Planning Rituals

PLANNING PROCESSES IN
THE DUTCH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Jacob de Smit

Delft University Press
Most of the planning that I have seen in about 250 American and foreign corporations is like a ritual rain dance performed at the end of the dry season to which any rain that follows is attributed. Rain dancing has no effect on the weather even though it may have therapeutic effects on the dancers. Despite this, I find that as so-called professional planner I'm repeatedly asked to help improve corporate dancing, not to help control the weather.

Russell L. Ackoff
Planning Rituals

The Development of a Planning Process for the Dutch University System

an inquiry into interorganizational metaplanning practices

Jacob de Smit

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to
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FOREWORD

This book reviews the planning process of the Dutch Universities and the Ministry of Education and Sciences as it developed during the seventies. It provides a case-study in interorganizational planning together with an attempt to contribute to the development of planning theory. The book is founded on a research effort in which the author participated during from 1976 until 1979 in the planning process as described. The research resulted in a more extensive report which was published as a Ph.D. dissertation. This book is a condensed and adapted version of this dissertation. Although describing a typical Dutch and rather unique case, it is my intention to provide sufficient insights from this case for more general use. In particular scholars and practitioners in planning and policy-making might find some use for this text.

Preparation of the book started in June 1975 with the preparation of a research proposal. The main research effort consisted of participating in joint committees of the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the Universities like the Advisory Group on Planning (A.G.P.). Secondary the meetings of the Permanent Planning Committee (P.P.C.) of the Academic Council (A.R.) were attended by the author as an observer. The openness and cooperation of both civil servants of the Ministry and board members as well as professional planners of the Universities was crucial in the work which resulted in this book. I hope that the outcome will contribute to their continuous efforts to reshape the planning process for the Dutch University System.

The state of the Dutch economy of the moment indicates that the universities will have to face crucial decisions. Therefore a well designed planning process is of utmost importance. This book gives some idea of how far we are with the development of such a process.

Bergschenhoek, October 1981.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since this book is a consequence of a piece of real-life research, many ideas and facts contained in it were generated with the help of others.

The closest working relationship was with the Ministry of Education and Sciences. Therefore my first acknowledgements must go to the people of the Ministry. In particular the Underminister Dr. Ger Klein, who sponsored this project, the Director-General Dr. Gottfried Leibbrandt and the Chairman of the Advisory Group on Planning Jack Hoffman must be noted for allowing me to participate in the planning process and to see the inner workings of the Ministry.

The Advisory Group on Planning was perhaps the most important single source for this work and each member of this group, therefore, in one way or the other made important contributions. The secretary of this group, the head of the Planning Coordination Unit of the Ministry, Jaap Cuperus, was my main liaison with the Ministry. His comments and help have been not only valuable and deeply appreciated, but also led to a mutual relationship and understanding which goes beyond the traditional client/researcher relation.

The Permanent Planning Committee of the Academic Council must be thanked for allowing me to sit in on their meetings.

Students and staff of the Social Systems Sciences Unit of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania provided me with stimuli and criticisms which I experienced as most helpful. My supervisor Dr. Russell L. Ackoff stimulated me in his own unique way. Without him this work might not have started and the emphasis on a client-relationship would certainly have been much less. I am thankful for his guidance. Dr. Thomas A. Cowan must be noted not only for reading and commenting upon the manuscript, but also for the stimuli he provided.

The contributions made by Dr. George Calhoun, Dr. Wladimir Sachs, Paul Broholm, and Chris Chacona were important, because they provided lots of collegial criticism and help.

The Graduate School of Management at Delft, the Netherlands, provided the necessary resources and formed my working environment. Its staff must be thanked for the assistance they provided in the past five years. In particular Wil Sommeling must be thanked for a beautiful typing job, and Frans Schmitz for helping out with the figures and tables.

Finally, my wife, Elly, and my two girls Diane and Marie-Louise must be thanked for the numerous little and large sacrifices they made in order to support me in conducting the work that led to this book.
1. PURPOSE AND METHOD

The academic executive and all his works are anathema, and should be discontinued by the simple expedient of wiping him off the slate; and the governing board, in so far as it presumes to exercise any other than vacantly perfunctory duties, has the same value and should be lost in the same shuffle.

Thorstein Veblen

The subject of this book is a peculiarly complex one. It is the planning of planning or to put it shorter meta-planning. I intend to examine the process by which Dutch governmental and educational authorities developed a large-scale planning effort for the university system of the country.

The story of this effort, sustained throughout the entire decade of the seventies and continuing into the eighties, is a fascinating one. It shows many pitfalls, failures and complications, which is most characteristic of real-life policy-making and planning. I shall endeavor to tell that story as succinctly as the complex nature of the subject permits. What enfolds is a vista in which educational planning exfoliates into an effort to develop this planning process, an effort to plan this planning. No explicit effort was made to differentiate planning from meta-planning. However, just as planning for education is different from planning for war, I work on the supposition, that in order to plan educational planning, the two aspects of planning must first be separated conceptually, even though ideally planning and meta-planning should merge in an indistinguishable whole.

To my knowledge, the subject of meta-planning is a new one, though the activity of meta-planning can be considered to be as old as planning itself. Hence, it is hardly surprising that the participants in the planning process of the Dutch University System (both the professional planners of the universities and the Ministry as well as others) failed to realize that as their planning process developed, the process of development itself, the meta-planning, became the critical problem, as becomes clear from the analysis of this process.

Members of academic communities all over the world tend to be averse to the idea of planning as applied to universities and academic work. This is mostly because they see planning as variety-decreasing and therefore as a threat to the traditional value of academic freedom. Every effort to improve planning in university-systems faces serious difficulties. The Dutch University System with its classical orientation is no exception. Fear of governmental control and belief in the necessity of autonomy, together with the need for government funding, create an atmosphere in which talking about planning is difficult and therefore challenging.

Planning is an attempt to influence behavior. As in all such situations, the principle formulated by Conant and Ashby (1970), can be applied: someone who tries to
effectively influence (and therefore to regulate) the behavior of a system must have a model of that system. Such an interventionist must have a thorough knowledge of the workings of the system. At the same time we must realize that this same principle provides an argument for participation in planning and in the design of planning processes, since all participants combined, might have a more perfect model.

This book reports on the way in which people in the Dutch university system developed the planning process. At the same time it provides an opportunity for me, as a participant, to put forward ideas about probable and desirable future development of those processes. Lastly it intends to provide some ideas about ways of looking at those processes, and to contribute to the development of a conceptual framework for analyzing and describing planning processes.

1.1. Aims of the Research

The problems, that the Dutch university system is facing by developing and sustaining an effective planning process provide the basic reason for the research on which this book is founded.

The thesis put forward is that the Dutch University System shows a chronic inability to adequately determine its own future, i.e. to engage in effective planning. A first aim of the research was to give an explanation of this inability. A second aim was to show that the important changes in the planning process that took place in the seventies did not change this inability (see Chapter 5). The research intended also to provide guidelines for further development of the planning process, thus solving the system's problem, or at least making a contribution towards this end.

Why is this systems problem interesting from the perspective of planning theory? The problem is different and unique through a number of properties, each of which by themselves are not so. The system shows both the characteristics of an interorganizational network and a system which is instrumental to a larger whole. As such it shares only part of the characteristics of the towns\(^3\) in England, which served as the focus for the extensive research on interorganizational planning as conducted by the Tavistock Institute (see Stringer, 1967, and Friend, Power, Yewlett, 1974). The meta-planning perspective on this system allows for contribution to the development of the planning theory. On the other hand, this system's problem is sufficiently general to be of interest for anyone who studies planning. The Dutch University System shares a number of characteristics with many other organizations; the politics involved, the power games and the bureaucratic behavior of its parts. Therefore what is learned from this research will be useful in many situations. The theoretical aim, then, is to increase the effectiveness with which we analyse, understand and improve the planning processes in this type of organizations.
These overall aims are pursued by four related sets of activities:

- A historical analysis of the planning process of the Dutch University System describes and explains the major events and changes which took place.
- The development and expansion of a conceptual framework for planning makes such analysis possible and fruitful and helps in designing possible future interventions.
- An evaluation of the major changes which were implemented in the planning process in the last five years demonstrates the lack of progress.
- Recommendations for future changes show what can be done in order to establish effective planning.

The main object of study which is reflected in this book, is not the university system, but the planning process of this system, the way in which the planning process of the Dutch University System is structured, changed and developed. It is in this sense an essay in meta-planning.

1.2. Method

My empirical research consisted in documenting the history of the planning process of the Dutch University System since 1970, and participating in and directly observing the development of that planning process since 1976. Thus, it is a case study covering the period from 1970 to 1979, while interventions were only made from 1976 to 1979.

This empirical material makes it possible to contribute to the development of a conceptual and theoretical framework for planning by adapting conceptual models from decision theory and theories of decision-making processes to a conceptual framework, applicable to the situation in which multiple actors wrestle with systems of problems, which is the situation characteristic for planning.

While documenting the planning process of the Dutch University System, I noted that this process demonstrated a "natural" tendency to evolve towards the ideal of proactive planning (see Ackoff, 1974). Since the analysis shows how this evolution is the result of changes in the environment without any designed intervention based on proposals of the participants, it indicates the usefulness of proactive planning in turbulent environments.

Finally I show that the changes in planning did not result in major changes in the system as a whole, and I reflect upon other necessary changes that would have to take place.

From April, 1976, until February, 1979, I worked with the Ministry of Education and Sciences as an advisor on planning. The Ministry paid about $70,000 for this, so when I started my work I had great expectations about potential interventions. As it
turned out, I had to reconsider some of them.

First of all, I joined a bandwagon. I was not asked to come in and design a new route to be taken; rather I came in at a moment when the failure to implement the McKinsey proposals had left its mark in a variety of ways. In my opinion a number of ideas and concepts about planning were by mutual consent defined as taboo, such as the notion of planning by discipline. In the carefully worked-out agreement of the various participants, there was very little room for radical new ideas or changes.

Secondly, before designing any intervention, I felt the need to understand and appraise the situation. This part of a planning process (system analysis, formulation of the mess) tends in my view to be underestimated by inexperienced planners such as I was. In particular, in complex situations like this one, and especially because I had to work on my own and part time, this part of the job required a couple of years, thereby delaying any potential large scale interventions.

Thirdly, the absence of a hierarchical superstructure made any decision about changing the planning process a negotiated agreement between the power groups. I had no power base and could only participate on the basis of knowledge and ideas.

This all resulted in a low keyed but continuous intervention. I took part in the meetings of the most central group, the Advisory Group on Planning (Advies Groep Planning or AGP), which met every two weeks. In both the meetings and the preparation of the meetings of this group, I could participate as a full member (taking into account my lack of a power base). This role also provided me with access to documents, people and the meetings of other groups (as an observer).

This participative observation allowed me to interpret the various events and to make an evaluative description of the planning process (see De Smit, 1981).

My work was focused on the way the planning process was changed. This implies that I took part in the "adjustment" process in 1976, although at that time I knew little about the historical commitments. I took an active part in the design of the major change of the planning process leading to the first multi-year agreements as well as the specification of the guidelines for the development plans, which were supposed to be the stepping stones towards these multi-year agreements. Once this process was on its way I became more of an observer until the summer of 1978, when I was actively involved in the design of the planning process for the next planning cycles.

I decided to stop my involvement after the first planning cycle had been completed at interuniversity level by signing the multi-year agreements, and after the formal decisions about the structuring of the planning process for the next planning cycles had taken place in February, 1979.

Parallel to my empirical work, the description of the conceptual model was refined and tested by my attempts to understand and explain the various events that took place. This conceptual work tries to build on the basis for the study of decision-
making as developed by Ackoff (1972), Ackoff (1975) and the subsequent work of Calhoun, Chacona and De Smit (1976). It starts from the recognition of ends and means as relative concepts, implying that every means is an also end and every end is also a means. The consequences of this perspective on planning (seen as systems of decision-makers dealing with systems of decisions) are further explored. On this part it became clear to me that a dissertation is a beginning and not the end of one's occupation with theory building.

In view of the normative aspects of research on planning, I can improve the controllability of this research by making my values and world-view ("Weltanschauung") explicit insofar it is relevant to this research. I have tried to do so in Appendix 1. I discuss there particular my views on research, planning and universities.

1.3. Overview

The description of the planning process of the Dutch University System, and the conclusions that can be drawn from that, form a summary of the system of problems inhibiting the development of an effective planning process. This evaluative case description is derived from the more extensive one which appears in the original dissertation (see De Smit, 1981).

Since the description of the planning process, which is provided in Chapter 3, requires some understanding of the Dutch University System, a very short description of this system is given in Chapter 2. Again a more elaborate description particularly of the internal structure of the Ministry and the rather typical form of the Dutch university democracy is provided in De Smit (1981).

After the formulation of the "mess" or "problematique", discussion of the conceptual framework takes place. Since in practice the development of this and the analysis which led to the formulation of the "mess" took place simultaneously and interactively, there is no real argument for any particular sequence. However, presenting the conceptual material in Chapter 4 allows me to draw some illustrations with empirical material derived from the historical analysis.

Chapter 5 concentrates on the effort to evaluate the major changes which have taken place in the planning process in the last couple of years. It starts by identifying those changes. Consequently I develop a procedure for evaluating the impact that the "improved" planning has had upon the university system. Finally both the results of applying this procedure and its limitations are discussed in the last sections of this chapter.

The results of this evaluation show that although the changes in the planning process were substantial and implementation of those changes required lots of time and manpower, the impact on the system was virtually nil, or at least not measurable by my procedure. This might be due either to the procedure itself or to the presence of some
very basic problems either with the planning process or with the system itself. Since the analysis of Chapter 2 and 3 and the conceptual material in Chapter 4 tend to point to some of those basic problems, this dissertation reports on attempts to improve the planning of the universities in the Netherlands which were a failure.

Failures, however, form the basis for learning and the development of new knowledge. This report therefore concludes by making recommendations about what can and should be done in order to make the planning of the Dutch University System more effective.
2. THE DUTCH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.

John Dewey

There is an old and honourable university tradition in the Netherlands. The Dutch have a deep belief in academic freedom from interference from the church and state. Financially, of course, the universities are now dependent on the state. Moreover the state has been finding the financing of the universities more of a burden since the rapid increase in student numbers during the 60's and 70's when the percentage of each cohort entering university increased from about 3 to 12. In the current economic climate cut backs are the order of the day. The universities are resisting and government delves deeper into the internals of university affairs, a very tempting move as so much of academic life is regulated by statute. Ministers of Education have been trying for a decade to revise the statutes with little success until now, although capitulation looms on the nearby horizon. For an Anglo-American there is a strange anomaly here in the Dutch insistence on individual freedom and the extent of regulation. Indeed there is now a proposal to introduce a clause in the Academic Statute guaranteeing the universities their academic freedom!

There is also an old academic tradition in the Netherlands from Erasmus, Huyghens, Spinoza, Stevin and Boerhaave in the 17th century to the mathematician Brouwer, the physicist Lorenz, the chemist van 't Hoff, the biologist Nico Tinbergen and his brother, Jan, the economist in this century. In economics the Netherlands have exported much talent to the U.S.A., resulting in losses such as Koopmans, Houthakker and Theil. Each field has its handful of people internationally recognised within their own field, but the brilliance required for general academic acclaim seems temporarily to be lacking.

The peculiarities of the Dutch society are reflected in the structure of the university system. The Dutch find themselves on an interface between the Germanic, French and Anglo-American traditions. They are not at home in any one of these traditions and are hardly numerous enough to forge out an independent tradition, although they sometimes manage to bring across ideas from one tradition to another.

The whole society exists upon three 'pillars' of different faiths: the Roman Catholics, the Protestants and the Socialists. Political parties, labor unions, broadcasting companies who time-share the radio and television channels, schools, banks, businesses and the universities mostly have affiliations to a religion or to the 'state'. The influence of religion and in particular a Calvinistic attitude are everywhere to be felt.
2.1. The System

Post-secondary education in the Netherlands is provided by two types of institutions: universities (universiteiten en hogescholen) and colleges or HBO schools (Hogere Beroeps Opleidingen). Universities provide "academic" education and colleges provide occupational education (vocational or professional). The two types are quite distinct in their aims, functions, organization and financing.

The Dutch University System comprises thirteen universities, (plus a number of university institutes and academic hospitals), a number of interuniversity coordinative bodies coordinated by the Academic Council and the National Government, in particular the Ministry of Education and Sciences, together with some joint consultative bodies, which were created by the Ministry and the universities (see Figure 1).

Although my main focus is on the relations between the three main subsystems of the university system (as reflected in the consultative bodies of the planning structure) I will briefly discuss each of the subsystems, after discussing the function that the system as a whole has in the Dutch society.

![Figure 1. The Dutch University System](image)

2.2. The Role of the University System

The three principal perspectives that shaped the present role of the universities in the Netherlands are to be found in medieval, nineteenth century and twentieth century thinking about the function and nature of a university.

The medieval focus on professional training, the nineteenth century emphasis on academic freedom, and the twentieth century concern for service to the society are reflected in the University Education Act of 1960. This Act specifies the role that the university is supposed to fulfil.

The responsibility for regulating education and science as well as funding lies with the Minister of Education and Sciences. The responsibility for governance and funds lies with the universities, whereas the schools (or faculties) are responsible for
education and research. There is an extensive Academic Statute (with the status of a law), which regulates the schools, that are allowed to exist, the degrees that may be granted, qualifications required to study in those schools and examinations that must be passed to obtain a degree. The level of detail is such that in most cases this could be regulated by a university-senate or a faculty-board in the Anglo-American context. The objectives of the university as prescribed in the law are more or less commonly shared by the people within both the universities and the Ministry.

The most traditional role of the university system is providing education. It implies reproduction, renewal, and extension of the intellectual resources of the country. The university system is not politically active in the Dutch society, nor is it influential in producing innovations. Research is seldom directed to real-life problems. Grant research as well as contract research account for only a small proportion of the total research activities. Therefore there are few incentives for the production of research outputs which are considered to be useful by others than the researcher.

2.3. The Government and the Ministry

The country is governed by a Cabinet (headed by a prime-minister) consisting of 16 ministers. Each has a specific responsibility to Parliament. The Minister of Education and Sciences has the main responsibility for education. He is supported by two Underministers who each have their own responsibility to Parliament. It is not uncommon that the areas of responsibility between Minister and Underminister change in successive Cabinets.

![Organizational Chart](image-url)

Figure 2. Organization of the Ministry of Education and Sciences, August, 1978.
Beneath the political superstructure, the division of responsibilities in the Ministry of Education and Sciences is more stable. Its structure is based on traditional principles of staff and line. The highest civil servant is the Secretary-General. Under him we find a number of staff units (about twelve) and five line units called Directorates-General: Primary Education; Secondary Education; Higher Education and Scientific Research; Inspection of Education; and Science Policy (see Figure 2).

There are two potential problem-areas with respect to the structure of the organization: first, the relation of the structure to the division of responsibilities among ministers and under-ministers; second, the relation of the structure to the task it is supposed to perform (see De Smit, 1981).

Given the prerogative of the Minister to redistribute responsibility as he wishes, disputes over the boundaries of responsibility remain a likely possibility.

The present organization of the Ministry is the product of a series of events which occurred between 1972 and 1975. The result is a remarkable example of organizational development not very well designed for its present tasks as becomes clear from a brief review of those events.

A need for an improved planning process for higher education and scientific research was perceived in 1969, and the international management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, Inc. was commissioned to undertake a planning development project. Their report was presented in November, 1970. Subsequently McKinsey was given an assignment for the redesign of the organization of the Ministry of Education and Sciences. A basic assumption was that the organization of the Ministry should be complementary to the previously proposed planning structure. On the basis of McKinsey's proposal (McKinsey, November, 1972, "Implications of the Planning Structure of Post-Secondary Education for the Ministry") the Ministry began to engage in a process of change and the discussion of the implementation of the proposed planning structure started.

At the beginning of 1974 a change in government resulted in a change in the Minister and Under-ministers of Education and Sciences. The post, previously almost always occupied by a Christian-Democrat, was for the first time occupied by a Labor Party member. This change coincided with firm resistance from the universities towards the McKinsey proposal for the development of the planning process. The new Under-minister rejected the basic ideas of the McKinsey proposal and started the development of the current planning process in 1974. At the same time, the implementation of the reorganization of the Ministry proposed by McKinsey was near to completion, including a number of high level appointments of new civil servants in line with the proposal (see McKinsey, November, 1974).

