

WHITHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE? *
On the Future of International Development Co-operation

By
Johan Galtung
University of Oslo, Oslo
Institut Universitaire d'études du développement, Geneva

1. Introduction.

The world is changing, even rapidly; the agencies for international technical assistance/development/cooperation are parts of the world - how do they change? This is the topic to be discussed in the present paper, and the first problem is how to discuss it. There are at least two broad answers to that question.

Thus, an empirical approach might be used, tracing the origins of the concept back to such ideas as Point Four and the Colombo Plans, no doubt also to clearly colonial patterns. A combination of content analysis of motivations etc. as expressed in official documents in the donor countries, reactions in the recipient countries and analysis of structure and function, not to mention evaluation of the factual consequences of the countless projects - spanning the spectrum of social sciences from psychological effects on individuals via economic, political, social effects to the consequences for international relations. This would produce interesting trends, and such studies, bringing together information from the many pieces of research in this field, would be invaluable. However, no such empiricist study will give us any answer to the question posed in the title, whither, and on the future - for one would certainly not be content with extrapolationist studies from the trends of the last thirty years or so.

Hence, there is a need for a second approach, more based on theory and values/goals, less based on concrete data. We have to be free to speculate to say anything of importance about the future, particularly if the future is to contain qualitatively new elements of which there is no empirical trace- or "pre-trace", "pre-shadow" - in past or present. Obviously, the two approaches do not contradict each other: the latter has to be informed by

the former. But one has to try to capture some of the essential elements of technical assistance not easily mirrored in official documents and statistics. And one way of doing this would be, roughly speaking, to divide past, present and future time into three phases, the Old International Economic Order, the New International Economic Order, and Self-Reliance/Global Interdependence (OIEO, NIEO and SRGI for short). In doing so it goes without saying that we do not believe that these three systems characterizations correspond neatly to past, present and future respectively: OIEO will still be with us for a long time, but it is mixed at places with elements of NIEO and SRGI.

Rather, the point is to try to see what type of concept of technical assistance/development/cooperation would correspond to the three systems. Some of this is already indicated in the semantics: "assistance" smacks of the paternalism of OIEO, "development" is literally speaking more developmental and in that sense straddles the OIEO-NIEO gap; and "cooperation" is more neutral in the sense that it does not presuppose any ideology of "development" but simply states that this or that is an agency where international cooperation - presumably indispensable under a system of global interdependence however self-reliant the parts (or precisely because they are self-reliant) - can take place. The only problem is that several of these agencies have anticipated, perhaps even pre-empted some of this process by changing nomenclature more than content, at an early stage. As OIEO is still so much our dominant reality, the present paper sticks to the terminology that corresponds best to that phase, and talk about "technical assistance".

2. Technical assistance as an OIEO instrument.

In retrospect it is always more easy to predict, and today the easy post-war emergence of technical assistance appears as an almost natural phenomenon in the sense that its absence would have been difficult to explain. Both for socio-cultural, for economic and for political reasons TA stands out as the logical thing to do.

To start with the socio-cultural aspect: TA fits the basic patterns of the Western conception of the world almost too well.¹⁾ In this conception one basic element is the idea of the West as a center from which things and ideas radiate to an eager periphery, waiting for goods and services.

Under the formula of TA they could receive both, and be shaped by them. Intuitively one would expect countries that had been engaged in moulding others easily to adapt to this new pattern, as donors of TA, and that does not include only former colonial master countries. It would also include countries with, for instance a clear tendency to engage in missionary activities, as measured, for instance, by number of missionaries per capita, or outlay per capita for evangelical work, "overseas".²⁾ In general it would comprise countries that see themselves as models one way or the other, for other countries or for the rest of the whole world for that matter³⁾ - countries that feel that they have something beyond money to offer.

One may talk about a "missionary complex" in this connection, a sense of "mission civilisatrice" of which countries may have more or less. And in TA they found a structure that mirrored perfectly this cultural element. True, the recipient countries had to apply for projects, and the decisions were taken - unilaterally - in the donor country. In other words, what was new was that a first step had to be taken on the recipient side, but even that first step could be facilitated through such catalysts as the training of scholars from the recipient country, in the donor country, so that they knew what to ask for; not to mention the demonstration effect.⁴⁾

Western cosmology also harbors some ideas about social processes that could have some bearing on the way TA was shaped. Thus, there is the "Idea of Progress", and how it comes about: by gambling on a few, well selected factors, injecting much social energy into them. The principles according to which such variables are selected would then constitute the TA theory, or ideology, at that time. As the theoretical base tends to be narrow, selecting only a few variables, one would expect many and rapid changes in TA theory over time. Candidate variables emerged by a process of comparison: which are the factors on which developed countries are high and developing countries low, selecting from this (extensive) set of variables a limited number that could be seen as a causal nucleus of the nexus of variables held to constitute development. There was one additional constraint on the choice: only those variables could be selected that provided politically acceptable reasons in retrospect of why the West was developed. Thus, the simple idea of conquering

and exploiting others, so basic in Western (and Japanese) growth could not be included - partly because it could not be advocated as a method for others to use, and partly because it could not be admitted as basis for Western growth, and partly because there was no clear, overt TA process through which such skills could be transmitted.⁵⁾

Typical examples of theories that passed these filters were/are:

- improved quality and quantity of commodity exports in return for foreign currency;
- improved infrastructure for internal and external transportation and communication, including storage facilities, shipping and freight in general, etc.;
- industrialization for import substitution;
- improved health and education services;
- population control, family planning.

These do not differ appreciably from the phases development theory in general has passed through, being products, intellectually and politically, of the same milieu. But there is the important implication that through such ideas, and the practices to implement them, developing countries were pushed along a twisting path held to be similar to the one trodden (successfully) by the developed countries. If the results were not the same, the discrepancy was not explained in terms of what the developed countries had done in addition (i.e., colonized most of the world) but in terms of properties of the developing countries, held to be negative.⁶⁾ Many of them were lumped together by psychologists/sociologists/anthropologists under such headings as "traditionalism", and the problem then became one of overcoming this syndrome.

