aim and audience of this paper.

The identification of steps forward should flow from examination of where we are, how we arrived there and what our major present discontents may be. Therefore, unlike the other sections of the paper its "action conclusion" will not be summarized or forelighted at this point.

## II.

#### The Lost Paradigm

The growth and modernization paradigm of 1945-70 was a substantial

achievement, both intellectually and in terms of practical impact. Since the early classical economists and the late mercantilism of Liszt and Hamilton, economics had not by and large concerned itself much with what we now term development nor with working out particular applications of "main economy" theory for "backward" territories. One need only look at the "colonial" economics of the 1930s or the occasional allusions to colonies and peripheries in main line work to see how different the position is today from what it was in the 1940s. Then when Hans Singer went to join the UN's fledgling economic secretariat, Joseph Schumpeter could only say in amazement "But I thought you were an economist...".

The impact has not been purely - nor even primarily - academic. Development economics is still a rather lower middle class sub-discipline from the point of view of its own profession and lacks the rigour and elegance of more theoretical and econometric branches. The intellectual impact is rather more of the type Keynes termed voices in the air to which politicians (and, in this case, managers and bureaucrats) listen; but in the case of development economics the scribblers have not been defunct but very much alive, so short has been the period from pen to practical influence (or at least cooptation into apparent influence). Equally the impact has gone beyond intellectual - organizational structures have been altered, certain priorities have been set, finance and personnel have been raised and allocated in not inconsiderable sums, at least partly on the basis of the paradigm. True, 5-Year Plans go back

to the Gold Coast of the 1920's (7-Year Plan in that case) and the Belgian Congo of the 1930's, as well as to the USSR, but it is the development paradigm of the social scientists which made them in form (and occasionally in substance) a universal feature of the Third World. True, much "planning" is a facade carefully crafted to attract aid or investment, but because both recipient and transferor states feel a need (for whatever reason) to play this game, the paradigm does to a degree influence policies and resource allocations even if not necessarily as its authors supposed nor necessarily for the good (however defined).<sup>3/</sup>

This is not the place to discuss the growth and modernization model in detail. Suffice to say that its skeletal structure was the Harrod-Domar-Feldman but that significant additions were made to take account of structural differences and elements (e.g. education somewhat artifactually transformed into "human investment" and made to seem as analagous to standard fixed investment as possible). However, these structural modifications and additions were all formulated on the basis that development meant becoming like the already industrialized economies - a characteristic as true of the periphery writers as one of those based in the Northwest or Northeast and of the Marxian as of the bourgeois economists.

Clearly the history in the paradigm was either symbolic (like Locke's "covenant" or Marx/Engel's history of pre-capitalist modes of production) or abstracted to the point of reductionism. Few serious historians have ever viewed knowing history as a means to causing

it to repeat itself as a series of brilliant triumphant marches. Nor was the apparent universalism of the paradigm quite what it seemed. Development was to become universal, but by the process of homogenizing the periphery into a copy of the industrial societies of a few decades before (and approach with deep roots in the Marxian tradition). Thus the paradigm was open to any country or any intellectual to join - but at the price of accepting cultural, intellectual and technical deprovincialization (for the proponents) or neo-colonialism (for the opponents). Even the potentially independent "provincial" schools of thought came to be incorporated as special cases (e.g. Prebisch and ECLA) or misread as neo-classical variation on a theme (e.g. Myint and the Rangoon School, albeit in the end Myint seems to have some to misinterpret his earlier work in the same way). The final irony was that apparent root and branch critics - e.g., many of the "development of underdevelopment" and the "unequal exchange" groups - actually wrote not on alternatives to the paradigm but on what factors blocked its operation and how these might be removed!

The development paradigm was ultimately the intellectual world that Europe (and North America) made; the intellectual successor to the high noon of colonialism and, its harsher critics might (perhaps slightly unfairly) suggest, the intellectual justification for the high noon of neo-colonialism.

#### Death of A Paradigm

The paradigm did not die (or sink into a terminal coma) because of intellectual incoherence or inconsistency. Few paradigms do. Indeed

either the Marxian or the bourgeois variant of the paradigm (and certainly the ECLA variant of the late 1950s and early 1960s) are more elegant, less inconsistent and more logically complete than any alternatives existing then or now. The difficulty is that the world they describe appears to diverge in significant respects from the real world in which real people live so that, like Ptolemaic astronomy, they have fallen into desperate and increasingly unsatisfactory efforts to explain why reality is unreal and the paradigms are somehow better ideal type constructs (whether in the Weberian or the Platonic sense) than those partial models-theories which do have recognizable objective corellatives.

The main "problems" of the paradigm modifiers and defenders have been:

- a. growth often did not happen even when most of the supposed preconditions were met (or it became evident on examination that the model's preconditions could never be met for the economy in question);
- b. when growth did occur, development in any meaningful sense did not by any means always follow, e.g., Liberia certainly grew over 1945-65, but even the most economic of observers could hardly suppose it was becoming more like a modern industrial economy or society;
- c. when development did occur, the patterns did not seem to fit the model and/or had a singular number of "unsatisfactory elements", e.g., South Korea (and for that matter North Korea) have grown and developed in ways which up to a point are prize cases for the paradigm, but many aspects of their development (as with Japan before them) are very distinctively different from industrial Europe (West or East) and show little sign of becoming less so; e.g., Brazil's growth and

development have been characterized by a sharpness of class division, regional inequality and naked social injustice, which (whatever its parallels in 19th Century capitalism) simply are not viewed as acceptable or viable by centre capitalist intellectuals and give rise to doubts even by the intellectual and managerial architects of the growth processes in question;

- d. there has been a loss of faith in growth and modernization at the centre. The manifestations vary (from 1968 through Green Parties to the New Right, and from alternative life styles to decentralized people's participation to odd variants of neo-Puritan authoritarianism masquerading as mass liberation) and are more evident in the Northwest than in the Northeast. What is common is a much more nuanced and less optimistic view of the world than was common about 1950 and much greater doubt that bigger and better is the be-all and end-all of progress. Needless to say, it is possible to keep an intellectual model for export after losing faith in it at home (especially if it is a catchup model!), but there are rather serious logical and personal difficulties in doing so.

#### Political Will: Cop Out or Confusion?

A method of defending the paradigm requires special mention. This is the statement (or exhortation) that the problem is absence of political will. It is rarely clear exactly what this is supposed to mean other than that politicians are not acting as the author believes they logically should in their own interests, as the model says they will, or as the author wishes they would.

The attack - while occasionally convincing - in general seems singularly ill considered. Political decision takers do not by and large lack the will to do things. What they do lack is a will to behave as the paradigm says they ought to do. That suggests the appropriate response to be a re-examination of what their perceived goals are and how their political will relates to them. Only if such a reexamination show that they are not acting in their own medium-term interests (as they perceive those interests), is the criticism as put valid and, even then, political will is hardly the most accurate term.

If the criticism means that the social scientists wish the political decision takers' goals and means to achieving them were different, that is a different criticism. It may be a perfectly valid one but is hardly best put by saying that the paradigm represents reality and the way political decision takers, coalitions and classes behave represents a set of aberrations from reality! It is perfectly proper for a social scientist to set out to alter reality by educating-converting-mobilizing individuals, institutions or classes, but it is counterproductive to start by asserting that the desired altered dynamic is present reality as opposed to a potentially attainable and preferable reality.

Perhaps, however, "absence of political will" really represents a despairing code term for social scientists' recognition that there is no operational statetheory. (Economists blame this on political scientists, who in turn argue it results from the hegemony of economists, while sociologists rather cloudily - even if probably justly - blame both of the other disciplines. Presumably psychologists have something to say about all their colleagues, and historians can find similar examples in the intellectual history of deteriorating world views!) The development paradigm was



an extreme example of this. Its bourgeois variants really do assume a harmony of all significant sub-class interests - a characteristic which becomes even more noted in applied variants promoted by international organizations such as the World Bank. The Marxian variants certainly incorporate the term "class struggle", but neither their "creative capitalism before the revolution" nor their "socialist construction after the revolution" applied versions actually include it in any integral fashion. (Chinese social science has been an exception, but has not been part of the paradigm nor widely accessible to other social scientists, managers or political decision takers.)

#### A Heritage of Fragmentation

To operate at a time when a paradigm that has endured for 25 years as a dynamic force has undergone a decade of uncertainty sinking into disintegration poses a number of very real intellectual problems.

1. "Frontier thinking" and discourse are more than usually fragmented and the relationships among different pieces are more than usually problematic because there are no (or very few) generally accepted, integrating principles to which they related and around which they circle.
2. The gap between frontier thinking and the bulk of research (which lags it by perhaps a decade) is abnormally wide - probably more micro research is still being done in terms of the old paradigm than in terms of attempts to construct a new paradigmatic frame or a set of more limited "intermediate level theories".
3. Similarly, there is a wide gap between both frontier thinking and research and the bulk of teaching (where the lag may be, on average, two decades). The bulk of teaching and of teaching materials are quite inconsistent with the themes

of imaginative development discourse.

4. The gaps within the intellectual social science communities are paralleled by gaps between them and the managerial/political decision taker/public communities whose exposure has been to the paradigm in the days of its ascendancy and who interpret academic work in the light of that exposure, even if they themselves never fully subscribed to the paradigm.

These gaps lead to very real problems of coherence and convincingness. It is true that there may be greater humility among social scientists in offering prescriptions (may be-uncertainty can lead to brittle assertiveness and intellectual certainty about principles to great tolerance and flexibility about secondary issue). However, the "on the one hand, but on the other" approach inspires decision takers either to remark sourly that it is a happy accident that intellectuals are not ectopi with twenty hands or to consider whether amputations might reduce the hands to one! Decision takers have no objection to being offered options or being warned that each option has certain risks/"bad" side effects, but they detest refusal to give a firm opinion or recommendation. (This may explain their relative tolerance of economists who tend to assume that when asked a question they should answer it whether they know the answer or not, whereas some other social scientists appear to insist on reposing the question and answering in such complex and qualified terms as to seem to the decision taker to be declining to answer at all.)

#### A Foison of Fads

The quest for coherence has also given rise to a number of what can best be described as intellectual fads. This description is unfair to many of their authors who have not claimed proto-paradigmatic status for them and are initially flattered, then bewildered, and presently horrified when their tentative "intermediate level theories" for special cases are

"boomed" into international intellectual fads, transmuted beyond their imagination (or desire) and then dropped. Needless to say this "faddery" does nothing to enhance decision taker confidence in social science - to reorient strategy on a new basis every year is not practicable let alone optimal. Three of the clusters of fads are of genuine interest because they seem to recur and to have certain aspects of reality within them.

a. the pessimistic "neo-classical/Marxian convergence" models.

