

THE RELUCTANT PLANNER: AN OVERVIEW OF PLANNING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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my mentor, my close personal friends & professional colleagues.

Planning in developing nations has undergone an enormous range of experimentation and change. This paper provides an overview of planning experience in the last three decades on the basis of various planning exercises in which the authors have been directly engaged, or have closely observed, and relates them to the planning theory of the time. The various planning tools, including macro- and microeconomic models, input-output models, and others, are investigated in the light of these planning processes. Each case history reveals one or more shortcomings of the older approaches and the formulation of the new approaches. This experience gives us an idea of where we are and indicates some lines for improvement and extension of planning practice in future.

1. Introduction

"May you live in interesting times", threatens an ancient Chinese curse. For those whose philosophies stress serenity, this curse is fearful in its implications today. Some people are reacting with dismay bordering on panic. Others with more activist philosophies rejoice that there are Evils to be fought and a Holy Grail to be sought. Among these exhilarated people is a large contingent of planners.

There is perhaps no profession for which the times are more interesting today than planning. Never before have planners faced so complex a task, or been assigned so wide a range of responsibility. Today governments plan; state or provincial governments plan; unions plan; cooperatives plan; regional authorities plan; international organizations plan; and so do multinational corporations. A Senate Finance Committee Report on global firms comments:

The coordination of MNC (multinational corporation) operations requires planning and systemization of control of a high order. In the largest and most sophisticated MNCs, planning and subsequent monitoring of plan fulfillment have reached a scope and a level of detail that, ironically, resemble more than superficially the national planning procedures of Communist countries [12].

Indeed, the times are particularly interesting for planners from market economy countries, because all the tenets of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

developing countries, they have found themselves drawn increasingly into global planning at the same time. In the process, the planning approach has changed from mechanical to organic; its elaboration has ranged from detailed, formal Master Plans to the extreme of continuous planning with no formal, published plan document. In doing so it has become increasingly operational, to the point where planning and management converge. Finally, the planning function varies from the scanty directions of an indicative plan to the crystallization of national identity and the creation of a philosophy in its own right.

Do all these changes add up to solid progress in solving today's economic and social crises or have we strayed too far from the market? The purpose of this paper is to approach these questions through an overview of planning experiences in the last three decades. One way of providing such an overview would be to review the literature, as Harry Richardson, Lloyd Rodwin, and others have done. After contemplating the mountains of literature which have resulted from the "crisis of planning", we have decided to provide an overview of the history of planning during the past three decades, and of the current situation, on the basis of the various planning exercises in which we have been directly engaged, or which we were able to observe on-the-spot, and relate them to the planning theory of the time. Each of these case histories progressively reveals one or more of the shortcomings of the older approaches and the formulation of the new approaches. In most instances these cases pertain to developing countries. Successes and failures vis-à-vis the political and cultural environment of the country are discussed. Throughout, we indicate the extent to which formal modelling tools—in particular, macro- and microeconomic tools as well as standard management science approaches—are utilized. This experience gives us an idea of where we are and indicates some lines for improvement of planning practice in future.

2. The Fifties: Macroeconomic planning

While other kinds of planning went on in odd corners in the 1950s, outside of socialist countries planning was dominated by the application of neo-Keynesian growth models to problems of development. The models used were usually a species of Domar model; target rates of growth of national income were established, incremental capital-output ratios (ICORs) calculated, investment requirements determined, and the development investment budget somehow distributed among sectors, occasionally by input-output analysis, linear programming, and other allocation models, but more frequently by political jockeying among sectoral departments. A number of management science tools began to play a minor but important role here. Keynesian economics, of course, was a highly aggregative affair. It provided no basis of tackling the regional and sectoral problems which were the roots of underdevelopment, let

income. The foreign aid given to finance the development projects would provide the foreign exchange to permit expansion of the Libyan money supply. People working on development projects would be paid partly in food, and food could be sold from stocks, supplemented by food aid if needed, against income paid in cash. The sales of food by the government would reduce the monetary circulation, offsetting inflationary effects of the development programme and releasing foreign exchange, held as reserves against the currency, for other purposes. Drought would no longer lead to famine. (Needless to say this system disappeared not long after Libya became an oil-rich country with per capita income rising at 25% per year.)

The ink was hardly dry on the Plan, however, when vast reserves of oil were found. The outlook for Libya was transformed; yet the Plan was scarcely revised. Moreover, the country was overrun by hundreds of UN experts who took upon themselves major responsibility for administering the Plan. By 1967 the Libyans were fed up, and organized what was politely called a "Special Evaluation Mission"—a mission designed to reduce the degree of "United Nations imperialism" in Libya.

Here we see a number of errors in the relationship between planning and implementation, all too common then and certainly not unknown today.

1. The plan period was too long for implementation. The Six-Year Plan should have been broken up into a series of shorter implementation plans.

2. No allowance was made in advance for contingencies which could require drastic revisions of the Plan in the administration phase. (We could not have expected oil on the basis of our knowledge, but we did not have enough knowledge to exclude all mineral discoveries altogether.)

3. The people on the spot when the need for revision came, both Libyan and foreign, were not really "planners" and did not, for the most part, have a mandate to plan.

4. Only the Libyan elite were consulted in Plan preparation.

5. Implementation of the Plan was taken over in far too great a degree by foreigners, provided mainly under UN auspices. It was not merely that the Libyan population did not participate, even the Libyan government scarcely participated.

6. Libya has three distinct regions: the coastal area which has enough rainfall to produce citrus fruits, olives, and tobacco; the high plains suitable for grazing and cereals; and the desert. Yet the Plan was not really regionalized.

One good feature of the Plan was that since the problems of Libya's crushing poverty were so highly visible, no plan could avoid dealing with them. Had oil not been discovered, the Libyan Plan might have gone down in history as an early example of a successful Basic Needs Approach. As it was, the Plan became more irrelevant with every year that passed.