In retrospect one could hardly imagine a more complete formula for changing other countries in the direction of one's own. Where centuries of missionary activity had concentrated on people's minds, and on some minor activity at the village level, TA went straight to the entire structure for production of all kinds of goods and services, all the time modelled on the developed countries with only minor modifications. It even went so far as to suggest, and indeed participate, in what might be called "the denominator approach" (a euphemism) to GNP/capita growth: reduction in the number of future "capita", through family planning.⁷⁾ Money for grants/projects was available provided

it was requested and the project was judged sound, i.e. in accordance with prevailing theory - not so strange that the developing countries quickly learnt to phrase their requests in such terms.

This picture, then, becomes more pronounced when the economic factors underlying TA are brought out more clearly. The question is not to what extent such consequences are intended. The point is only that, objectively speaking, the type of TA given has at the same time often contributed to increased dependency on the donor country and thereby to increasing gaps, between rich and poor countries, and between rich and poor within the poor countries.⁸⁾ These have been the objective trends during the last generation. It is impossible to say how much of it is due to TA, but as technical assistance by and large has been characterized by the same type of measures as developmental policies in general, TA has at least not counteracted such trends. One specific reason for this would be that so much of TA has gone into infra-structure, preparing the developing country for better participation in world trade, particularly commodity export. Better capital goods for extraction of minerals etc. or cultivation of cash crops, better storage facilities, better transportation networks from the sites of extraction to the modernized ports and airports - all of this is at the same time a continuation at a higher level of old patterns.

The same applies to some extent to improved health and education services: seen in a context of preparing the infra-structure this is "the human factor". The objection would be that at the same time basic human needs are being met, and this is partly correct. But the purpose makes an imprint, often indelible, on the way this is done. Thus, if the purpose is that of getting workers sufficiently literate to read instructions, but not sufficiently educated to engage in critical and constructive debates, then this will have some impact on the type of schooling system chosen.⁹⁾ Correspondingly, improving health services can also be a way of creating medical clients with increased dependency on public and private institutions, including pharmaceutical companies, not a way of improving their capacity for curing themselves and for preventing diseases through action on their own environment.

From this there is a short step to the political aspects. Not only could TA be used to maintain and reinforce existing patterns economically speaking by deepening certain structures linked to vertical division of labor; it could also be used to steer recipient countries politically, in other words to exercise power in a broad sense. Much of this can be seen analytically as a question of counter-value.¹⁰⁾ Officially technical assistance is presented as a gift, as a transfer of value from one actor on the international scene to another without corresponding counter-value. But social anthropology informs us that there is no gift without the expectation of something in return. One might then expect that this "something" could be the economical value accruing to the donor countries through mechanisms of unequal exchange, based on gradients of uneven development. The whole trick would be to raise the former colonial countries from being commodity producers only, to the status of producers of semi-manufactures and even manufacturers of processed goods typical of the phases of the industrial revolution, thus permitting the center countries to develop even more sophisticated forms of technology and products. But this was/is not seen as counter-value because the structure is supposed to work that way; anyhow it only means that the structure is working normally and to the benefit of both parties.

To get something in return would be to get something over and above the normal economic returns from the infrastructure investment. And this is where clearly political aims enter:

- to be given priorities in competition for future economic expansion;
- to be accorded certificates of atonement for wrongs wrought during the period of colonialism;
- political alliance formation;
- voting patterns in the UN;
- non-aggression against the donor country;
- provision of public opinion pressure and other forms of assistance in case of aggression against donor country by third party;
- confirmation of the donor country as a model country by imitating, even uncritically, institutions and patterns from donor country;
- cooperating with donor country in making the project, and thereby the donor country itself, a "success";

- legitimizing the political and economic style of the donor country by being (at least) as democratic-autocratic or socialist-capitalist as the donor country;
- giving status as "most favored donor country" to the donor country by regulating the entry as donor countries.

All together this is a substantial list, and other elements could no doubt be added. The basic point would be that a purely economic, even marxist model stating that the ultimate "something in return" is increased profit, will not do. Power has other ingredients of which the use of others for validation of oneself is basic, and TA has served that purpose well by providing a channel through which learning, to the point of imitation, becomes institutionalized.¹¹⁾ In short, TA is a part of foreign policy, and even an important part. In being so it could draw on many of the same sentiments and pre-conceptions, the same institutional patterns and to some extent even the same people as did colonialism. What changed was the rhetoric.

Throughout the period these institutions grew. They became bureaucratically rooted in the donor countries, from close to volunteer organizations to agencies the head of which is sometimes accorded cabinet rank. In spite of what has been said about decreasing official development assistance (ODA) relative to the gross national product¹²⁾ - the budgets are by and large increasing (given the economic growth of the industrialized countries), or are already so big that they can compete with other governmental agencies/ministries. But there is a difference: for the ordinary ministries/agencies, so to speak engaged in domestic development, it is always the question of too many projects chasing too little money; for development assistance it may be the other way round. There are not enough "good projects" around, which is not strange given the multiple demands, spanning from the local level where the project will be operative to the level of national politics in both donor and recipient countries, and on to international relations. In addition the channels for articulating local demands are often clogged or non-existing. Thus, given the distance between a local population on the other side of the globe and the top level of the donor country it is not strange if domestic and foreign policy considerations of the donor country take precedence.

This problem, then, becomes aggravated by demands, articulated internationally and domestically, to spend more money - before the budget year ends - leading to a search for capital intensive projects.¹³⁾

3. Technical assistance in the NIEO phase.

And this leads us straight to the present phase which is here characterized by the initials NIEO - not because that order is brought into being, but simply because it constitutes the dominant rhetoric, and because the thinking has changed. For our purpose we shall distinguish between two aspects of the present phase, one is NIEO proper, and the other is the accompanying phenomenon, not at all integrated into NIEO, of focussing on basic human needs for those most in need.