The ultra orthodox Marxian strand (e.g. Bill Warren) argues that capitalism is still creative and that raw accumulation on the periphery is the way to progress for the next few decades. Other variants (e.g. Dudley Seers) see neo-classical and neo-Marxian applied growth/development strategy/policy as converging with generally repressive and quasi-stagnationist results implying that the Chile of Pinochet and Poland are examples of this convergence and its fruits.

b. The optimistic "capitalism unleashed" models which in the Northwest

are the export version of Friedmania. However, they are more than that. It is possible to argue that the Israeli and Chilean variants, while in a sense homegrown, really flow from the minds of intellectuals who look at a world centered on Chicago not on Santiago or Tel Aviv. However, that will not serve for the Brazilian variant, which on the one hand is not monetarist and on the other really does appear to be indigenous both in personnel and in being informed by a weltanschauung centered on and looking out from Brazil.

c. The optimistic (or normative) neo-Marxian models variously

titled "Redistribution with Growth," "Another Development," "Basic Human Needs," "Basic Needs," "Third System," "People's

Participation," "Just, Participatory, Sustainable Society."

In general these do incorporate struggle integrally - albeit the international organization variants (understandably) play this down with considerable damage to their coherence. Further a majority seem to stem from contributions by Third World or First World (rather peripherally Second World) social scientist including an abnormally high per cent of intellectuals who are also "men of affairs," whose world views do center on particular peripheral economies/policies rather than on industrial economies/policies or a purely artificial globalism. These have been the most influential of the fads, but also the most subject to cooptation and premature obsolescence from too great and too varied claims being made on their behalf.<sup>4/</sup>

A critique of this kind is necessarily unfair. The problem is not in the intellectual efforts per se. Many do reveal certain aspects of reality, build from real development experiences, and offer clues toward constructing at least a body of useable intermediate level theories. The problem is the frenetic booming of such tentative beginnings into pseudo paradigms - a failure to which social scientists, especially those on the borderline between academia and application, have been quite as susceptible as have managers and political decision takers. (The plazas have not been much involved - these fads have tended to be rather elitist ones which have never, or at least not yet, reached translation into the vocabulary of ordinary discourse or socio-political mobilization.)

#### Some Silver Linings

That most determinedly optimistic of development social scientists, Albert O. Hirschmann, recently remarked that the paradigm was doubtless largely wrong and had made development look too easy, but that this might prove

to have been one of its greatest uses - had social scientists known how difficult the intellectual and practical road was in 1945, they might never have attempted it. Without going to that extreme (and at least in terms of the academicians and decision takers of the industrial world the reflection has more than a grain of truth), one can see certain possibilities arising from the present lack of an accepted, universal orthodoxy.

1. The nature of development and of progress is open to serious examination and to suggestions that they are contextual rather than universal. The straight line (turnpike theorem) view of progress, which really is a product of the European enlightenment, is somewhat in eclipse and the other views with helix, cyclical or zigzag paths much more common outside Europe (and indeed in Europe before the philosophes) receive more respectful hearings and serious analysis as to their role in decisions and their potential for organization and mobilization.
2. Universality is no longer viewed as necessarily attainable or desirable. There is a renewed realization of the possible virtues of provincialism interpreted as grounding in a particular context and seeing the world (including the global) from the view of that context.
3. As a result, the self confidence and "global acceptability" of Third World social scientists has increased significantly. It is no longer per se a criticism of a social scientist to say that his world view is centered on Calcutta or Manila or Port of Spain or Mexico City or Cairo or Dar es Salaam.<sup>51</sup>
4. Last but not least, because the "queen of the social sciences" of the old paradigm was economics, both political economy and

some of the other social sciences have been able to reassert their contributions' importance, if only by pointing out that they are able to demonstrate the weaknesses/contradictions in the failed models.

### Hearing, Listening, Understanding: Some Issues In Communications

While this section relates in particular to social science/social scientists; communications problems in respect to planning, most of the points are rather more general. For that matter academy-plaza-corridors and intercountry communications problems are by no means limited to the social sciences; they affect the natural sciences and (perhaps a fortiori) the arts too.

Communications issues are partly hearing - much of what the academy, the plaza and the corridors say is simply not heard in one or both of the other fora. Equally they are partly listening problems - for historic reasons each of the fora has come to hold a dim view of the intelligence and insightfulness of most actors in the other two and therefore no longer tries to listen very carefully except to a handful of "exceptions".<sup>6/</sup>

Beyond hearing and listening there are real problems of understanding, both in the sense of comprehending what is being meant and of achieving a great enough degree of empathy to see why it is meant and what it means to the speaker. (Neither of these two senses of understanding requires agreement - there is a good deal to be said both intellectually and practically for understanding one's opponents in both senses!)

However, the most convenient way to cluster communications questions is problem inter-fora within one country, inter-country, and intra-academy.<sup>7/</sup>

### Communicating At Home - Issues of Continuity and Effectiveness

Cases of basic moral/value conflict are excluded here. If any forum's main members are convinced that one of the other fora has views and operates

on principles totally anithetic to their own, any practical cooperation or even reasoned discourse relationship is virtually impossible. This is particularly true of planning. Social scientists who see Dakar-Pekine and Metro-Manila as examples of people clearance and see the basic interests of the Senegalese and Philippine political decision takers as requiring people clearance can hardly make an input into metropolitan planning unless they also agree that people clearance is a legitimate means (or end). Nor can the political decision takers be expected to welcome advice of participation from social scientists known to hold contrary views - quite reasonably they suspect such "cooperation" would, in practice, resemble obstruction of subversion of the ends and targets as well as the means. <sup>8/</sup>

Nor is it likely to be useful to discuss in detail questions of conscience relating to discoursing with, advising, working with, working for institutions and decision takers with whom a social scientist is in very fundamental disagreement about major means, targets or goals. These questions relate to ethics rather than social sciences as normally defined and are hardly unique to academicians or social scientists. Verbally social scientists appear, on balance, too prone to assert unwillingness to cooperate in a rather purist fashion but, in practice, the reverse would appear to be the case if participation in plaza or corridors is actually an offer.

However, many problems of communication have little to do with basic differences of goals or questions of conscience about proper interrelationships. Social scientists' communication with political decision takers, managers and the public is marked by discontinuity and ineffectiveness even when none of the parties desires this nor sees any barriers in principle to fruitful discourse and collaboration.

Continuity of contact is important. There are too many social scientists, too many decision takers, too many managers, too many publics for each to communicate with each, especially if each exercise must begin with a hunt-and-see phase to locate potentially interested auditors. Unfocussed sending of speeches or notes on problems or academic papers is no substitute. The recipients (usually correctly) do not assume themselves to be a selected or particularly relevant audience and pay little attention - so little that they cannot identify the 10% of the cases in which they are a primary target audience.

If there are regular contacts between individuals and institutions, some of these problems of absent or purely formal (and unheard) communication can be overcome. This is particularly true when a substantial number of institutions (including enterprises) have planning and research units staffed by persons who have some familiarity with academic discourse (and often an intriguing desire for acceptance by and respect from the professional intellectual community) and when a significant number of political decision takers and mobilization leaders also have academic or semi-academic backgrounds. Such situations are clearly not universal, but they are commoner than is usually supposed.

However, while regular contacts on a quasi-personal, quasi-institutional basis are a start to communication, some greater degree of formalization is usually useful when attained. For example, it is reasonable to suppose that social scientists are concerned with the applied problems as perceived by political decision takers and managers (if only as an input into research and a clue as to sources and directions of funds!). It is equally reasonable to suppose that many managers and political decision takers are interested in hearing comments on approaches, ideas as to new approaches, suggestions



as to ways and means. The conditions for a variety of meetings to discuss, with or without formal agendas and papers, exists. The surprising point is how rarely it is exploited effectively. The apparent reason is "business" which may indicate either a lack of selectivity in proposals or a lack of enough basic personal contact to set up topics for meetings in a way which appears relevant enough to potential participants to cause them to give these activities priority.

The same holds true of written materials. There is no particular reason that a research report, a journal article, a book, a working paper for managers, a brief for a minister, or a set of ideas for a mobilization campaign flowing from the same problem, the same goals and the same research should be a single piece of written work with a uniform vocabulary and presentation. On the contrary. Equally, there is no reason to suppose that the same social scientists will always be interested in or in a position to respond to the needs of a particular manager or minister. Per contra, it would be rather surprising if the same institutions, enterprises, officials, managers, politicians were to be the most likely readers and users of all of a social scientist's or social science unit's papers (or to use only those from one source). Academicians seem, on the whole, to be rather "above" giving serious consideration to locating and reaching particular audiences (apart from themselves) with a devastating reduction of their effectiveness. To send fifty research papers a year to the senior official of a ministry with no cover notes to suggest their relevance (if any) to him or to one of his departments and with no consideration of what vocabulary and style might be accessible to him, is to commit fairly elementary errors in psychology, educational methodology and communications theory. Unfortunately, it seems to be the second most common error. The most common is not to send the papers at all, which is doubtless

a worse failing. The problem on the political decision taker/managerial side is somewhat different. Both groups are more used to deciding on target audiences and speaking or writing to them. However, both are in a majority of cases not very well attuned to directing either communications in general or queries to intellectual audiences (a weakness which afflicts some who are themselves serious social scientists). As a result, their requests for ideas or assistance are not seen as such, and their attempts to indicate practical social science problems are viewed either as hopelessly superficial or rhetoric without substance. (In some cases that is fair comment, but it is arguably more profitable to respond by attempting to pose deeper questions and issues of content and at the same time to indicate possible directions than to ignore or make dismissive noises.)

The most critical form of continuity of communication may be individuals pursuing mixed careers - in the academy, the enterprise, the office, the smaller and middle-level mobilization fora, the broader political decision taking posts. Evidently not everybody can or should seek this pattern. However, the results of those who do suggest that there is much to be said for its being more common. It certainly can improve academy-plaza-corridor communication (including achieving heated discourse on real issues and clarifying true differences or ambiguities). The snag in recent years lies not so much in movement from academy to plaza or corridor as back again . . . the successful migrants do not return or if they do it is to academies abroad or to international organizations research/intellectual wings.