So although the McKinsey planning structure was rejected and not implemented, its complement, the organization of the Ministry was implemented. The consequence
has been that the present organizational structure of the Ministry does not match the
task of planning. In particular this can be said for the Directorate-General for Higher
Education and Scientific Research (see Hoffman, 1981). This mismatch has resulted in
numerous frictions and malfunctions as well as the overload at the top of that Direc-
torate-General.

Responsible for supporting the Minister on matters regarding higher education is
the Directorate-General of Higher Education and Scientific Research (see Figure 3).

This Directorate-General performs a variety of functions. First, it allocates 99%
of the money used by the universities. Second, it provides guidelines for the organiza-
tion and conduct of higher education, in the form of laws proposed to Parliament and
specific guidelines within the framework of the law. Third, it prepares a budget request
to Parliament. Fourth, it must approve decisions of the universities with respect to
their appointment of high level personnel, administrative structure, building programs,
and important educational changes.

Two sets of problems arise out of the organizational structure of the Directo-
rate-General. The division of responsibilities is not consistent with its tasks. There is an
overlap of responsibilities and there are many unclear relations and ambiguities (see De

2.4. The Universities

There are thirteen universities in the Netherlands, which spent in 1979 1.8 billion
dollars 4). (For overall data see Table 1.)
TABLE 1
OVERALL DATA ON THE DUTCH UNIVERSITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1983</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 universities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students</td>
<td>124,750</td>
<td>137,000</td>
<td>172,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- inflow</td>
<td>21,787</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>29,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- degrees</td>
<td>10,228</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Staff</td>
<td>36,400</td>
<td>35,360</td>
<td>35,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- academic</td>
<td>17,600</td>
<td>16,700</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- other</td>
<td>18,800</td>
<td>18,600</td>
<td>18,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Budget (in mill.$)</td>
<td>1,575</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>1,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- personnel</td>
<td>1,215</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>1,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- other</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The university degree requires a nominal duration of study of 5 and 6 years and an average duration of study of 7 or 8 years. Drop-out rates are high in comparison to American universities (see Phillips, 1977). All universities and all professors are perceived to be equally qualified. Professors of the same rank receive the same income independent of discipline or university.

Data about the total number of scientific personnel in the university are not available. Universities claim that as a result of their autonomy they need not present to the government data about personnel whom they appoint.

In the Netherlands universities are not permitted to select students. In principle those students who have the appropriate diploma may enter any academic program at a university of their choice. With growing student numbers, fluctuating student interests and fixed budgets, the consequence is that some schools, such as engineering, can easily accommodate more students, while others are overcrowded. For those disciplines where there are simply too many students to maintain good education, the Minister can create a numerus fixus meaning a maximum number of available student-positions. He can also recognize "threatened disciplines" for which subsequently placement committees are created. This placement means that a student (given a choice of discipline) cannot always study at the university of his choice. The law requires that the Academic Council annually recommend to the Minister and Parliament the number and nature of numeri fixi to be installed. For the academic year 1980-81 there will be eight disciplines where the numbers of student places will be limited to a prearranged number. Those will be: Medicine, Animal Medicine, Dentistry, Social Medicine, Biology, Pharmacy, Physical Training and Agriculture. Obviously the decision to create a "numerus fixus" depends not only on student numbers but also on facilities like buildings, acceptable teaching load, acceptable time allowance for university governance,
minimum time necessary for research. For 1979 there was the expectation and creation of 13 numeri fixi, although in 1978 only three were really in effect.

Each university consists of a number of faculties ("faculteiten"). Each faculty or school is autonomous in making decisions with respect to education and research. The university is responsible for such items as facilities and payroll. Interuniversity consultation and coordination takes place in the Academic Council. In view of the planning process the most important committee of the Academic Council is the Permanent Planning Committee ("Permanente Planning Commissie or P.P.C."). This committee consists of University Board members (those responsible for planning) of each university together with the heads of the planning bureau of each university (the professional planners).

2.5. University Governance and Democracy

Democracy, in the forms we know it, has its basis in two important ideas. The first is the idea of the nation-state. This idea indicates that every group which can be considered, on the basis of geographical, ethnical, or other criteria, as a nation should be organized as a whole and exercise control over itself. The second idea starts from the first by asking the question: Given a nation state, who grants the power to govern, who possesses the ultimate authority? In the idea of "sovereignty of the people", power is legitimized only by the people of the nation. This idea is well-known from Rousseau ("contrat social") and worked out in documents like the American Constitution.

These two ideas, which form the basis for a democratic state, can also be applied to organizations. The idea of the nation-state can be transformed into the idea of the autonomous organization, the organization which is structured as a whole and controls itself. The idea of people's sovereignty can be transformed to sovereignty of the members of an organization, in this case, the university community.

Possible application of these ideas to the university creates some problems arising out of the fact that, unlike a nation-state, a university is also an instrument used by society to realise certain objectives of that society. Therefore, we see an important difference from the nation-state. In the concept of the nation-state there is no instrumentality of that nation with respect to a larger whole; in the university there is. Therefore the notion of "sovereignty of the people", which leads to a definition of stakeholders as consisting of all the inhabitants of a country, provides to narrow a basis for a definition of the stakeholders of the university. The interests of those stakeholders, who are not members of the academic community, have to be taken into account.

In the process of designing the Act of 1970 this fact was realized, but not dealt with in a satisfactory manner. No mechanisms were developed to insure that the university would serve the aims of society at large. One of the objectives of the Act was to assure the independence of the universities. The design, therefore emphasized
this independence rather than the relation between the university and its environment (see De Smit, 1981).

The Act implies four levels in the university, although only three are mentioned in it. These are the university level (summit level), the school level (intermediate level), the study group level (basic level), the individual professor and on the supra-university level, the Academic Council. (The Academic Council acts as an advisory body for the Ministers and the universities. The council makes recommendations to the central government authorities on behalf of the various universities when the need arises. The meetings of the Academic Council are open to the public.)

In the Act of 1970 the relative autonomy of schools and full professors was continued. The University Council chosen by the university community has only limited authority over the schools. At the school level, the Study Group and the full professors have independent tasks. The division of power between Faculty Council, Study Group and professor is unclear. The Faculty Council is supposed to be responsible for the curriculum as a whole; the Study Group and full professors for parts of it. But the responsibility for the whole is shared between the Faculty Council and the Examination Committee. Exams are administered by the Examination Committee which acts on its own, not on behalf of the Faculty Council. The University Council is responsible for establishing rules and regulations for operating the universities, as well as outlining the internal organization of the universities, and preparing the annual budget. The general administration at the intermediate level is carried out by the Faculty Council. (The tasks and responsibilities of this body include: The organization and coordination of education and research activities, study groups (or units) which are the main parts of each school or faculty; the establishment of faculty regulations, subject to the approval of the University Council; the establishment and administration of educational programs for all fields of study of the school; advising the Executive Committee of the University Council on the appointment of senior faculty (full professors) to the school.)


In view of the planning process a number of characteristics of this system of governance are of importance: At the intermediate level it is remarkable that the process of governance requires a joint operation of a large number of groups like administration, Faculty Board, educational committee, research committee, various study groups, examination committee. Nearly all those groups have de facto veto power. As a consequence the process of governance is characterized by negotiation between the various groups. Decision making about important issues like curriculum change, full professor appointments, research policy and so on, takes a long time, an average of 1½ to 2 years, a fact which is completely ignored and unrecognized by those who act on the supra-university level. Furthermore it is clear that in most cases the
Faculty Council has the real power with respect to allocation of resources at the school level. At the university level the process of governance differs from the lower levels by the fact that there is a greater distance between governors and those governed and that the issues at hand are more complex. Also at the university level there is a large number of actors with differing jurisdiction, the University Council and Executive Committee are the most important ones. (In most universities the University Council consists of 40 members, meets every six weeks and has a chairman who spends all his time in this job. The Executive Committee usually divides the job at hand into portfolios or "areas of concern". The law requires these two groups to rule and control the university. Also the law specifies the difference in jurisdiction; nevertheless, many disputes about this have taken place.) Out of the extensive evaluation effort of the Polak Committee (Parliament, No. 15515, 1979) it became clear that the decision making procedures at the university are regarded to be very time-consuming. Conflicts about procedure matters seem to be standard. The average duration of any decision making process at the university level about real issues is about 2 years.

Overall we see a reasonable acceptance of the structure as provided by the Act of 1970. Major changes are not likely in the next decade. Adjustments will be made at the supra-university level and at minor points. The whole governance system is not yet stabilized, which has its effect on the possibilities for creating effective planning.
3. THE PLANNING PROCESS

...the fact that planning probably has become the most frequently discussed topic in management literature does not mean that a lot of it is being done. Instead a lot of what is being done is called planning. These are two very different things.

Russell L. Ackoff

This chapter provides a summary of the description of the planning process that was made earlier (see De Smit, 1981), and identifies the various problems involved in the development of that planning process. It provides a short case-history of the planning of the Dutch University System and a summary of the system of problems which were identified in the analysis of the case. These problems provide the explanation for the chronic inability to develop effective planning as became apparent during the seventies. They also form the basis for the recommendations of Chapter 6, the basis for the formulation of what can be done in order to overcome this incapability.

My main concern will be with the planning process as it took place between universities and the Ministry. From the perspective of a university as an organization this is planning at the interorganizational level. I will give emphasis to metaplanning instead of planning (see Faludi, 1976; Van der Kwartel and De Smit, 1978), which means that I will concentrate on improving the planning agencies, their procedures, and ways of operating. The metaplanning process between Ministry and Universities is described based on my view on planning, a systems perspective and my value premisses (see Chapters 1 and 5 as well as Appendix 1). Internal planning processes either within the universities or within the Ministry are dealt with only if they influenced the overall process. The same goes for interuniversity processes in which the Ministry did not participate. I will not consider the colleges (H.B.O.), despite the fact that they participated in some of the joint planning processes.

The principal time perspective involved is that of the 1970's, since the major change in planning, which I analyze and evaluate, was prepared and implemented in the period from 1973 to 1979.

3.1. The Case-History

The main events that took place in the development of the planning process are discussed chronologically. It starts with a discussion of the need for improved planning and the mode of planning which prevailed in the late sixties. This forms the starting point for the process of change, which was supposed to improve the planning of Dutch post-secondary education:
The first main event in this process of change was the development and rejection of the McKinsey proposals. The second was the New Start of 1974 as initiated by Underminister Dr. Ger Klein. The third was the subsequent integration of planning and metaplanning activities in 1976. The first time that this improved planning process produced any plans is the fourth main event. This took place by means of signing the so-called "multi-year agreements" in September 1978.

From the perspective of analyzing the development of this planning process the last important event which was taken into account was the process by which agreement was reached about the structure of the planning process for the subsequent planning cycles in 1979 and 1980.

Obviously these events are related; they form snapshots in a stream of events, which provide the reader with a story of a process that took place over a ten year period and involved a couple of hundred of more or less active participants.

3.1.1. The Need For Improved Planning.

A number of factors contributed to the emphasis on planning for education in 1969 and the subsequent hiring of the international management consulting organization McKinsey and Company, Inc. It became fashionable in the late sixties to talk about planning, and what's more important, turbulent changes in the educational system as well as its environment demonstrated the need for planning.

The reasons for starting with post-secondary education were "purely pragmatic" as the following quotation (Parliament, No. 128, 1971) illustrates:

"In this sector planning has been most developed and the planning field here is the easiest to oversee, which increases the chances for fast implementation."

The need for planning in post-secondary education was evident in the late sixties. New academic disciplines had been developed, the number of students was booming, universities experienced an almost explosive growth, and the cost of education rose even faster.

The Minister of Education and Sciences formulated eight points of departure (Parliament, No. 128, 1971) for the development of educational planning, which still seem to have some validity:

Educational planning is a continuous process.
Educational planning is a part of policy development.
Educational planning aims at enabling policy to deal with an integrated whole of decisions.
Educational planning deals with quantitative and qualitative aspects.
Educational planning has a long term perspective.
Educational planning is comprehensive planning.
Educational planning is part of a larger whole.
Educational planning fosters effectiveness and efficiency of education.
By formulating these points the Minister provided criteria. Furthermore there was a need for planning, and planning had become fashionable. All conditions seemed to be favorable for initiating a new development in the planning of Dutch Higher Education.


The McKinsey report: "Developing Improved Planning for Postsecondary Education in the Netherlands", was submitted to the client (the Minister) in November 1970. The context in which this proposal was discussed and had to be implemented can be summarized as a Ministry in state of transition, universities in transition, and the absence of a formal planning system.

The Ministry was in a state of transition as a result of a large number of changes in staff and organization. It is doubtful whether the Ministry was fully capable of dealing effectively with the McKinsey proposals for improving the planning of Dutch post-secondary education. The universities were in the midst of one of the most fundamental changes in their history. They were in the process of implementing university democracy as required by the new law, the Act on University Governance Reform 1970, the WUB (Wet Universitaire Bestuurservorming, Parliament No. 15515, 1979). (In order to appreciate the consequences of these changes it is necessary to recollect the two forces that induced its development: on the one hand the growth of universities and cries for new, more efficient ways of university governance, on the other hand the request for democracy made by the students and younger faculty members, culminating in the student riots at Tilburg and Amsterdam in 1968.)

The McKinsey proposals defined planning as the integral process of preparing and formulating future decisions in the field of higher education. There were four points of departure:

- Planning encompasses the formulation of objectives and alternative policies, therefore, planning is defined in a broad sense.
- Planning shall be flexible and continuous. Plans and planning procedures will be updated every year.
- Planning is a joint responsibility of universities and the Minister.
- Planning should be public or transparent, that is, open to public view.

The essence of the proposed planning system was founded on: planning by academic disciplines; three interrelated planning stages; and lump-sum contracts. It was a proposal that had its roots in the idea of Planning Programming Budgeting Systems (P.P.B.S.) which had been developed earlier in the United States. Planning by discipline was founded on the idea that both the students' demand for education and society's need for graduates become manifest by academic discipline. (In fact McKinsey proposed to work with clusters of disciplines. Such a cluster was at that time called a "planning
discipline".) In order to achieve the objectives of higher education, which encompass meeting the demand for education as well as the need for graduates, planning by discipline was seen as the obvious path.

The proposed planning system required the creation of a number of new organizations. The most important of these was the National Steering Group, which was supposed to coordinate the planning process at the national level. It would be the link between Ministry and universities and function independently and with sufficient expertise.

The McKinsey proposals were never rejected; on the contrary they were approved by all parties including Parliament. Yet they simply were not implemented.

Five interrelated reasons coproduced the failure of the implementation of the McKinsey proposals:

1. The blueprint mode of meta-planning (those responsible for implementation had not been involved in the design, it was not "their baby");
2. The undoing of university democracy (it coincided with implementation of the university democracy and was at odds with it);
3. The political nature of the proposals (they reflected a distinct political choice in a multi-party political context).
4. The political changes (political turbulence resulted in lack of leadership and therefore loss of momentum);
5. The abundancy of resources (this made the need for planning not apparent to those who were supposed to implement the improved planning process).

The turning point was probably in October, 1973, when the Ministry asked for information necessary for the planning process which the universities refused to provide, causing a stalemate. Nevertheless, the complement of the McKinsey proposal, the proposal for reorganization of the Ministry, was implemented in 1974.

3.1.3. A New Start.

Two simultaneous efforts took place to develop a new approach to the planning process. As a counterforce to the National Steering Group the universities created the Permanent Planning Committee (P.P.C.) as a coordinative body for planning and planning development. The Underminister Klein had a new proposal developed by a joint committee (committee Leibbrandt) of the Ministry and the universities. He wanted the development of the planning process, the metaplanning, to be the joint responsibility of the Minister and the universities and insisted on a process mode as opposed to the development of a blueprint for the planning process (see Faludi, 1976). This joint committee developed a proposal which is the foundation of the present organization of the planning process (see Figure 4). (This proposal is the first document which refers to "contracts" between Ministry and universities. These "contracts" are later referred to
as "multi-year agreements"). However, this organization of consultative bodies and committees was (at the time) intended to deal exclusively with the development of the planning process, with metaplanning.

A hierarchy of three levels was proposed. On top there would be the main consultative body, the Planning Consultation Group (Planning Overleg Orgaan, P.O.O.). This group would have no decision making power. It would be chaired by the Minister and consist of members from the colleges and from the universities. Each university would be represented by two people (a board member and his professional planner, the head of the planning bureau. This was the same representation as in the Permanent Planning Committee of the Academic Council). The group would discuss a final consultation structure and design a process of policy preparation for planning. The group was to be installed in May, 1974. An Advisory Group for Planning (A.G.P.) would prepare the meetings of this P.O.O and coordinate specialized work, what was to be carried out by a number of task groups.

In contrast to the McKinsey proposals, this proposal did not emphasize long term planning, there was no independent National Steering Group, university plans had priority over discipline plans, the organization of the planning process was seen as a joint process of Ministry and universities, and the existing planning processes within the universities were considered to be the starting point for further incremental developments.

In accordance with a process mode of metaplanning, obtaining agreement about, winning support for, and implementing the proposal took place simultaneously. Obtaining this agreement and support took until 1976. Implementation also took consi-
derable time and progressed gradually; meanwhile the actual planning process required
the making of decisions: budgets had to be prepared and pressing issues required the
development of new policies.

It is recognized in planning theory that it is impossible to stop planning or not to
engage in planning. If planning stands for dealing with systems of decisions, it is clear
that the process of making decisions, which affect one another cannot be stopped. In
large bureaucracies (like the Ministry and the universities) this is reinforced by the
mechanistic functioning, where without any explicit order to stop, "business as usual"
based on "standard operating procedures" will continue (see Allison, 1971).

It is important to note that in these processes of planning, decision making about
"business as usual", there are tendencies towards self improvement. Civil servants who
prepare next year's budget learn from their mistakes, improve their methods, and so on.
By doing so the organization of the planning process is changed, which demonstrates the
systemic nature of planning. If planning continues to develop then metaplanning
continues to occur simultaneously. This was demonstrated most clearly with respect to
the processes of resource allocation.

At the end of 1974 Underminister Klein proposed a new method of resource
allocation based on a middle term perspective. After the universities failed to produce
an alternative method in the fall of 1975, a joint working group was created between
Ministry and planners of the universities. This group was called ATOOM, (Technical
Consultation about Resources, Administratief Technisch Overleg Over Middelen). In a
limited sense this was a participative effort, since all universities participated by
means of their planners, although the intermediate and basic levels of the universities
were not taking part. This group worked hard and produced the yearly budget for all
universities.

ATOOM worked as a non-policy group and was solely oriented to resource
allocation. Furthermore their style was to agree on results which would not differ very
much from the past results. A good result was supposed to be one on which each
member of the group agreed. (The strict orientation to resources as distinct from means
and ends denies the systemic nature of ends, means, resources and organization and is
therefore in my opinion wrong. Their style and method for agreement on good results
reflects the planning mode of disjointed incrementalism, see Lindblom, 1959.)

The professional planners became more important within their own organiza-
tions, since in ATOOM the actual process of bargaining and dividing the resources took
place, based upon highly technical methods which were developed and improved while in
use. In this process the university boards became more and more dependent on their
professional planners.

Still it slowly became clear that further refinement of the existing methods of
ATOOM would have little benefit. Increasingly, the limitations of purely technical
consultation were recognized. University policies as well as the policies of the Under­
minister would have to have consequences for resource allocation, and the ATOOM
group was not equipped to handle these policy-based considerations (as a consequence of
the background of its members).

In the fall of 1975 it was clear to all stakeholders involved that a new start had
been made. There was at least formal agreement on a new mode of planning by the
major stakeholders (i.e. Parliament and universities), although no real consensus about
the proposal existed. (This was illustrated by the amendments to the planning memora­
dum as made by Parliament. In particular, the amendment, which required the creation
of a National Steering Group next to the POO/AGP, shows the disagreement of
Parliament (see Parliament, No. 13401, 1976).) Within the universities the new start was
not recognized as an important new development by most people. Since there was very
little tangible output, it was considered to be a harmless but time-consuming activity
which was necessary to help avoid implementing the McKinsey proposals.

The actual planning process developed rapidly. ATOOM proceeded quickly and
produced visible and important results. At intermediate levels there was a strong
awareness of the ATOOM group and almost none of the POO/AGP groups. University
Councils and Boards followed the work of ATOOM closely, since the outcome was of
immediate relevance. Meanwhile the metaplanning process (POO/AGP) slowed down as
a result of the lack of interest and the other priorities of its participants.

Underminister Klein expected unavoidable budget cuts which would lead to far
reaching changes that would require more substantial decisions than could be provided
by the technical approach to planning used by ATOOM. He wanted the ATOOM group to
stop and the POO/AGP groups to engage not only in the development of the planning
process, but also in the actual planning process, so he wanted to integrate metaplanning
and planning. The Advisory Group on Planning (AGP) was asked to prepare a proposal
for this; meanwhile, ATOOM would continue until an alternative method for resource
allocation would be available.