2.3. Too abstract, too divorced from political power: the Philippines

In 1956 the first author became a member of a team connected with the National Economic Council of the Philippines on the 1957–61 Development Plan. The sort of planning being done in this arena was typical of the times: establishing targets for growth of national income, estimating incremental capital–output ratios, etc. The Plan produced turned out to be highly abstract in many ways, however, and many errors were made. In the case of the Philippines, the errors turned out to be irrelevant in that the Plan was never implemented.

The NEC was a political body, with a board including congressmen, senators, and representatives of industry, finance, agriculture, and labour, something after the pattern of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. As planners we thought that we were in touch with the political process through the NEC itself. We were wrong. The members of the Council turned out not to be the people with the real political power. In short, the effective development planning was done outside of the NEC, wherever the real political power elite gathered, perhaps in the more elegant of the Manila clubs or in the homes of the “first families”.

One job done within the NEC at the time was to have a more lasting impact: the construction of the industrial priority formula. President Mag-saysay had learned that various agencies concerned with industrial development were using different criteria for evaluating the same industrial projects. He ordered NEC to construct a priority formula that would be used by all government departments. The NEC Secretariat put together a formula with shadow prices giving a high weight to employment creation and to savings in foreign exchange, and lower weight to raising per capita income. Our statistics were good and we were able to test the formula on some 100 enterprises. We showed the results to our masters on the Council. Some were immediately unhappy because enterprises in which they were personally interested came out with a low priority. We explained that this result was due to the form taken by the formula. They asked us to change the weighting system. We did; we showed the results to the Council—and then other members were unhappy. This process continued until finally a compromise was reached acceptable to all the members. The formula with which we ended was perfectly reasonable from the planners’ point of view, and it took account of some political realities, which in this instance proved to have wide enough validity for the formula to be adopted and used.

2.4. Perspective planning without power to implement: Sri Lanka

The difference between organization charts for planning and the real positions of the planning organization in the political power structure was

assassination of Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, and the initial confusion when the new government was formed under Madame Bandaranaike, four years had gone by and the need to get on with the implementation plan was becoming desperate.

In September 1962 the Prime Minister had issued instructions to all Departments requiring them to submit to the Department of National Planning, not later than 31 December of that year, all projects which they wished to have evaluated for possible inclusion in the Three-Year Plan and in next year's budget. Each Department was also asked to establish an internal planning committee and to appoint a liaison officer to ensure coordination of Departmental planning with the work of the Department of National Planning.

When the deadline arrived no proposals had been received. With the complete backing of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance summoned the Ministers to a meeting to warn them that they could expect no budgetary allocations unless they complied promptly with the Prime Minister's request. The result, totally unforeseen by us, and by some of my Sri Lankan colleagues as well, was that within a matter of weeks the *Minister of Finance was forced to resign*. The combined political backing of the Ministers in the line agencies was so powerful that not even the Prime Minister and Finance Minister combined could withstand it. In short, the Cabinet, apart from the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, were quite happy to have perspective plans that committed no one to anything, or project planning of the traditional type in which each Department prepared and evaluated its own projects. They were not prepared to have any interference by a Department of National Planning in their project planning and in their internal priorities. With the resignation of the Minister of Finance the Line Departments went their own ways as usual. Needless to say the Department of National Planning, having been rendered totally impotent, was also totally demoralized.

Perspective planning, no matter how inspired and inspiring, is of little use if it never leads to action. It is politically easy to give lip service to a perspective plan which has no legal status and no money. The political crunch comes with the commitment of the government to specific projects. By the same token the planner takes limited professional risk in preparing perspective plans which have no visible results. It is in project evaluation that the planner is put on his mettle.

Altogether, by the time the 1950s drew to a close, we did not need the gloomy statistics to tell that we were on the wrong track. It was clear that the big increases in GNP were not "trickling down" and that welfare was not improving. We knew we must get closer to the problem, and looked for ways to disaggregate other than sectoral disaggregation. We began to look towards the hitherto neglected possibilities of regional planning.

activities are concentrated (plantation agriculture, modern mining and industry, related sophisticated services); and the retarded regions are those where traditional sector activities are concentrated (peasant agriculture, handicrafts, related services).

Meanwhile Gunnar Myrdal, as Executive Secretary of the ECE, showed that within Europe the more advanced countries were characterized by small and diminishing regional gaps and the more retarded countries by large and increasing gaps. The MIT group, with its knowledge of Asia, Africa, and Latin American, quickly recognized that this discovery could be generalized into a well-nigh universal law. The whole nature of the argument for attacking regional disparities accordingly changed. It was no longer just a matter of social justice for inhabitants of retarded regions. The redistribution of income entailed in reducing regional disparities could, if desired, be only relative, not absolute; even rich regions could become somewhat richer as poor regions became much less poor. Closing regional gaps became a matter of fundamental importance for national development.

These ideas, taken together, set the stage for the future crucial role of regional policy in national development. Few indeed were the Third World countries that made no use of regional policy whatsoever, and in many of them the concept became the very core of national development planning.

Those who came into regional planning from the national development field often found their professional training inadequate for the task confronting them, and had to learn on the job. This statement applies particularly to interactions in space and above all to the so-called "spatial multiplier": the impact of an economic action of a certain kind, in a particular *location* having certain spatial, geographic, and physical characteristics, on the distribution of other economic and social activities in space. Economists are not very good at this sort of analysis. Economic geographers are better, but have still a long way to go in developing readily applicable models.

The first author became aware of our deficiencies in this regard when appointed Chairman of the Special Task Force set up by all three levels of government to select a site for Montreal's new international airport (see [3]). We were not asked: "Should Montreal have a new airport?" That was already decided. We were asked: "Given the objectives of the metropolitan, provincial, and federal governments regarding urban growth and regional development, which of the several technically acceptable sites is optimal?" In other words, we were asked *where* the new airport should be in terms of the impact on geographic distribution of economic activity. Among the variables that proved to be crucial were: the distance between river and mountains on either side of the St. Lawrence; the width and depth of the river to the north and to the south; the size and shape of the noise zone and its influence on residential and industrial location; the agricultural quality of land at the various sites; the physical attractiveness of the countryside in the neighbourhood of the sites;

In the early phases of development cities served as “central places” for their hinterlands. Urban centre and peripheral region were integrated within the single development process; but with the great majority of the labour force engaged in agriculture, it was the expansion of the primary sector in the countryside that generated growth of the city, not the other way around. Then as industrialization and structural change took place. Cities grew in the proximity of natural resources: steel towns near coal; iron and industrial near water; pulp and paper towns near the forests; meat packing towns near the grazing areas. It is in this phase that the simple growth pole theory works.