Effectiveness of communications revolves around similar issues: level of discourse, attitudes toward problems and perceptions of how they are seen by others, worldviews and time frames. The latter seem to create special problems. The academician who explained that a system

(the Chinese mandarin) was historically an unimportant failure because it was stable for only five hundred years evidently was not operating on a view of the short-run which is of much relevance to the practising planner! Similarly the "worse is better," "no change at periphery until final revolution at center," "present national efforts on periphery premature" intellectual should accept that no political decision taker or manager can accept his advice since, objectively, it amounts to going out and hanging oneself, trying to make matters worse by identifying and promoting the most negative social and economic forces, or migrating to the center to start a revolution there. If the intellectual school of thought is correct, it is nonetheless not one addressed in any meaningful way to Third World decision takers, especially as its own logic makes detailed empirical research in particular Third World contexts a waste of time ("numbers are inherently bourgeois" is a less obscurantist dogma than it may appear if one accepts the underlying premises).

#### Inter-Country Tensions in Communications

Normally what is meant by a heading of this type is South reactions to North social scientists (originally Northwest but now Northeast as well). Such discussions tend to include three elements: differences on ideas and outlooks, problems relating to particular individuals, and "intellectual imperialism."

Differences on ideas or outlooks are not inherently different because the social scientist (or on occasion the manager) is a foreigner. They may appear to be, but more because deportation on the one hand and departure on the other are easier solutions in the cases of expatriates, or because expatriate views are seen as more likely to acquire (foreign?) practical backing than because the communications/discourse issues are themselves unique. Admittedly an outsider is

likely to make more errors because of background ignorance and, if these are combined with brashness, will set auditors' teeth on edge - but that is sometimes equally true of young citizen social scientists.

Personal approaches and habits do seem to constitute a real difference and one which creates problems. A substantial number of foreign social scientists are not very much concerned with the countries or peoples they study - their peer groups and, potentially, rewarders are elsewhere. As a result, they use scarce time, research facilities, cooperation and return nothing at all (not even copies of erudite articles in unreadable formats). In extreme cases they do not even interact with local social scientists, except as sources of low-cost information and semi-skilled labor. Further, they can be extremely thoughtless. Two examples may help illustrate. One researcher sent a fifty-paged, mimeod questionnaire on regional production and accounts data to thirty Third World Ministers of Finance with a mimeod cover letter demanding that they answer promptly! An academician hired as a consultant took his terms of reference (citizen written) outlining the organizational problems he was to tackle and articulated it into a research project from which he produced several academic articles and secured an international organization post. What he did not do was make the slightest effort to determine why these planning/management problems existed, to educate citizens to deal with them, or to make any serious proposals for fulfilling (as opposed to elaborating) his job description. It is small wonder that academics and especially foreign academics are not universally held in high regard - indeed the degree and breadth of tolerance for them is what strikes the author as surprising.<sup>9/</sup>

"Intellectual imperialism" or "one way dependence" is a more particularly inter-country issue (albeit it can arise among institutions in

a single country!). The "hewers of wood and drawers of water" model has applied to Third World academicians and is deeply resented. The quite apparent sensitivity to foreign social scientists is a mix of objection to being mined of time and materials, or being organized in outside directed "teams" and of being organized at the conceptual level with little concern for either "provincial" or broader insights from the host social science community.

Part of this tension is inevitable. The part resulting from the interplay of "provincial" and "universal" is arguably healthy. That resulting from the need to import senior personnel and export students for advanced education is inescapable until the flow of students and of scholars is two-way. However, the part resulting from a hierarchical structure in academia with the Third World participants at the bottom is not merely unsound but in most cases quite unnecessary.

South-North relations face slightly different problems. The Northern social science communities, as a whole, do not take Southern intellectual initiatives seriously (unless the Southerners in question move to the North!). This, quite reasonably, leads to irritation directly and indirectly increases suspicion of the nature of the Northern academic presence in the South. The case for interpenetration of ideas, techniques, institutions and personnel is either multi-directional or hierarchical, and the latter is no longer acceptable to most Third World social sciences communities (nor to the author).

South-South social science communications problems are quite different. The most general unsatisfactory characteristic is the need for North mediation. The links even within continents and a fortiori among them are few and tenuous within the South. While a start has been made and - perhaps unintentionally - is being facilitated by the quasi-intellectual bureaucracies of international organizations,

South-South academic discussion based on cross-country experience leans heavily on use of Northerners. While there is no reason Northerners should not be involved, there is a logical case for supposing that, as the majority of comparative Western European scholars are Western Europeans, so the majority of comparative African (or South Asian) scholars should be African or South Asian. This is an area in which the establishment of effective channels of communication, contact, exchange of personnel have not developed very fully or very well despite a substantial number of starts, often ending in a substantial number of similar breakdowns. (This comment holds even more forcibly for the managerial/public service quasi-academic community in respect to planning than it does for academicians.)

#### Intra-Academy Communications and Controversies

The issues clustered here have little in principle to do with planning or with the Third World or even with social sciences as such. However, as they are relevant to each of them taken separately and to their overlapping segments, they deserve mention at this point. Mention is the operative term - to discuss them in full, let alone seek to resolve them would be a rather fruitless task as a spinoff from considering planning and the social sciences!

1. Authoritarianism: Academia and academics tend to be authoritarian in practice (even when very much the reverse in principle). Platonic Guardians and Machiavellian puppet masters for Princes are inherently authoritarian models. They are, perhaps, even commoner among intellectual bureaucrats than in the academies proper. More generally, social scientists, when convinced of the truth of a position, have a tendency to seek to "convert" others (especially those they consider unable to see reality because they are a bit dense) by any means which comes to hand.

This reaches its absurd culmination in the models which specify what the "masses want" and reject any comment that the masses demonstrably do not see it that way - on the grounds that this is the result of "false consciousness" but that the modeller knows the true desires of the masses. Apart from being better mysticism than Marxism, this is a very fashionable academic form of authoritarianism widely applied to planning. (Its conservative variant simply omits the claim that the masses in any sense want what is proposed, merely arguing that it would be "good for them," which has the virtue of greater honesty and less muddle but hardly of greater participation, discourse or non-authoritarianism.)

2. Perceiving human action as "experiments." There may be a case for some scholars operating from this stance. However, precisely because nobody and no community views itself/themselves as experiments, this approach abstracts and falsifies. This is quite apart from whether the viewer agrees or disagrees.
3. Operating from identifiable (and multiple?) points of outlook. Global views of vantage points have merit. So, however do those from particular classes, villages, towns, small countries, regions. For most human beings these are their points of outlook. Presumptively one of the strengths of social science work is to transcend, not to ignore, to synthesize, not to ignore, particular viewpoints, but another is logically to increase understanding of, precision within, and effective application of the particular ones. Synthetic globalism or universality

which amounts to generalizing and exporting one particular vantage point's outlook is arguably the exact opposite of serious social science (V.S. Naipul to the contrary notwithstanding).

4. Commitment, detachment and values are hardly issues to be "solved" here. However, two points may be made. No person and probably no piece of social science work is "value free," and to pretend otherwise is not helpful to clarity or to honest discourse. Commitment and detachment are both possible virtues and potential vices. Praise singers are usually worse for their heroes than destructive academic critics for their enemies! Petronius is a type of intellectual who still has his uses. This is true even in such applied fields as planning. What is critical is not that everyone have the same values or balance of commitment/detachment, but that values be seen clearly and the balance of commitment or aloofness related plausibly to the particular piece of work to hand.
5. Education - mobilization - indoctrination is an "irregular declension" problem a la: I educate with careful attention to showing the logic of my position and the errors of my critics; you tend to mobilize a bit uncritically; he engages in crass indoctrination. Part of the problem is contextual: elementary civics lessons, dialogue on adult education with a community group potentially interested in organizing a program and blocked by an overtly oppressive group, and a graduate seminar on the nature of a state have rather different requirements. Part



relates back to the authoritarianism which appears to be deeply ingrained in social scientists (and perhaps social science and ideas more generally). The first, at least, could yield to more reasoned discourse which might also help promote somewhat more tolerance/awareness of the danger in respect to the second and to a less envenomed and more lucid dialogue on the uses of conveying data, encouraging thinking, mobilizing for action, convincing of the correctness of ideas, preaching values.

#### Applied Social Sciences: A Tour D'Horizon

No brief summary of the contributions of applied social science to thinking about/action toward development in general or planning in particular can be anything more than scrappy and provocative. Two angles of entry are of potential use: capsule comments on individual social science disciplines, and a more general glance at the interaction between social science and social actors or actions.

The disciplines sketched here are: economics (economic science), political economy, geography, sociology, government (political science), history, education, psychology, law, religious studies (theology). Doubtless there are cases for additions, redivisions (e.g. anthropologists will probably resent the merger of sociology and anthropology), and/or deletions (law and theology are not be any means always listed as social sciences). The tour d'horizon which follows is biased in two senses - the writer's planning experience is dominantly in Africa and the smaller South-Southeast Asian states, and his own major discipline is political economy with secondary interactions largely

with law and theology. <sup>10/</sup>

Economics has asserted, achieved and maintained a position of "queen of the social sciences" in respect to development and planning. In large part this relates both to economists' propensity to answer questions put to them (even if they do not know, or have no reason to suppose they know, the answers) and to their claim that economic science is value-free and applicable on behalf of any rational set of goals. To a degree these weaknesses have strengths - applied social science must answer social actors' questions or it rules itself out of relevance; to assume that all means are 100% tied to particular ends (values) is a remarkably non-operational approach to decision taking or programme development. Nonetheless, they are ultimately weaknesses and ones compounded by the fact that economists (naturally) have a bias (even if some fight against it) toward economism, i.e., believing that the questions central to their disciplines are always the most important ones and the starting point for answering other questions. (Keynes' view that economics was rather akin to plumbing - a dignified, useful, not very intellectual field of endeavour which was working best when noticed least - has never had much favour in the profession!)

Political Economy (whether revived classical, Marxian, or other) attempts to grapple with the interaction between values, which are very often not usefully defined in economic terms, and means, which are almost always both economic and political. Whether its claim to be the logical organizing focus for all applied social sciences is valid is a different matter; its assertion of a greater breadth and realism than economic science is more soundly based. Unfortunately it tends to be combined with a lesser degree of technical proficiency

and a certain ambiguity on what degree of freedom does exist between particular means/techniques and ends/goals in applied political economic fields such as planning.