NIEO proper can be analyzed in structural terms, and in terms of concrete instruments,¹⁴⁾ and among the latter is one that is directly relevant in this connection: "increase in aid". More precisely, the demands are articulated in terms of the targets established by the United Nations for the First and Second Development Decades, the famous 0,7% of the gross national products of industrialized countries. In 1974 the total aid flow was about \$ 15 billion, corresponding to an average of 0.33% of the GNP of the donors - to reach the target, then, would mean a doubling of that figure to about \$ 30 billion. In comparison it may be mentioned that the public and private debts of the developing countries was estimated at about \$ 150 billion at the end of 1976, and the trade deficit of non-oil Third world countries is around \$ 35 billion per year it is clear that even meeting the target would not solve the problem. But not meeting it would solve that problem even less; as a consequence the demand for increase in aid. This is in line with general NIEO philosophy: changing the net flow between MDCs and LDCs, between rich and poor countries by improving terms of trade, debt relief etc. As a demand it is fully understandable, but it should also be noted that it does not question the assistance qualitatively, only the quantity, its volume.

The counter-argument to NIEO philosophy at this point is, of course, that if one drives in the wrong direction at 33mph it does not help to speed up to a fast 70 mph; the direction is still wrong. And this is where the undercurrent, increasingly heard,

of the basic needs approach enters the picture, by questioning the entire goal of the exercise.

It should be noted that this turn in development thinking, by now a couple of years old, throws some interesting light on the whole problem of evaluation. In the early phases it looked so simple: development received a clear definition in the idea of the per capita gross national product, leading to policies of strengthening the processing and marketing sectors on the economy. From this goal a number of concrete projects could be derived, after some time they could be monitored in terms of their effects, with green light if the consequences tallied well with the goals, red light if not. It was as simple and logical as anything could be. And yet it did not happen that way, certainly because this bureaucratically inspired paradigm of evaluation was much too simplistic. Very soon it showed up that it was not the consequence but the goals that had to be, and in fact were, evaluated. A "successful" project raised more problems than it solved, particularly when it became clear that any such project became like an island, an enclave, transplanted onto foreign soil, and as such could serve as bridgehead for foreign enterprises of various kinds, for military, political, economic and cultural penetration, etc.

However, the major impetus for goal-reformulation came with the persistent increase in absolute misery instead of the decrease that had been not only expected, but even promised. It should be noted that the abolition of misery is another type of goal than the developmental, systemic goals prominent in the 1950s and 1960s. The idea that development and abolition of misery are not necessarily positively related is hardly new - misery was - after all - a basis of the pattern of early industrialization in Europe till the trade unions became strong enough to get a better share in the fruits of development. The two have probably been seen as belonging to different social realms, "development" being at the macro level, misery a problem of the individual and his/her family, a micro phenomenon handled through the good deeds of aid organizations, among them the religious ones. This separation is certainly of old standing: in the antiquity, in the middle ages and in our "modern period" the elites have engaged in many policies to develop the productive forces and the political power of their societies, but not necessarily to do

anything about misery. Linkages that to us may seem obvious are not necessarily so: the linkage between anatomical knowledge and surgical practice known as medical science, for instance, took many centuries or even millennia to emerge.

For the neo-classical economists who have dominated so much of development thinking for more than thirty years there was a conceptual link between "development" and "abolition of misery": the income distribution.¹⁵⁾ For a project to have a "developmental effect", economic growth was no longer sufficient, the income distribution had to "improve" in the sense of becoming more egalitarian. It is important to note that the thinking is still in terms of "income"; that points to a monetized economy and to the use of markets, including markets for selling and buying labor, and for that reason compatible with the model of a capitalistically oriented economy, regardless of the ratio between the public and private sectors of the economy. It should also be noted that the relation to the goal "abolition of misery" is not a simple one: an egalitarian income distribution is neither a necessary condition (the lower tail may be above misery lines), nor a sufficient condition (the whole population may share misery equally).

The logical sequel of this type of thinking is today very much on the scene: if the goal is to abolish misery, then define misery, perhaps by dividing it into components, and state the goal as that of conquering misery, component by component, individual by individual. The "components" are increasingly identified with basic (material) needs, and the individuals are those who have at their disposal least of the satisfiers of these needs - commonly identified as food, clothes, shelter, health services and schooling. The problem, then, becomes one of mobilizing productive forces in these directions. And that is where the problems start accumulating.

First, if the productive machinery is used to produce food, clothes, shelter, health services and schooling in a way that is immediately accessible to the poor today, then in most cases the trade component will be minimal. The general experience seems to be that the least expensive food is the food grown locally by the people who themselves will consume it, not the food grown in far away places - among other reasons due to the expenses of storage, packaging and transportation, and the many

middle-men. The condition for the local method to be effective, however, would be that the producers /consumers can control the factor of agricultural production, meaning not only the soil and their own labor, but seeds, fertilizers and equipment, and water. If the outside controls only one of these necessary factors, it is enough to twist the productive machinery in another direction.

But given these conditions the net result will be simple foods - often mainly staple foods - simple clothes and housing based on local materials, medical services of the "bare-foot doctor and local herbs" variety, and schooling closely tied to work. None of these products will do well on the international markets, nor would they need much - in general - in terms of outside inputs (goods and services) to be produced. There are exceptions given the asymmetries in the world economic geography, but by and large the thesis seems to hold: development in the sense of abolition of misery is negatively related to external trade, maybe even to internal trade.

The problem that remains would be how the cities, under such conditions, would get their food, if not through internal trade - and this is where the problem is located. The cities subsist on the basis of food and other essentials being produced in their Hinterland, and luxury goods being acquired through trade - they need something to trade with and they need systems that guarantee that their needs for food are met. If the poor in the countryside should control these resources themselves, there would be no guarantee that exportable products would be available (such as cash crops), nor any guarantee that enough food would be available - the people in the countryside might consume it themselves, particularly if they were also able to produce for the other needs and produce the equipment needed for these production processes.