The development of this proposal to change the planning process took from fall
1975, when the need was first recognized until fall 1976, when formal agreement was
reached in the meeting of the POO. (Again we notice that the development of a
proposal for a change in organization takes time and involves a number of participants,
while for others "business as usual" must continue. The effects of this are more
important if the change requires much time and small number of participants. A number
of trade-offs can be recognized. If one wants to reduce the duration, it can be done by
spending a greater percentage of time on the development project, but this might hurt
"business as usual". If more members of the organization participate in the development
project, "business as usual" might also be hurt.) The long duration of the process by which this proposal was developed and agreed upon is caused by a number of reasons.

First, consultation on the interorganizational level requires difficult agenda management. All parties have numerous other obligations. If for instance the Parliament suddenly wants to see the Underminister on the day a PGO meeting is scheduled, it requires a number of weeks to reschedule a meeting.

Second, there was a slow development of relationships and mutual trust, requiring the redefinition of roles and finding new modes of interaction. This was not a simple process. It took place in multiple interaction circuits in which different groups of the Ministry were participating. Furthermore, many events, inside and outside the system, tended to disturb this process. An example of such an event was the first disturbance initiated by Parliament on April 6, 1976, when the two amendments to the planning memorandum (Nota Planning) were discussed and accepted. These amendments implied besides the need for "an National Steering Group", the necessity of "planning by academic discipline". This created ambiguity about the position of the Underminister. By law he must obey the Parliament; in practice he can delay execution of such motions. This ambiguity delayed the preparation of the "proposal".

While the preparation of the proposal three other issues came up, which required additional time. They all had to do with defining the mode of interaction and in particular with the role of the Advisory Group of Planning (A.G.P.):

- The first issue was the question of where the bargaining process between the ministry and the universities should take place (meaning, who should bargain with who, or in which committee or group would the bargaining process be placed) and what the role of the AGP should be in this.

- The second issue was the question whether any real meaning could be given to the notion of "commitment" and "joint process" as proposed earlier.

- The third was the question whether civil servants may express their own views towards university representatives on issues on which the Underminister did not yet have a position, but on which the Underminister would take a position at a later date. At issue was the question whether a civil servant was a pure instrument of the Minister, speaking only on behalf of the Minister.

All three issues are obviously interrelated and one's position on these issues is very much dependent on one's perspective on planning. For instance taking the negative position on the third issue implies that all preparation of policies and positions can only be done within the Ministry and not in a joint venture with the universities. It is based on the notion of separability of ends and means and on the denial of the stylistic values of means. It implies a negative stand on the second issue.

The civil servants in the Ministry were all but united on these issues; the position of the Underminister however, was clear as was shown in June 1976\(^1\). No National
Steering Group would be created; the present planning organization of AGP and POO would remain intact. The AGP should be a secretariat for POO, an instrument. Therefore, no negotiations would take place in the AGP; instead it would prepare matters for POO. Members of the AGP should act independently and committed, including the civil servants of the Ministry. Therefore one should be prepared to see differences of opinion between positions taken by the civil servants in the AGP and the Underminister's position at POO meetings.

The Underminister shared his position with university representatives. With respect to his civil servants this was more difficult. It seemed clear from previous discussions that they did not share his views, but a paradoxical situation had emerged.

For the civil servants, who saw themselves as instruments of the Underminister, the position of the Underminister was their position. But the position of the Underminister was that his civil servants did not need always to share his position. In my judgment, this issue was never really resolved and caused unnecessary problems later.

The major points of the memorandum of June 22, 1976, which contains the proposal, were:
- The "going concern" of budgets, admissions, new schools has consequences for middle and long term. Decision processes for the "going concern" show too little cohesiveness.
- Actual planning will be done within POO/AGP.
- Multi-year agreements (meerjaren afspraken) will be made between universities and Ministry.
- It will be the joint responsibility of Ministry, universities, colleges to develop the planning and all three partners will make a firm commitment to this process.

Remarkable is that there was no mentioning of development plans or their role in the planning process. These were introduced unilaterally by the Underminister in August 1976. As such this introduction was not in agreement with the proposal of June. This created distrust and unnecessarily delay. A face-saving intervention led to the inclusion of the development plans (as "partial" development plans) in the agreed upon planning process leading up to multi-year agreements.

In the fall of 1976, there was an agreement about how to structure the planning process and what should be the type of results coming out of this. This agreement was formally made in the POO meeting of October 22, 1976, where the three main items agreed upon were:
1. POO from now on would be involved in "actual planning.
2. Multi-year agreements (meerjaren afspraken) will be made based on "partial" development plans.
3. A time-schedule as proposed by the AGP would be adopted. In order to prevent the development plans from becoming impracticable as had happened in the past, the
time-schedule indicated that "Guidelines" (richtlijnen) and "Policy Indications" (beleidsindicaties) had to be made.

"Guidelines" were necessary to coordinate the planning effort at all universities in order to insure that all universities would address the same type of issues. Moreover, those Guidelines were supposed to structure the plans in such a way that comparison of the plans and integration of those plans into a national plan would be possible. "Policy Indications" were felt to be necessary in order to establish certain general assumptions. These "Policy Indications" were to be of a global nature and were mainly intended to prevent the plans from becoming lists of wishful thinking. For instance, the Under­minister could have indicated that he wanted some large growing universities to stop growing, while other small ones needed further development. (The guidelines and policy indications were to be ready at the beginning of 1977, so that the universities would have enough time to prepare their "partial" development plans before January, 1978. These plans would then be discussed and lead to multi-year agreements in September, 1978. These multi-year agreements would cover the budget for 1979, and the years 1980 to 1984. Meanwhile the ATOOM group was to continue to prepare the budget for 1977 and 1978.)

A number of difficulties needed to be overcome with respect to the proposed planning process like:

- In stopping ATOOM there was the risk of losing the results of the learning process that had occurred within that group.
- The organization of the Ministry was not designed for the job at hand. Responsibilities needed to be assigned for the various subprocesses like the development of the guidelines, policy indications and the further work of the ATOOM.
- The different conceptions of planning among the participants and in particular within the various organizations reinforced the existing ambiguities. In particular this was important within the Ministry.
- The different views on the mode of interaction and type of relationships between the Ministry and the universities resulted in differences in expectations with respect to the behavior of the participants. (A mere agreement between large organizations like the Ministry and the universities to work and interact in a new way does not change the attitudes and views of the people involved.)

Nevertheless in principle, the implementation of improved planning of the Dutch University System, which was initiated in 1970, halted in 1973, redesigned in 1974 and revised thereafter did at least get started in November 1976.

3.1.5 Multi-Year Agreements.

Guidelines and Policy Indications were necessary to enable the universities to make development plans. Guidelines were prepared jointly by the Ministry and the
universities, Policy Indications were prepared by the Ministry.

The dissident views on planning as existed in the Ministry resulted in Policy Indications, which created turmoil, since they did not fit the expectations of the university representatives in at least three ways; they contained a new method for resource allocation (the new method for resource allocation, which seemed to be out of place in Policy Indications to start with, was different, cruder, and in the eyes of the universities less accurate than the method of ATOOM in use at the time. Also there was no relation between this method and the one which had been developed jointly by the Ministry and the universities in Taskgroup III), apart from the global indications a number of very detailed normative statements were made, and there was no reference whatsoever to multi-year agreements.

The university representatives in the AGP felt the appearance of this memorandum (Policy Indications) as a break in their developing relationship and mode of interaction, which were to have been based on mutual trust, commitment and joint venture. A face-saving solution was needed in order to deal with this memorandum. A joint group of the Ministry and the universities found this solution in the form of an explanatory memorandum. This implied that formally the Policy Indications were called the basis for the Guidelines and the development plans, but in practice, only one page out of the original Policy Indications memorandum (the one referring to scientific staff levels) was integrated into the Guidelines.

These final Guidelines for the development plans and multi-year agreements (including the explanatory memorandum) were agreed upon in the POO meeting of April 1, 1977 and sent to the universities. (These Guidelines consisted of 28 pages of text and 15 different forms which had to be filled out by the universities.) At that moment it was uncertain whether all universities would be able (and willing, although they had formally agreed in the POO meeting) to follow the Guidelines and provide all the necessary information. In order to have a continuous platform for technical consultation, so that the maximum opportunities would exist to solve the problems inherent in making the development plans, the POO decided on April 1 to create the COM (Contact Group Development Plans and Multi-year Agreements, Contactgroep Ontwikkelingsplannen en Meerjarenafspraken). This group consisted of one planner from each university and a number of civil servants, so it had almost the same membership as the old ATOOM group. This COM group advised a test run with the Guidelines and first recommended the development of draft development plans. These draft plans were to be ready in August, 1977, and the discussion about them would lead to revision and adjustment of the Guidelines so that the production of the "real" development plans could take place in the fall of 1977.

The university democracy (WUB) and the organizational autonomy of sub-units both at intermediate and basic levels make the preparation of a good plan within the
universities a time-consuming process. Nationally generated Guidelines and Policy Indications must be transformed into Guidelines and Indications for each school. Subsequently a school works out its plan, and agrees to it in its Faculty Council. (Note the conclusion of the committee which evaluated the WUB (Parliament No. 15515, 1979) saying that any decision making about a major issue at the school level requires two years.) Once the school plans are ready, the university planning bureau can prepare a university plan for the University Council. Subsequently, the Academic Council at the national level is supposed to comment on the interrelatedness of the plans submitted. (The Academic Council (Academische Raad) was legally obligated to give advice on the interrelatedness of the university plans. Due to the various delays and changes in the schedule the time available for studying the documents and preparing the advice was reduced to four weeks. So the Academic Council did not advise in time. Advice came on May 19, 1978, when no use could be made of it.)

Clearly this procedure demanded more than the time available. Time could be saved only by shortening the procedure, thereby reducing possibilities for involving the intermediate and basic levels within the universities. An interesting consequence of this way of working was that it enhanced the position of the professional planners. Due to time constraints, the draft plans could only be made by the planning bureaus at university level - the University Boards and Councils could hardly be involved.

The fact that the Ministry took those plans seriously legitimized the planners' independent actions. Simultaneously, this way of working formed a major cause for producing "token" documents, which were not based on real commitments from the power groups within the universities.

The preparation of the development plans proved difficult. The Guidelines were not always clear and were in part, unacceptable to the universities. There was no student forecast which was trustworthy, though such a forecast was needed as a basis for the development plans. The perspective of the new Minister on planning was highly relevant, but unknown. (The Dutch cabinet fell in August, 1977. This had no positive effect on the planning process. Progress stagnated, since both the civil servants in the Ministry and the universities took "wait and see" stances.) The planners of the universities wanted to abandon the development plans, which they hadn't asked for anyway, and indicated in January, 1978 that new data made these plans useless but that revising them (including the necessary discussions within the university democracy) would be too time-consuming.

Summarizing, it can be said that the unforeseen initiative to reactivate development plans (the August 17, 1977, letter of the Underminister) resulted in substantial delays, lots of work within the universities, and very little impact on the outcome of the planning process.
The dominant group in the preparation of the multi-year agreements was the COM. This group clearly wanted to be central in this process and tried to reduce the role of the AGP and the taskgroups. (Illustrations of these points can be found in the COM proposal for presenting its conclusions to the POO without any interference by the AGP and in the fact that the COM made its own student forecasts thereby ignoring the work of Taskgroup III.) From the perspectives of the planners in COM this could be understood as a continuation of work in ATOOM and an effort to guard their internal status within the universities. For the civil servants, these efforts tied in with the early discussions about the organization of the planning process and the role of the AGP. Thereby the conflicting views between the two main Head-Directorates (Educational Policy and Institutions) revived, which led to the efforts of the Head-Directorate for Education Policy to dismantle the staff group for Planning coordination which formed the AGP secretariat. All this illustrated a substantial shift from the planning system as proposed in the Leibbrandt memorandum in 1974 and the planning memorandum in 1975. More important, this change was made without any public debate.

The report of the COM was still euphemistically called an "evaluative framework", suggesting that it provided a method to evaluate the development plans. The method proposed was the old proposal of the university planners to translate tasks (in terms of incoming students) into resources (in terms of academic staff). What was new was that the various ratios and percentages were not supposed to be neutral, based upon research, about actual teaching load and so on, but instead were to be the outcome of a process of negotiation between the universities and the Ministry. This was an important recognition of the normative aspects of these ratios and therefore seems to be an improvement although the question arises of who the negotiator is and whether he is recognized as such by the important stakeholders.

Based on this COM report the Ministry produced a draft "Intentional Task and Budget (Intentieele Taakstelling en Toewijzing or ITT). This document provided the basis for the multi-year agreements. It was presented to the universities in June 1978 at a POO meeting. Here some of the technicalities of the meeting were interesting. The documents on which decisions were to be made were very extensive and had been developed by the Ministry in close cooperation with the University planners. They were handed out to the university boards on very short notice. Thus, either the university representative at the meeting knew the content of the documents beforehand as a result of being in on their preparation, or he would have to trust that its content had been determined in association with his planning bureau. It was clearly impossible for University Board members to even read the material before the meeting, let alone fulfill the obligation of internal consultation within their university.

At the national level, the Intentional Task and Budget presented a picture which satisfied both the Minister and the university planners:
The overall educational task was expected to increase 30% without any increase in resources.

Meanwhile the research capacity was supposed to remain constant at 5100 full-time equivalents of scientific staff.

There would be eleven academic disciplines with "numeri fixi".

This result can be seen as a success for the planners in avoiding substantial budget cutting. But their success might be short-term. The other side of this coin is the Minister's success in having the universities agree to a considerable increase in workload which, combined with the possibility of rather optimistic student forecasts might result in potential budget cutting if the actual student influx failed to materialize. If this should happen, open political discussions (which would relegate the planners to the sidelines) would be inevitable. A side issue was the question whether this increase in efficiency would have any real meaning. The agreement of the universities to an increase in workload was not founded on a commitment to it by the academic staff who were to become more efficient. (The bilateral consultations and negotiations in June laid the basis for draft multi-year agreements, which were formulated in July by the Ministry and sent to the universities on August 16, 1978. These draft documents had to be agreed upon by the university councils and each university was asked to respond before September 16. This provided the University Councils with one month's time to determine their positions. The Councils might be able to complete their tasks in such a short time, but consultation or participation with other levels in the university would be out of the question.)

The multi-year agreements were signed in the POO meeting of September 28, 1978. This meeting was perceived to be a major achievement in the planning process and was covered by television and press. These multi-year agreements specified the obligations of the Minister: the amounts of money to be provided in 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982 and 1983, as well as the obligations of the university for education and research.

Two universities refused to sign their multi-year agreements for very different reasons. The Catholic University of Nijmegen did not sign on formal grounds. Its representatives stated that these types of agreements had no basis in Dutch law and that they might lead to an undesirable mixing of responsibilities of the Minister and the universities. The (municipal) University of Amsterdam gave three reasons for not signing the multi-year agreement:

- The negotiations had been almost exclusively about the relation between the university's tasks and the academic staff, thereby neglecting the non-academic staff and other resources. These negotiations were therefore insufficient basis for an agreement about overall resources (money) in relation to tasks.
- The planning process, as had taken place, had allowed too few possibilities for feedback and consultation with the intermediate level (schools).
- The student/staff ratios, student forecasts, and calculation methods which were used bore little resemblance to reality. (The factual teaching loads differed considerably from the agreed upon teaching loads.)
Not signing the multi-year agreements had no direct consequences for these universities, since the law requires the Minister to provide equal opportunity for development to each university. Both universities received the funds offered in the draft agreements.

The multi-year agreements were not based on the development plans, nor were they developed in a joint process of the various levels within each university. The agreements contained a number of new items and sometimes even surprises for the various schools. In view of this, substantial time would be necessary for working out the internal consequences for the universities. Also substantial internal "selling" was required in order to have the major internal interest groups accept them. Such selling would take several months at least during which the university representatives would be forced to concentrate on internal affairs, thereby further delaying work at the interorganizational level.

The prevailing definition of planning (by the Minister, his top-civil servants and the other major participants in the planning process) was a very limited one. In this view policy development (an example is the development of the proposal for restructuring University Education into a two-phase system, "Opening Up Higher Education", Parliament No. 15034, 1978) was not seen as a part of the planning process and even less as part of the "joint" planning process (characterized by "commitment" of the participants) as agreed in the "new start" of 1974. This perspective on planning reflected an explicit change from the points of departure which had been formulated during the McKinsey period and agreed upon by Parliament. It reflected not only the style of the new Minister, but also that of the particular unit within the Ministry which developed policy proposals. (This unit, the Head-Directorate for Education Policy, had shown earlier a "move/countermove" perspective on planning and policy making. Furthermore its members had expressed their lack of trust with respect to "joint" planning and "commitment" which were supposed to be core concepts underlying the current planning process. The members of this unit therefore did not favor the introduction of these policy issues in the POO and the AGP.) Also from the university planners there was absolutely no pressure to discuss policy proposals in the existing planning circuit. (For example the restructuring of Higher Education was a topic in which almost all important members of the university system took an interest, and dealing with such a topic would no doubt raise the question of whether the planners were the proper representatives of the university. So the planners and the members of the university boards supported the position that discussion about these policy proposals should not take place in the current planning process. Once discussions elsewhere led to conclusions about restructuring Dutch Higher Education, the consequences of those conclusions should be introduced into the planning process. This could only be so after
the proposed changes were accepted and agreed upon by Parliament.

Related to the change in perspective is the fact that the planning of the planning was no longer an explicit agenda item. Necessary discussions and negotiations (about how planning should be structured and organized, which decision making structure should be created) did not take place. This is not to say that nothing happened, but changes in the planning organization like the slow vanishing of the task-groups just seemed to occur, without any recognition of who was responsible for those changes or why they occurred.

Parallel to this change in perspective on planning, participation in the planning process was decreasing. The formal number of participants in the process remained constant (since POO and the other committees did not shrink), but token involvement increased while real participation decreased. The way in which the planning process was structured was an important factor in this change. The late arrival of extensive documents or the late and hurried preparation of new agenda items required an extensive effort from participants who wished to stay up to date. This extensive effort was simply too much for some of the participants. Furthermore, the style of the key actors was such that it emphasized informal consultation. By doing so they effectively limited the real participation of others than the in-crowd. This again increased token participation of the outer circle. In fact the process during the summer of 1978 was controlled by a group of between 4 and 10 people.

3.1.6 The Follow-Up.

The process of organizing and structuring the part of planning process, which was supposed to continue after the multi-year agreements were signed, started in May 1978. Ideally this metaplanning process should be participative, in practice, this process was competing for the attention of the participants with other processes among which was the actual planning process leading to the first multi-year agreements. This was not immediately recognized and was a source of confusion later, when the people who designed the work program for the next planning cycles took the agreement of the other participants in the planning process for a serious commitment. In reality little attention had been given by the participants to the work program and it was regarded even in October as still open to discussion and amendment.

The draft time-schedule for the next planning cycles was first discussed in the AGP in June 1978. The schedule called for parallel processes to be called "adjustment" cycles. In principle this was to be seen as a continuous process. The first adjustment cycle would lead to adjusted multi-year agreements for 1980/1984, the second to adjustments for 1981/1985, the third for 1982/1986 (note that during 1981 the fourth and fifth were being prepared). There were very few comments. As a consequence of various delays the discussion in the POO of the global workplan took place in November.
1978. Only after the agreement in the POO could a detailed workplan and time-schedule be worked out. Agreement on this was reached in January 1979, after which preparation of the next planning cycles started. So a delay of six months reduced the available time for both the first and the second adjustment cycles considerably.

A number of problems had to be considered in the design and implementation of the planning process for the next cycles. The first of these problems is founded in Dutch law, which specifies a procedure for development plans which is at odds with the concept of rolling planning. (Rolling planning implies the yearly production of multi-year plans.) A second problem both in theory and practice is based on the overlapping time framework in plans. Two problems have to be faced here. If the preparation time for a plan is more than a year, one faces the situation of simultaneous preparation of an "old" and a "new" plan based on new information. This fosters "rain-dancing" behavior and attitudes like "let's finish this plan quickly and not worry about it too much, since it will not be implemented anyway in view of the new data or situation" from those engaged in developing the "old" plan. The other problem which has to be faced, is related to the complexity of the organizations involved. For example, in the winter and spring of 1979 the professional planners were simultaneously involved in selling the "old" plan internally as well as making the "new" plan in the preparation of the first (and second) adjustment cycle based on new data with respect to student forecasts, new guidelines of the Ministry and so on. Since these processes cannot and should not be secret, they tend to have an impact on one another, not least in creating distrust with respect to the university planners.