Geography as a social science does not appear to have a uniform self definition. Certainly there are geography departments and institutes which are very much in the applied social science field. These usually do succeed in using geography's historic natural science links and an extension of them to agricultural science to acquire greater specificity than sociology and greater relationship to particular situations than economic science. However, the uses limitations of this approach have usually been unclear both to the geographers and to the potential users with the latter tending to suppose geography to be a branch of local physical planning. That seems an unduly narrow perspective.

Sociology is the social science least inclined to answer applied questions in a fashion intelligible to the questioner. Its defenders relate this to intellectual honesty and its critics to fuzzy-mindedness. Classical colonial anthropology was an exception - knowledge as the basis for the power to manipulate was its motive force. However, the anthropology sub-discipline of sociology has - at least in the Third World - recanted against this, albeit not against a defense of "pluralism" and "conservation of tradition" which at times appears obscurantist and even more frequently drives the practicing planner, who really has no option of doing nothing to distractions.

Government (political science) cannot in this context be viewed as one discipline. Administration as a means of providing nuts and bolts education and techniques has been and remains influential. Development

administration - rather unfortunately - was a child of the "growth and moderization" export boom and has virtually perished with it. Political theory is doubtless influential, but more in Keynes "voices in the air" sense than as a systematic input into development thinking or planning. The absence of an usable, operational state theory is noteworthy. As a generalist organizing discipline for development, political science has suffered partly because politicians are more convinced they know politics than that they know economics and partly because it has not been able to answer the rather larger number of practical questions (in planning or development more generally) which at least on the face of it are primarily economic. Whether the adoption of a set of economic methodological approaches (ones which an increasing number of development economists think ill-suited within their own discipline), including a slightly artificial variant of econometrics, is a valid answer to these limitations remains to be seen - the author is sceptical even though at the level of discourse and insights some of the tools appear to have force.

History has suffered from its use by non-historians and from the descriptive school of historians. The first turn history into a religion or a myth, which may or may not make it appealing but hardly relates to its nature or uses as a social science. The latter make it boring, often intellectually imperialistic and quite impossible to apply except as a source of snippets of data. Despite this, political economists (and to a lesser extent government specialists?) have a high regard for the potential contributions of history as - rather surprisingly - do many managers and political decision takers if history is interpreted as running up to yesterday, with the last 50

or 10 years as valid a field of inquiry as the previous 5,000.

Education is in a functional sense a very influential social science in the development field. When married to economics (or occasionally political economy) its child, "manpower planning" is even more influential. However, education has had a substantially lesser impact at the overall intellectual level. Manpower planning has escaped from education (in the applied institutional sense) precisely because of this. Similarly, to ask that agricultural extension should be viewed as primarily a problem in education with educational insights as critical as agricultural, tends to arouse even greater bemusement among educators than among agronomists. Apparently the applied role of training teachers, while bringing money and prestige, has also narrowed and shallowed the intellectual nature of the discipline.

Psychology has rarely been perceived as a major social science input into development thinking or praxis. What psychological development models there have been (and the number is not all that small) have been constructed (or concocted) by members of other disciplines. It is not self-evident that this situation is inevitable nor that psychology cannot be more coherently integrated into development and planning thinking and practice. However, there appears to be little sign of this happening in the immediate future.

Law has, like education, been functionally useful in development administration - albeit planning is something of an exception to the rule in this respect. However, also like education, law has not been treated as a discipline with a central intellectual or organizing contribution. The initial law and development effort was a singularly "universal export model" one, with the result that its artifactual heritage of laws is mixed and

its contribution to law being seen as an integral element in indigenous development as often negative as positive. Some rebuilding of efforts toward identifying the role of law in development have begun but not on a broad front.

Theology (Religious Studies) has had substantial, if very uneven, influence on development thinking and practice, but more via the plazas and the value frames of decision takers than through influencing officials or contributing to discussion of means or targets. While unlike other social science disciplines, theology probably has relatively little to say about techniques (a viewpoint writers like the present President of Iran would reject), its concern with goals does require that it pay somewhat more coherent attention to major means and interim goals and take part in more extensive discourse with other social science disciplines on development.

#### Interactions Among The Social Sciences

It is a platitude to remark that discourse among the social sciences is inadequate and that what passes for joint approaches often involves parallel proposals made by individuals or groups who do not bother to listen to each other - to auditors who can hardly be faulted if the story of the Tower of Babel springs to their minds. However, there are no simple answers - or rather none that do not create equally acute problems.

- a. To create masterful polymaths who know all the relevant concepts and techniques of all the social science disciplines is impractical. Knowing one relatively thoroughly,<sup>two</sup> more to some extent, and being able to carry on an informed discussion with the others is

- the maximum which any normal academician can achieve
- b. to delegate commanding authority to one discipline which then organized the others is confusing line decision - taking and managerial organization with intellectual interaction-discourse-contribution. In fact, the "queen of the social sciences," eras theology, law, and (now or just ending?) economics science have been rather damaging in their long-term impact on the disciplines in question;
  - c. to cut development up into discrete "problem" areas - e.g. urban housing, rural water, income distribution, foreign resource management - has very definite uses. However, the disciplinary requirements in each packet still exceed any one person's (or any synthetic discipline's) range, and there are still interactions and overlaps among the newly defined categories. One does not do away with links and interactions by redefining topical areas;
  - d. to say that relating and synthesizing disciplines is the duty of the final decision taker is in a sense true. However, it is hardly an excuse for lack of disciplinary interaction and discourse - if the social scientists cannot understand one another it is slightly unreasonable to expect a decision taker to be able to do so simply because he is not a specialist in any (unless one supposes his reaction will be "a plague on all your houses"!)

and, so long as social scientists remain in contact with each other, the advisors and programmers can incorporate the work of the describers, analysts, and critics and be complemented by (at least some of) the mobilizers.<sup>12/</sup>

The somewhat shaky social science perception of relative time spans is probably linked to the problematic nature of interactions with reality. On the one hand there is the danger already cited to think sub speciae aeternitatis, which has its uses for certain types of description and analysis but is not directly applicable to development, let alone planning. However, an equally prevalent strand can be characterized (or caricatured) as the "New Jerusalem Yesterday or Never" approach which argues that, if ultimate goals are not reached in a very short time, this proves the approach to be wrong. Hopefully, this is not correct - social sciences stand very much under that general damnation if it is! More immediately to the point, it is an approach which tends to infuriate even the most open and reasonable of decision takers and managers.

Commitment/detachment also overlaps types of interaction with reality. Mobilization is a form of interaction which almost inherently requires commitment - and preferably commitment to something beyond organization for its own sake! Description and criticism can be from a detached viewpoint (which has some particular strengths and weaknesses) or based on passionate pro or con commitment (which affords other weaknesses and strengths). As with choice of type of relationship, there is no evident case for uniformity, but there is one for social scientists making clear what their commitments or detachments are (or at least what they believe them to be!).



Social Science-Social Action-Social Actors

The interaction of social science, social scientists, other social actors, and social action is problematic. This is especially true when social scientists are operationally or quasi-operationally involved in programmes and projects designed and directed by other social actors. That of course is by definition the case in planning.

The relationship of the social sciences to reality is an issue of theoretical and practical, intellectual and praxis concern - both generally and in relation to development. Attempting either to define a particular interaction which is universally valid or to say that each social scientist in each context should operate on the same spectrum of interactions is almost certainly otiose. Both individuals and contexts vary too much for that. Description, criticism, analysis, prescription, mobilization, alteration are all legitimate relationships between social sciences and social scientists and reality. Each can be abused - dispassionate description of, let alone social engineering for, genocide raises intellectual problems no matter how aseptic the genocide nor how cogently it is justified on triage or financial stabilization programme premises. Not all can be combined in all contexts - to be a critic of, a mobilizer for basic changes in the goals and personnel of, and a detailed programmatic analyst and advisor to the corridors of power always poses dilemmas, but in some cases is simply implausible (e.g. Chile today). Nor, if one may apply an economic postulate more broadly, is there any reason to reject specialization and division of labor; personal predilections and abilities are not usually uniform across all of the relationships

choices among means, even if some means can be used for a range of ends.

Second, the value-free ends posed in this definition are on more careful inspection very value-loaded indeed. Sometimes they include the greater efficiency of "free markets" which is a logical and intellectual absurdity unless one states the goals and constraints toward which/within which the efficiency is to be directed/limited. (Pareto optimality for example takes income distribution as a given - by no means a value neutral assumption.) In less extreme cases they are merely economistic - more gross domestic product is always better than less and can always be redistributed either during or after production. It is not self evident that more physical goods and services always are better than less. Redistribution during or after production is not as plastic as this approach supposes. To the extent that external vulnerability is altered there is a perfectly good economic case for "notional" insurance premium charges against solutions involving greater risks (even if political decision takers would not put the concept in those terms, they understand it quite well!).

At a somewhat different level, planning is frequently described as writing a plan. That is an aspect of planning (not as it happens an essential one), but the author (who admits to being somewhat eccentric on this point, is unable to comprehend how it can be advanced as a definition of the whole. If planning is a process relating to changing reality (or, more accurately, altering the directions and tempos of change), then the data collection, analysis and positing of subsequent actions to be taken are important but by no means adequate in themselves.

## V.

Planning: Notes Toward A Definition

A very real problem in discussing social science contributions to planning is deciding what planning is or ought to be. It cannot be said that one of the more notably successful contributions of the social sciences to planning lies in arriving at a clear, reasonably accepted definition. There are at least three common definitions, all of which appear to the present author to be slightly absurd.

Planning has been defined as the hallmark of a functioning socialist transition to a socialist political economy. In the first place this raises very severe problems for handling macro (e.g., enterprise) planning at all for serious discussion of techniques. In the second, it is either false or confusing because it redefines a generally used term without giving proper warning to the auditor. The only type of economy which does not have significant macro planning is one in which the dominant political decision-taking group is virtually totally responsible/responsive to a set of capitalist subclasses who both find it more convenient to handle macro social organization themselves rather than via the state and have no secondary divergences requiring mediation through the state. The nearest thing to an example that comes to mind is Hong Kong. Even relatively stable, highly inegalitarian capitalist economies - e.g. Singapore, South Korea, Brazil to take a range - find it prudent to practice rather extensive planning. Actually creating the conditions for primitive

accumulation in a previously planned (or muddled) political economy requires very interventionist and forceful planning indeed - vide Chile of Cauas, or Sri Lanka today. Capitalist planning may have very different goals and interim targets from socialist (although the particular tools used are not necessarily equally different), but to say that it is not planning appears to obfuscate rather than illuminate.