Second, under these conditions the technical assistance component would also be minimal. One reason follows directly from what has been said: some of the motivation would be lost with strongly diminished prospects of short-term returns through increased trade on favorable terms. But there is also an idealist streak in the TA enterprise that would tally well with the idea of abolishing misery, and also evidenced in the numerous disaster relief actions. Consequently, some willingness should be assumed, even much good intention - the problem being knowledge of how to do it. If the overwhelming evidence seems to point in the direction that

"modern" development efforts, with TA or without, makes the unit price of almost anything needed more, not less expensive for the impoverished needy, then some other approach has to be found - unless one is able to abolish misery by abolishing the miserables completely through family planning.¹⁶⁾ And the question is where the donor countries should derive that type of knowledge from, given that their techniques seem by and large to be capital-intensive, energy-intensive, labor-extensive, research-intensive and organization-intensive, and hence to operate best in settings similar to the donor countries, eg., cities with capital-concentration, energy resources, research institutes and "modern" organizations readily available, with less need for manual labor.¹⁷⁾ On techniques with the opposite factor profile the donor countries would be weak; they would even have to dig into their pasts to uncover them - an idea contrary to the idea of progress underlying the master-disciple relation of technical assistance.

Caught by the dilemma of giving more to capital-intensive projects that seem to deepen dependencies and increase the gaps without abolishing any misery, but at the same time contribute to meeting targets set by the UN, by the Third world as parts of the NIEO packages, by parliaments and public opinion - increasingly, it seems - as part of an atonement program particularly suited for small, rich, protestant countries with troubled consciences ~~and~~ and, on the other hand, to go in for something more relevant to those most in need at the risk of spending much less money, and even at the risk of appearing incompetent, irrelevant - what does one do? Off hand one would predict a number of reactions in this kind of situation, no doubt a delicate one and not ~~one~~ of their own choosing.¹⁸⁾

First, there is the possibility of denying the problem and continue as before, seeking those partners in the Third world that would agree with TA of the most capital-intensive and research-intensive variety. Those partners exist, and this would tend to steer the TA flow in the direction of the more conservative regimes.

Second, there is a course that seems to become increasingly popular, viz., that of giving the same type of TA as before, but to countries that show signs of improving their income distribution, or - in the most adequate parlance - of meeting the basic needs of those most in need. The difficulty in this approach is clear: there is a confusion between the national and the local levels, between

general policies and the workings of the project locally. General national policies will not prevent a local project from creating gaps between professionals, workers and consumers, dependency and the donor country for continued flow of spare parts and expertise, etc. At most it will serve to legitimize the insertion of such elements in the social body. Technology is a strong factor and works its ways, regardless of the ideological persuasion of the national leadership. What is needed would be different types of technology, and where do the rich, Western donor countries get that from?

Third, there is the possibility of trying to initiate projects that directly, on the spot, have the effect of changing income distributions and meeting basic needs; avoiding the fallacy of confusing the national and the local levels mentioned above. It should be remembered that this means helping setting up, on a sustained basis, a pattern of production of goods and/or services that leads to a more egalitarian local society. There are people in the rich industrialized countries with ideas, and also with considerable experience, by now, about how to do that: the "soft/human/radical/intermediate technology people" to use one kind of etiquettes; the "commune people" to use another.¹⁹⁾ Often they are the same people; only rarely do they have the eyes and ears of the establishment well represented on the boards of the TA agencies. Being against the dominant trend in their own countries they are unlikely to be included in the projects that also are supposed to mirror the donor country favorably abroad - unless there is a major change of public policy (which may not be so unlikely). Given present conditions, however, the proof rests on those who think this is possible within the limitations set by the TA setting, eg., that it shall be acceptable to elites in both donor and recipient countries. Hence, what is likely to happen is that projects that start out with this kind of goal slowly, almost imperceptibly will change the goal-setting so as to harmonize more with the consequences - which is another way of doing evaluation research by "evaluating" the goals.²⁰⁾

Fourth, there is the possibility of drawing the consequences from this and say, more or less: "what is needed is a basic structural change, giving the local population more control over the factors of production. Hence, let us support popular movements, of liberation".

This conclusion has been drawn, formulas have been found for giving money to such movements for humanitarian purposes (medical services, work in liberated areas), thereby liberating funds that can/could be used to acquire arms. If the goal is to abolish poverty, this may have been the most effective "investment", as judged by the rapid progress in that field often made by socialist regimes.

Fifth, there is the possibility of handling the whole issue over the United Nations, not necessarily trusting the wisdom of that organization, but leaving any blame for decisions made to the UN while at the same time knowing that assistance through the UN counts as ODA, and hence as fulfillment of the target. And sixth, there is the more radical idea that the best way of helping the LDCs is by making MDCs less dependent on them - as sources of raw materials they would like to process themselves and as markets they would like to operate themselves. In other words, TA funds could be used for internal restructuring of the MDC economies, possibly meaning fabricating more synthetics (as substitutes for raw materials) and making each other even more accessible as markets (as substitutes for lost Third world markets). All of this can be done in highly capital- and research-intensive ways thereby preserving the social pattern, but it is doubtful whether it would count as ODA, and even more doubtful whether it would be acceptable from a NIEO point of view.

In short, the situation is contradictory and so are the responses. Technical assistance was set up at a time when the model was more clear-cut than today; it was, in fact, a successor-model to the colonial pattern. What was wrong with the Third world was what the First (and to some extent the Second, the socialist) world had and they had not; in the first run political freedom, in the second run economic growth. This change in basic platform for catapulting the Third world along the trajectory of the Western nation-states led to a change from the military-political official towards the economist, assisted by the other social sciences, as the administrator of progress. But he retained his Westernness, regardless of the color of his skin. And behind all of these perspectives there was the same ultimate, basic assumption: "we in the West are the cause of their situation, for good or for bad, more than they are for us, we have formulas relevant for them rather than vice versa". In short: reliance on the West rather than self-reliance.

4. Technical assistance in the phase of self-reliance and global interdependence: the phase of international development cooperation.