Dividing the planning process into time periods assumes the availability of long term plans in order to develop middle term plans. In complex organizations as the Dutch University System it proves to be very difficult to establish any process leading to long term plans. In this case it was not even attempted. The reason for these difficulties are, among others: important power groups in the decision making system have an organizational life-span of no more than the middle term period (for example the Minister, three years; the students, four years). As a consequence they tend to focus on short term issues. The multi-nodal characteristic of the organization requires a complex and time-consuming decision making process (recall the internal decision making at the school level which required two years). The decision making process with respect to each long term issue takes (based on the present organizational structure) so long that often before it is ended, new inputs change its foundations, so that in principle it could go on forever without ever producing any result.

A rather peculiar problem finds its roots in the typical circular organizational structure of Dutch universities. I call it the participative problem related to hierarchies of plans. Usually in complex organizations the need for integrated planning is recognized. This implies that plans of parts of the organization are integrated into a plan of
the organization as a whole. In itself this seems logical and simple to realize, but if we have participative planning combined with a circular organization based on sovereignty of the individuals, it becomes more complex and difficult. Again an example: the participants in the planning process at school level, who are chosen by the lower level of the school, find it sometimes difficult to accept the constraints of the university plan, particularly if those are not in accordance with the views of their constituents. The hierarchy of plans assume a certain degree of instrumentality of the parts towards the whole, whereas the participative mode of planning assumes an instrumentality of the whole towards the parts. It is not easy to fulfill both those claims at the same time.

The past experiences demonstrated that as a consequence of this the schedule could often not be kept under control and since deadlines existed, so that decisions had to be made, the role of the professional planners was again enhanced. Agenda management is important in dealing with this problem. What is going to be discussed, when, and where, are critical questions which had to be answered by the professional planners due to time constraints.

On top of this there was the fact that the planning process which was initiated by the New Start of 1974 and which led to the multi-year agreements of 1978 was a major change and had the characteristics of a crash operation, meaning that a number of "rules of the game" with respect to the functioning of the Ministry (but also the universities) were violated in the process. This created pressure on the existing departments to see that this would not happen again and to establish new rules.

In the whole process the agenda-setting is a crucial part of the metaplanning, but the actual planning process absorbed all the university people (they had to "sell" the multi-year agreements in their universities, work out consequences and so on). Notable in this agenda-setting as it had taken place was the tendency to overload. The need for lessening partiality (increasing comprehensiveness) was fully realized, but the limits of the capacity of the existing planning process for dealing with new and sometimes complicated issues were little understood. (This can be seen as a typical problem of interorganizational decision making, where each organization typically does not know what the others can or cannot do.) The consequence of this was that for most participants (but in particularly for the civil servants) the idea that a number of important issues could only be dealt with in the third adjustment cycle was hardly acceptable. Therefore they insisted on dealing with these issues in the second without having the slightest idea whether this could be done properly.

So to summarize the work plan and time schedule, which were agreed upon in January 1979, it can be said that the first adjustment cycle required Guidelines to be ready and agreed upon in January 1979 so that development plans could be adjusted (to a limited degree) and new multi-year agreements could be made in September 1979. Hardly any new issues would be dealt with in this cycle. The second adjustment cycle
required Guidelines to be ready and agreed upon in June 1979 leading to multi-year agreements in September 1980. Some important new issues would be dealt with, although the preparation time for the guidelines was only four months. (The most important issue of the time was the proposal for restructuring higher education, "Opening Up Higher Education", Parliament No. 15034, 1978. This proposal was supposed to become law in 1981. So clearly there would be an impact of this proposal in each of the prevailing planning periods. Nevertheless, this issue could not be included in those planning cycles, since the universities rejected it and the discussion in Parliament and at the national level was far from conclusive. Besides, it would have been impossible to foresee the consequences of the proposal well enough so that they could be reflected in the Guidelines.)

Three new issues were taken up in the second adjustment cycle. The first was nationwide coordination in the development of crown chair formation (full professor chairs). The second concentrated on the critical relation between the medical schools and the academic hospitals and the third emphasized the "other" tasks of the scientific staff.

Two important constraints were perceived by the participants with respect to the proposed planning process. The problem of multiple consultation circuits, together with the specific organizational structure of the Ministry and the universities, made including new issues in the planning process difficult. The second constraint was the deadline posed by the yearly budget cycles, as well as the required time for proper preparation of new issues.

The development plans were still officially on the agenda, although the first adjustment cycle would not require them. Real support for the concept was vanishing (if it had ever existed). Frequently university planners would say that insisting on development plans would drag the whole of the university democracy into the planning process. Furthermore, those plans would limit the freedom of the negotiators for the multi-year agreements. So not only did the professional planners fear control by the university councils and so on, but also some of the university board members felt that negotiation without a starting platform in the form of a development plan would leave them with more options. Though this might be so, nevertheless from the viewpoint of developing participative and transparent planning processes this was a setback. Also it is my opinion that negotiation must be based on a definite platform and by allowing the platform to be defined by one party (the Ministry which developed an Intentional Task and Budget) the universities lost a very important opportunity to coproduce the definition of the situation.

On top of all this the universities were heavily engaged in studying and discussing the consequences of the policy proposal "Opening Up Higher Education" (Parliament, No. 15034, 1978). In view of the important consequences of this proposal it can easily be
understood that these discussions overwhelmed almost all other issues. As a result little or no attention was given to the planning process which as such almost seemed to evaporate.

3.2. Problems and Conclusions.

In order to highlight some of the problems and conclusions which can be drawn from the analysis of the planning process and the case-history, the discussion of these problems and conclusions is grouped around four topics. The first two are the political and the mechanical dimensions of the planning process. Subsequently the focus will be on the interorganizational context of this planning process and finally the interplay between metaplanning and planning will be the focal point.

3.2.1 The Political Dimension.

The political dimension of the planning process becomes manifest in two ways; there is the way by which the planning process is sensitive to impulses from the political system and there is the degree by which the process itself can be characterized as political, implying that internal politics dominate the behavior of the various parties involved.

The influence of national politics in the planning process is quite important as has been shown in the preceding description. Government changes, periods of caretaker government, the change in political background of the Minister of Education all proved to have serious consequences for the development of the planning process.

With respect to internal politics there are different parts of the university system to consider. In view of the highly complex democracy that our Dutch universities have become after the change in the law in 1970, it is almost obvious that the organizational climate of the university in the Netherlands is highly politicized (and sometimes polarized). This is partly a consequence of the typical organizations that universities all over the world tend to develop into. Some authors (see Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972) use the concept of the university as organized anarchy to demonstrate some of the characteristics of those organizations.

So although this political climate is partly an inherent property of universities and therefore was already present before the introduction of the Law of 1970 (the WUB); The implementation of a university democracy, which copied to some extent the parliamentary system, only enhanced this. This implies a mode of decision making behavior as described by Allison's third conceptual model, "A Governmental (Bureaucratic) Politics Paradigm", characterized by the saying "Where you stand depends on where you sit" (see Allison 1971). The following quote from Allison illustrates the nature of such decision making:
The decisions and actions of government are intranational political resultants; resultants in the sense that what happens is not chosen as a solution to a problem but rather results from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unequal influence; political in the sense that the activity from which decisions and actions emerge is best characterized as bargaining along regularized channels among individual members of the government.

If this characterization holds for the universities, it certainly is also applicable towards the academic council and its various parts. Also the Ministry of Education seems to show some of the typical characteristics of internal politics, as is reflected in the apparent fights for influence between the main parts of the Directorate-General. In this specific case the political dimension was further amplified by the possibilities of forming coalitions with groups within the universities. The impact and importance of the political dimension of the planning process for the parts of the Dutch University System (see Figure 1) is only reinforced for the whole of the system, as a consequence of the interorganizational characteristics of this system as is shown by the lack of a hierarchical superstructure.

The unclear division of responsibilities between the various groups in the planning process leave plenty of opportunities to play with the implementation of the decisions. Again a quote from Allison (1971) illustrates the way this is being done:

Most decisions leave considerable leeway in implementation. Players who supported the decision will maneuver to see it implemented and may go beyond the spirit if not the letter of the decision. Those who opposed the decision, or opposed the action, will maneuver to delay implementation, to limit implementation to the letter but not to the spirit, and even to have the decision disobeyed.

Examples of this phenomenon are abundant as the analysis of the planning process (see De Smit, 1981) shows. Both the implementation of the McKinsey proposals and the implementation of the recommendations of the Leibbrandt committee (the New Start of 1974) as well as the history of the development plans shows how players in the game use this leeway in a conscious manner.

Any analysis or redesign of the planning process of the Dutch University System must take into account the political nature of this process. The disregard for this aspect as is reflected in the technocratic mode of planning, which has developed over time forms one of the most important factors contributing to the existing inability to develop effective planning.

3.2.2. The Mechanics6).

The preceding analysis shows the impact of organizational routines, standing operating procedures and programs on the planning process. The continuation of the actual planning process (as run by ATOOM), the reviving of the development plans, the impact of the budgets in September of each year, the yearly routine of making student forecasts in order to determine the number of admission restrictions (numeris fixis) are all examples of such routines. Their impact on the development of the planning process
seems to be underestimated by the people involved. Also the effort and time required to establish changes in rules and operating procedures of the different organizations are hardly known outside those organizations, not even by the people who are involved in joint planning. As a consequence the effort and time required to establish or change joint rules and procedures are mostly underestimated.

Also the pace of the mechanical process is often misjudged. This became clear for instance with respect to the advice of the Academic Council. It was asked to provide advice, so it did, but the matter was handled according to the standard operating procedures of the Academic Council. This resulted in advice at a time when it had no practical value. The same holds for the internal procedures in the universities. Although this mechanical nature seems incompatible with the political nature of the planning process, I would argue that it is not. The mechanical characteristics in fact enable a number of games to be played from the political perspective (for instance it provides the mechanisms for delaying implementation). So the mechanical, bureaucratic mode seems to be complementary to the political mode of decision making. This is not to say that a temporary decrease in political in fighting will not increase the "business as usual" and other aspects of the bureaucratic mode of behavior as we have seen happening during the demissionary periods (caretaker government) both in 1973 and in 1978.

The impossibility of not planning is generally recognized among planning theorists, as is the impossibility of not making decisions. Usually the main argument for this is that not to make a decision or a plan in itself implies a decision, which influences future events. This phenomenon is amplified by the standard operating bureaucratic procedures, which lead to the situation where no decision implies continuation of business as usual. By doing so the actual procedures are simultaneously further ingrained in the organization as well as usually refined and further developed. Therefore, it shows that not only non-planning cannot exist, but also it is impossible not to engage in metaplanning, as was demonstrated by the series of events surrounding the actual planning process (ATOOM) in 1975, 1976, and 1977, as well as by the more recent developments when metaplanning was no longer explicitly being dealt with, but nevertheless changes in the organization of the planning process took place. As a consequence these changes were hardly subject to any (public) debate or control.

In our attempts to redesign and change planning processes this impossibility to stop current processes as well as the dominant impact of their development during the preparation and decision making about those changes must be taken into account. The fact that this was not done in various stages of the development of this planning process (for example the New Start 1974) created many obstacles, which contributed to the unsatisfactory outcome of this development.

The impossibility to halt current processes next to the need for a systemic
perspective on the redesign of them as well as the recognition of the benefits of a well-run bureaucratic machinery leads me to adhere to the motto: "Think big, act small".

3.2.3. The Interorganizational Context.

My observations about interorganizational planning can be grouped around four topics (circuit problem, rules of the game, participation, inactivism). These topics are found by looking at planning principles and attitudes. (This can only be done from a particular perspective on planning and therefore by having a definition of planning. Insofar this is not sufficient clear to the reader from Chapter 1, Chapter 4 and Appendix 1, the reader is referred to Ackoff (1974), Ackoff (1981), De Smit and Rade (1980), Rade and De Smit (1980) in particular to the so-called proactive or interactive planning paradigm.)

The first two topics are derived from the planning principle called coordination. Traditionally coordination of decision making activities would be achieved by a hierarchy of authority (see Galbraith, 1973). Since such a superstructure cannot be imposed in this situation other means are used. The consultative circuits provide one of these means, and coordination by means of rules is another. So the first topic can be labelled the problem of multiple consultation circuits and arises from the division of labor with respect to decision making both within and between organizations. The second topic is the slowly developing agreement about a mode of conduct, about rules of the game. This is seen by some theorists as the most important way of coordinating planning behavior in interorganizational networks (see Berg, 1978) and was recognized by the participants as a relevant concept. The third topic is also related to one of the principles of planning (see Ackoff, 1974), the notion of participation. The various universities (as well as the Ministry) participate in a typical way in the joint planning processes. The way this participation is structured seems to have severe constraints on the development of the planning process. In particular, the role of the professional planners and of the planning portfolio holders of the university boards is of interest here. The fourth topic is found in the planning attitude characteristic for the Dutch University System (but also for a number of other public organizations), which can be labelled as systemic inactivism (see Ackoff, 1974, Sachs and Calhoun, 1980). This planning attitude, which resembles what Schon (1971) calls dynamic conservatism, is very much anti-change oriented. A short discussion of some possible reasons why the Dutch University System fosters this attitude will conclude this section of Chapter 3.

The "circuit problem" arises out of the need to both coordinate plans of various subsystems as well as to integrate plans dealing with various aspects. In particular integration seems to be the more important issue of the two. The problem is typical for decision making in an interorganizational network, which almost by definition lacks the
superstructure of a managerial body which is able to insure this integration. The problem arises out of the need for a more or less functional division of labor in the organization and within the university boards. This specialization of university board members results in the existence of parallel consultation circuits at the interorganizational level dealing with various aspects. These parallel circuits develop their own pace and methods. The problem is the coordination and integration of these parallel activities. The problem was recognized in the planning process as soon as steps were taken to develop the process from "partial" to more comprehensive (including more aspects of the university system). This circuit problem will become more and more apparent and will require some kind of solution when further development of the planning process takes place. In the light of this a reconsideration of the organizational structure of the Ministry, but also of the universities (WUB) will be necessary.

Coordinating mechanisms for this type of joint planning can be found in the establishment of "rules of the game". The agreement on modes of conduct and rules which guide the behavior of the various participants makes it possible to do without a higher authority who settles disputes: disputes are negotiated out. Negotiation and bargaining become the dominant concepts in this type of planning.

In the development of this planning process many examples of slowly developing rules for behavior are discussed. Also a number of violations, perhaps conscious, of those rules were found. (The procedures with respect to the "policy indications" and the introduction of the "development plans" demonstrate this.) The only occasion when this mode of conduct was discussed was in Noorwijkerhout in 1976 (during the preparation of the "adjustment" memorandum). The analysis shows how difficult it apparently was in the Dutch cultural setting to explicitly address the question of the mode of conduct. Also the difficulties in having the consequences of signing or not signing multi-year agreements discussed point into this direction. Still, some progress has been made over time. Mutual relationships of trust and respect have been developed among a little group of people from both the universities and the Ministry. This puts a constraint on the range of possible modes of behavior of each party. Yet this process developed so slowly that accidental personal changes might undo the gains made up till now.

As for the third topic, participation, the planning process has up till now been dominated by the professional planners. The consequences of this limited form of participation have not been discussed at length, although some negative aspects became apparent in the last couple of years. The most apparent consequence was the impossibility of discussing policy matters (bestuurlijke onderwerpen) in this planning organization, which led to a frequent outcry for the necessity of further involvement of the policy makers (in terms of the planning portfolio holders of the university boards). The complement of this outcry is the tendency to limit the planning process towards a basically technical, instrumental, non-policy oriented process. (This redefines planning
in a limited way by concentrating on choice of means by given ends. As such this assumes the separability of ends and means.)

A less recognized consequence is to be found in the inherent conservatism of this type of involvement. From their perspective the professional planners could not afford to really "rock the boat" or to treat controversial issues without being put in the spotlight. Thereby this limited participation fosters the planning attitude of "inactivism".

The fourth topic is found in the planning attitude which characterizes this planning process mostly, inactivism. This attitude can be illustrated by a couple of quotes from Ackoff (1974):

Inactive organizations require a great deal of activity to keep changes from being made. They accomplish nothing in a variety of ways. First, they require that all important decisions be made at "the top". The route to the top is deliberately designed like an obstacle course. This keeps most recommendations for change from ever getting there. Those that do are likely to have been delayed enough to make them irrelevant when they reach their destination. Those proposals that reach the top are likely to be further delayed, often by being sent back down or out for modification or evaluation. The organization thus behaves like a sponge and is about as active.

Inactivists take a position on an issue only when forced to. "Forced to" means doing so is the only way left to keep changes from being made. Wherever possible, words are used in place of action. Inactivists are prolific producers of policy statements, white papers, strategy documents, position papers, reports, memoranda, and any kind of document that can substitute for action.

Another prevalent means by which inactivity is achieved consists of setting up committees, councils, commissions, study groups, task forces, and what-have-you at the drop of an issue. The responsibilities of such groups are deliberately left vague so that they can spend most of their time in defining their functions and in jurisdictional disputes.

When one of them manages to generate a recommendation, those who were not represented in the group can object to their lack of representation and have another group formed to take them into account. This process can go on indefinitely, particularly if augmented by occasional personnel changes.

Inactivists have a greater fear of doing something that does not have to be done (errors of commission) than of not doing something that should be done (errors of omission). Hence they tend to react only to serious threats, not opportunities. By so doing they practice what has come to be known as "crisis management".

In general the only organizations that can survive inactive management are those that are protected from their environments by subsidies that assure their survival independent of what they accomplish. The most conspicuous examples of such organizations in our society are universities, government agencies, and publicly protected private monopolies such as utility companies.

Although in most practical situations a blend of planning attitudes is found, the planning of the Dutch universities in characterized almost solely by inactivism. This is demonstrated by the overall effect of the changes in the planning process as shown in Chapter 5 and by various examples that arise from the extensive analysis (see De Smit, 1981) like the efforts of taskgroup III with respect to student forecasts and resource allocation models. Many different causes contribute to this. Already I have discussed the inherent conservatism of the professional planners. Another contributing cause is the crisis management attitude of the civil servants of the Ministry, which is inherent
in the role of supporting the Minister in his dealings with Parliament. (This demonstrates the ambiguity and dualism in the role of the Minister. On the one hand he is a political animal who is constantly wheeling and dealing with Parliament and Cabinet, on the other hand he is a technocrat, who is partly managing an enormous and complex organization.) The abundance of resources and related protection from the environment is another contributing factor, although this might change in the future. The particular division of responsibilities as laid down in the organizational structure of the universities (the WUB) as well as the ambiguity of the law, which is the basis for this structure, provides additional ground for this posture.

3.2.4. Metaplanning and Planning.

With respect to the relations between the process of organizing and structuring the planning process and the planning process itself, I would like to focus on three conclusions.

1) Metaplanning can be and was conducted in a mode which contrasted with the planning mode of the actual process. Even so, proposals for a planning process based on learning, feedback and participation were developed in a metaplanning process, which showed none of these characteristics. The planning mode in which the metaplanning activities took place can be characterized (based on Faludi, 1976) first as "blueprint" (McKinsey), later as "process" (The New Start) and finally as "disjointed incrementalism".

2) The interrelation of the metaplanning and planning is demonstrated by pointing out that delays in the metaplanning process result in further development of the actual planning process thereby refining the methods and organization, which in itself is a metaplanning activity. This implies the acknowledgement of the impossibility not to engage in metaplanning.

3) Remarkable is the lack of interest in metaplanning which developed over time. During the period when the McKinsey proposals were discussed, the attention of the members of the academic community, Parliament and even the general public was focussed on the question of how to structure the planning process of the Dutch University System. This attention has decreased over time and in 1980 the planning process itself is no longer an issue. There are no discussions in Parliament nor within the universities. Important changes are made on an ad hoc basis.