A more or less inverse definition takes planning to be a body of analytical and programmatic techniques which are value-free and (in the extreme forms of this definitional pattern) serve value-free goals which are universally acceptable. This may be a useful way of proceeding within a given context in which goals are fairly clearly agreed and stable and the main questions are ones of means and techniques. Certainly some of the more creative work using this definition springs from precisely that type of background. However, as a general intellectual or cross-national approach (or even one within a single state in which goals are either not agreed or not stable) it suffers from two types of major limitations.

First, it is true to say that means are not one-to-one correlated with goals, but quite untrue to deny that means do influence points of arrival and that some means are inconsistent with some goals. - e.g. computerized material balances planning without a dual price system is quite inconsistent with decentralized, participatory operation of the planning process, as well as hopelessly unsuitable technically for economies with very bad data flow channels and a large number of relatively isolated areas and production units. Ends do determine

Necessary, yes; sufficient, no. The plan document itself is a convenient guidebook, mobilizing statement, reference point but is not even necessary let alone sufficient (indeed a number of countries have had and have plan volumes which bear no evident relation to perfectly real planning processes - e.g. at times Sri Lanka - or which bear very complex and problematic relationships indeed - e.g. Kenya since independence).

To attack this definition is not to attempt to break a butterfly upon a wheel. Its prevalence has had negative consequences. Planning units have seen their task as finished when the plan appeared (or rather oddly shifted to very micro, traditional Treasury assessments of individual collections of bricks and mortar) and chosen their techniques and personnel skills with this limited definition of their role in mind. Other ministries and units have welcomed this definition since it allowed them to play lip service to planning while "getting on with the job" as they perceived it. Academicians have also selected techniques and analytical vantage points to suit the definition and had the benefit of being involved in the section of the planning process with the highest ratio of inspiration to perspiration and of creative thought to drudgery. But planning does not stop with the "plan" any more than budgeting stops with the estimates' publication - or, if it does, it has nothing to do with reality. Institutional creation and reform, administrative development, monitoring and data flow processes/channels, techniques for early warning of deviations and for prompt, coherent modification to fall back (or opportunistic advance) positions are just as much part of planning as building up the initial guideposts.

### A Working Definition

A more inclusive definition might be: planning is a process of utilizing and allocating scarce resources to achieve a set group of targets which represent progress toward longer-term goals (or values) within a given time frame.

This type of definition need not be economic - there is no automatic reason to equate scarce resources with finance of foreign exchange, to set only economic quantity targets, or to assume that "final" goals and underlying values are wholly (or even predominately) economic. However, it is true that real resources of various types are virtually always a constraint on achieving other targets. Therefore, achieving growth in the availability of scarce resources is normally a critical target whether it is seen as a general means to target fulfillment or as an "intermediate end". In poor politics/economics "zero growth" and development are not compatible, even if rapid growth is by no means an adequate condition for development. In general form, such a definition of planning does not specify goals. However, this characteristic vanishes as soon as any specific planning in any actual context is studied (or operated). Goals are central to selection of targets and of means in a way much more subtle than a simply plugging them into an otherwise universal process. This approach appears to have the best chance of avoiding the pitfalls of defining planning processes only in terms of goals and contexts so that no general topic exists at all and of defining them in such a mechanistic way that planning appears to be purely a matter of techniques, with both goals and contexts minor secondary

irritations (as is implementation in some definitions).

However, this definitional approach highlights the analytical gap in respect to usable state theory. Indeed much social science literature on planning extends this gap further by having no adequate descriptive apparatus either in respect to the state or to institutional/bureaucratic operation. Without these, values are not simply determined outside the planning process per se, they drop out of the sky in a totally unexplained way and cannot be checked for "validity" within any particular planning process. In addition, a large body of major technical and operational issues cannot be handled (not, incidentally, including a majority of "implementation" issues) because of the abstraction from bureaucracy/institutions/administration.

A possible "state theory" construct for planning would be that of a dominant decision-taking group. This approach allows such a group to be a "coalition", to change over time, to operate on multiple goals, to relate to institutions in non-homogenous ways - i.e. one coalition fraction dominant in respect to some and other in respect to different institutions. Objections to that approach are in large measure either academic objections to the complexity of reality or economists' objections to non-economistic goals and processes (which is perhaps another variant of the objection to complex realities!). It is certainly true that if the coalition/decision-taking group has a set of goals with very complex tradeoffs, is characterized by rapid shifts in balances of power, and is accompanied by individual institutions being dominated by particular fractions with very different goals and priorities among them, major intellectual problems arise in respect to planning. So they should - major real problems in terms of the

operation of the process arise under precisely those conditions!

Similarly, some working institutional theory is needed within planning definitional and conceptual frameworks. Otherwise the ways in which administration and management function and the particular characteristics of "bureaucrats" and of institutions are abstracted from, with substantial cost to the completeness, ability to project or analyze results, and overall rationality of the planning process and of the social science contribution to it.

#### What Are The Goals?

It is certainly true that problems arise intellectually - and operationally - because dominant goals are not always, perhaps not even usually, stated precisely and openly. Published planning documents deal very much in short and intermediate term targets. Further, they may - for quite good reasons so far as the decision takers are concerned - not merely omit statements as to longer term values, but make quite misleading statements either for purposes of domestic coalition protection or for those of securing external support. One implication is that the effective planning technician (it is rather arrogant to call the clerks the planners!) must have enough contact and discourse with and enough understanding of and sympathy with relevant decision-takers to understand what their basic goals, priorities and targets are. The majority of planning technicians - academic or bureaucratic, citizen or expatriate - in many countries neither achieve this nor perceive its necessity. One can hardly claim that the social science contribution as it now stands has done much to help clarify its significance for them.



Indeed there has been a rather perverse contribution. This is the explicit or implicit argument that the planning technician (in such work always termed planner) because he has more command of information and language can substitute his own goals for those of the political decision-takers who will not notice the difference at first and later will either welcome it or be trapped into continuing their "Platonic Guardian's " path. Questions of responsibility aside (what right as a technician to substitute his judgement of values for that of a political decision taker?), the argument vastly overstates the strength of the intellectual and the bureaucrat. They can and do influence decisions, they can and do fail to implement decisions threatening to them - a point social science research has not handled very well, albeit it is now a growth area. In cases of close rapport between decision-taker and intellectual or official technician, the latter may influence goals and basic choices. But to suppose that the clerks can take control and manipulate the political heads in an illusion.

Perhaps the most striking example of that illusion and its limits was in Sri Lanka in the early 1970s. The then Minister for Finance was an intellectual in politics. He secured adoption of a set of tax policies which would have wiped out accumulated wealth in two decades, made inheritance impracticable as a route to passing wealth or power, but allowed rapid accumulation by risk-taking entrepreneurs (falling to the state on their death). As a programme for gradual transition to socialism by parliamentary means this seems commendable. But it was approved by a cabinet and passed by a parliament dominated by a small capitalist-led and based party.

The Minister has been the ultimate in the clerk misleading the decision takers. Within a few years the policies were reversed. Worse, he had - by his tactical concessions for one generation to entrepreneurs - confused and alienated his own base; he and his party were wiped out in the 1977 elections! The fate of the typical planning technician who sets out to reshape national goals may not be as dramatic - it will be quite as ineffectual in achieving its own goal.

#### What Is Planning About?

If the working definition suggested earlier is accepted, planning is basically about procedures, techniques and efficiency as they relate to achieving targets which are at one and the same time consistent and possible, as well as directed to achieving goals which are ultimately more basic than exogenous to the planning process. To attempt to integrate the goals into the definition of planning is either to limit definitions to specific contexts and goal sets, or to create confusion by giving the impression that goals are universal, agreed and value-free. For example, equality of results or equality of opportunity (very different things indeed - in practice often opposites) is a possible real (and a more frequent verbal goal). If it is a basic goal, then a series of requirements as to targets, policies and techniques follow. Knowing whether it is a goal and with what priority is critical to planning technicians' own efficiency and their knowledge as it affects choice of targets, policies, means, techniques is equally important. But equality is not a universal goal. (In, for example, Singapore and Kenya it is not simply not a goal but is radically inconsistent with the actual goals informing the planning process - as the Prime Minister of Singapore

is admirably open in asserting.) To talk as if it were and to define planning processes generally to incorporate it, is to confuse the author's idea of the desirable with the actual. It is not sensible to criticize the Singapore planning process for not producing less inequality (or for increasing inequality) independently from a critical analysis of the nature of Singapore's political economy and state decision-taking group goals. If the planning process did promote equality, it would be inefficient in terms of the requirements of those it is set up to serve.

Another area of setting limits relates to when planning ends and management or administration or mobilization or any other more "routine" activity begins. While it is logically clear that the publication of a plan is a very bad cutoff point and that to define every act of implementing, participating in or responding to a planning policy, target, project or programme as planning is too broad, where to draw a line is much less clear. Monitoring performance, revising policies/programmes coherently to respond to changed contexts or unexpected results, reviewing experience and relating to new/altered/continued sets of decision-taker priorities are part of the planning process. So is the designing and setting up of new institutions, enterprises, action groups, communities, sub-classes, parties also engage in planning.) Beyond that, broad definitions and rules of thumb probably cease to be of much help - one needs to look at a particular situation and trace through implications and interactions before reaching a working decision (or an article, policy paper, a lecture, an action memorandum).

### Is Planning Universal Or Provincial?

As defined planning is relatively universal. The concept of organizing in a way consistent with progress toward goals is not uniquely Western or industrial. The ideas of constant, unidirectional, "progress" and "modernization" are more time-and-culture bound but are hardly essential to planning. Nor are participatory and people's-movement approaches inherently in opposition to planning - their targets are the decision-takers and, more particularly, their policies and goals. However, there are worldviews which have little place for planning - mysticism and astrology are examples (which is not to assert they have much also in common), as may be forms of "populism" which really do depend on pure emotional response and mass interaction.

However, there is a different sense in which planning as defined is always "provincial". It is context bound because goals arise from and relate to contexts and because different targets/instruments/techniques are important and feasible in varying contexts. This is not to deny similarities among and possibilities of fruitful interchange between planning experiences. It is to warn that the quest for the "universal model plan" is a variant of the quest for El Dorado and that prepackaged export model planning processes, plans, or plan components are rather likely to be inappropriate technology or, at the least, to require rather extensive adaptation, climatization, and expert installation before they operate well. Even then they are unlikely to operate as their designers envisaged; but that can be a strength.