This may sound like a contradiction in adjecto: if countries are to develop by means of self-reliance, then how can that be reconciled with technical assistance, with the idea of donors and recipients? Particularly if we assume that the focus of development will be human development, which means meeting material and non-material needs, but in a self-reliant manner - locally, nationally, regionally? The answer is that these ideas can only be reconciled under certain conditions, and this is where such catch-words as "global interdependence" and "international development cooperation" enter. What would concrete implementations of such principles look like?

In a sense the answer is very simple: like cooperation organizations and projects between countries that are on a more equal footing than MDCs and LDCs have become trained to regard themselves relative to each other. Among Nordic countries cooperation projects touching developmental aspects of all societies involved are always run on the assumption that all countries have something to contribute, and if one country is ahead in one field, then another country may be ahead somewhere else. More particularly, there may even be a tacit agreement to search for this "somewhere else" so that each country has the chance of experiencing the relation both on the teacher and on the pupil side.

The conventional objection would be that this works as long as the countries are "at the same level of development" roughly speaking, and belong to a community of nations where power gradients are not too steep. But the point here is the power to define what constitutes development, and it is precisely this power that is distributed more evenly under the formula of "self-reliance". "Self-reliance" does not only mean to use one's own factors in the pursuit of standard goals of development, it also implies setting one's own goals, consistent with one's own culture and needs, at the individual, local, national and regional levels.²¹⁾ For the definition not to become so relativistic that anything is accepted as self-reliance provided it is endogenous, however, one additional point should be made: the goal has to be developmental in terms of meeting human needs, material and/or non-material; and there has to be an effort to satisfy basic

material needs for all, at a minimum level that is not too low. This leaves open a vast range of developmental policies, and one major distinction would - perhaps - be between those policies, that go very far in the satisfaction of material needs to the point of neglecting a number of non-material needs, and the policies that stop at a lower level of material needs satisfaction in order to develop more fully along non-material lines. If these developmental styles are recognized as being of equal value, then the basis for a dialogue is there. If the second style is seen as superior, all the materialist West can hope for is that those who go in for the second style will not be equally arrogant, if they assume the roles as teachers, even as masters and models.

Self-reliance, properly understood, will lead to diversity, and diversity, when properly utilized, is the best source possible for a fruitful dialogue, for mutual learning.²²⁾ Interpreted this way it can easily be seen that self-reliance has in its wake a higher, not a lower potential for global interdependence precisely because there is something to learn when others are different, and there is something to learn both ways - leading to inter-dependence rather than dependence. The difficulty, however, is that those who are used to being teachers do not easily become pupils and vice versa. The West rarely officially admitted it had much to learn from China; at non-governmental levels such ideas have been formulated, very often. However, the opposite thesis also holds: he who is used to being a pupil does not easily fall into the role as a teacher, and this may explain part of the Chinese reluctance to participate in such dialogues (most of it, however, may be due to other factors).

Let us now try to map out some features of international development cooperation in a phase more characterized by self-reliance and (symmetric) global interdependence than the case is today. This will be done using four principles, viz.,

- basic needs orientation
- two-way assistance
- shared decision-making
- increased globalization.

(1) Basic needs orientation. Development cooperation should focus ever more on what is essential for human survival and development on a sustained basis, and on a short-term basis. It can always be

argued that any type of socio-economic growth will have, in the longer run, some impact on the basic needs situation. The argument is plausible for tractors, less for cars - and even for tractors it is far from obvious. However, this point is now so well known that it only gains in depth if the attention is extended to the non-material needs for freedom and identity (to mention two gross categories), thereby setting much broader agendas for the discussions and the projects. Gradually it should be possible to leave behind the pattern of administering other people's welfare down to the minute details, defining the basic task as how to meet basic human material needs in ways that let people be the master of their own situation.

Concretely this opens for an enormous field of future international cooperation: technologies that are more "human" in the sense of both producing sufficient in terms of goods and services to meet basic needs, and at the same time to be capital-saving, energy-saving, labor-intensive, creativity-intensive (the opposite of a pattern that hands the monopoly on creativity over to the researchers), participation-intensive (the opposite of administrator-intensive). At the same time the technology should also be soft on nature, meaning that it should neither deplete the non-renewable resources nor pollute human and non-human nature. And: it should be structurally more acceptable in the sense of producing less inequities and inequalities, fragmenting people less away from each other by fostering more togetherness when things are produced and consumed, and segmenting people less into narrow specializations by appealing more to the total personality. All of this are perfectly reasonable demands, they will probably be increasingly heard as the century draws to an end, and they point to a high number of the evils that beset the rich, industrialized societies. At the same time traditional technologies are too inefficient, and often also harmful on nature - so there is ample room for cooperation, trying to blend the "traditional" and the "modern" into new syntheses, and/or developing both further, but in directions more suitable to meet human needs. Thus, there are both the synthesis and the "walking on two legs" approaches. With the high number of demands a maximum mobilization of human ingenuity is needed - not only the think tanks and the experts in rich countries.

A second field of cooperation would focus on the economic cycles themselves. The problem could be formulated very much

in the same manner as above: how to arrive at a fruitful compromise between the inefficient but highly transparent economic cycles dubbed "primitive" and/or "traditional" today and the super-efficient, but dehumanizing and dependency-creating cycles referred to as "modern". Needless to say, this second field is more related to socio-economic organization, but also strongly tied to the question of choice of technology.

The virtue of such fields of cooperation is, of course, that they define areas where both rich and poor countries of today are deficient and in need of development, from either side of the water-shed, so to speak. There is much room for dialogue and exchange of experience, especially if forms can be found whereby not only experts and top decision-makers, but people working at the local level could be involved. In other words, it has to be recognized that this type of orientation would call for other concepts as to who are experts than the concepts of yesteryear.