But then as development continues there comes a third stage, where the leading sectors of the urban economy are *human-resource-based*: electronics, optics, scientific instruments, computer technology, sophisticated services, and the link of growth of the city to the natural resource base of its hinterland is broken. The urban economies operate in broader and broader economic space. Indeed, the metropolitan centres which are the sources of innovation, and in that sense alone are “development poles”, cease to be “development poles” in the sense of generating spread effects to their own regions, and become once again “central places”. They grow in response to growth elsewhere, mainly in other cities, and operate in an economic space which for major metropolitan centres like Tokyo, Singapore, Paris, Sao Paulo, New York, and London can be scattered world wide.

There remains a hard kernel of truth in the theory. Where industrial expansion and primary production in the same geographic area can be planned together (the Phase II case) the theory still holds, and such opportunities for creating symbiotic feedback relations between urban growth and regional development should certainly be seized, as was done in the Mauritanian Third Plan.

3.2. *The Mauritanian Third Plan*

When work began on the Mauritanian Third Plan, the population of about one million was so scattered and isolated that there was no dynamic interaction among sectors. Little was bought or sold from one sector or region to another. The “grand nomads” roaming the desert lived within a camel economy, and were virtually self-sufficient, as was the stable agricultural economy of the Senegal River Valley. The graziers in the Sahel sold their cattle in Senegal, and had little contact with the Mauritanian economy. The modern sector, consisting of the capital city of Naouakchott, the iron mine, the copper mine, and the modern (mostly foreign) fishing industry, was scattered and particularly isolated economically—a typical “enclave” selling nothing to the rest of the country, and buying virtually nothing from it. At the same time, the combined level of unemployment was extremely high, and the level of health and literacy very low.

first in order that GNP would grow as a result. The use of input-output analysis bore out this finding.

This concept had emerged as planners investigated underemployment. Underemployed rural workers in the poorest countries could not take advantage of increased opportunities because they were malnourished or unhealthy; they simply could not increase their working day. In the case of the peasants of the Senegal River Valley, most of them suffered from the debilitating effects of malaria, bilharzia, and intestinal parasites all at once.

The second major interlocking strategy in the Mauritanian Plan, namely to forge links among the sectors and regions, reflected a further step in the analysis of the failure of wealth to "trickle down": job-creating activities would not "trickle down" unless the appropriate structure were created. There had been instances in several countries of hydroelectric projects being completed and then underutilized because of the inability or non-existence of small industrialists to take advantage of the cheap electricity, and lack of knowledge on the part of peasant farmers to take advantage of irrigation potentialities. It became clear that detailed plans at the microeconomic level were needed to ensure that a power plant not fail in effectiveness for lack of complementary resources and capacity to use its output, and that in general large-scale projects would be dovetailed into the economy.

Finally, the recommendations for Mauritanian education reflected the swing from the principle of planning uniform education on a national scale and on the basis of equal opportunity, to the idea of the individual solutions for different sectors and regions of the country. Education planners were also turning to systems analysis. Instead of deriving econometric relationships between level of composition of output and educational requirements from statistics showing relations in the past, they were relying more on technical and engineering data and interviews with employers concerning future requirements.

All these adjustments in the development approach were in response to the emerging concept of a society in the process of development as an organism in the course of growth and evolution rather than as a stable mechanism, a biological feedback system in which distinctions between ends and means disappear. Education, health, nutrition, transportation, environmental care, and enrichment of life are at once much desired consumption items, and crucial components of development.

With this new awareness of the need for an integrated approach, the end of the Sixties brought a meeting in Stockholm of an United Nations Expert Group on Social Policy and Planning. Largely as a result of Myrdal's leadership in this meeting, the group called for a sharp shift in direction, to be called The Unified Approach. The proposal became a General Assembly Resolution and a research project was set up at UNRISD in Geneva to put content into the proposal.



cf. Urban
Systems
Corp.



architects, town planners, sociologists, and foresters. A fourth was that the work was done within the region itself, and in constant contact with the state government which controls land-use under the Malaysian constitution, rather than in the capital city. A fifth was that efforts were made, by sociological surveys, to ascertain the tastes, values, and aspirations of potential settlers. A sixth was that some members of the planning team were recalled during the implementation phase.¹ ←

The plan spans a twenty-year period, essaying to encompass the entire development process, beginning with agricultural development (rubber, oil palm, timber, cattle, tapioca, sago) and the consequent processing industries, and working toward large industry as the population grows.

The goal setting techniques used on the project owed much to the physical planners on the team. In the final selection of projects for inclusion in the plan, goals had to be translated into criteria for evaluating individual projects. Physical planners are in some ways well equipped to follow a unified approach, since they are accustomed to reaching decisions about both quantitative and qualitative objectives. By the time all the physical analyses were completed, the range of options where choices had to be made by economic analysis was mercifully narrow. Some mistakes were made to be sure, and this vast \$1 billion project has run into both problems and opportunities that were not fully foreseen in the planning phase; but the story is a relatively happy one, perhaps mainly because the planning was done in intimate and continuous contact with the region itself and with the state and federal government departments responsible for administration.

5. The Basic Needs controversy: Haiti

By the time a regional development project in Haiti had begun in 1973, there had been another swing in development policy. Owing to the continuing failure of increases in GNP to reach the poorest people, there was a philosophical shift in emphasis towards the direct elimination of poverty which was eventually called the Basic Needs Approach (BNA). The Haiti project was a direct response from the Canadian government, reflecting their new policy of allocating aid towards the poorest people with the objective of meeting their basic needs.