The danger in this definitional approach is that it appears to

remove all moral-ethical-value judgement responsibility from planning technicians and social scientists. Appears, rather than does. In the first place, the articulation and application of values is a commoner and - in immediate impact to real human beings here and not at least - often a more important aspect than decisions on basic verities. In the second, it is one thing to say a national planning process is designed (or logically ought to be designed) to implement the goals of the dominant decision-taking coalition and another to say whether an individual should cooperate in that process or work for the modification/conversion/substitution/elimination of that decision-taking coalition. Hjalmar Schacht's economic planning both for the Weimar Republic and for the Third Reich was efficient in terms of the (rather different) decision takers he served. That does not mean that individuals-or social scientists need take the same view of both exercises' moral propriety. Just as there is unlikely to be a "universal model plan", there are no universal planning technicians, not simply because no one has adequate disciplinary and contextual knowledge but because the range of goals and values any one individual can work for and live with himself is limited. <sup>14/</sup>

## VI.

### Content and Technique: Scraps Toward Guidelines

To survey all planning techniques and instruments in a short paper is hardly practicable...to study them widely enough to do so would require so long that the survey would be out of date. Nor is a compact survey of their relationships with social science methodology

(rather direct in many cases and ultimately substantial in almost all) any more practical. What can be attempted are a few points which are striking to one observer/participant in one non-randomly selected set of planning processes.

The first is the tendency to treat techniques out of context as if they were meccano kit parts which could be fitted together into an infinite number of designs and whose laws of interaction and combination were "natural", "immutable" and value-free. While perhaps pedagogically convenient and avoiding the opposite mistakes - such as defining input-output analysis as inherently capitalist (because it was designed for use in the New Economic Policy) or inherently Communist (because it was first used in the NEP) - this is neither intellectually nor operationally satisfactory.

Techniques and policies can only be understood and applied adequately within a context. In particular they need to be analyzed and applied in relation to goals. Incomes and prices policies, for example, can be used to alter income distribution toward minimum wage earners, salariat, peasants, or capitalists. The meaning of profit-oriented policies may not be the same in the context of a largely state-owned, directly productive sector - may not, since an examination of the sector's own use of surplus and distribution of income is required before a complete evaluation.

Further techniques often have underlying theoretical assumptions (or alternative sets). This is true of both capitalist and socialist inflation control techniques (oddly similar at some levels but sharply divergent at the theoretical). It is equally true of techniques which inherently or de facto assume enterprise-dominated markets, government-managed markets, or non-market allocation systems as the

dominant form of resource direction. Related to this is studying and clarifying the uses and limitations of techniques - e.g., standard market economy banking legislation is, perhaps, not very usable in a transition to socialist economy with very limited money markets or intermediation; per contra, public enterprise management techniques, assuming a Soviet model of material balance allocations and requirements set from outside for the enterprise, are distinctly inadequate for a manager in either an enterprise-dominated government managed market context.

The Great Powers: Capital/Output, Capital Budget, Cost/Benefit

Applied social science contributions to planning revolve very largely around three concepts and clusters of techniques. Even in the cases of disciplines other than economics there has been a notable tendency to adjust approaches and vocabularies to interact with this triad: Capital/Output (Harrod-Domar-Feldman and their extended families), Capital Budgeting (Traditional Treasury Candle End Collection Revisited), Cost/Benefit Analysis (Little-Mirlees and Related Black Boxes). Each of these is a useful analytical approach and gives rise to a useful body of techniques. Each has been overdeveloped in the academy and overapplied in crudely reductionist forms in actual planning with results that lend little credit to social science and offer little development to the users and used.

The problem is not that these techniques are totally inappropriate nor universally lack power. Rather it is application in inappropriate contexts, overgeneralization, intellectual hegemony, exclusion or downgrading or other techniques/analytical tools.

The relationship of fixed investment to output is important. So are related questions of production structure and of capital/output ratios. However, fixed investment is very far from being the whole of development, and attempts to treat other elements - e.g., education, health - as investment in people wholly analagous to fixed investment do not seem the most satisfactory approach to these topics. Nor is it possible to attempt any general planning of production structures nor any systematic selection of particular projects simply on the basis of capital/output ratios.

Similarly, capital project budgeting is of some importance. (It ill behooves the author as a Treasury economist to downgrade nuts and bolts Treasury function!) But it is very far from being a systematic approach to planning and tends to substitute for serious attention either to policy or to the operating results of public infrastructural or enterprise investment. When taken together with capital/output analysis it has contributed to a standard tendency to underestimate the importance of working capital and to confuse the uses of constant price projections with the real planning problems of budgeting and of credit which, ex definitio, must be operated in current prices.

Cost/benefit analysis is useful, especially if one recognizes that any desired cost or benefit can be plugged in (so long as it can to a degree be estimated). However, cost/benefit as a general analytical and planning approach is a rather different matter - it rests on surprisingly artificial assumptions both about the nature of the world economy and the goals of decision takers and about the quantity and quality of data available. Social cost/benefit analysis has led to even greater practical problems - converting all gains into artificial "market value" equivalents in order to arrive at a unique "payoff" number hides real tradeoffs and substitutes technicians' guesses or prejudices for proper presentation of alternatives to decision takers.



Mathematics, Models and Projections

Mathematics, models and projections have also suffered from uncritical use. The first need in any context is to consider carefully their uses and limitations. For example, elaborate econometric calculations on the basis of short time series composed of numbers themselves marked by dubious accuracy or consistency and relating to an economy in which structural change is rapid, have a spurious elegance and precision but very little content. Models, by their nature, are abstractions from a more complex reality to illustrate/examine certain elements thought to be key. Therefore, the critical questions are whether the selected elements are in fact crucial and whether the other factors held constant or formulated in initial assumptions are both less important and plausibly represented. Even then models remain much more suggestive and indicative than directly usable for elaborating programmes. Projections are vital to planning - targeting without projecting whether the targets are feasible and what elements of existing patterns of change need to be altered to reach them, is a rather empty exercise. However, projections should specify the assumptions made (especially for subsequent use in evaluating or revising them) and should normally state ranges of least unlikely results not single numbers which again give a totally spurious impression of precision.

One useful result which may flow from mathematical exercises, modelling and projects (may, since in practice the opposite sometimes occurs) is concern with data quality. Much more priority in planning ususally needs to be given to getting approximately correct, reasonably up-to-date data. Similarly, planning technicians and social scientists would be well advised to go to basic sources and examine them for probable mistakes

or ranges of doubt before conducting elaborate exercises. The number of academic articles and of policy measures taken on the basis of statistical trends which subsequently turned out to represent errors, improvements, or deteriorations in the statistics not changes in reality is embarrassingly high.<sup>15/</sup>

#### Speed, Simplicity, Operationality

Planning techniques need to produce indications of what would happen under certain assumptions and what has been happening rapidly. To have no answers when a decision needs to be taken and perfect data on why the decision was wrong six months after the event is very distinctly less satisfactory than having imperfect but approximately correct analyses at the time of taking the decision. Simplicity is also critical, not simply because it enhances speed but because effective planning requires that more institutions, managers, decision takers, mobilisers be brought into the process than are usually involved today. To do so requires techniques which they can operate and whose results they can understand.

Operationality is critical to planning - or any other applied social science area. (Even in research the value of techniques which allow one to set up an intellectual model but require data which is not and is unlikely to become available so that most of the categories remain empty is open to some doubt. This implies a need for greater concern with institutional and administrative techniques and procedures. It may well be no part of planning to engage in day-to-day administration, but it certainly is a part to ensure that policies, programmes and projects can be managed/administered. This requirement is remarkably frequently overlooked both

by academicians and by senior technocrats not themselves directly involved in the institutional or administrative operations in question. For example, taxes which, on paper, meet a number of fiscal efficiency criteria, promote desired income distribution and offer incentives to appropriate production/consumption responses, but which cannot be administered or bring tax administration to the verge of collapse, are a not very uncommon outcome of planning fiscal policy!

Similarly, what passes as planning administrative reform usually proceeds on the basis of techniques which seem to relate to the reality of administrative reformers and that of what can be fitted into simple two-dimensional diagrams but have, in most cases, no relation to the realities of the countries, institutions or administrative/managerial services supposedly to benefit from the reforms. (While the most trenchant critics of this weakness are academic social scientists, they are also among the intellectual sources and personnel pools for it.) Two contributory factors appear to be yet another assumption that universal principles are all and provincial realities nothing (or worse than nothing) and that working administrators are mindless conservatives who have no useful ideas on how their systems could work better or the constraints relating to specific potentially useful changes.

#### Techniques, Programmes, Policies, Targets, Goals

The content of planning exercises is very largely the learning, use and evaluation of the results of techniques. This is probably even more true of the direct involvement of social scientists (as opposed to their more detached analysis of broader aspects of the process).

However, as suggested by the working definition used, techniques are a dependent not an independent variable. The starting point is goals and the route to choice, elaboration, articulation of techniques

lies through targets, programmes and policies flowing from (contributing to realisation of) the goals. That is admittedly an oversimplification - processes like this are always partly iterative. Techniques certainly can throw light on the validity of programmes and policies or, if techniques for certain programmes and policies are simply not available, may force selection of alternatives for which the techniques exist. They may also demonstrate the implausibility, inconsistency or flat impossibility of certain preliminary targets. Whether seen as techniques (and not as representations of deeper and broader analytical and explanatory systems) they are likely to affect goals much is open to doubt. However, the primary direction starts from goals and works down to identifying appropriate techniques - or at least it should. Planning exercises which appear to have been constructed to fit the techniques known to or favoured by technicians are by no means unknown.

#### Continuity and Perseverance

"To plan today and fly away is to live to plan another day" remarked a sympathetic and able expatriate planner in East Africa as he left "his" third plan in place. While few social scientists would wish to associate themselves with that way of putting it, the involvement of academics in planning often does verge on that approach.

The drawbacks are considerable:

1. It is almost impossible to create an ongoing process rather than an episodic set of plan-writing exercises loosely linked by annual capital budgeting;
2. therefore policies, management and administration are systematically underemphasized as are annual budgeting of scarce resources (whether finance, domestic credit, foreign exchange, skilled personnel, or construction capacity);

3. the initial creation/initiation of new techniques-programmes-policies is seen as somehow complete in itself and their articulation, initial operation, modification to overcome early operating snags fall out of the picture.