Also this can be partly explained by the inactive planning attitude. As Sachs and Calhoun (1980) indicate: If the elite in control is favored by preserving the status-quo they will foster inactivism by engaging in all kinds of ritualistic behavior (like "rain-dancing"). In this specific case the professional planners and the civil servants who control the current planning process can hardly expect that any change in that process will improve their relative position. Furthermore any public debate might only force
them to do additional explaining towards their constituencies and thereby further constrain their behavior. The role that these constituencies play, however, has become important with the implementation of the university democracy (as created by the WUB). It is in this respect remarkable how the various parties who control the planning process at the same time try to avoid the involvement of these democratic bodies (university councils, faculty councils and so on) in this process. (This avoidance can be created in different ways. A familiar way is the make very tight time-schedules which do not allow for this involvement. An example is the Intentional Task and Budget. Other ways are to involve these bodies in large, unstructured tasks or to have them discuss controversial issues, which are not to be dealt with in the planning process. Examples are the Development Plans.) So in a way the undoing of university democracy, which constituted one of the objections against the McKinsey proposals has been realized all the same by the creation of a planning organization on which the democratic bodies have hardly any impact.
4. A CONCEPTUAL DIGRESSION

The essence of ultimate decision remains inpenetrable to the observer - often, indeed, to the decider himself ... There will always be the dark and tangled stretches in the decision-making process - mysterious even to those who may be most intimately involved.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

This chapter describes a way of looking at planning processes. As such this discussion of a conceptual model for analysis of and recommendations about planning constitutes a break in the line of arguments made in the other chapters. What is said in this chapter permeates the discussion in Chapter 3, 5 and 6. In this chapter I try to make explicit the system of assumptions which channel my thinking about planning processes.

The development or choice of a conceptual model, (a conceptual system framework or perspective), is a critical step not only in research on planning, but in all research. Yet, this development receives little attention in the literature. What one usually sees is the outcome of these developments. In the present research the development of a conceptual model took as starting point the planning paradigm as developed by Ackoff (1974) and (1981) and the conceptual model of decision making as developed by Ackoff and Emery (1972). During the analysis of the planning process of the Dutch university system I tried further to refine this perspective in accordance with my "Weltanschauung" (see Appendix 1) and my experiences with attempting to explain events in this planning process (see De Smit, 1981).

The conceptual model which was constructed in this way shares the characteristics of all conceptual systems. It provides us with a frame of reference, a looking glass through which we observe phenomena in the surrounding world. The conceptual system that we use in order to describe, analyse, and observe reflects our value system. It helps us in structuring our observations and experiences. On the one hand such a conceptual system magnifies, highlights, and reveals phenomena, on the other hand it blurs and neglects. In doing so it provides as much hindrance as help since it also defines what we are not able to see. (This is illustrated nicely in Churchman (1967) when he quotes Immanuel Kant, saying: "We would not find regularity in nature if we had not first put it there"). As a consequence we must be very critical about the assumptions we make in the development of a conceptual system, since this constitutes the most normative part of our research. (This is illustrated by Allison (1971), when he demonstrates the consequences of the choice of a particular conceptual model by giving different explanations of the Cuban Missile Crisis based on three different conceptual models.)

The conceptual model presented here is an extension and refinement of a part of the conceptual framework presented by Ackoff and Emery (1972). In addition I try to
integrate some of the important conceptual models of decision-making which were developed over the past thirty years. In particular this conceptual model tries to integrate the prescriptive model of decision theory developed (mainly) in economics with the descriptive phase model developed (mainly) in psychology (see Simon, 1959).

The analysis of the planning process as reflected in my dissertation (see De Smit, 1981), as well as my continuous interaction with the participants, point at two conclusions about this conceptual model:
- The model proves useful in the sense that it helps to generate explanations which are insightful. (See the discussion of joint commitment, the role of the professional planner, the agenda in De Smit, 1981.)
- The model is far from a finished product; further work will be necessary. As such the model constitutes for me the beginning, not the end, of an attempt to make a contribution to planning theory.

4.1. Introduction

I see planning as a decision making process of purposeful individuals. As a consequence my attempt to develop a conceptual system for observing planning processes in and between organizations focusses on decision-making and purposeful behavior (Ackoff and Emery, 1972). Having defined planning in two ways: functional (the design of a desired future and of ways to get there, see Ackoff, 1974), and structural (a decision-making process in which systems of decision-makers deal with systems of decisions); (systems of decisions or "messes", see Ackoff, 1973, or "wicked problems", see Rittel and Webber, 1973, or "problematique", see Ozbekhan, 1973) I start the development of the conceptual system from the structural definition of planning. Sagasti (1973) provides an attempt to develop a conceptual framework for planning from the functional perspective.

My approach to planning will be familiar to most scholars in the field, but in particular to students, researchers, and professors within the Social System Sciences Department of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. In contrast this approach will be foreign to most of the participants in the planning process of the Dutch University System. The discrepancies between my view and that prevailing in the Dutch University System can be recognized throughout the description of the planning process, nevertheless the two major discrepancies should be mentioned here:
- I reject the idea that planning is only the preparation of policies and plans. Contrary to most participants in this planning process I see deciding and implementing as part of planning.
- I include the choice of ideals, objectives, and goals as part of planning. This is not included by many participants.

Planning (defined structurally) is the process by which a system of decision-
makers (participants) deals with a system of decisions (problems). My aim is to produce a conceptual model for this process. I intend to develop this model by first discussing problem-solving in section 4.2. (as the process by which one person deals with one problem) and then discussing the implications of expansion from one person to a system of participants and from one problem to a system of problems in section 4.3. Section 4.4. will discuss the expansion from problem-solving to planning (see Figure 5). Finally, in section 4.5., I will show some of the implications of the use of this model for research on and design of planning processes.

Figure 5. Development of the Conceptual Model.

4.2. Problem-solving

The two basic and rather different models of decision-making or problem-solving that persist in the literature (see f.i. Calhoun and De Smit, 1981, Ebert and Mitchell, 1975, White, 1975) are the logical or structural model, favored by the economists, and the process or phase model preferred by psychologists. An adapted version of the first and one of the many similar versions of the second will be related to one another in this section, at the end of which I will summarize what is new and different in this conceptual model.

Problem-solving, decision-making and choosing are notions which are often used
in similar situations. I will take the problem definition of Ackoff (1962, p. 30) as a starting point. It implies five necessary and sufficient conditions for the existence of a problem:

1. An individual who has the problem: the decision maker.
2. An outcome that is desired by the decision maker.
3. At least two unequally efficient courses of action.
4. A state of doubt in the decision maker.
5. An environment or context of the problem. The environment consists of all factors which can effect the outcome and which are not under the decision maker's control.

This basically means that a person has a problem if he wants something, has unequally efficient ways of trying to get it, and is in doubt about which way is best.

The first step in the development of the conceptual model for planning is the formulation of a conceptual model for one decision maker who deals with one problem. (Dealing with a problem is a wider concept than problem-solving. It includes resolving and dissolving, as well as implementing the selected course of action, see Ackoff and Emery, 1972 p. 108-109.)

It is obvious that this first step neglects systemic aspects such as the fact that the decision-maker is in reality part of a system of decision makers and the fact that the problem is in reality part of a larger system of problems, in other words that the environment can be acted upon and therefore be controlled. This step recognizes that the decision-maker as well as the problem each consist of related parts, although the decision-maker will be regarded as a black box, as a monolithic entity. (The fact that the decision-maker is regarded as a black box, a whole in whose structure we take no interest, does not preclude the application of this model to situations with more than one decision-maker. This is demonstrated clearly by Allison (1971) when he applied his Model I to the policy making process regarding the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in their approach of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Conducting research on the basis of this assumption will not reveal any explanation based on the interrelatedness of the parts of the decision-making body.) The problem will not be seen as such, but will be taken apart along the two dimensions. Starting with the static, structural view on decision-making I will first discuss the components and parameters of the problem situation. Later I will discuss the steps involved in the process of dealing with a problem by presenting a phase model.

4.2.1. Components and Parameters.

The problem situation is characterized by the four components of a purposive state (see Ackoff and Emery, 1972) and their relationships. These components are: (1) the subject that displays choice (A), (2) the choice environment (S), (3) theavailable courses of action (C₁), and (4) the outcomes possible in that environment (O₁).
The relevant relationships between these components are called the parameters of a purposive state (see Figure 6). It is in their definition that I differ from the Ackoff and Emery model.

![Figure 6. Components and Parameters of the Choice Situation.](image)

These parameters are: (1) the value \( V_j \) that an outcome has for \( A \) (the relation between \( A \) and \( O_j \)), (2) the efficiency \( E_{ij} \) that a course of action has for an outcome (the relation between \( C_i \) and \( O_j \)) and (3) the intrinsic value \( II \) of a course of action for \( A \) (the relation between \( A \) and \( C_i \)). (Ackoff and Emery (1972) apply the notion of probability of choice for the relation between \( A \) and \( C_i \). For a more elaborate discussion of the difference in perspective see Calhoun and De Smit, 1981.)

The concept of the intrinsic value of a means was introduced by Ackoff (1975). He indicated that every end is a means to a further end and every means is an end-in-itself. (This extrinsic or instrumental value of ends is ignored in this section (4.2). The recognition of this phenomenon provides one of the main arguments for the expansion as discussed in section 4.4.) Out of this follows that means have two kinds of value: extrinsic or instrumental, and intrinsic or stylistic. The extrinsic value of a course of action is determined by its efficiency \( E_{ij} \) to an outcome \( O_j \). The intrinsic value of a means is the preference that the subject \( A \) has for the use of a course of action \( C_i \) independently of the outcome which is produced by their course of action.

The available courses of action form a set with \( m \) elements, and the possible outcomes form a set with \( n \) elements. The set of courses of actions need not be available in reality, they must be simply perceived as available; the same holds for the various values of \( E_{ij} \). A researcher or an interventionist might have perceptions of the set of outcomes, the set of courses of actions, and the efficiencies which differ from those of the subject \( A \). Also, the subject's perceptions can change over time.
4.2.2. Phases in Decision-Making.

Simon's (1965) dynamic view of the phase model of decision making was seen as a major step in the advancement of conceptual frameworks for viewing the decision-making. He identifies three phases: finding occasions for making decisions; finding possible courses of action; and choosing among courses of action. He subsequently labels those phases as intelligence, design, and choice. Earlier Dewey (1910) formulated a phase model for problem-solving; a large variety of basically similar models exist in the literature (see for an overview Kirsch, 1977).

I prefer to distinguish five interrelated sub-processes in the process of a single decision-maker dealing with a unitary decision (see Figure 7).

![Figure 7. Phases of the Decision-Making Process.](image)

These five phases (setting the agenda, generating alternatives, evaluating choosing and implementing) are not new. (This not to say that these five phases are self-evident. Too many perspectives on planning and decision-making show that one or more of these phases are ignored. In particular "setting the agenda" or "implementing" are often disregarded in conceptual models, see Berg, 1978, Mintzberg and others, 1976, Simon, 1960, and in subsequent definitions of planning, see Chapter 3 and De Smit, 1981.) In a great many attempts to describe decision-making processes one can recognize these phases.

4.2.3. The Process of Dealing with a Problem.

The conceptual model which I propose for dealing with problems is completed by integrating static and dynamic views on decision-making. This I do by describing each of the phases as a black box, whereby the input and output of each box are specified in terms of the previously defined components and parameters of the choice situation (see Calhoun and De Smit, 1981).

"Setting the agenda" is a phase, which I assume to be ended if the subject (A) perceives the existence of a problem. This implies that the minimal necessary and sufficient conditions for the existence of a problem (see Ackoff, 1962) are fulfilled. In terms of the components and parameters this means that: there is a subject (A), the decision-maker, who is in a state of doubt as to which choice to make out of at least
two unequally efficient actions \((c_i, 1 \leq i \leq m \text{ and } m \geq 2)\) in order to attain a desired outcome out of at least two possible outcomes \((q_j, 1 \leq j \leq n \text{ and } n \geq 2)\) in an environment \((S)\). So the output or result of the phase "setting the agenda or initiating" is the situation in which there is a subject \((A)\) with a problem; that is, a decision-maker who wants something and thinks that he has at least two ways of getting what he wants.

This phase can have two different starting conditions, both derived from a partial fulfillment of the minimal necessary and sufficient conditions. The first of these is the situation in which the subject \((A)\) wants something, has some desired future state, and has at least one outcome which is valued positively. The second of these is the situation in which the decision-maker has at least one course of action of which the intrinsic value is positive (he has a tool which he would like to use).

The process by which this initial situation (input for this phase "setting the agenda") is transformed into the problem situation (output) is often described as problem finding. It coincides with what Simon (1960) describes as: finding occasions for making a decision or intelligence activity. Very often this "problem finding" part of the decision process is neglected. Not only is this the case in theory, but also in the actual structuring of group decision-making in particular in so-called democratic processes where all attention is given to voting, but where often (in fact) only one person determines the agenda. (See the discussion of the role of the university president with respect to the consensus metaphor in Cohen and March, 1974).

"Generating alternatives" starts with the result of "setting the agenda", a decision maker with a problem. This phase is ended when no further activities are undertaken to generate more alternatives. This implies that both the set of possible outcomes and available courses of action that the subject \((A)\) wants to consider, are known to him.

"Evaluating" starts with the result of "generating alternatives", a decision maker with a problem who knows all the available courses of action and possible outcomes that he wants to consider. This phase leads to the identification of the parameters of the choice situation. Both the set of outcomes and the set of courses of action are exhaustive sets (as a consequence of the previous phase). By defining the third phase the way I do, I avoid the use of an "other-than" outcome as is necessary in the Ackoff and Emery (1972) model. These sets can be transformed in exclusive and exhaustive sets (see Ackoff and Emery, 1972), so that it is possible to formulate relative values \((V)\) to outcomes, relative intrinsic values \((I)\) to courses of action and relative efficiencies \((E)\) of each course action. This implies that each sum of these parameters equals 1.0, thus \(\sum_j V_j = 1.0\), \(\sum_i I_i = 1.0\) and \(\sum_j E_{ij} = 1.0\). Without yet choosing, the decision-maker can
now, as a result of his inquiry into the parameters of the choice situation, decide to restart the inquiry into available courses of action or possible outcomes. If so, he then re-enters the second phase. If as a result of this second inquiry towards outcomes and courses of action the sets of outcomes and courses of action are changed or enlarged, further inquiry towards the parameters is necessary.

The fourth phase, "choosing", starts with a subject (A) who has a problem, who knows all the outcomes and courses of action that he wants to consider, and who knows the value of all parameters ([l, Vi and Eij for all Q1 and C1]). This phase is ended if the set of courses of action is reduced to one element. (This need not always to be a reduction to one course of action. Sometime a reduction to a small set of courses of action is possible, particular if those courses of action can be implemented simultaneously.) The choice is made, the course of action is chosen.

Choosing involves the construction of a model, that relates the parameters of the choice situation. The personality (individuality) of the decision maker is reflected in this model and in the values of the parameters. So if two individuals are placed in the same choice situation the differences between them can be manifested in two ways; (1) the differences in values of their parameters (l, E and V) and (2) the difference in their model (their way of relating the parameters). This second way can be illustrated if we assume two individuals in the same choice situation who have no difference in values of the parameters. They might still choose different courses of action, for instance if one pays less relative weight to stylistic preferences compared with efficiencies and relative values (ends justifies means), while the other is someone for whom how something is done is more important than the result which comes out of the action.

The last phase "implementing" starts with the result of "choosing"; that is, with one (or more) course(s) of action. This phase ends when this course of action has resulted in an outcome. This outcome might (but need not) belong to the original set of possible outcomes. Implementation is the transformation of a specific, chosen course of action into an outcome.

4.2.4. Conclusions.

The conceptual model as presented thus far, although it is limited to one individual dealing with one problem, already helps us in analyzing planning processes. Since it emphasizes the fact that ends and means are relative concepts, in particular by recognizing the intrinsic value of means, it forces us to question notions like "politically neutral planning", "apolitical civil servants", and "purely instrumental government bureaucracies", as well as the idea that the preparation of policy can be separated from choosing policy. In view of the planning of the Dutch University System it provides a
direct criticism to the dominant role of the professional planner. It also makes the 

events with respect to the "optimistic" student forecasts of the fall of 1977 more easy 
to understand. It leads us to choose sides with the Underminister with respect to the 
issue of "joint commitment" and it provides an immediate critique of the definition of 
planning (as the process of preparing policy decisions) actually used in various stages of 
the planning process.

In more general terms this model provides a perspective on planning as a process 
of decision-making, which implies a process of inquiry which is not limited towards the 
pursuit of truth, but in which the processes of the pursuit of truth, beauty, good, and 
plenty take place in such a way that they cannot be separated.

Furthermore I would like to mention that this model not only encompasses the 
rational actor model of Allison (1972), but also the concept of "bounded rationality" as 
developed by Simon (1957, 1976).

A possible objection against the use of this particular phase model could be that 
it lacks the behavioral foundation of the true process models which try to reconstruct 
the decision process of an individual (see Simon, 1957, 1976, Janis & Mann, 1977). For 
instance, the individual might not go through the "setting the agenda" phase in a clearly 
recognizable way. It is, however, important to note that my aims are not to use this 
model for explaining individual decision-making, but to have a starting point for the 
development of a conceptual model for planning.

The model as presented thus far can be used for analyzing and explaining 
planning processes (as Allison showed in his application of the rational actor model). It 
is obvious that in such cases it will not generate explanations of phenomena which are 
the result of the fact that a problem and a decision-maker are in fact elements of 
larger wholes.

4.3. Expansion to a System of Decision-Makers

In this section the preceding model is expanded by assuming that the subject (A) 
is no longer a black box. The subject (A) is to be seen as a system of individuals. The 
consequences of this expansion are explored by first discussing a very simple system of 
individuals, a system of two individuals who have no division of labor with respect to 
decision-making. Thereafter, the consequences of further expansion of the model are 
explored by increasing the complexity of the system of individuals (decision-makers) 
that deals with a problem. This increase is found in (1) the increase in the number of 
individuals who form the system and (2) by changing the involvement in the decision-
making process (division of labor). Finally, instead of discussing the various systems of 
individuals as we know them, I will briefly comment upon a system which in-it-self is
not an organization but of which the parts are organizations, the interorganizational network. Here I will discuss the increase in the complexity of the conceptual model that arises from the expansion from a system of individuals which forms an organization to a system of individuals, which forms an interorganizational network. This allows me, subsequently, to indicate some of the problems inherent to the decision-making processes of the Dutch University System.

4.3.1. Two Individuals.

The first step in the expansion of the conceptual model can be taken by regarding the subject (A) as a system which is composed of two individuals, who participate equally in the decision process. There is no division of labor with respect to the process of dealing with a problem. With this expansion, communication enters the realm of our discussion. The two individuals must communicate and coordinate their decision-making behavior in order to deal with their problem together. Rules of the game, procedures, formality, explicitness are all examples of elements that enter the decision process as a consequence of this expansion.

A great number of problems can arise which need to be addressed in one way or another. The clearest examples can be found in differences in style and personality (for a definition see Ackoff and Emery, 1972). Two people can differ in the values they attribute to outcomes and the stylistic values they attribute to means. In any joint decision process some agreement should be reached on this. They can also differ with respect to decision-making behavior which can lead to disagreement about the way the various subprocesses are conducted. (See for instance optimizing versus satisficing behavior in the school class experiment in Glueck, 1974.) An optimizer might want to search for as many courses of action as he can find, whereas a satisficer might limit this number as much as possible. If an optimizer and a satisficer have to decide jointly, this might cause problems. A further complication is the potential difference in personalities, as reflected in different ways of relating the parameters of the choice situation. For instance with similar sets of outcomes and courses of action and with similar parameters, a typical utilitarian decision-maker (one who puts little weight on his stylistic values) can considerably differ with respect to his preferred action from someone who regards his stylistic values as important compared to the outcome. In theory these matters can be solved by developing a joint decision model, having a joint decision process and determining jointly the values of the parameters. In practice this proves to be impossible and necessary intermediary steps will be made explicit as part of a process of negotiation.

The notion of meta-decision-making becomes relevant in this context. Decisions must be made about the decision-making process, introducing a whole new power game about the rules which coordinate the decision-making process (see Rade and De Smit,
An obvious and simple expansion of this model can be found by assuming that the number of participants will increase. The complexity of the decision process grows with the number of participants (for instance, see Shaw and others, 1957). The possible characteristics of the group also come into play. With respect to this particular research I will limit myself to a particular type of group, the organization. (An organization is a social group with a functional division of labor relative to its common objective(s), see Ackoff and Emery, 1972.)

4.3.2. Division of Labor.

The assumption made in the previous section of equal involvement of each of the participants in the decision-making process almost never holds in practice. In group decision-making what usually happens is characteristic of an organization - a division of labor. A division of labor with respect to the decision-making process simply means that the activities involved are not equally shared in all phases. The American college president (see Cohen and March, 1972), who limits himself to "setting the agenda", is one example. The familiar split between the staffers, who prepare policy and thereby are "generating the alternatives", and the decision-makers, who "choose", is another. A division of labor can be also worked out for meta-decision-making and decision-making by having one of the participants decide about the pace and organization of the decision-making process.