Although the objectives of the Basic Needs Approach seem straightforward enough, they had aroused a great deal of controversy as to what they really

¹ A seventh element may have been the fact that the Canadian Project Manager spent much of his time playing golf with Malaysian officials with an interest in the project, and dealing more generally with public relations, leaving the various professionals to do their jobs without excessive direction from the top.

mean and as to what should really be done. It is useful to look at the arguments before turning to the Haiti experience.

The idea arose out of the ILO's quest for attaining higher levels and better distribution of welfare by means of employment. As we have seen, such a quest inevitably turns attention to basic needs. In the Report of the Director General of the ILO issued in 1976 [7], he states:

- Basic needs, as understood in this report, includes two elements. First, they include certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter and clothing are obviously included, as would be certain household equipment and furniture. Second, they include essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, and health and educational facilities....
- To those concrete basic needs are added participation of the people in making the decisions which affect them, basic human rights, and employment as a means and an end. He adds, however:

Not only must the structure of production change, but the total amount produced must rise over time. For this reason, it should be stressed that a rapid rate of economic growth is an essential part of a basic needs strategy [7].

The Programme of Action further specifies:

It is important to recognize that the concept of basic needs is a country-specific and dynamic concept. The concept of basic needs should be placed within a context of nations' overall economic and social development [8].

Thus, not only does the Basic Needs Approach have political undertones, but also confusion arises as to whether Basic Needs are to be the overwhelmingly dominant consideration, to the point of ignoring market signals. The controversy manifests itself in discussions concerning a shift in the national product-mix so as to increase the output of goods and services consumed by the poor. Even Paul Streeten [15] says something of the kind.

The income approach has paid a good deal of attention to the choice of technology but has neglected the need to provide for appropriate products. ... The choice of appropriate products, produced by appropriate techniques, giving rise to more jobs and a more even income distribution, which in turn generates the demand for these products, is an essential, distinct feature of the BN approach, and not necessarily fully achieved by redistribution of income.

But if "a rapid rate of growth is essential", goods and services cannot be produced for direct consumption by the poor, no matter what the loss of efficiency entailed. On the contrary, meeting basic needs will require that comparative advantage be exploited to the full.

Much the same remarks apply to the suggestion that a BNA means choice of labour-intensive over capital-intensive techniques. Obviously, where unem-

ployment exists it is desirable to use labour-intensive techniques whenever these are efficient. But there is no reason for using them when they are inefficient. On the contrary, most countries wishing to meet basic needs by the end of the century will be compelled to use always the most efficient techniques available, whatever they may be.

Some Third World leaders who hold the latter view feel that their industrialization as well as their national sovereignty is threatened by the fact that so many donor agencies, whether multilateral or bilateral, have accepted the Basic Needs Approach and directed their assistance towards helping poor people in poor countries. The Indian delegation, during the discussion of UN General Assembly Resolution 32/174 in May 1978 declared:

We are, therefore, strongly against any attempt to divert the attention of the international community to alternative approaches to development co-operation The meeting of basic needs is a part and parcel of the overall objectives of the plans of the national government whose sovereign right it is to identify and determine their development needs. It is, therefore, up to the national government to identify such gaps which need to be filled from external resources, either through finance or through technological transfers or through the application of appropriate commercial policies [17].

Similarly, Ajit Singh [14] points out that the Third World countries fear that such an approach may discourage industrial development.

Fortunately a development programme which involves direct contact between planners and a target population is likely to lead to the discovery of "easy-to-take" opportunities for raising output of people where they are and doing more or less what they are now doing. Macro planners, playing with models in air-conditioned offices in the national capital, are frequently quite unaware of latent capacities for higher productivity in the villages. But building on these latent capacities is just the opposite of deliberately accepting a "second best" by allocating resources to the production of something with a lower value of output per man year than readily available alternatives. Such latent capacities were found in Haiti.

A Haiti regional plan: Basic needs

In 1973 a regional plan was initiated in Haiti. This project was unique in several respects. First, the region is one of the least developed in all the world, with severe restraints in terms of both natural and human resources. Second, there were absolutely no reliable statistics or other types of information regarding demographic, social, economic, or physical characteristics of the region. Upsetting as that situation was at the beginning, it proved to be a blessing in disguise. It meant—as in the case of Pahang Tenggara—that fact-gathering was necessary. And that meant in turn that the job had to be done on the spot, in immediate contact with the target population and with the

terrain. The lack of resources meant that there was no choice but a Basic Needs Approach and working with the target population itself.

What gave the project its special flavour, however, were two more or less accidental conditions prevailing in the Canadian International Development Agency. First, they were having difficulty in exhausting their budget and were eager to have solid projects as soon as possible. Second, the prevailing mood in CIDA was that the team doing the planning should also be responsible for administration.

Accordingly, a system of "risk minimization" was adopted, in the sense that each quarter a list of projects was submitted to the Haitian and Canadian governments, on the basis of the then existing knowledge, which it was felt were so sound that they could not possibly turn out to have been a mistake in the light of anything that might be learned later. As time went by it was felt that this system was not merely tolerable, but that it is the ideal way of organizing development planning/administration. Clearly, it imposes enormous discipline on planners if they must be administrators as well, and if they must come up with a steady flow of worthwhile projects, rather than taking their time to complete a plan *document* and then going away, leaving the mopping-up to others. Moreover, it was eventually realized that with such a system there is no need for a plan document at all. In fact, no "Plan" for the region as a whole has ever been produced. Instead, the team has concentrated on one *Zone d'Intervention Concentree* after another and devoted its efforts to generating a steady *flow* of projects, rather than assembling a stock of projects to be drawn down over five or six years.