These drawbacks are made even more severe when the academic teaching of future managers, administrators, planning technicians embodies the same assumptions about planning. The unfortunate fact that the ratio of inspiration to perspiration and of creative initiatives to making them work is about 1 to 99 very rarely comes through in teaching.

It can be said that this outlook is one to which expatriates are particularly prone and represents a very telling case for citizenisation. That is true, but some aspects of it inform much Third World academy thinking and practice so that, as is rather usual, citizenship is a necessary rather than a sufficient condition for developing a more satisfactory frame of reference.

#### What Is To Be Done?

In writing of problems it is easy to give a picture of total failure. In the case of social science interaction with development, and in particular with planning, that would be an unduly gloomy perception. Neither in respect of potential nor of achievement nor of direction of change since 1945 is the pattern or dynamic systematically negative - failures are in respect to needs and hopes rather than previously achieved standards. The conference of which this paper forms a part could not have been held in 1945 and if it had been attempted there would have been little experience to discuss. If it had been held in 1965 there would have been material, but it is inconceivable that - as is the case today - a clear majority of the paper-writers and participants would have been Southerners.

The spectrum of achievements and possibilities is very wide. Indeed, it is arguably wider in the Third World than in the industrialised countries. Certainly there have been cases - e.g., the Uganda of Amin, the Equatorial Guinea of Macias - where the relationship of social science and social scientists to dominant social actors and actions was limited to survival and very often survival by departure or failure to survive; a pattern only too reminiscent of much of Europe in the Second World War. But even under regimes which are quite overtly repressive (even if their own chosen word for it is rarely that), there are degrees of freedom and types of relationship possible other than silence, covert opposition and suicide. Interaction between social scientists and the state in Zaire is not purely on the latter's terms; criticism and analysis are not *per se* passports to prison. In the Philippines it is the degrees of freedom allowed at least some serious critics, the latitude for social science research and proposal of alternatives and the opportunities for certain types of mobilization which are surprising, even if limited. The Northwestern analogues are perhaps Greece of the Colonels and Portugal of Caetano; the Northeast, Poland of the 1960's. Even in states about which many social scientists, including the author, have rather grave reservations there is often a genuine eagerness to hear and reflect on at least some criticism and discourse which is more than purely technical or marginal - Sri Lanka today is an example - ironically perhaps more so than it was under the LSF government before 1977.

Nor is movement from the academy to the corridors of power as unusual or as confined to one class of state as might be supposed. Whatever reservations one has about the Brazilian military regimes,

they have involved academicians and intellectuals in more than window-dressing or technical roles - Roberto Campos and Delfim Netto are serious social scientists with technical competence and coherent commitments. This may of course be a mixed blessing - the Chilean junta's political economic policy was not merely implemented but in substantial measure designed by intellectuals (Chilean even if one suggests that their worldview was very much that of Chicago and of Friedmania). This, however, is not a question of exclusion of intellectuals but of value judgements. To condemn a regime because one disagrees with its values is one thing; to say that it does not involve social scientists seriously is another.

At the opposite end of the spectrum the problem is sometimes that of too great expectations of and calls upon social scientists. A fairly evident case is Tanzania where the readiness to receive and use research, including critical and programmatic research is much greater than the capacity to produce or to communicate it. Similarly, while it is a compliment to the social sciences that a remarkable number of academic practitioners have ended in the corridors of power as senior officials, managers, researchers or ministers, the high general opinion of the suitability of academic training as a preparation for practical action makes developing the academy rather more difficult than it would be if the enthusiasm were less! Granted, Tanzania like any other state, is not organized primarily to facilitate social science research - officials and managers are busy people and cooperating in research takes scarce time. Detailed research projects affect as well as observe reality and not always very helpfully - when 56 research teams want to study one small village, either one needs to cut back to 1 or to add a 57th to

study the impact of the other 56 on rural development and social formation! Finally, like any state, Tanzania, especially in operational and applied roles, prefers social scientists it perceives as broadly sympathetic to its Party's goals. That is a fact of life anywhere social scientists are taken seriously - if knowledge is power and the academic has the power to alter reality, he can hardly expect to be sought out to amass power and to alter reality by decision takers and managers whose goals he rejects. Engage them directly or indirectly in discourse or mobilise groups who can get a hearing, yes; but advise those he wishes to remove, no.

The difficulty of proposing remedies is that it is very easy to give the impression first that there are universal, total solutions to be had and that the author has discovered them. That is very rarely the case - indeed the quest for the universal, total, permanent solution is quite often part of the problem, not the answer.

Several points need to be made on limitations:

- a. some of the issues integral to the social sciences, particularly in their relationships with development and planning, are both complex and changing, so that to claim either to see the whole problem (let alone answer) or to see how it will appear in a decade (let alone in a century) is to demonstrate a fatal misunderstanding of reality;
- b. other issues involve inherent tensions (at times hardening into antagonistic contradictions) - state and critic, thinker and administrator, commitment to goals and commitment to objectivity, relative importance of different aspects of reality and relative value of different vantage points for looking at it. Resolving these tensions by



enforcing uniformity is hardly plausible social science methodology (as well as hardly practicable), and there are rather few general guidelines as to when and how tensions can be creative and no ultimate guide beyond conscience as to when the proper response to a situation or a regime is to seek to change it by whatever means are necessary rather than to attempt to alter it by dialogue or semi-detached advice and participation;

- c. many problems and possibilities are almost totally context-determined and nearly all are context-affected so that general pronouncements or guidelines miss some totally and are, at most, first approximations as to how others might be tackled.

The following tentative suggestions are limited to what social scientists of the academy might do themselves or jointly with inhabitants of plazas and corridors. Certainly suggestions on the initiatives the other groups might take can be written, but the presumptive audience for this paper is either academicians or rather intellectual managers and political takers who are interested in joint academy-corridor action.

#### Notes Toward An Academic Agenda

1. Applied research topics are a logical part of an academic agenda, especially when gaps in concepts and analysis limit the effectiveness of the disciplines. Some priorities would appear to be:
  - a. the operational nature and dynamics of states;
  - b. the operational nature, goals and dynamics of bureaucracies and organizations (theory there is, but usually evidently too "pure," too partial, or too overtly manipulative);

- c. the possible meanings, requirements and patterns of mobilisation and participation (both of which suffer from being such "good" code words as to be used to cover a remarkably divergent variety of sins and good works);
  - d. coherent, functional definitions of planning at different levels and in different contexts;
  - e. serious consideration of the interaction of techniques and goals with respect both to ends and means relationships and to contextual "objective" conditions;
  - f. "deconomysticism" - preferably not by creating alternative "mysticism" which, whatever their merits as worldviews, are almost certainly inherently inconsistent with planning;
  - g. more careful and detailed examination of interactions between the universal and the provincial (contextual), both in broad intellectual terms and narrower applied contexts, and examination from a variety of vantage points, not just from the centre or an artificial "universal" vantage point.
2. Communication also requires sustained attention. The truth will not make anybody free if he is unable to find it or if it is presented in terms he cannot comprehend - or, worse yet, can easily comprehend wrongly.
- a. The requirements (in content, technique, style) of potential users should be studied and taken more seriously. This includes different "levels" of

managers and mobilizers, emphatically not just the highly educated, intellectual managers and political decision takers who can be seen as extensions of the academy.

- b. Comprehensibility - defined in terms of the intended audience, which itself needs to be determined for particular pieces of work - must receive higher priority if social science work is to have broader impact. Technical terms are sometimes essential - special languages (usually unintelligible or misleadingly intelligible even to other disciplines) are undesirable in principle and quite unsuitable for communications beyond the limited clans who speak them regularly. This is not a plea for writing down to mobilisers, managers or decision takers - that is always counter-productive. It is a plea for using terms and thought patterns they can comprehend - development administration was a discipline notable for its unique philology at times somewhat uncharitably dubbed neo-Syracusan.
- c. The volume of material communicated to recipients must be plausible. Too much is as bad as too little (indeed it is a standard organizational technique to send so much information to supposed supervisors or decision takers as to guarantee that none is read with any care). This implies "targeting" and rather complex distribution lists (albeit it saves paper and postage), but certainly can increase the actual readership and the care paid to particular pieces.

d. Similarly, it is desirable to have a brief introduction on materials sent to managers-mobilisers-decision takers indicating why it is supposed that they will find it of interest. This is helped if the material is organized in a way which lends itself to problem analysis and solving, i.e., if it is not assumed that the academic journal format is necessarily the best all purpose communication style.

3. Responsiveness to known needs of decision takers, mobilizers, officials (and finding out what they are) is an important condition for effective cooperation, discourse, communication.

Examples include:

- a. ordering research programmes to provide inputs into programme and policy preparation and evaluation;
- b. making available interim research findings when the timing of the final report would limit its usefulness to decision takers, managers, mobilizers;
- c. arranging research programmes to avoid overloading particular institutions and projects and taking into account the scarcity of senior personnel's time to be interviewed, provide data, make arrangements;
- d. serving on mixed (official/unofficial) projects, committees and being open to arranging secondments of academic personnel to operational institutions and vice versa (in the latter case for teaching, research and/or study);

e. preparing action-oriented reviews of policies, programmes, strategies directed to decision takers, managers - a type of general consultancy report which can usually be done best by an individual at some remove from the areas analyzed but in a close enough proximity (physical, emotional, intellectual) to them to have immediacy and contextual congruity. Such studies are very rarely done by citizen academicians and the work done by volunteer or, more commonly, hired expatriates is rarely very satisfactory since it usually is based on relatively brief contact and is distinctly out of focus as proposals for action even when the analysis is sound.

4. More care in looking at the academies' attitudes toward plazas and corridors and how these attitudes appear from outsiders' vantage points could reduce frictions based on misunderstandings or thoughtlessness, albeit it might increase them if the particular academicians and officials/politicians do hold incompatible value positions. Examples include:

- a. showing genuine respect for other actors, including seeking to understand what they view as the set of constraints and imperatives within which they operate;
- b. making criticisms not intended as root and branch rejections specific and, when practicable, oriented to suggesting what the author sees as preferable alternatives;

- c. when advising, formally or implicitly, concentrating not on what cannot be done or ways in which something cannot be done but on what is possible or what means/instruments are usable;
- d. when seriously seeking to block or reverse a specific decision or policy to argue in terms of preferable alternatives rather than simple negatives;
- e. avoiding claiming direct applicability for work which in fact requires substantial additional data and ways/means of articulation before it could reasonably be applied.