(2) Two-way assistance. The word "cooperation" should not be used unless there is an element of reciprocity, not only "I assist you", but also "you assist me". The basis for the latter is complex: there has to be, first of all, the recognition of having a problem, second, the conviction of not being fully able to solve it alone, third, the notion that it might be beneficial to either party if other countries are called in to help.²³⁾ Thus, for Norway to request a World Health Organization mental health team, mainly staffed by people from developing countries who might see aspects of the Norwegian mental health situation we do not readily see ourselves; and for England to request the assistance of an ILO unemployment mission²⁴⁾ would presuppose some ability not only to recognize the problems (that ability is present), but to recognize other parts of the total world community as a possible source of solutions that could blend with those produced domestically in a fruitful combination.

A first step in this direction would be to invite teams of people from developing countries to the developed countries, not only to study and learn, but to identify our problems and start speculating about solutions. Such teams, of journalists, authors, social scientists would today run against deeply ingrained tendencies to see assistance as a one-way street; but that is a pattern that can be overcome. If it is possible for a country like

the United Kingdom to contemplate scaling down its diplomatic services drastically simply because it is no longer the great power it used to be, this should also be possible. It would, incidentally, also contribute greatly to the development of the Third world countries sending such missions, if one assumes that the spin-off effects from being an expert - exposed to new and challenging problems, being forced to formulate problems and solutions in entirely new contexts, above all accrue to the experts - and hence to his or her home setting.

One counter-argument would be that developing countries might identify problems, but - being resource-poor - not be able to contribute towards their solution. But this type of objections misses the point. Problems that can be solved by means of capital have already been identified in the rich countries; the argument even being that they have overidentified.²⁵⁾ The point is to increase the awareness of problems for which capital is no solution; problems that might have escaped the attention of the rich countries precisely because there is no known instruments in their expensive tool-chest to bring to bear on them. Examples such as mental illness and unemployment have been mentioned above. Rich country solutions would go in the direction of suggesting expensive mental hospitals and new work places, also expensive. Poor country solutions might be more in the direction of more communal living, less stress, less productivity - possibly implying lower standard of material living. The question is how they would argue such points (if they were made), whether they would be able to see aspects we do not easily ourselves permit into our cognitive frame of reference.

(3) Shared decision-making. The pattern of a TA agency acting much like a research council, upon applications and unilaterally only with the exception that the applicants are from one group of countries, developing countries and the decision-makers from the donor country, clearly belongs to the past and will historically stand out as a transitory arrangement, between colonial patterns - and what? For this "what" the formula "shared decision-making" has been offered above, and one concretization would be as follows: open the TA agencies for the recipient countries, as staff members and as decision-makers. If democracy is something like "everybody's right to participate in decision-making affecting oneself", then

clearly recipient countries should participate. This would have the advantage, gradually, of eliminating extraneous, non-developmental factors from influencing decisions, permitting more clearly developmental perspectives, clarified in dialogues, to emerge.

In short, the idea would be to open not only the boards, but also the staff of such agencies to the whole world, or to all UN member countries, to have a formula to go by. It may be argued that then one should just as well turn the whole thing over to the UN, multilateralizing all assistance through UN channels where this kind of shared decision-making is already institutionalized. There are two important arguments against this position, however.

First, there is the need for some redundancy in the international system. The UN system is indispensable, the best global articulation forum there is and, on the average, capable of launching actions that benefit from a high level of acceptability - but it has its well known rigidities. There should be openings elsewhere - a project turned down ~~on~~ place should have a chance somewhere else. One giant mechanism for universal decision-making, with evaluation criteria and procedures binding on all other levels may sound efficient and just, but it also becomes one giant mechanism for replicating the same mistakes, and perpetuating the same antiquated paradigms. The short history of TA so far should make us modest and sceptical of any claims to have found the formula for the future - including the formulas suggested in the present paper. Diversity should be cultivated but so should democracy: a group of rich people in rich countries deciding over projects affecting poor people in poor countries essentially belongs to another century. To this, then, it may be objected that it will not help that much to include rich people from poor countries in the decision-making, which is true. But this problem can be attacked, gradually evolving more representative patterns, eg., by involving people from the local levels who have been affected by similar projects earlier, and for that reason possess invaluable experience.

Second, if assistance is to be two-way there will also be developmental projects in today's rich countries, of course in the closest possible cooperation with the country's machinery for domestic development - in parallel with the patterns for developing countries. There will have to be a mechanism handling such projects

where some of the resources would come from the outside, playing the same role as the UNDP office with its Resident Representative does today in developing countries. Those offices are staffed in a more universalistic fashion, certainly not only with people from the host country. There is much to learn from their experiences, including the idea of having a UN appointee as the head of the agency - at least as the formal head (to start with), something like the Governor General in Commonwealth countries. Just as the Specialized Agencies sometimes contradict each other (in the sense that one may promote what the other turns down), diversity to the point of contradictions could be even encouraged in a system of the type envisaged here, where, in practice, each country would have an agency for international development cooperation, attached to the UN system but with a high level of autonomy, concerned with the development of humankind all over the world, but particularly with projects located in that country, or drawing on resources from the country. Direct ties between two such agencies might serve to make "bilateral aid" more meaningful, and more easy to handle from the point of view of the recipient country.²⁶⁾

But the basic point would be some kind of shared concern for the fate of human beings everywhere, and the conviction that human experience somewhere else, and resources from the outside, may be useful provided

- all countries make full use of their own resources, both in stating goals and in mobilizing the means, and
- the whole pattern is reasonably symmetric, with no country being donor only, and no country being recipient only - everybody having something to offer, everybody having the need to receive something.

This, then, is seen as the true content of self-reliance. It is not self-sufficiency in the sense of closing oneself off from the environment, although the capacity for doing so may be indispensable, especially in matters of food and security. Withdrawal from a system of dependence and penetration, to regain one's own bearings may also be indispensable, for a shorter period. But a really self-reliant country will have enough self-confidence to enter into this type of cooperation.

(4) Increased globalization. By "globalization" is meant a pattern whereby global institutions are emerging, catering to the world and humankind as a whole.²⁷⁾ They would be based on concepts of "common heritage of mankind", perhaps extending that concept so as to include both rights and duties. The best known example today is the idea of an international seabed, or ocean regime; but the idea can be extended in at least three directions that partly overlap.