In principle this division of labor allows specialization, the involvement of more participants and a greater efficiency of the decision-making process. With respect to big issues, in particular in view of the "implementation", a division of labor is unavoidable. So although a division of labor is often unavoidable and also often desirable it creates a number of new problems which need to be addressed. In principle these problems arise out of the relationships (parameters) between the subject (A) and the other components. (The focus is here on the additional problems that arise out of the expansion from the subject (A) as a system of decision-makers without a division of labor to a system with a division of labor for decision-making.) I will not present an exhaustive overview of the consequence of this expansion, but instead limit myself to two areas of concern; the stylistic aspects of the decision-making process and the obvious consequence of any division of labor, the coordination of what has been divided.

Different styles of the various participants create additional difficulties in the process of dealing with a problem. An example might illustrate this. Let us assume a division of labor in which it is a staffer's task to generate alternatives, while others take care of evaluating, choosing and implementing. In his work this staffer comes across four courses of action \((C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4)\). When this staffer has a clear stylistic
preference for C1 and C2 over C3 and C4 he might try to limit the set of courses of action which are considered to C1 and C2. Where a number of staffers work together on generating alternatives, this might result in so much compromising that the set is limited to one particular course of action. (This is the case in most real-life policy making.)

Another consequence of a division of labor is the need for coordination. The literature on organization theory provides plentiful insights on how coordination can be achieved. I will discuss the two general principles which were presented by Galbraith (1973), (1) rules, programs, procedures and (2) hierarchy. Coordination of the decision-making activities by means of rules or procedures leads to machine-like behavior, which is characteristic for the typical bureaucracy (see section 4.3.3.). Coordination by creating a hierarchy presupposes the acceptance of some ultimate authority in the decision-making process. In some systems of decision-makers (for example the bureaucracy) this assumption might hold, in others (like the interorganizational network) it does not. Since most strategic decision-making is non-routine decision-making, coordination by hierarchy results often in an overload for the top. As such the system tends to behave like the monolithic subject (see 4.2.).

4.3.3. Systems of Decision-Makers.

Many different systems of decision-makers with a division of labor are found in practice. One might easily be tempted to present a typology of all those systems2). I will resist this temptation and limit myself to two ideal types of organizations: the bureaucracy and the interorganizational network.

A bureaucracy is an organization with a functional division of labor, but in which the parts behave in a prescribed way. In my view this ideal of Weber (1946) comes close to what Ackoff and Emery (1972) call an organism. (They indicate that an organism is a purposeful system that has a functional division of labor. Its parts are not purposeful.) The organization is capable of selecting ends and means, but the parts are not. The parts do not (or are not supposed to) display purposeful behavior. This implies a denial of the stylistic preferences of those parts and is therefore a concept which distorts our view, since human beings are purposeful and have stylistic preferences. To overcome these humanistic problems these organizations must minimize the human element by the use of rules which guide the behavior of the parts. Allison's Model II (1972) fits this description. Focussing upon these characteristics forces us to seek standard operating procedures and rules in our efforts to explain the decision-making behavior of these organizations.

The administrative services of the universities as well as the Ministry can be characterized as bureaucracies, and in the analysis there were many examples of the
power of rules, "business as usual" and so on. The conflicting views between Under­
minister Klein and his civil servants about the possible role of the civil servants in joint
planning show how powerful those concepts are, not only for the researcher, but in
particular for the participants themselves.

An interorganizational network is formed by a system the parts of which are
purposeful, but in which the whole is instrumental to the parts. The organization which
consists of purposeful individuals coordinated hierarchically does not work. Therefore
negotiation becomes a dominant characteristic. The "where you stand depends on where
you sit" paradigm of Allison's Model III describes the behavior of the participants. The
stylistic differences of the participants are recognized, but the power game determines
the possible influence of a participant. The two most important phases of the decision-
making process are: "setting the agenda" and "implementation". Furthermore the pace
of the process becomes an instrument for influencing the outcome.

Since the difference between chaos and the last type of decision-making is in the
process of negotiation, the necessary conditions for successful negotiation become very
relevant. Again there is a problem of communication. A joint language is necessary, but
also some agreement on "rules of the game" for negotiation. Rules, programs, and
procedures form an important means for coordination of decision-making activities, as
a result of a lack of other means (hierarchy).

An extension of this type of organization leads us to the interorganizational
network. This can be defined as a social system of which the parts are organizations.
The most complex type of such a network is provided by having different*types of
organizations in such a network.

In dealing with a problem such a network has two ways of dividing labor. It may
form groups with representatives of each organization and those groups divide the work
along functional lines. Examples of this are groups that make allocation models. The
other way is formed by the division of labor among the various participating organiza­
tions. For example the Ministry has other tasks than the universities.

An additional problem in interorganizational planning arises from the internal
subprocesses in each organization. As the analysis of the planning process of the Dutch
University System shows clearly, the fact that various participants in a joint decision
process are unaware of the nature of the decision-making process in the participating
organizations creates additional complexity which is not easy to overcome, unless we
would take the unfortunate road of reducing variety by making all participating
organizations similar. An example might again illustrate this phenomenon. Let us
assume a network of organizations engaged in "generating alternatives". If they agree
on a division of those activities among two participating organizations, the internal
procedures can strongly differ. For instance one organization might decide it to be
necessary that all its members are consulted and involved and thereby might require
substantial time for this process, where the other organization has an internal division of labor, so that it can respond almost immediately.

In view of the preceding discussion it will hardly be surprising that many people doubt whether interorganizational decision-making with true involvement of the various participants is really possible. (Yet we see as many examples of successes as of failures in attempts to develop effective interorganizational networks. The farmers' associations in Europe and the brewers' associations in the United States can be seen as successful examples.) Clearly it can be seen that standard recipes for structuring those decision processes are not available.

4.3.4. Conclusions.

In developing the conceptual model from one decision-maker dealing with one problem to a system of decision-makers who deal with one problem, the emphasis was on the increasing complexity of this model. In this perspective all kinds of difficulties were introduced as a consequence of subsequent steps in this expansion. The negative side of this way of developing the argument is that the advantages of group decision-making over individual decision-making did not get much attention. Yet it is clear that if more individuals are involved this implies more knowledge and a greater capacity for observation and information processing.

This model does not imply any stand or a preference for group (or even interorganizational) decision-making or individual decision-making. It simply tries to indicate where to look and what to take into account if we try to analyze planning processes which involve a system of participants.

4.4. Expansion to Systems of Problems

As we saw earlier the two characteristics of the systems perspective are: A system consists of related parts, it forms a whole, and a system is a part of a larger whole, the environment (the open-system concept). The first of these two system characteristics is already recognized in the one/one situation (see section 4.2.), where we saw that a decision itself is made up of a system of subdecisions. Application of the open system concept to problem-solving leads to the recognition that a problem by itself is a part of a larger whole, a part of a system of problems. This is the other side of the relativity of ends and means. If every means is also an end in itself, then the complement is that any end or outcome is to some degree a means for something else.

In the practice of policy-making this phenomenon has been recognized many times, and in the literature a variety of labels are used to indicate these types of poorly structured strategic problems. Ackoff (1974, 1981) uses the term "messes", which has negative connotations which are not implied in the systems concept. Ozbekhan (1973) uses the French word "problematique", which connotes more precisely the idea of a
whole set of related problems. Both Rittel and Webber (1973) and Mason and Mitroff (1973) use the term "wicked problems", which only indicates the fact that they are difficult to solve, but it does not encompass the systemic character.

I have broken the decision-making process down into five interdependent parts, five phases. This means that a system of problems for which one has to deal with a system of decisions provides us with a network of those parts. So the system of decision-making processes can be visualized as a network of related subprocesses. These networks can show a variety of different characteristics. The number of elements is one of those. The structure of the network is another.

A first step in expanding the conceptual system can be made by assuming that instead of the subject (A) who deals with one (isolated) problem, he (A) has to deal with two (related), but similar problems. For instance, the relation might be given by the fact that some of the courses of action which are available for dealing with one problem exclude the use of some courses of action for dealing with the other problem.

The consequences of this expansion are two fold. The relation between the two problems will present a number of constraints for each of the two and the problem-solving capacity of the subject (A) will be divided between the two problems. (This is not to say, that there would be no possible synergistic effect in the simultaneous involvement with two problems.)

A further step in the expansion can be taken by the assumption that the system of problems contains more than two elements. The more elements it contains, the more the capacity and attention of the subject for each problem is reduced as a consequence of the distribution over the system as a whole.

A next step in our expansion is made by assuming that the elements of the system are different. So the system of problems is made up of dissimilar problems, which require different decision-making processes. For instance, two or more decisions of the system may be in different phases at a specific moment in time or, even more complex, the two decision-making processes may show differences in pace.

Examples of these can be found in the planning process of the Dutch University System. I will only mention two examples of two related decisions with different paces. The first example is the decision about the allocation of resources for personnel, which involved the related decisions about an allocational model for education and one for research. The first decision evolved fast, the second slowly and as a consequence the outcome of the first had an impact on the second but not vice versa. The second example is the related decisions about development plans and crown chair formation. The development plans were decided upon quickly, but the crown chair formation required long deliberations at the school level. As a consequence, the development plans contained the elements of a crown chair formation decision without being made in coordination with that decision-making process.
4.5. Implications

A conceptual model for planning would imply the integration of the two expansions as made to the problem solving model in the preceding sections. This is not further worked out in this dissertation for two reasons. It would require a further development and specification of those expansions and the development of the conceptual model would start to become the central theme of this book. As it stands this chapter provides an unfinished product which allows plenty of space for further work. Still, I would like to explore the implications of using the conceptual model as it now stands for the analysis and design of planning processes, such as the one of the Dutch University System.

If we expand both dimensions at once we face a complexity which seems difficult if not impossible to handle. In practice this complexity is reduced by using less complicated conceptual models like the ones developed in decision theory. This will be done not only by the researcher who analyzes a particular planning process but also by the participants, who are likely to have models which differ from each other. Even more complex; the participants use different models for different situations. Very common is for example the simultaneous use of complex models (like Allison's models 2 and 3) for the own organization with the use of less complex models (like Allison's model 1) for other organizations. (See Allison, 1971.) It is this phenomenon that makes planning fascinating, the variety in paradigms and definitions of planning, perspectives on planning which exist not only among researchers, but also among participants in planning processes.

If one implication of this model is the increase of complexity, which we subsequently must reduce by using simpler models, one might raise the question, why use this model in the first place? I see mainly two reasons for this. The model contains a number of new elements that provide explanations which other models do not. Second, this model encompasses others, so that we get an idea of what is lacking in a particular analysis in which we use one of the other models.

As I indicated earlier (see section 4.2.3), the relative distinction of ends and means, in particular the intrinsic value of means with respect to the various phases of the decision-making process, implies a rejection of the pure instrumentality of human beings and organizations, and the neutrality of the professional planners, civil servants, forecasters, and the like. Thereby this conceptual model provides in essence an argument in favor of participative planning, in particular of stakeholder involvement in the process.

As such it supports the position taken by Underminister Klein about the role of his civil servants, rather than the position of those civil servants themselves (see De Smit, 1981). It also reveals more clearly the role of the forecasters, illustrated nicely by a remark of one of them saying: "Tell me what you want to prove and I'll provide you
with a sound forecast which proves it. Furthermore, it makes us distrust "neutral" planning coordination groups like the National Steering Group as proposed by McKinsey and Company.

Attention is also drawn to the fallacies of the structure of the university democracy in the Netherlands. In particular, the fact that the ultimate authority is founded in the community itself implies a stakeholder definition in which the relationship with the larger whole is not reflected. Furthermore the "Duplex Ordo" (see the discussion of the "WUB" in De Smit, 1981) is a clear example of the disregard for the systemic nature of the planning process as reflected by the idea of a system of problems.

The model as presented obviously leaves many questions unanswered. One of the more interesting ones is the question of how to coordinate decision-making in interorganizational planning. Without a superstructure, the development of rules and procedures seems reasonable, but the mechanistic organization which results from this looks unpleasantly like a bureaucracy.

In summary, the model calls for a broad perspective on planning including politics, power plays, processes of negotiation and so on. It implies a proactive perspective on planning due to the recognition of the systemic character. The recognition of the idea of the system of problems together with the three principles for decomposing systems (subsystems, aspect systems and phase systems, see De Leeuw, 1974) calls for comprehensive and continuous planning. (Comprehensive is here-used as both integrative and coordinative planning implying both the coordination of decision-making for subsystems as well as the integration of decision-making for aspect systems, where continuous planning implies the integration and coordination of decision-making for phase systems.) The recognition of the subject (A) as being composed of a system of decision-makers who are purposeful individuals with stylistic preferences and separate personalities calls for participative planning.
To try to evaluate the changes that took place in the development of a planning process for the Dutch University System is not an easy task. First of all it is difficult to pinpoint the change that one wants to evaluate, since in reality there is an ongoing process of change which does not stop. There is not one event that can be treated as a stimulus of which the effect can be measured. The process of change consisted of a large series of small events that all contributed. Second, as in all real-life policy research, there is no way of knowing the effects of no-change, since the experimental model of before-and-after measurements or an experimental and control group (see Suchman, 1967) cannot be used in this case.

If I, nevertheless, try to undertake an effort to evaluate the changes in planning that took place during the last decade I will first assess the nature of the proposed and implemented changes. In doing so I will try to concentrate on the most important changes that were implemented in 1978 and 1979. The nature of those changes will be assessed in terms of (potential) progress with respect to the principles of proactive planning. (See Ackoff (1974); participative, coordinated, integrated, continuous planning of ends, means, resources, organization, implementation, and control. Instead of coordinated and integrated I use the notion of comprehensive planning.)

Whether these changes in the planning process led to improved planning of post-secondary education remains still a question. In order to cope with this question a method of evaluation is chosen. This method is tailored to the specific circumstances of the Dutch University System and its planning process and is used in an attempt to determine the effect of those changes upon the university system. My conclusion is that the measurable effect of the changes in the planning process on the functioning of the university system is negligible. In view of the conclusions of the analysis of the planning process (see Chapter 3) this is hardly surprising.

Yet it seems to me that it would be unfair to evaluate the changes of the planning process only on the basis of the directly measurable, tangible results that were the consequences of those changes. Therefore, finally, I will also discuss some of the possible consequences which cannot be assessed in the available time nor with the method that was used.
5.1. Changes in the Planning Process

The characteristics by which changes in a planning process can be assessed in terms of progress towards the principles of proactive planning are the degree of participation, the degree of comprehensiveness, and the degree of continuity. These characteristics can be seen as inherent properties of the planning system, which might (but need not necessarily) result in a change in the output of that system.

![Figure 8. The Planning System and the University System.](image)

In the case at hand there are three systems to be analyzed. The metaplanning system, the planning system, and the university system itself. (I will concentrate the discussion in this section on the planning system and will only deal with the metaplanning system insofar as this contributes to the explanation of the changes in the planning system. The consequences for the university system itself will appear in the next section.) The output of the metaplanning system is action which (it is to be hoped) results in change or improvement of the planning system. The output of the planning system is action which (it is to be hoped) results in change or improvement of the university system (see Figure 8).

Between 1970 and 1980 there have been two distinct proposals for an improved planning process and one for a change in the metaplanning system. Two of these three proposals were implemented.
The proposal of the New Start was a metaplanning proposal, which was implemented. (Although there was never a proposal that was implemented, the Leibbrandt memorandum can be seen as such. In reality there were a number of different and changed proposals, which were developed over time.) As such it showed progress towards the proactive planning principles compared with both the existing planning practice and the preceding proposal of McKinsey and Company:

- The involvement of the universities in the metaplanning process demonstrated progress with respect to participation, although by no means all stakeholders were participating.
- The emphasis on the process mode of planning as well as the discussion of the long-term and middle-term planning process showed progress with respect to the principle of continuous planning.
- Both the inclusion of decision-making (as distinct from only the preparation of decisions) and the coordination of the plans of the various universities in the proposed planning process showed the increasing comprehensiveness of this proposal, although it became clear from the implementation that real comprehensive planning was far out of reach.

The proposal for the integration of metaplanning and planning as reflected in the adjustment memorandum (see Ministry of Education and Sciences, 1976) can be seen as the basis for the changes which led to the current planning system. Again progress is shown towards the principles of proactive planning:

- Participation increased because of the involvement of the universities in the planning process, although the dominant role of the professional planners shows how limited this progress was. In fact, it constituted no progress from the preceding ATOOM period, although some in comparison with the pre-McKinsey period.
- The middle-term orientation constituted some progress towards the principle of continuous planning, but again this was already present with the existing planning practice of ATOOM and in the proposals of McKinsey. Furthermore, the lack of long term orientation shows how little progress there was.
- The comprehensiveness is somewhat more difficult to assess, because several dimensions should be considered here. Certainly there was an attempt at coordination, since all universities were simultaneously involved and tried to have their plans related to one another. Hardly any integrative effort was made since the time pressures precluded the integration of school plans in university plans and so on. The variety of aspects (issues and agenda items) was deliberately kept small (budgets and tasks) in the first year of implementation, but the proposal indicated that this variety should increase in later years. (The proposal made the assumption that the limited capacity of the planning process would require a limited number of issues, at the agenda in the first year. After a learning process the number of issues
and the degree of comprehensiveness would increase gradually.) This was demonstrated in the second adjustment round, although negated by the exclusion of the proposals for restructuring of the university system.

The two proposals together make for the most important change which took place in the planning process during the last decade. The most important features of this change are:
- the new "participative" organization (the POO/AGP structure).
- the multi-year orientation and the agreements about budgets and tasks (the multi-year agreements).
- the normative ratios, which formed the foundation of the multi-year agreements (the ratios were negotiated instead of derived from existing teaching practice).

This change constitutes only limited progress towards the principles of proactive planning. In the view of an activist for proactive planning this progress is far too little. In particular, the abandoning of the development plans, which could have been a means for increasing participation and further integration, was a setback. The lack of understanding and lack of trust of the political leaders towards proactive planning forms one of the greatest obstacles to further development of the planning process.

The change in planning of which I try to assess the consequences, is a change in a joint process which due to limited (and increasing limiting) perspectives on planning of the main participants as well as legal and other constraints was reduced by those participants to changes in the process of budget allocations.

Although I reject the planning conception that is the basis for this reduction, I will show that even from this limited perspective the changes in planning had no effect.

5.2. Method of Evaluation

In evaluative research (see Suchman, 1967) three main conditions of method apply: (1) sampling equivalent experimental and control groups; (2) isolation and control of the stimulus; and (3) definition and measurement of criteria of effect. I will first discuss the third condition and later (see 5.2.2) address the other two conditions.

5.2.1. Criteria.

Suchman (1967) indicates that a crucial question in evaluative research is, "What do we mean by a successful result?" If I translate this question to the attempt to evaluate the major change that took place in the planning process of the Dutch University System, it boils down to, "What do we mean by improved planning?"

In principle this question can be answered in two ways: one could formulate an ideal planning process and compare the change in the actual process to this ideal; the criteria for evaluation are found in the planning process itself. Or one could measure the impact that the change in the planning process has upon the functioning of the
university system; these criteria are found in the function that this planning process performs. I will briefly discuss the first in order to clarify my preference for the second.

One of the fallacies of increasing professionalism is a devotion to method for its own sake, instead of an orientation to results. In medicine this is very well expressed by the saying: "The operation was a complete success, but the patient died". To some extent the credo of planners that "in planning, process is the most important product" can be interpreted to reflect this orientation. In view of this it will hardly be surprising that my first attempts to specify criteria for evaluating the changes in this planning process were derived from this professional perspective. In doing so I arrived (wrongly) at such criteria as the degree of participation, comprehensiveness (coordination and integration), and the time span.

Although I will not downplay the importance of this type of (professional) criterion in any intermediary process, I want to emphasize, that the ultimate criteria for any method or technique must be found in the function it performs for a larger whole. So the important question is not whether the changes in the planning process brought about a well-organized, well-structured, smoothly operating planning process, but whether this improved planning process led to improvements of the Dutch University System. (To paraphrase Ackoff, 1981, here; the crucial question is not whether we improve the rain-dancing, but whether we improve our control of the weather.) So the criteria for evaluation of the improved planning process are to be found in its impact upon the system it serves.

This recognition of the fact that a "good" planning process does not necessarily produce "good" plans and furthermore that the making of "good" plans does not necessarily result in desirable changes to the system for which the plans were developed, forms the starting point for the development of the method for evaluation. Of course, it is very likely that well-structured, well-organized planning processes will develop good plans, as it is likely that "good" plans will be implemented.

The impact of improved planning upon the Dutch University System can only be determined based on a limited number of aspects. I will derive those aspects, and thereby the criteria from the discussion of the role of the Dutch University System (see De Smit, 1981) in its environment, the Dutch society at large, and from the basic tasks of the university system as formulated in the law and as reflected in the discussions of the Advisory Group on Planning.