The tactics involved little structural or technological change, and no great outlay of capital. The strategy was two-pronged. One set of objects was designed to increase the value of agricultural output through a better infrastructure (preventing erosion; building access roads and silos; improving, repairing, or installing small irrigation systems; introducing improved seed, fertilizer, tools and product-mix). A second set of projects was aimed at raising production and welfare by improving human resources through nutrition, health, family planning, education, and training.

With this type of on-the-spot project planning it was found that simple forms of intervention brought quick results. Since half the crops were lost to rats, birds, and insects, a campaign was launched to eradicate rats and to construct a system of bird-proof and insect-proof storehouses. These facilities had the potential to double the real income of peasants in a single year and directly attack prevalent malnutrition, thus permitting an increase in productivity. Together with a system of credits against crops in storage, they would also improve income distribution by allowing the peasants to hold crops for higher prices, rather than being forced to sell immediately after the harvest when prices are low and to buy back the same foodstuffs at high prices when food is scarce.

The approach followed in Haiti—partly by accident—was a good one. In the first place the farmers were an integral part of the decision-making process; full reign was given to the entrepreneurial initiative of the people, using local traditional cooperative institutions as vehicles for change.

Second, planning was not separated from management or implementation. Experience suggested that if planners and managers are not identical people, they should be on the same team and in constant contact with each other, with the officials of the line agencies, and with the target population. Thus, formulating a development plan becomes a continuous feedback system in itself. The end product of the planning exercise should *not* be a document presenting a stock of projects. Indeed, the planning exercise should never end, and so can never have an end product. The outputs of each phase of activity then become inputs for the next phase of planning. As individual projects and studies are completed and knowledge accrues, plans may be revised and targets changed. Indeed, no plan is really ever finished, even if it is officially published as a legal document. Long-term perspective plans or “horizons” of ten to twenty years, must be continuously translated into intermediate-term plans of three to six years, and these in turn into one-year plans or development budgets. Meanwhile, preparation of the next long-term plan begins.

While this project took a long step towards integrating the farmer into decision-making, recent Self-Reliance Approaches have been moving towards total participation, in some cases to the point of taking on a political complexion.

6. The self-reliance approaches

A number of groups have carried the ideas of the Basic Needs Approach much further in fostering self-reliance at the grassroots. “Another Development” was introduced by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. The Foundation’s Project, Development and International Cooperation, produced a report entitled *What now? Another Development*² in 1975 and a final report entitled *Another Development: Approaches and Strategies* two years later [9]. The approach has attracted widespread international support. It includes a good number of neo-Marxists, but it is far from being a communist movement. Another approach is embodied in *Animation Sociale*, a politically quite conservative French concept of guided self-help. Another approach again has been followed by a number of Catholic missionaries in response to the *Populorum Progressio*.

² *What Now? Another Development* was published as special issues of *Development Dialogue*, nos. 1 and 2, 1975. See also recent issues of *Development Dialogue*.

← 1971
← -1980
COSSP
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6.1. A Haiti cooperative

One of the most satisfactory self-reliance projects is one of the many cooperative actions being encouraged by the Oblat missionaries in Haiti. In one case the people had seen a coffee cooperative operating in neighbouring regions and decided to start their own.

The cooperative reinforces the traditional village cooperative structures. Conditions of membership are to be 18 years old, to attend four meetings, and to participate in the activities of the *conseil d'action communautaire* (community council). Now that the cooperative is a going concern, evening sessions are held to discuss current problem. They have sessions with officials from Port au Prince, and with aid groups—such as the FAO expert who was expected to arrive in a few days to demonstrate tree pruning. The members are now talking of combining with four other neighbouring coffee cooperatives to prepare their own development plan.

→ 6.2. Participatory democracy

→ In some of the self-reliance movements the political aspect emerges. They might be regarded as a continuation of the Basic Needs Approach in that its proponents concern themselves with the socio-cultural and political framework of local, regional, national, and international levels within which basic needs might really be met. A fundamental aspect is *participatory democracy* which can be more fully practised the lower one goes on the organizational hierarchy. It is believed that top-down centralized planning has alienated the people and failed to construct adequate administrative machinery. Thus, Poona Wignaraja [18] favours “the village becoming the focal point of development”. See also Silra et al. [13]. John Friedmann [1] talks of agropolitan districts:

A normative theory is proposed in which production and distribution would be encompassed within the context of face-to-face political decision-making in appropriately sized “agropolitan” districts. Decisions on economic activities would thus be subordinated to a territorial will in an act of reciprocal entitlement between individual and community.

→ The “Another Development” group take this idea further. In translating the concept into specific measures for controlling the pattern of political and social development at the community level, some proponents take constantly into account relationships among social groups (or classes) as the development process unfolds. They are much concerned with the distribution of decision-making power, and treat development largely as a political process at the community level. Projects become instruments of social and political change, not only through the benefits they bring on completion but through the process of planning and execution.

The sharp break from earlier concepts of planning and implementing

development projects can be illustrated by the Rangput Self-Reliant Movement which is regarded as a success [6]. The Movement started as a pilot project in Kunjipukur with the favourable situation that the village was already relatively egalitarian: all land owners were peasants and the richest peasant owned only 30 acres of land. Another element of success was that all economic infrastructure, such as roads and irrigation channels, was constructed using free community labour.

The concept of self-reliance in Kunjipukur was carried to the extreme when it refused grants from the central government. During the 1974 famine the district of Rangpur was one of the hardest hit, and an estimated 82,000–100,000 persons died. However, the self-reliant villages of the district.

Did not allow any relief to enter their boundaries, did not permit anyone to go to the relief centres (gruel Kitchens) opened by the government, and did not let anyone die: The communities met and arranged contributions from those who had some surplus, to be given to the distressed in return for some work devised collectively.³

Hugue et al. contend that such a programme in the present context of the country will lead to sharp conflicts. Indeed, a fundamental element in the approach to "Another Development" is the acceptance of the principle that conflict-resolution is a necessary part of the development planning process. Conventional development thinking, the authors state, assumes a conflict-free social framework for change. Mutually acceptable policies are then suggested to achieve mutual goals. The reality is different; conflict of interests is the rule. Thus, with regard to organizing reform from below the Another Development school think in terms of preparing for resistance to change from certain quarters in advance, at the same time that specific projects are used as instruments of both organization and change. They also believe that the resistance will sometimes be too powerful to overcome.