First, there is the idea of a global administration of the world's "commons": the ocean floor outside national territorial limits and below; the "superjacent" water column and above; outer space including celestial bodies; the polar regions. And then there are the much more controversial ones: unpopulated areas under national jurisdiction; natural resources of any kind; sites of national beauty; treasures of cultural achievement where already today it is quite clear that the national sovereignty in fact is contested. Thus, there are protests from all over the world if a state uses territory for, say, weapons tests that render the territory useless (even if there is no danger to neighboring states). There are increasing protests in an ecologically more conscious world when signs of exceptionally, and avoidable, bad householding of natural resources are emanating from within national territories, depletion and pollution increasingly being the concern of everybody. And although a country might have the right to destroy sites of beauty (eg., a wonderfully shaped waterfall) or cultural treasures (eg., old monuments) because they stand in the way of economic growth, that right seems to be increasingly disputed, and not only by the country's own residents. In other words, there seems to be an increasing feeling that more and more of nature and human achievement belong to humankind as a whole, and that the state within which they happen to be located or to have been produced is a trustee on behalf of humankind, nothing more, nothing less - not an owner with unlimited rights. Most importantly, this also extends to the citizens: the state has a right to punish, but there are limits, and when these are overstepped (as in the case of torture) the protests are forthcoming.

Second, there is the basic needs approach in a global perspective. If we depart from the emerging point of view that every human being born has as his or her birthright, simply by virtue of being a human, the right (not only the need) to adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical service and schooling - possibly

also some others - then this has a number of consequences. Thus, it sets a clear priority: resources first have to be used for this purpose, then - when those needs are met on a sustained basis - resources could be used for non-basic needs. But, given the asymmetries in the world economic geography, this will sooner or later have implications for the right of a nation to dispose freely of the resources within its own borders. One thing is to argue, as is done today, that every country should be sufficiently in control of its own resources to be able to give first priority to meeting the basic needs for its own citizens; quite a different point is to globalize this concern and argue that countries have a limited right to use their resources (particularly soil) for luxury consumption when basic needs are not met in other countries, and there are ways in which this could have been done with those resources.

At this point the objection is that the prices would be prohibitive, which is true given the way "modern" production and distribution, including the possibilities of monopolies/oligopolies to fix prices, will tend to increase the unit price (to the consumer). Consequently, a third important consequence of the principle of globalizing the basic needs approach would be, gradually, to take the basic needs satisfiers out of the commodity market. In most countries today this is done for schooling (which is free to the extent that it is compulsory, meaning primary level and in some cases beyond); in socialist countries the same applies to many or most health services; and in times of distress and emergency the same also applies to the other three. Moreover, transportation/communication is subsidized in many countries to be accessible to all, and not run on a market basis which would distribute the access too unevenly.

Third, there is the idea of globalizing some of the transnational corporations. This is not the place to get into detail but the idea is very simple: do the same for certain transnational companies as was done for some private national companies earlier in this century (and in the nineteenth century), nationalization, in many countries. Clearly, the criteria would usually have to be non-economic if by "economic" is meant the ability to survive under market conditions (we do not say "free" market conditions, given the monopolistic/oligopolistic tendencies). One criterion

might be that the corporation is actually dealing in satisfiers of basic needs or at least potentially so, like the pharmaceuticals (actually) or the food corporations (potentially, since their products often have the character of being luxury items). Another criterion might be that the corporation is infracting codes of conduct, quickly emerging, although they are often so soft that they are easily circumvented. And then, closely related to this would be the idea of creating global corporations, catering to the basic needs of humankind that behave in an ecologically responsible manner.

These three aspects of increasing globalization overlap in the idea of establishing global corporations, operating on the world commons, for the purpose of meeting basic needs. The types of international seabed regimes currently contemplated satisfy criteria nos. 1 and 3 - more or less - but not no. 2. It is not enough to hope that if the proceeds from deep sea mining accrue to poor nations, then they will be, predominantly, used, to meet the basic needs of poor people.²⁸⁾ Rather, an international ocean food corporation, focussing on how to produce cheap protein for everybody, would meet the criterion, which is a strict one: in fact meeting the basic needs of the most needy. If nodules were edible, usable for clothing and shelter, had medical or educational value, everything would have been simpler from this point of view. The situation being as it is, the channels of conversion are both circuitous and add to the final price of a consumable basic need satisfier.

The basic point in this connection, however, is how this is related to patterns of international cooperation. No imagination is needed to imagine enormous, world-encompassing bureaucracies, related to the UN system one way or the other to undertake such giant tasks - eg., a world protein household program, to mention only one. Some of this centralization is probably necessary to overcome some of the inequalities created when even what is needed for survival is exposed to the gradient created by a world market economy, meaning that resources flow there the demand is articulated in monetary terms, not where the need is. But a pattern of decentralization is equally indispensable. And this is where the agencies of international cooperation enter the picture: as the local administrators of these tasks. The point made above, that this should have a basic needs orientation, be a two-way street, with shared decision-making are highly compatible with everything said under the heading of "globalization".

5. Conclusion.

Thus, there is no scarcity of possible tasks under a program of international development cooperation. What is needed is not only to learn from the errors of the past and to exercise a little imagination with regard to the future - but also to be sensitive to the general trends in contemporary history. Just as true as the statement "the TA of the early 1950s is outmoded today" is the statement "international development cooperation would not have worked in the early 1950s". However, the international development agencies enjoying a certain autonomy within the governmental structures of at least the smaller donor countries could run the risk of being somewhat ahead of the general trend, particularly if good contacts with the more progressive developing countries are well established. There are some risks associated with this. But if they continue with the old patterns, there is not even a question of risk-taking: they will quickly recede into the oblivion institutions that fail to understand basic social processes so well deserve .

N O T E S

* The present paper is prepared for the Canadian International Development Agency, and I am indebted to Charles A. Jeanneret for encouraging me to undertake this particular assignment.