The universities perform three functions simultaneously: the generation of knowledge (research), the dissemination of knowledge (education), and the application of knowledge (consultancy, patient care, neighborhood assistance). The Dutch law specifies these functions by saying that the universities must:

- educate
practice science
- foster social responsibility.

The educational aim is further specified by saying that education implies:
- preparation for the independent practice of science
- preparation for professional work
- furtherance of insight into the interdependence of the sciences.

These aims have to be operationalized a bit further by bringing the background and number of the students into the discussion. The Dutch University System must provide every qualified potential student the possibility of acquiring the education he desires. (This boils down to avoiding restrictions with respect to the influx of students, the avoidance of "numerus fixus".) In the Dutch situation this simply means that every student with the proper type of high school diploma must be admitted to the educational program he wishes to attend.

The changes in the planning process can be said to have an impact upon the Dutch University System if the way this system performs the above mentioned functions is changed. These functions are all but defined in an operational manner, which allows measurement. A number of assumptions will allow me to narrow those functions down to key characteristics which can be measured subsequently in terms of variables. Before I do so, however, I will address the problems which have to be faced in this evaluation.

5.2.2. Problems with Evaluations.

An evaluation of the change in planning of the Dutch University System faces problems that result from the failure to meet the two other main conditions as mentioned by Suchman (1967). There is no control group, which was not effected by the change in planning (first condition), and it is not possible to isolate and control the stimulus (second condition). Furthermore, it faces problems that result from insufficiently clear criteria for the effect of the change in planning upon the system.

In order to cope with these problems a number of questions have to be answered:
- If the system is changed, how can one tell whether these changes constitute an improvement?
- How can the contribution of improved planning to the changes of the system be distinguished from other sources?
- How can one account for a possible time-lag between changes in the planning process and changes of the system which resulted from that? In other words if the system has not yet been changed, how does one know that it will not change in the future?
- How can one compare the "unchanged" and the "changed" system?

The first question only needs to be answered if the system proves to be changed
due to changes in planning. It is only after finding out what the changes in the system are that the question of whether these changes constitute an improvement of the system needs to be addressed. Since we will see that the system was not changed, I can put this question aside. If at a later stage changes will occur, a discussion of an idealized university system could be helpful in answering this question.²)

The second question focusses on the other processes which might have coproduced changes in the system. The question of the determination of the degree to which the changes of the system can be attributed to changes in the planning process is common for non-laboratory research. Unfortunately this recognition does not make answering simpler. Again the assumption that the system was not changed, helps to find a way out, since it leaves only one of two opinions: the change in planning had no effect upon the system; or the change in planning was neutralized by some other parallel process. There was no sign of the latter, so I developed the evaluation based on the former assumption.

The question of the time-lag is difficult to handle both in general and in specific terms. In general (describing the situation as a stimulus/response model), if a stimulus (changes in planning) is applied to a black box (the university system), how can one know whether a response (change of the system) will be generated in the future? In principle two ways of dealing with this are available. One can try to find a model of the black box and simulate the stimulus on the model, or one can try to open up the box and analyse the relationships between the subsystems. By doing the latter one would develop a theory or explanation of the relations so that the chain of events from stimulus to response can be followed and explained. The task of developing a simulation model of the Dutch University System which has some reasonable degree of isomorphism with that system goes beyond the scope of this discussion. I have therefore limited myself to analyzing the university system and the impact of changes in the planning process upon the various parts of that system.

In order to identify the changes of the system a comparison must be made between the "unchanged" and the "changed" system. Since there exist no control group which was not affected by the changes in planning, a first step would be to compare the university system before and after changes in the planning process were implemented. This brings in the time dimension and the problem that all kinds of other influences upon the system have to be accounted for. Ideally a researcher would like to compare the state of the "unchanged" system at time \( t \) with the "changed" system at time \( t \). Since there is no control group and the actual system can only be described, as it was, before and after the changes in planning took place, the description of the "unchanged" system has to be constructed.
5.2.3. Key System Characteristics.

In an attempt to make the criteria for evaluation operationally useful I will make a number of assumptions.

- Fostering social responsibility can be seen as a property of both education and the practice of science, and not as a separate function of the university system.

This assumption limits the possible functions of the university system, which can be affected by the change in planning to education and the practice of science.

- In view of the organizational structure (the schools are independent of the university in structuring their educational programs - see the discussion of the Duplex Ordo in De Smit, 1981) I assume that the changes in the planning process do not and will not have a significant impact upon the manner in which those programs are structured.

This assumption limits the possible impact of the changes in the planning process to the variation in the number of students which were to be admitted to the various programs and to the role of the practice of science (while fostering social responsibility).

- The practice of science is, in terms of choice of methods and topics, almost exclusively controlled by individual scientists. At the school level there are some efforts to coordinate and develop a school policy, but all of this is very much just beginning. The university level can only influence the practice of science in terms of the capacity for the conduct of science that it provides to the various schools. (In view of the limited responsibilities of both the university level and the Minister this capacity is in practice only treated quantitatively i.e. full time equivalents of academic staff, the size of the formation or the number of chairs.) This assumption limits the possible impact of the changes in planning process on the practice of science to the impact on the capacity for conducting scientific activities.

- The application of knowledge in the Netherlands is either funded separately (patient care) or treated as a private activity of the academic staff. Therefore the practice of science can be seen as limited to academic research (in the broad sense, including literature review and so on).

This assumption limits the capacity for the conduct of science to the capacity for research.

In principle the changes in the planning process could result in a variety of means by which the university system was to be changed. Those could include changes in rules (hiring policies, personnel policies, enrollment policies, tuition policies, instruction practices and so on), changes in organizational responsibilities, changes in resources. In practice the joint planning process of which the changes are assessed only dealt with changes in resources in terms of money budgets. This fact not only reflects the limited view on planning of the main participants, but also the typical organizational division of
responsibilities over individual faculty members, schools, universities and the Ministry of Education and Sciences, as well as the division of labor within the Ministry. This leads to the fifth assumption.

Changes in enrollment and capacity for research cannot be attributed to changes in the planning process if these changes did not lead to any changes in budgets for each university. In other words if I subdivide the university system in two subsystems; the planning system and the planned system, then it can be said that the only output of this joint planning system (which acts upon the planned system) is a change in the distribution of the overall budget.

So the functioning of the Dutch University System is changed if the enrollment and the capacity for research is changed. This (possible) change can be attributed to the change in the joint planning process if this change in planning led to a change in budgets. The key variables to analyse are enrollment and capacity of research as determinants of the overall function of the system and budgets as the output of the planning process and the instrument for realizing changes.

Each of those variables can be analysed for the university system as a whole and be broken down to university, cluster of academic disciplines and so on. In view of the autonomy of each university with respect to budgets, there is no use for a further breakdown of budget figures than by university and within each university by budget for personnel and for other expenses. All the various allocation models and ratios which are used in the planning process are not part of the multi-year agreements. A particular university is not bound to appropriate its funds internally based on the grounds by which the national government provided the funds to that university.

Enrollment and capacity for research are the key variables for analysing the functioning of the university system. From the perspective of the society at large these data should be studied for the university system as a whole, and be broken down to academic disciplines. In order to contrast these data with the budgets they are broken down to university level also.

5.2.4. Data Gathering.

The data on actual budgets are available in the Ministry of Education and Sciences. In order to get an assessment of the budget figures for the "no change" situation, the university budgets are calculated with the use of the "old" method of budget allocation. (The method used in ATOOM 1978. The computation was made based on the guidelines as provided by the ATOOM working papers (see Ministry of Education and Sciences, 1977.)

The enrollment figures are available, but not all are necessary for this analysis. In view of my assumption that the functioning of the educational subsystem is not
affected by changes in the planning process, any change in enrollment due to changed planning comes about by means of a changed influx of students. The influx of students in the Dutch University System is from the perspective of the joint planning process largely uncontrollable except possibly in academic disciplines where restrictions in admissions ("numeri fixi") were created. This leads to the next assumption.

- In all non-restricted academic disciplines changes in the planning process will have no impact upon the influx and the enrollment of students.

In order to show the relative weight of a possible impact of the changed planning I provide data on all disciplines. The actual influx data are grouped by university and cluster of academic disciplines and separate data are provided on the restricted disciplines. All these data come from the Ministry and the Academic Council, which prepares the yearly decision of Parliament about restrictions in admission.

With respect to the restricted disciplines the influx could be effected either by changed budgets or by some other changed part of the planning process like changed ratios or time-horizon. For the latter no formal evaluative procedure has been worked out. Instead some major participants have been questioned about the way the proposals for restrictions were developed and about the possible impact of the changed planning.

Data on the capacities for research are only available in the multi-year agreements. This implies that these data are constructed and are derived from budgets and assumptions about teaching ratios and average salary.

- The capacity for research plus capacity for education and "other" activities equals the total available faculty time. Assuming that "other" activities are constant, or at least independent of changes in planning, and assuming that the capacity for education is a function of the enrollment, I can determine the capacity for research by means of enrollment and total faculty time. Total faculty time can be translated into budgets, so the capacity for research can be calculated out of budgets and enrollment. This implies that those (calculated) capacities will only be affected by the changes in the planning process if the changes of budgets or changes in admissions due to restrictions take place. So data on capacities for research need only to be gathered (by calculation), if changes in the other variables, budgets and enrollments, prove to have taken place.

The main question is whether the budget or the functions that the Dutch University System and its parts perform would have been different in 1979 and the years thereafter if the planning process would not have been changed? The first impact of the "improved" planning process could possibly be noticed in the first multi-year agreement of 1979. So two moments will be points of reference; 1977 as the moment in which there had been no impact of changed planning and 1979 as the moment in which the first consequence of the implementation of the changed planning could be noticed.
5.3. Results

The change in planning from the "old" ATOOM method to the "new, improved" method was initiated by Underminister Klein. The main reason was that the "old" method would not allow for sufficient changes (see De Smit, 1981). The "new, improved" method would enable the allocation of resources based on new policies.

A first appraisal of the "improved" method can be made by comparing the budget allocations of 1977 with those of 1979. In this way a comparison of before and after the implementation of the changed planning can be made. This comparison is shown in Table 2. In this table next to the change in budgets from 1977 to 1979, the enrollment in 1977 and the expected increase of this enrollment from 1977 to 1979 is also given.

| TABLE 2 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Budget | Budget Difference | Enroll. | Incr. |
| RUL (Leiden) | 336.7 (265.3) | 343.9 (276.5) | 7.2 (11.2) | 1.1 (2.1) | 14481 | 6.5 |
| RUG (Groningen) | 318.6 (269.4) | 324.7 (274.9) | 6.1 (5.5) | 1.0 (1.0) | 15615 | 7.1 |
| RUU (Utrecht) | 466.5 (374.6) | 498.0 (397.9) | 31.5 (23.3) | 3.4 (3.1) | 21706 | 7.3 |
| RUR (Rotterdam) | 170.6 (122.5) | 167.7 (128.6) | -2.9 (6.1) | -0.8 (2.5) | 7256 | 15.7 |
| UvA (Amsterdam) | 391.9 (323.3) | 397.5 (332.1) | 5.6 (-2.1) | 0.7 (-0.3) | 22358 | - |
| VU (Amsterdam) | 253.4 (207.1) | 273.4 (223.5) | 20.0 (16.4) | 3.9 (4.0) | 12417 | 0.2 |
| KUN (Nijmegen) | 294.2 (240.2) | 310.4 (249.7) | 16.2 (9.5) | 2.8 (2.0) | 14824 | 5.3 |
| KHT (Tilburg) | 30.5 (45.1) | 53.5 (44.8) | 3.0 (0.3) | 0.3 (-0.3) | 4255 | 3.7 |
| THD (Delft) | 363.9 (277.8) | 383.2 (289.5) | 19.2 (11.7) | 2.7 (2.1) | 10413 | -2.6 |
| THE (Eindhoven) | 175.5 (137.5) | 184.4 (144.1) | 8.4 (6.9) | 2.5 (2.4) | 4280 | 11.4 |
| THT (Twente) | 104.4 (83.6) | 108.8 (88.5) | 4.4 (4.9) | 2.1 (2.9) | 2422 | 7.0 |
| Total | 2926.2 (2346.4) | 3046.5 (2439.2) | 119.3 (92.6) | 2.0 (2.0) | 130527 | 6.8 |

Between brackets is the personnel budget. Figures are in millions of guilders (a rough conversion is: two guilders equal one US dollar).

No data are provided for the Agricultural University of Wageningen and for the University of Limburg. For Wageningen not all data were available. Limburg, as smallest and youngest university with only a medical school, is treated separately and is in fact outside the joint planning process.

This table shows an average yearly increase of two percent and a maximum of 3.9 (for the Free University of Amsterdam). Already these changes can be seen as marginal, however in order to appraise the impact of the planning process on these data, the table should be corrected for the automatic increase of salary level. (This is the increase due to the automatic raise as a result of increase in age, incidentele looncomponent. In view of the existing salary scales the level of personnel cost rises
automatically with the increase of age. Historical data show that this increase is about 2%. The factual increase is more in view of the compensation for inflation, but these data have been adjusted for inflation.) This correction would lower the real changes by two percent or more.

In order to appraise the impact of the "improved" planning process without having to correct the data it is more precise to compare the budgets in terms of full-time equivalents of scientific staff. This can be done safely because the new method took scientific staff as a starting point. This comparison is shown in Table 3.

The average increase was to be 0.4 percent per annum. The largest changes occurred at Delft where a decrease of 1.1% took place (together with a decrease in enrollment of 2.6%).

Already based on these data the conclusion can be drawn that the change in planning did not result in any substantial change in budgets, since the expectation would be that the "old" method would lead to less change than this "new" method. The data of 1983 (see Table 3) indicate that the "new" method did also not lead to substantial changes in the near future. For the sake of completeness the comparison between the allocation for 1979 based on the "old" and the one based on the "new" method will nevertheless be given.

### TABLE 3

**SCIENTIFIC STAFF BUDGETS**

(source Ministry of Education 1978)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific staff in full time equivalents</th>
<th>1978</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>difference</th>
<th>1983</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abs</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUL</td>
<td>1911.0</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUG</td>
<td>1882.6</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUU</td>
<td>2757.3</td>
<td>2750</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUR 2)</td>
<td>807.0</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVA</td>
<td>2369.7</td>
<td>2380</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VU</td>
<td>1483.6</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUN</td>
<td>1710.1</td>
<td>1722</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHT 2)</td>
<td>287.2</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THD</td>
<td>1404.8</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>-15</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE</td>
<td>711.5</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THT 2)</td>
<td>434.0</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15758.8</td>
<td>15815</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A precise result of a budget allocation for 1979 with the use of the "old" method cannot be generated. The "old" method was improved and adjusted every year by the professional planners to insure that the outcomes would differ as little as possible from the previous year. So most probably the real results of the application of the "old" method to 1979 would lie in between the budgets of 1978 and 1979. The results of a comparison between the two budgets for 1979 confirm this conclusion as drawn earlier (see Table 4). The outcome of the allocation of budgets for 1979 by means of the ATOOM method would for 1979 lead to virtually the same results as the allocation based on the "new, improved" method. (The biggest difference is at Delft. This difference seems to be contradictory to the direction of the change. It is not, however, as a consequence of the automatic salary increase. Therefore the result of Delft with the "old" method is closer to what no-change at all would have been.)

The data show that the output of the planning process (the budgets for the various universities) were not (or virtually not) affected by the changes in planning that took place.

**TABLE 4**

**TWO BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR 1979**

(source Parliament No. 15300, 1978)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1979A &quot;new&quot;</th>
<th>1979B &quot;old&quot;</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(abs)</td>
<td>in%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUL</td>
<td>336.7</td>
<td>343.9</td>
<td>(276.5)</td>
<td>342.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUG</td>
<td>318.6</td>
<td>324.7</td>
<td>(274.9)</td>
<td>321.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUU</td>
<td>466.5</td>
<td>498.0</td>
<td>(397.9)</td>
<td>497.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UvA</td>
<td>391.9</td>
<td>397.5</td>
<td>(321.2)</td>
<td>395.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VU</td>
<td>253.4</td>
<td>273.4</td>
<td>(223.5)</td>
<td>271.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUN</td>
<td>294.2</td>
<td>310.4</td>
<td>(249.7)</td>
<td>312.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THD</td>
<td>363.9</td>
<td>383.2</td>
<td>(289.5)</td>
<td>390.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE</td>
<td>175.5</td>
<td>184.4</td>
<td>(88.5)</td>
<td>184.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2600.7</td>
<td>2715.5</td>
<td>(2121.7)</td>
<td>2715.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The small universities (Rotterdam, Tilburg, Twente and Limburg) are ignored, together with the Agricultural University of Wageningen. Figures are in millions of guilders (2 guilders is approx. 1 US dollar).

The estimate budget 1979B is calculated by using the ATOOM method on the same data as were used for 1979A.
Before concluding that the changes in planning had no measurable effect at all it is necessary to evaluate the possible impact of the changed planning process on enrollment.

The forecast of student numbers with respect to the influx of students which formed the foundation of the multi-year agreements distinguishes 38 different academic disciplines (see Table 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFLUX OF STUDENTS IN 1979</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(source Ministry of Education 1978)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Total** | **27867** |

Out of these, the possible regulation of influx has only been discussed in a subset of academic disciplines, furthermore some of the regulation (e.g. medicine) is not based on limited capacity but on a political agreement. In some other disciplines the history of the capacity advice of the Academic Council shows clearly that the changes that were implemented had no impact (e.g. dentistry). The only remaining academic disciplines on which a potential impact could be noticed are shown in Table 6 with the capacity development of the past years.

The data of Table 6 show a remarkable growth of the capacity for law students. The reasons for this growth have nothing to do with the change in planning (see Academic Council, 1979). The other data provide also no indication of any serious impact that the change in the planning process might have had. Nevertheless I interviewed two experts on this subject. They indicated that the change in the joint planning process had no impact on restricted disciplines, and very little impact on the distribution of students in restricted disciplines over the various universities. Yet in view of the very limited proportion of the whole of the student population involved, it is warranted to say that no substantial impact of the change in planning can be discovered with respect to the functioning of the Dutch University System.

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TABLE 6
INFLUX IN POSSIBLY AFFECTED, RESTRICTED DISCIPLINES
(source Academic Council 1980)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>618p</td>
<td>765p</td>
<td>941p</td>
<td>896p</td>
<td>988p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>287p</td>
<td>403p</td>
<td>420p</td>
<td>464p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>2850p</td>
<td>3646p</td>
<td>4170p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>920n</td>
<td>935n</td>
<td>895n</td>
<td>934n</td>
<td>979n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>1758p</td>
<td>1678p</td>
<td>1631p</td>
<td>1700p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>1677p</td>
<td>1609p</td>
<td>1581n</td>
<td>1602p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers refer to the maximum capacity according to the advice of the Academic Council. "n" means restricted discipline (numerus fixus) "p" means regulated influx by means of placement committee (plaatsingscommissie).

5.4. Other Perspectives

The method which was used to evaluate the possible impact of improved planning on the Dutch University System has a number of limitations, which to some extent have already been indicated in the assumptions. If those assumptions would not hold, then the results will not be reliable. It is difficult to assess whether in particular over a long period the assumptions will hold.

In particular this might be true if the changes in planning result in an increasing awareness within the academic community of resources and relations between tasks and resources. In that case there might be future effects on both educational and research programs. The same might be true with respect on possible effects on policies. (The mere existence of the multi-year agreements, for instance, resulted in an allocation of freshmen of "threatened" disciplines over the universities which was closer to their first preference than it would have been otherwise.) Already within the existing policies some evidence can be found of tightening up the rules (for instance, with respect to tenure appointments). In general, changes in mentality which might permit future changes of the system, are not evaluated by this method. Here again one has to take into account the mechanics of the system, which imply that considerable time will be needed for the dissemination from university level to school and department level and the subsequent decision-making about educational and research programs as well as policies. It might very well take a number of years before any of those effects upon the functioning of the university system become apparent.

The application of the method of ATOOM 1978 to the data of 1979 in order to construct a budget allocation based on the no-change assumption, disregards the mechanics of the old process. ATOOM 1976, 1977, and 1978 differed significantly from one another due to further refinement and improvement. Although no substantial improvement was to be expected, in a real "no-change" situation the method of 1978
would certainly be changed and further refined if to be used in 1979. Discussion with participants of the ATOOM group indicated that these changes and refinements would most probably lead to the actual budgets of 1979.

Also it is clear that if the outcome of the evaluation had been that the system had changed considerably due to changes in planning, then the method would have been incomplete and additional methods for assessment of the nature of the changes would be required.