Finally, some self-reliance approaches advocate national closure, insisting that trade should occur only between countries at the same level of development and that advanced countries should become independent of Third World materials and markets.

The general tenor of this argument is towards self-sufficiency: if the target population in a country needs more food, food output in that country should be increased. It is not suggested that the increased food might be obtained by producing more steel or textiles for export. On the contrary, there is a mistrust of this approach, which is identified with the failures of the 1950s and 1960s. There is the suspicion that if exports of steel are increased, for example, the steel multinationals will profit, but there may not be the required increase in supplies of food for the poor.

Obviously, if this sort of "planning" became universal, as the Another

³*Development Dialogue*, 2 (1977) 33.

→ Development/Self-Reliance philosophers seem to propose, the planning profession would undergo drastic change. The highly trained technician who steers clear of value judgements is replaced by the "barefoot planner" or "social animator" whose taste would be to discover and utilize latent strengths in the community to get things going, and to keep things going by anticipating and preparing to deal with "contradictions". It would also seem that this new style "planner" would be the one with clear ideas of his own as to which "things" are good. The entire political process would be revolutionized. National governments would have little or nothing to do with the process of development or decision-making; the bureaucrats representing the sectoral line agencies would have disappeared.

6.3. The 1980s: Decade of the disappearing market? Decade of the disappearing nation-state? Decade of institution building?

It would be good to know where these currents are taking us. Are we moving away from the market, economic individualism, competition and comparative advantage? If so, is it because we have constructed institutions better suited for achieving freedom and prosperity, or are we simply adrift? Is that other mainstay of the liberal planner, the nation-state, crumbling away?

6.4. Is the market disappearing?

Most planners today would feel distinctly uncomfortable with neither market signals nor policy statements of national governments to guide them. True, some physical planners, regarding themselves as artists with solid technical backgrounds, have tried to give the public something *better* than its "felt needs" so that when it sees the finished product it is lost in admiration. But Western social scientists, most of whom have entered the planning field steeped in liberal philosophy, particularly those with a background of neo-classical economics, have been very reluctant to make value judgements of their own and have tried to give the general public what *it* wants. They feel happiest when "planning" involves no more than strengthening, improving, and "patching" the market, since market choices provide direct and concrete evidence of what people want. Where the market cannot be made to work, or for "lumpy" decisions where no market signals exist, such as decisions regarding national defence, education, health, the environment, and income distribution, these planners have looked for guidance to policy statements of governments representing the people, and particularly to statements of national governments representing all of the people. Thus, the planner need never be involved in defining goals but only in prescribing means of attaining them.

Of all the current trends in thinking about planning, the one that entails the farthest departure from the market is the Basic Needs Approach, and in a

somewhat different fashion the Another Development and Self-Reliance approaches. After a rather lengthy review of the literature on BNA, we conclude elsewhere that to give the concept a distinct meaning of its own and to put concrete content into it, we must interpret basic needs in an absolute sense, and then evaluate development projects to be undertaken in poor communities, both in the public and in the private sectors, in terms of their direct and indirect contribution to basic needs [4]. The target population would be involved in both the planning and execution of the projects. Of course the market is there in the background as one of the points of reference in the decision-making process. A BNA does not mean that the community may not be involved in inter-regional and international trade, and prices of various potential products are an important consideration. But the resource allocation would be very different from those based on *individual* decision-making within a framework of *individual* tastes and objectives. Insofar as a BNA leads to community decision-making and cooperation, it may lead in really poor communities to more consideration of market signals than before; for in such communities individuals dare not take advantage of higher potential money income from cash crops, because if the crop fails or the market collapses their household may starve. But in any case, the decision-making process and the resultant resource allocation and income distribution are quite different from those entailed in individual decisions in a free market, which is exactly why the BNA now engenders such widespread and enthusiastic support.

If we look back at the various plans described above, we can see that they show a fairly steady retreat by planners from the decision-making process. In Libya, since there was not even a proper government when the Six-Year Plan was prepared, the planners were really making all the decisions about its content, although ultimately the population was involved in implementation through efforts to raise their levels of skill and productivity through technical assistance. Even in the implementation phase, the technicians made many of the decisions for several years after independence. In Indonesia and the Philippines very few people apart from the planners were involved in plan preparation, but that mattered little since the plans had little effect on the real decisions governing development. In Sri Lanka too, the planners *tried* to make the decisions regarding plan content, and failed for lack of political support. ←

The Mauritanian plan strove to integrate the regions and sectors of the national economy by links to small development poles, creating new economic development potential and new opportunities which invited individual households to take decisions and undertake action to take advantage of them.

For Pahang Tenggara we prepared a Master Plan. The planners themselves had a hand in defining goals and, once the plan was accepted by the state and federal government, major decisions regarding land use had already been made. Individual households could then decide whether or not they wished to migrate to the region as settlers, and individual entrepreneurs could decide

→ whether or not to invest in the region to take advantage of opportunities created in plantation products, cattle, modern industry, and services. The Haiti integrated regional development project, since it was designed mainly to help Haitians to do better what they were already doing, laid great stress on presenting to the target population and evoking from them fresh ideas to be translated into concrete projects for presentation to the Haitian and Canadian governments. The means was a dialogue between the people and a variety of "planners", including social animators, sociologists, anthropologists, and such technicians as agronomists, engineers, economists, and others. The basic idea was to give the people what they wanted in response to "felt needs", but also to encourage them to "feel needs" which were more attuned to potential development (more a matter of raising aspirations than of lowering them). When we come to the Haiti coffee cooperative we have moved closer still to minimal guidance and maximum encouragement of individual choice, although the encouragement was towards collective decision-making within a cooperative framework.