1. For an exposition of "the Western conception of the world", see Johan Galtung, Tore Heiestad and Erik Rudeng, "On the Last 2500 Years in Western History, And Some Remarks On the Coming 500", The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol.13, ch.13 (forthcoming 1978). For a short version, see Johan Galtung, Development, Environment, Technology, UNCTAD, Geneva, 1977, ch.1.
2. Statistically, this focusses attention on the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and Canada - no doubt among the most eager donors of TA today.
3. Thus, according to the interesting summary of remarks of the speakers at the 47th Quaker International Conference, Yvoire, France 23-25 September 1976 on "What Progress on the New International Economic Order" it looks as if a Norwegian undersecretary of state, Mr. Stoltenberg, sees a special role for Norway because there are some similarities between "the emergence /in Norway /of strong trade unions and the strengthening of the labour movement which created the new centre of power necessary for change to occur". The danger with this kind of analogy is, of course, that it may lead to the wrong policies when the situations turn out to be less parallel. Thus, Norwegian elites were certainly not so strong during the period of "free" capitalism as the world capitalist elites of today, and there was also a sense of community lacking in the world as a whole. At any rate, Norway shares this kind of experience with many other countries in the world.
4. Hence the competition among donor countries for Third world students in engineering: those who do not stay over and become brain-drained can serve as articulators of orders from the "donor" country.
5. Of covert processes there were many, however, and they are gradually coming to the surface. What has clearly been transmitted through CIA, KGB and similar agencies has been repression techniques - particularly against those who try to expose and change exploitative patterns within and between countries.
6. At this point classical climatological and racial theories will always be lurking in the background, sometimes in the foreground. Of course, climate is an important factor, particularly when the idea is to transplant life styles developed under other climates. Race seems to be unimportant but culture not, and as cultures are correlated with race for historical reasons, cultural differences are often seen as racial differences.

7. The joint interest of the rich countries and the rich in the poor countries in not having to contend with too large, hungry, and possibly very angry masses of poor people in the poor countries is only too obvious, and the genocidal aspects of such practices will probably figure more prominently in the TA debate in years to come. For one thing: to eliminate people is an obvious concomitant of an increasingly capital- and research-intensive technology. A more labor- and creativity-intensive technology would preserve and treat human beings better - and this seems to be the crux of the matter. Thus, the family planners become the little helpers of a very particular way of organizing human affairs.

8. For one example, by the present author, see "Development From Above and The Blue Revolution: The Indo-Norwegian Project in Kerala", Essays in Peace Research, Vol. V, ch.12, Ejlers, Copenhagen, 1978. A short version appeared in CERES, 1975.

9. This theme is elaborated in Johan Galtung, "Literacy, Education, Schooling - For What?", Papers, Chair in Conflict and Peace Research, University of Oslo, no.56 - originally prepared for the Persepolis Symposium on Literacy, September 1975.

10. This is elaborated in Johan Galtung, "Notes on Technical Assistance With Special Reference to the Indo-Norwegian Project in Kerala", Essays in Peace Research, Vol. IV, ch. 16, Ejlers, Copenhagen, 1978.

11. Thus, TA is to international relations what a school is to intra-national relations: a mechanism through which one generation tries to make a firm imprint on the next generation, "bringing it up" (to become similar to oneself).

12. The data, frequently quoted, are from the 1975 Review - Development Cooperation by the OECD. ODA was \$ 15 billion in 1974 or 0,33% of the GNP of the donor countries, with Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands as overachievers and Switzerland (0.14%), the USA (0.25%), Germany (0.37%), Japan (0.25%) the UK (0.38%) and France (0.59%) as underachievers relative to the UN goals for DDI and DDII, 0,7%.

13. It should be remembered that a good bureaucrat is one who spends the money allocated, and only that, before the end of the budget year.

14. See "Conclusion", "Self-reliance and Global Interdependence: Some Reflections on the "New International Economic Order""; Papers, Chair in Conflict and Peace Research, University of Oslo, No.55.

15. For an example of this kind of thinking, see Elteto, O. and Frigges, E., "New Income Inequality Measures as Efficient Tools for Causal Analysis and Planning", Econometrica, 1968, pp.383-396.

16. Which, of course, is one approach and one reason why such practices have been engaged in, under various guises.

17. It should be noted how this directs TA towards the cities, and hence towards the very same people who, according to the first line of reasoning above, would be less inclined to let the poor rural population get control over the factors of production.

18. The present list is based on relatively systematic conversations with a number of TA officials in several of the donor countries.

19. For a very comprehensive analysis and presentation, see Godfrey Boyle and Peter Harper, eds., Radical Technology, London, 1976.

20. In fact, this was more or less what happened in the Norwegian TA project to the fishing villages in Kerala, India - see the essays referred to in footnote 8 and 10.

21. For an exposition of self-reliance, see Galtung, O'Brien, Preiswerk, eds., Self-Reliance, George, Lausanne, 1977.

22. Where there is no diversity, only implementations of the same model, exchanges will be structured by the "who knows more and who knows less", and "who has more and who has less" dimensions - the former leading to a master-pupil relation, the latter possibly to a donor-recipient relation.

23. This is inspired by the definition of the role of the patient given by Talcott Parsons in The Social System, Free Press, Glencole, 1951 - ch.X.

24. I am indebted to Richard Jolly for this particular suggestion.

25. In a paper to the SID-European Regional Conference, Linz, 15-17 September 1975 the SID Italian Chapter presented a paper "Observations on World Structures and Assistance to Developing Countries", pointing out how the large consulting firms contribute to making plans for highly capital-intensive projects. The role of these firms has probably been seriously understudied.

26. Needless to say, in the beginning the rich countries will have to foot most of the bill for a system of this kind, as they have done for the UN.

27. For more details on this topic, see Johan Galtung, The True Worlds, A Transnational Perspective, New York, 1977, chapters 7 and 8.

28. For an elaboration of this, see Johan Galtung, "Human Needs, National Interests and World Politics: The Law of the Sea Conference", Essays in Peace Research, Vol. V, ch. 13, Ejlers, Copenhagen, 1978.