The last three suggestions may seem self evident - the author can only say his observations indicate they are very often in the breach.

5. North-South interactions are by no means wholly separate from the previous "academic agenda" items. Each of these applies to expatriate personnel and institutions at least as much as to citizen ones. Indeed, in most cases they apply more strongly because both a natural caution in respect to the unknown or partially known and frequent unsatisfactory past experiences lead to special reservations by plaza and corridor (and for that matter academy) in respect of expatriate social scientists.

However, some points are more specific to this area:

- a. the need for expatriate institutions and individuals to be and be seen to be seeking to cooperate as equal or secondary, not dominant, partners in intellectual efforts largely focused, staffed and organized by citizens;
- b. where that is still not possible (e.g., because of lack

of personnel or facilities make creation of the conditions under which it will be possible priority goals;

- c. recognize that a combination of instant knowledge, substantial misunderstanding, claims to infallibility, and wholesale criticism are not well received by anybody, anywhere and that such combinations in the person of some expatriate social scientist create attitudes of mind toward all (or at least all unknown) expatriate social scientists;
- d. pay special attention to what support can be given and would be welcome in building up greater South-South knowledge, contact, and interchange and how such support can be made an interim or launching programme rather than an ongoing element which will rapidly come to be viewed as domination no matter how well it may be intended.

#### Some Joint Action Notes

Effective interaction among academies, plazas and corridors requires mutual participation in planning of teaching/communication, research and operational activities. This is particularly true in respect to development in general and planning in particular. Academics are not always very quick to grasp this point, with the result that even institutions and states genuinely concerned with intellectual contributions (not merely narrowly technical training or "learned apologia") often feel driven to set up special research, training and consultancy units because they feel cooperation and understanding cannot be secured from the traditional academies. This is not to say that specialist government quasi-academic institutes do not have a variety of roles to play, but that their creation in

response to frustration at relations with the academies is a most unfortunate starting point.

1. Teaching and communication need to be geared to user needs. Users are able to perceive at least some aspects of some of their needs better than outsiders. They are also more likely to be able to identify areas of emphasis and specialization - the standard academic teaching programme has distressing tendencies toward generalization and abstraction from the needs of any particular vocation or application rather too glibly justified in terms of "breadth of background" or "gaining the ability to cope with ideas." Beyond pre-service training, including normal undergraduate and postgraduate courses, there are usually needs for specialist courses in techniques or problem areas and for general refresher courses (especially given the recent breakup of the conventional wisdom on development!). These are very context-defined and can hardly be mounted by the academy in abstraction from users. On the other hand, in respect to refreshing and updating and to familiarity with new techniques, the academies are usually in a position to offer a good deal not available to "in-house" programmes by government bodies or enterprises. Finally, education in the broader sense of communication - e.g., adult education classes, open lectures, newspaper and radio pieces - should be of concern to academics, but requires expert advice from outside the academy if the standard errors of talking down to audiences or talking at a level and in a vocabulary which are unintelligible to most of the potential audiences are to be limited.



2. Research collaboration can be fruitful for both academicians and other actors. The gain for the academic researcher is not primarily finance (although that is often a not inconsiderable point) but access to data, contexts, insites, processes and people simply not available to the "pure outsider." (Evidently questions of confidentiality and use of such access arise, but usually what is actually seen as secret is narrower than might be supposed - time, habit and a dislike for the presence of "outsiders" often have more to do with access limitations than any serious view that the data or experiences are themselves confidential.) To continue collaboration must be seen as mutually beneficial and be articulated through appropriate modalities. Literally contracting out bits of research to the academies is one-but probably not the most fruitful or effective. Joint appointments, cross secondment of personnel, mixed research teams drawn from government/enterprise/party and academy are perhaps harder to organize but more likely to be productive of the gains available from interaction. They are usually most feasible in respect to governmental research units (e.g., in Treasuries, Planning Ministries and Central Banks) which at their best do have many of the characteristics of academies, are to a substantial extent staffed by social scientists (admittedly heavily biased toward economists and political economists), and have a real concern with quality of thought and analysis and the opinion of academic social scientists.

3. Operational activities evidently overlap research - researching and writing the rural water sector chapter of a Plan can be seen as a research project but is basically an operational activity - at least from the point of view of the would be user! Economic advising is primarily an operational activity but certainly provides a wealth of information and insights for later academic teaching and research use. Again the possibilities of team and cross secondment approaches need wider exploration than they have recieved, particularly in respect to citizens in Africa where they are common for expatriate academicians but not for domestic ones. Even more than in respect to research and teaching, joint action in this area should start with an exploration of each actor's attitudes and expectations. Academic social scientists who suppose that their role will be that of Platonic Guardians discoursing learnedly on abstruse theoretical lines or making major decisions every hour are in for unpleasant shocks; so are politicians or bureaucrats who view academicians as sources of instant answers to all technical questions cum high level public relations experts (or "praise singers"). While misconceptions may not usually be quite this extreme they are common and can better be explored and resolved before than during participation in operational work.

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Envoi

In writing proposals for changes or pressing ahead there are two dangers. The first can be termed the "Edward Bear Syndrome." (with apologies to A.A. Milne):

Here is Edward Bear, coming down the stairs now, bump, bump, bump,  
On the back of his head,  
It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs  
But sometimes he feels there really is another way,  
If only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it.

The second is the tendency to suppose either that an academician's duty is limited to proposing or marking beginnings or that any beginning not crowned with success in the short run is a failure. The prayer of Sir Francis Drake may still be apposite for social scientists concerned with planning:

Oh Lord, when thou givest to they servants to undertake  
any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the  
beginning but the continuing of the same until it be well and  
thoroughly finished that yieldeth the true glory.

## NOTES

1. Reginald Herbold Green is a Professorial Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, but wrote this paper while on sabbatical leave to the Ministries of Finance and of Planning of Tanzania. He has served on the "corridors" side of planning at various times over 1964-80 in Ghana, Uganda, Tanzania, Namibia, the East African Community, Southern Africa Development Coordination and-more fleetingly-various international organizations, Swaziland, Botswana and Sri Lanka. His "academy" interests have been pursued in fifty countries but primarily, Ghana, Uganda, the United Kingdom, the United States and Tanzania.
2. Further, it is in part 20-20 hindsight. While somewhat uneasy with the paradigm, the author did not start writing heresy until the mid-1960s nor break fully until 1970 at the time of the launching (and immediate sinking) of the Pearson Report.
3. In many cases one suspects that aid agencies, donor governments, academic advisors and host country decision takers have very different definitions of "good," few of which are based on any very serious inquiry into what the "beneficiaries" or "victims" of the process - beyond a handful of the most vocal and powerful - actually desire.
4. The author is evidently biased, first because of his association with several of these efforts (well before they became fashionable) and, second, because he is distinctly out of sympathy with the way certain of them have been co-opted to use the connotations of a title and body of thought for purposes directly contrary to their initial thrust and implications.
5. This is rather different from saying his home is there or that his current position is there. Many Third World academicians and yet more expatriate visiting ones do not see the world from their own locations. Equally, there are cases - e.g., the author - who are open to the description (or criticism) as seeing the world from the vantage point of a small, "least developed" state, even though they are not citizens of such states nor necessarily resident in them.
6. How individuals or institutions become exceptions is not very clear. Relevance and intelligibility are frequent, but hardly universal, characteristics, and a certain informed rudeness combined with sweeping assertions of greater knowledge seems somewhat more typical than urbane politeness and more cautious or subtle advice.
7. Other angles of attack are possible: inter-subclass is one and elite, including academy-plaza-corridors vs. excluded another. These, however, lead into interesting but lengthy digressions from the main themes of this paper.
8. This is not an endorsement of "whatever is right" as the motto for social scientists seeking to enter plazas and corridors. It is to suggest certain inherent reasons why root and branch critics can hardly expect to be welcome participants in designing and implementing government programmes and why political decision takers would, in fact, be ill advised to use them in such roles.

9. In part the author's perceptions on this point may be biased by his personal experience of access and cooperation, including in countries for whose governments he had not worked. Indeed in some cases would certainly have refused to work. However, it is also based on broader observation from the corridor side in Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda.
10. However, corridor involvement of social scientists in India and Latin America would appear to show the same biases and patterns as in Africa and Southeast Asia. On the other hand the International Center for Law in Development and the World Council of Churches are not necessarily very representative of disciplinary trends and stances in law and theology!
11. Outside socialist Europe very little of the framework of planning (as opposed to say budgeting or external trade or currency) has been enacted as law. This appears to be almost as true of 'transition to socialism' as to other polities. Bureaucratic structures and regulations certainly do exist, but even administrative law is moderately uncommon especially as an integral skeleton for or working organ of the planning process.
12. That is a descriptive statement not necessarily and advocacy of such a result in any particular case especially in respect to incorporation of work into the political decision takers' support system!
13. In general, social scientists tend to be self-indulgent in making clear from what value premises they criticize and what persons, classes, institutions they believe to hold the value-set on the basis of which the criticism is made. There is nothing whatsoever wrong with a critique based on an author's values, but there are ethical and practical reasons why both the nature of the critique and the values underlying it should be made clear to the reader.
14. These dilemmas confront citizens rather differently from expatriates. The latter are more prone to accepting assignments for which they have no expertise (e.g., the author was once pressured to fly away to North Yemen to write a pre-plan and almost agreed) but more able to disagree with decision takers with the fallback option of (literally) flying away. Citizens are less likely to be seduced into assertions of global expertise, but face far more severe practical and ethical problems in making decisions when their disagreements with dominant decision takers are fundamental.
15. As the author knows both from observation and from having made precisely this mistake on several occasions himself.
16. They are not unique to the academy - bureaucrats have similar weaknesses - but they are perhaps most common among social scientists, including quite distinguished members of the professor with decades of advisoria experience. The first two habits infuriate decision takers (for whom not doing anything very often is simply not a viable option), while the last (claiming direct applicability far too soon) is a cause of major conflict with officials and managers, especially if the social scientist in question convinces political decision takers that his approach is sound and all that prevents its application and success is mindless official inertia (not an unknown phenomenon but one less common than many academy members believe it to be!).

17. As is presumably apparent to the reader, the forgoing observations, analyses, comments and suggestions are the personal responsibility of the author and are not necessarily those of the Treasury or the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development Planning of Tanzania, nor, for that matter, of the Overseas Development Administration of the United Kingdom).