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Projects → Thus, we seem to be moving towards a concept of planning as "management", in the sense of providing an institutional framework within which experts can provide technical assistance but with the people directly concerned making the choices, as members of social groups of various sizes, from a single cooperative to a community. This approach is perfectly consistent with the concept of Self-Reliance, which insists that truly effective democracy can function only at the grassroots level, within communities of manageable size, where each individual can have his say but the decisions are collective. In this system, with some outside expertise to analyse and present options in a realistic fashion, the people themselves can do their own planning. In both Haiti projects people joined cooperatives of their own free will because they would enter into larger scale operations impossible on an individual basis. In Asia, too, village cooperatives are built up around specific development projects—small-scale irrigation schemes, feeder roads, anti-erosion measures, etc.—which could not be afforded or bargained for on an individual household basis.

* → Thus, the trend seems not to be towards "technocracy" or dirigisme. In contrast there is a trend away from increasing power for the mastadonian bureaucracies of central governments and towards individual control of their own destinies within a cooperative or collective framework, operating at the community level. Far from being "the end of liberalism", this approach may be the means of preserving the true values of the liberal philosophy. Neither the free market as such nor the concentration of political power in national legislatures is an *objective* within the liberal framework; rather they are institutions which are thought to contribute to such goals as individual freedom and higher levels of material, cultural, social, and spiritual welfare. There is no reason to suppose that the institutions that can contribute most to ←

achievement of these goals should be the same, as we approach the twenty-first century, as they were in the eighteenth century. It is perfectly possible that a new set of institutions can bring us closer to the ideals of the liberal philosophy than the present hodgepodge of institutions, which emerged from an earlier stage of social evolution and may no longer be the fittest to survive.

But if the trend towards self-reliance at the community level is supportive of liberal ideals, is it a challenge to the supremacy of the nation-state?

6.5. *Nation-state threatened from within?*

At first glance the moves towards local, rural development and agropolition closure do appear to be a species of revolution, involving loss of power, or at least of responsibility, for the nation-state. Some neo-Marxists, of course, are already convinced that providing acceptable levels of welfare to poor people in poor countries requires revolution. Some predict that within a capitalist system efforts at rural or local development will always be blocked by the power-elite at the top. These neo-Marxists working in non-socialist countries face an awkward choice: do they try to bring early gains in welfare for the masses, utilizing their knowledge of class-structure and "contradictions" to help make progress despite the barriers imposed by the power structure of the capitalist system, or do they work for the revolution and only then start helping the new regime to help the masses? There are vigorous debates among the neo-Marxists themselves on this score, and we will leave them to sort it out for themselves.

On the basis of the evidence, however, it can be argued that rural and local development can bring substantial social progress without violent revolution, and that it need not always be blocked from the top, even in countries where glaring inequalities and a high degree of concentration of power exist. Haiti is a case in point. The Oblats reported repeated instances of help coming from Haiti's central government when resistance was encountered at the local level. Food from Care, for example, which had reportedly been diverted for private gain at the local level, was redirected back to the Food for Work project in question. A local obstruction to forming a coffee cooperative was also removed by central government action. Local vested interests tried to block farmers' meetings to study the cooperative organization by referring to an edict that agricultural groups had to be officially recognized before they could meet. The farmers, of course, wanted to meet to study the statutes of the cooperative before forming one. The group appealed to the Minister of the Interior, who sent a written statement to say that the meetings could be held.

It should be remembered that much of the momentum for decentralized planning came "from the top" in the first place. Beleaguered central governments are sometimes more than happy if poor communities assume responsibility for their own development. There is no irreconcilable conflict between "grassroots planning" and survival of the nation-state; conceptually it may be regarded as an extension of federalism. There is a move the world over towards

→ greater autonomy for provincial, regional, and local governments. A system in which planning begins at the local level and is then aggregated to the regional level, then to state or provincial level, and finally to the national level, may prove to be the very kind of institution that may save the nation-state from falling apart—a moral that needs little pressing in Canada. Moreover, it is obvious that some kinds of planning must start at the national level, such as planning for national defence, for management of the money supply, for international trade, and for international relations more generally. Finally, when planning units are too small to attain certain goals there is a move towards aggregation which counteracts the trend towards disaggregation: witness the recent move of five neighbouring coffee cooperatives in Haiti to join together and prepare a development plan for their region as a whole. Some sort of multilevel planning must emerge, and in any society there seems to be a sort of “equilibrium” in distribution of responsibilities among levels of authority towards which the system tends. It is part of the planner’s task to discern this equilibrium and to recommend measures that will move the system more rapidly towards it.

In a recent paper Dr. Masahiko Honjo, Director of the United Nations Centre for Regional Development, points out that serious thinking about how best to integrate multilevel planning, vertically from one level of government to another and horizontally among sectors, is rather new. He favours a maximum degree of responsibility for local authorities. He sees the regional authority or provincial government as the link between local and national planning and as the major integrating force, both vertically and horizontally. Indeed, he suggests between the lines that the geographic area covered by these intermediate levels of government is the most useful concept of “region”, and that “regional planning” should be thought of in terms of this integrating function. He also points out, however, that we all have a good deal to learn together in each separate society; “the solution to the problem should come from within; rather than from ideas developed elsewhere”. It cannot be expected that the best solution will be the same everywhere. Dr. Honjo adds, “I would further submit that what really matters is the process by which people and government find solutions, rather than the substantive content of each solution per se” [5].

6.6. Nation-state threatened from without?

The next question is whether or not the nation-state is being threatened from without. So far as the multinational corporations are concerned, it does not appear that national governments, even those of developing countries which are presumably most vulnerable, are in any great danger. National governments are directing MNCs to fit their planning within the framework of national plans. Where conflicts of interest arise and no compromise can be found the MNCs may withdraw from the country altogether, as IBM and Coca

Cola left India rather than accept joint ownership. Third World countries are collaborating in the organization of joint information systems to monitor and control activities of the MNCs. Finally, the developing countries have organized some impressive MNCs of their own. All in all, as Paul Streeten puts it [16]

The nation state has shown considerable resilience in the face of multinationals; its demise, as with reports of Mark Twain's death, have been somewhat exaggerated. The Colombians succeeded in extracting substantial sums from their multinationals. The Indians dealt successfully with firms that introduced inappropriate technologies and products. The Andean Group of OPEC showed that solidarity among groups of developing countries in dealing with multinationals is possible and can pay.

If we ask whether the powers of the nation-state are being seriously diminished by the growth and proliferation of supranational organizations, particularly those in "the United Nations family", the answer is, "not yet". To be sure, when one reads such documents as the *Summary Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund*, one can well be astonished at the degree of consensus achieved among the representatives of some 130 nations on matters fundamentally affecting national interests. The same may be said to a lesser degree of meetings of other international organizations. But except to some degree in the field of international trade and international monetary policy, there is as yet no central coordination of the world-wide planning effort at the supranational level. When all the pieces of the vast jigsaw puzzle of planning effort are put together, the resulting picture is one of an incomplete system of global management. There are rather few major decisions having a significant impact on resource allocation which are entirely untouched by the planning process, i.e. which are not influenced by the analysis and advice of people who can be regarded as "professional planners". But the world-wide planning effort is still imperfectly integrated.

In the current state of the global economy—and of global society—the imperfections of global management can only be regarded as most unfortunate. As stated in the Report of the Brandt Commission established by President MacNamara of the World Bank, "At the beginning of the 1980s the world community faces much greater dangers than at any time since the Second World War. The world economy is now functioning so badly that it damages both the immediate and the longer-run interests of all nations" [10, p. 267].

7. Decade of institution building?

There can be no question, then, of merely leaving things as they are. Further moves towards completion of the system of global management must be made.

an illusion of 1980
in the U.N. "family"

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One reason for the existing gaps in the system, of course, is that there are still conflicts of interest among national plans together with jealously guarded national sovereignties. Another reason is that some major countries, and in particular the United States, do not have national plans which could integrate state or provincial, regional, local, and private planning, and which could in turn be integrated into the system of global management. Large corporations in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe, of course, have very competent planning departments, which are recognized as important parts of the overall management system. Even in the United States, perhaps still the strongest fortress of laissez-faire ideology, city planning has long been respectable, and governmental planning at the regional level is also accepted provided it remains at an ad hoc, trouble-shooting, problem-solving level, relating to particular sectors (energy, transport, health, education) or to particular regions (TVA, Appalachia). The idea of national planning, however—let alone of integrated multilevel planning—still has few supporters in the United States and in some other advanced market economy countries, although the same governments that shy away from such planning at home insist upon it as a basis for their economic assistance to developing countries. Consequently the scope of government planning is much narrower in most advanced market economy countries than it is in developing countries, while the scope of formal, professional planning in private enterprise is much wider. The result is that MNCs based on advanced countries still tend to have an edge, on balance, in world competition, while the national economies of developing countries tend to be better managed, given their levels of development, than those of advanced market economy countries.

Improved functioning of the global economy requires both better management of the advanced market economies and greater willingness of the national governments of advanced countries to cooperate at the international level. In recent years there has been a glimmer of understanding of the need for national planning and international cooperation in the advanced market economy countries, particularly in the United States where such a change of heart is most necessary for improved functioning of the global economy as a whole. Some years ago Henry Ford II called for the creation of a federal planning agency to undertake long-range perspective planning. Investment banker Robert Roosa, United Auto Workers president Leonard Woodcock, and Nobel Laureate econometrician Wasily Leontieff have demanded the establishment of a US Office of National Economic Planning. The Humphrey-Javits Bill provides legislation for just such an Office. Dr. Charles Reed, senior vice-president for corporate strategic planning of General Electric has called for a "planful society", as distinct from a centrally planned economy, in which planning is diffused throughout the economic and social system, with a common and shared perception of objectives to be attained. Where severe problems exist, as in energy, utilities, and construction, and in areas which cut

across industry lines such as unemployment, inflation, urban renewal, and the environment, he calls for planning at the national level, although with business and labour joining in the planning process. What he is asking for is not very different from what took place in the United States during the Second World War, although, despite the miserable performance of the US economy in recent years, one might hope that the scope of government intervention required to make it work well would be considerably narrower than the management thought necessary in time of war.

There is also a glimmer of hope for more cooperation on the part of the advanced market economy countries at the supranational level. It is of great interest that the OECD, in speaking of the challenge of the 1980s, refers to them not as "the Third Decade of Development" but as "the Institution Building Decade" [11]:

A number of thoughtful persons have observed that the technological and economic interdependence of the world has preceded by far—and created the need for—more effective transitional institutions for managing interdependence. ... This is the challenge that lies ahead in the "institution building decade" of the 1980s.

The OECD goes on to speak of the need for competent transnational authorities and for national governments to act upon the idea of a "world community" in "an as yet not fully articulated 'world interest'".

There is good reason to hope that we are moving towards a new institutional framework which will better enable us to achieve old goals, including individual freedom as well as prosperity. We are in the midst of a reinterpretation of liberal philosophy in terms of the institutions best designed to apply it. Multilevel planning, within and among nations, is among the institutions whose building needs to be completed. A great deal of experimentation and innovation is currently under way with respect to training, research, and practice in the field of planning. Out of this experimentation and innovation will come the new institutions we need.

Reluctant though planners have been to assume a larger role in the decision-making process, planners as a professional group have the knowledge and the skills to make a major contribution to global management. The real obstacle is not lack of technical expertise but "the reluctant clients": those with power to influence and make the top-level political decisions are not yet sufficiently aware of the urgency of the task of completing the planning system. "What limits our response to this challenge, on which the destiny of mankind depends?" asks the Brandt Report, and replies [10, p. 267]:

Not primarily the technical solutions which are already familiar, but the non-existence of a clear and generalized awareness of the realities and dangers and the absence of political will to face up to them and take corrective action. Only in a spirit of solidarity based on respect for the individual and the common good will it be possible to achieve the solutions that are needed.

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