Finally the method of evaluation disregards the degree to which the joint planning process of the Dutch University System is (or contains elements of) an end-in-itself. It is recognized in the discussion about participative planning that participation not only improves the planning process in terms of producing better plans and easing implementation, but participation is also seen as an end-in-itself. This assumes that self-control is to be valued positively. The degree towards which changes in the planning process led toward progress in this sense cannot be evaluated by this method. In view of the limited participation of the major stakeholders in the planning process this limitation would not seem to have serious consequences for this analysis.
6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Think big, act small.

The preceding five chapters show the inability of the Dutch University System to engage in effective planning, to effectively determine its own future and ways of getting there. Even the major changes in the planning process which took place in the seventies were demonstrated not to have had any substantial effect on the behavior of the system. Although some progress has been made, the planning process itself is far from the ideals to be found in the literature. In some respect progress has been made along the line of the participative planning principle by the involvement of the universities in the POO, but the increasing narrowness of the prevailing definition of planning has to be seen as a major setback.

An extensive analysis like this one must not stop at saying what is wrong even if the reasons for this are identified, but should also give some indications of what can be done in order to overcome the problematic situation that seems to have emerged in the seventies. I will do so by discussing the systemic nature of the situation, which illustrates the futility of a search for a single solution to the problems. Without providing a complete redesign of the planning process I will discuss briefly some of the necessary conditions for the development and successful implementation of an improved planning process. I will conclude with a discussion of some of the characteristics of a planning process which can serve as an alternative to the present, stagnated one.

6.1. Systemic Nature

Both from the literature on planning and from the preceding case-history the systemic nature of planning processes is evident. The implication of this is often overlooked, however.

There is no single cause which can be blamed for the stagnation of the planning process. We cannot say that the stagnation is caused by the political nature of the planning process, or by the fact that the universities are subsidized and thereby protected from their environment. Nor can we say that the university democracy in the Netherlands or the dominant position of the professional planners or the abundancy of resources are each by themselves the cause for it.

The inability of the Dutch university system to develop adequate planning is, as we have seen, coproduced by a large number of factors. Any solution will have to take this into account. The likelihood of any proposal to be successful is very low if it deals only with a partial solution.

The experiences in the past make it possible for us to learn from them. Already the McKinsey failure shows the interrelatedness of organization structure (both of the
Ministry and the universities) and the proposed planning process; any attempt at this moment to develop effective planning will have to acknowledge this systemic nature. (This is not to say that the only solution lies in a grand design which is implemented as a blueprint. On the contrary, it only provides an argument for thinking big, leaving the option of acting small completely open.)

Recognition of the systemic nature does not only mean the recognition of the system of problems, which together create the inability to develop effective planning, it also implies the recognition of the broad definition of planning, which includes both ends-setting and implementation.

6.2. Conditions for Planning

A number of prerequisites and conditions to be fulfilled in order to develop effective planning can be formulated. These have all to do with the attitude and views of the major stakeholders on the planning process.

First of all the need for planning has to be recognized. In view of this the present conditions seem to be more favourable than in the past. The abundance of the past is coming to an end. At this moment the need for drastic budget cutting is clear, so that the necessity of making crucial choices becomes apparent. Crucial choices have an impact on different parts of the organization and show to be related to other choices, thereby demonstrating the need for planning.

Second, the definition of planning as a process which encompasses policy-making, formulation of objectives and goals, decision-making and implementation has to be shared by the major stakeholders, if they participate in the design and implementation of that process. In a sense this means going back to the concept of planning as defined by Minister Gerard Veringa in the late sixties. The literature on planning, policy-making, public administration, and strategy formulation can be of help in convincing the major participants.

Third, the major stakeholders of the university system must not only support the development of this new mode of planning, they have to be involved in its design and development. "It has got to be their baby". This requires an extensive analysis of who those stakeholders are. Without doing so however, it should be clear from the start that there are more stakeholders than the small group of civil servants, planning portfolio holders of the university boards, and professional planners.

The fourth condition can be summarized as the willingness to cope with change. It implies a willingness to treat many factors as variables and as a consequence to accept and live with uncertainty.

The most evident factor in this respect is the organizational structure. The work of Alfred D. Chandler Jr. (1962) demonstrates clearly the interrelatedness of the organizational strategy and structure; therefore in the development of a planning
process, the organizational structure has to be treated as something that can be changed. (Here again we see that in the McKinsey proposals in 1970 this phenomenon was recognized very well with respect to the organization of the Ministry. So again in a sense this recognition implies coming back to an earlier position taken.) In this specific case this is important in view of the many anomalies that revealed themselves in the analysis, anomalies both in the organization of the Ministry (see also Hoffman, 1981), the universities and the interuniversity network.

To be specific, a reconsideration of the tasks and responsibilities of the Minister, the Ministry, the Academic Council, and the universities will be necessary. This implies a reconsideration of the overall organizational structure of the Dutch University System, as well as a reconsideration of the structure of its parts.

The dual role of the Minister, in which on the one hand he provides and acquires the resources for the university system as a whole, and on the other hand he allocates the resources within that system should be questioned. The second part of this role might very well be performed by the universities themselves (see also Grewel, 1981).

Also a redesign of the organizational structure of the Ministry will be necessary. The preceding analysis clearly shows the inadequacy of the present organizational structure of the Ministry, which was designed with a far different external structure in mind (see also Hoffman, 1981).

Furthermore a redesign of the structure of the Academic Council, its sections, the Permanent Planning Committee and the POO and AGP is necessary. The ambiguity between the responsibilities of the Permanent Planning Committee, which is officially a committee of the Academic Council, and the Academic Council itself are hardly acceptable and certainly not an example of sensible design from an administrative perspective. Also the circuit problem can be solved by reconsidering this interuniversity organization.

Perhaps one of the most important problems to be solved is the redesign of the Act of 1970 (WUB) which determines the internal organization of the universities. Here I will be even more specific with respect to the changes which are necessary conditions for the development of effective planning. The present organizational structure as prescribed by this Act has a number of features which are counterproductive to effective planning. I will discuss three of the most important ones:

- The Act of 1970 (WUB) left the basic principle of the "duplex ordo" (the dual structure) intact. This principle, however, is based on the divisibility of means and resources. Effective planning implies dealing with ends, means, resources, and organization. A coordination of decisions about all these aspects is necessary, therefore the concept of a "duplex ordo" whereby the university level decides upon resources (and may not even discuss means) and the schools decide upon means (without having any authority to discuss resources) is simply wrong. (Internal multi-
year agreements circumvent this by having agreements between schools and university about means and resources. It was therefore questioned by the Catholic University of Nijmegen among others, whether multi-year agreements are in accordance with the law.

- The second feature is a bureaucratic phenomenon which tends to develop in many government actions and laws. The Act of 1970 prescribes one organizational structure for all universities and schools; as such it aims at creating a monolithic structure a "Jack of all trades". In doing so the current views of organizing as reflected in a "contingency approach" or "Situativer Ansatz" (see Child, 1973, and Staehle, 1977) are ignored. For large complex organizations like universities a way of organizing which reduces variety instead of fostering it is again simply wrong.

- One of the most fundamental principles of the Act of 1970 - the notion of "sovereignty of the people" (see the report "Basic philosophy WUB", Ministry of Education, March 1978) - together with the concept of the nation-state, led to a very limited definition of stakeholders as academic staff, non-academic staff, and students. In doing so the organization secures its instrumentality to the objectives of these stakeholder categories. The role of the university as instrument of the society at large, the interests of other stakeholders than the aforementioned are not sufficiently reflected in the organizational structure. Combined with the absence of a market mechanism between the organization and its environment, this manner of organizing fosters the inward orientation of the university. As such it supports ivory tower attitudes and possible disregard of the societal needs.

These conditions - the recognition of the need for developing effective planning as well as the systemic nature of that process, the involvement of the major stakeholders in its development, the willingness to cope with change, and the existence of a strategic mentality which recognizes the necessity of changes - will not emerge out of the blue. It will require conscious effort to create those conditions. Perhaps here is a major task for the Ministry of Education and Sciences to make this happen.

6.3 Characteristics of "Improved" Planning

Although the development of a new, improved way of planning should be done by the stakeholders and be structured in accordance with their preferences and style, some characteristics can be given, based on the experiences in the past, the preceding analysis, and my personal biases and views. These characteristics are also reflected in the literature about planning and emerge as such as a new mode of planning (see Ackoff, 1974, 1981, Ozbekhan, 1973, De Smit and Rade, 1980, Rade and De Smit, 1980). The characteristics can be summarized as: transparent, variety increasing, negotiative and proactive. A brief discussion of each of those characteristics will illustrate the meaning and relevance of these concepts. The discussion enables me to conclude this
dissertation with some positive statements indicating what can be done in order to develop the capability of the Dutch University System to effectively design and create its future.

The first characteristic is provided by the necessary transparency of a planning process in which a large number of stakeholders, who are organized in a complex way, are involved or by which they are affected. If we want to realize "potential" participation, maintain an administrative system with elected officers who are on the job for short periods and who are not specialists in those jobs, then the planning process must be transparent. Outsiders must be able to see what is going on. In that way a stakeholder can effectively decide when to participate. This also implies low entry barriers into the planning process. So there should be no "planning" language that only planners are able to understand, and no complicated mathematical models which are only accessible to specialists. Also as few secret negotiations and deals as possible should take place.

In order to foster the innovative role of the university in the society, but also in order to permit the situational approach to be taken in the structuring of the planning process, the aim should be create and increase variety. Variety can be realized in many ways and be looked upon from many perspectives. In any case no monolithic planning system should be developed. (For instance it might very well be effective to have multi-year agreements at the national level and within the University of Leiden, while at the same time to reject these type of agreements within Utrecht or Delft.) The planning process should not only allow for different forms of planning in different parts of the system, it should also allow for different perspectives on and definitions of the system itself. The university can been seen in many different ways and be defined as a variety of different institutions. This is to be seen as an asset of the system and no planning process should be based on one limited definition.

The dominant mode of behavior of the participants in the planning process should be based on two-way communication. This implies a planning process which is characterized by negotiation. Negotiation should take place in such a way that the transparency does not evaporate. Negotiation should not be limited to issues like budget (resources) and tasks (means), but to all aspects of planning (ends, means, resources, organization, and implementation) as well as metaplaning. So not only the outcome of the game, but also the rules of the game must be subject to negotiation. Paradigms, agendas, and non-decision making all are to be part of this negotiative process of the major stakeholders. The instrumentation of this will not be simple and tendencies to use the existing power structure to enforce agendas and paradigms will be difficult to control.

Finally, improved planning for the Dutch University System should also be characterized by the proactive mode of planning (see Ackoff, 1974 and 1981). This mode of planning is based on the prospective posture. A quote from Ackoff illustrates this:
Most system planning is retrospective: preoccupied with identifying and removing deficiencies in the past performance of system components. Retrospective planning moves from what one does not want rather than toward what one wants. It is like driving a train from its caboose. One who walks into the future facing the past has no control over where he is going. Idealization rotates planners from a retrospective to a prospective posture.

This ideal of proactive planning combines a number of features:

- It is participative and comprehensive (both coordinating parts and integrating aspects, and relating different time perspectives).
- It is systemic and deals with all phases of planning (ends planning, means planning, resource planning, organizational planning, and implementation).
- It is based on a prospective posture, this can often be realized effectively by engaging in the process of idealized design.

The route indicated here is not an easy one, but in my opinion it is feasible. It will most certainly lead to a highly complex and complicated planning system. For those who hoped to be able to limit this effort to a rather simple system I would like to refer to the statement of Gevers (1979), who makes a case for an advanced, complex form of university planning. As such I think that a major effort to develop this type of planning systems is both desirable and necessary. The characteristics and recommendations in this chapter might be of help in shaping that effort.
A.1. Relevant aspects of the Researcher's World View

If one sees science as the pursuit of truth by means of dispassionate observation, fair and unbiased data collection and analysis, as well as testing of the conclusions which the researcher makes (see Churchman, 1967 for a critique of this view), a discussion of relevant aspects of the researcher's world view does not make much sense. I do not see science in that way.

A.1.1. Views on Scientific Inquiry.

I see science as an activity of human beings, as a process of inquiry (Ackoff, 1962). In order to be able to speak of inquiry as being scientific three conditions must be fulfilled:
1. It should be aimed at discovering something which was not previously known.
2. The inquiry should be controlled as far as possible.
3. The research should be self-improving, it should increase our research capability.

Inquiry I see as a knowledge-producing activity (see Churchman, 1971). This activity must lead to results which have some importance. It must matter whether we get those results or not. This means that someone should have a stake in the research activity. Results are not created for their own sake. In the research presented in this book three different stakeholders can be identified. The first group of stakeholders includes the civil servants of the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Netherlands, who, together with their colleagues at the various universities in the Netherlands, attempt to design, redesign, and modify the planning process. The second group is that part of the scientific community that conducts research with respect to planning processes in public organizations and universities. The third group consists of the professional planners of universities and government, who are in the business of designing and changing planning processes.

Any result of this research will be obtained by a variety of choices (and actions) made by the researcher. These choices are part of the controlled aspects of the research as well as the common sense part. As a consequence it is clear that my values (though not mine alone) do influence the outcome of this research, as well as any research I might do in the future. In order to achieve the highest possible degree of objectivity I therefore will try to make my value premises with respect to research on planning, to planning as such, to universities and education as explicit as possible.

A.1.2. Objectivity in Research on Planning.

Many researchers have previously claimed to be objective. They realized that
scientific results could be put to different uses, but claimed that science would provide
only means and that ends would be determined outside the scientific enterprise (see
Kaplan, 1964). Ends-setting in this view is something in which the scientist plays a role
as a citizen, while his business is only to generate means.

As soon as one denies the clear separability of ends and means, this position
cannot be held. However, in futures research, and in research on policy making and
planning, there is an additional set of complications.

Let us first consider a definition of planning (see Ackoff, 1974): planning is the
design of a desired future and the process of inventing ways to get there. It becomes
immediately clear that planning as an activity has to do with values, with ideas about
what is good, bad, beautiful, and so on. One problem arises out of the fact that we
might not call the previously desired future desirable if we reach it. Our value systems
change over time (see Fowles, 1977). Today's values differ from yesterday's values and
will differ from those of tomorrow, or as Toffler (1969) states it: "All plans imply an
attempt to impose the values of the past (as expressed in the plan) on the future".

A second complication arises out of the recognition that our present behavior
influences future values. Value changes can be influenced by our actions. Activities in
the realm of planning and policy-making tend to be guided by our values, but at the
same time they influence value changes.

Some of the problems mentioned above can be dissolved if we see planning as a
process in which a plan is just an interim report, a process in which plans are constantly
reviewed and adjusted, so that value shifts can be accounted for. There remains then
the recognition that the way this process is structured is in itself not neutral. Again
values determine the way we do things, the way we have stakeholders or others involved
in the planning process and so on.

We try to avoid imposing the researcher's value on the system by aiming at
participative design in planning and also by inviting participation in the design of
planning processes, but any act of the researcher, any choice he makes, any result he
produces, any effect his behavior has on others is strongly influenced by his values.
There is no way to exclude the researcher's values.

One could deal with the problem of values in the research of planning by trying
to have as little impact as possible. Try to study, to observe how planning processes
operate, are being modified, and so on. Do so by making oneself unnoticeable as a
researcher, make sure that the observations interfere as little as possible with reality.
This is an attitude which I did not choose. Research conducted in this manner becomes
valueless and meaningless. Furthermore, in order to find out what goes on, in order to
observe, one must have a good relationship with the various parties involved. This
means that one must have some degree of mutual dependence. In the strictest sense a
relation means that a change in a property of one entity results in a change of a
property of another entity (Kramer and De Smit, 1977). In order to have a two-way relation, one's behavior as a researcher must have an effect on the people involved.

Another way of dealing with the problem of values is to try to make them explicit. This can be done by two means. First, one's actual behavior should leave as little doubt as possible with respect to where one stands (I hope that during my actual work in this project I did this). Second, one can try to make an explicit statement of value, which I want to do now.

A.1.3. Views on Planning.

"Plan or be planned for" describes the dilemma we all face with respect to planning. It is a strong feeling that anyone should be able to plan if he wants to that biases me in favor of participative planning efforts. Participation in planning is for me not only a means to improve the planning process, to ensure better results or more easy implementation; participation is also an end in itself. I regard it as an end-in-itself for three interdependent reasons.

The first reason is formed by the recognition that as much as possible every man should make his own choices, people should be purposeful individuals, capable of displaying will (Ackoff and Emery, 1972).

Obviously such an idea needs to be complemented by some principles with respect to the interaction of individuals. Taking a systems view of society, I support two basic principles: solidarity and subsidiarity (see Staehle, 1973). Solidarity is the recognition of the fact that all our behavior impinges upon others, people are mutually dependent and should therefore share a concern for the whole (one for all, all for one). The principle of subsidiarity tells us something about the division of labor in any social system. It states that any subsystem should function autonomously. A higher level (superior or larger) system should only act if the subsystem does not want to, or is not able to solve its problem.

A.1.4. Views on Academia.

My ideas with respect to the role of the university and my views on education and research changed considerably over time. Starting from seeing a university as a conservative (meaning class-preserving) institution, I later saw the university as an educational institution. Now my view is not so simple. Ortega y Gasset (1959), the Spanish philosopher, indicated the three basic functions: education for a variety (of "intellectual") professions; scientific research and training of future researchers; and "general education". Within the Dutch law the latter function has been more specifically worked out; by specifying that universities should foster awareness of social responsibility.

My personal view is that three functions can be recognized: the generation of
knowledge (research), the dissemination of knowledge (education), and the application of knowledge (consultancy, patient care, neighborhood assistance). For me the unique property of a university as well as its "raison d'être" is that those three functions are carried out interdependently. University education is (or should be) the type of education in which research and application go hand in hand with education itself.

The university should not and cannot only be an educational institution, whereby society maintains itself by constant renewal (Dewey, 1915). The idea that education is necessary in order to make possible the transmission of ideas and practices through the constant reweaving of the social fabric is valid. But a university should do more, it should have a prime function in changing the social fabric, insuring progress for the society as a whole towards the ability or the power to satisfy all desires, towards omnipotence (see Ackoff and Emery, 1972).

In doing so the university inevitably becomes a place where people are indoctrinated, a place where values are transmitted. Therefore the university cannot be small, it has to be a meeting place, a marketplace for ideas. In itself it should form a pluralist society. Without going through the useless attempt to say what precisely a small university is, I should like to state that I do not argue for giant universities with over 30,000 students, but against mini-universities with a couple of hundred students and twenty or thirty staff members.

A.1.5. Views on the Role of the Ministry of Education.

As a result of the principles stated above my view of the role that a Ministry of Education should play can rather easily be described.

- First, since the separability of ends and means is only relative, I reject the idea of the neutral civil servant. The pure instrument of the Minister (who is politically responsible) as a part of a machine-type bureaucracy (as described by Weber, 1946), is a fiction that I have never met.
- Second, the Ministry should behave according to the subsidiarity principle. It should try to make universities as autonomous as possible, whereby the responsibility to the stakeholders must be ensured.
- Third, the idea that all universities should have the same educational and governance structure as well as the same quality characteristics is neither desirable nor possible and should therefore be abandoned. This is a consequence of the pluralist view with respect to the university system as a whole combined with the quest for variety as made by Ashby (1956).

The role of the Minister should concentrate on three aspects. The role as process coordinator, the role to coordinate and settle disputes between universities, and provide guidelines and incentives for a national educational and research policy.
Planning processes are essentially systemic. They consist of systems of people dealing with systems of decisions (Ackoff, 1974). This implies a number of problems with respect to the description of such processes. In any description of a system one has to deal with parts and their relationships, and the three different ways in which systems can be subdivided (Kramer and De Smit, 1979) all have an impact on this description.

First, the system can be seen as composed of subsystems. Subsystems consist of a subset of the set of components of the original system, which are viewed from the same perspectives as the original. Therefore they show the same relations. The first problem in a description is the choice of the focal system, which in itself is a subsystem of a larger system. The second problem is how to describe this focal system. This can be done by identifying and describing subsystems or in this particular case by identifying and describing subprocesses, of which subsequently the interrelationships should be shown.

Second, the system can be seen as composed of aspect systems. Aspect systems consist of the entire set of components of the original system, which are viewed from a subset of perspectives. Therefore they show a subset of the original set of relations. Again here two problems arise. The first is again the choice of focal system. This focal system in itself is an aspect system, since it is always seen from a subset of the set of all possible perspectives. The second problem is a consequence of the choice of the object of description. A description of a planning process is a description of a social system in which not only the perspective of the writer matters but where also the perspectives of the participants are important for a good understanding of the described events.

Third, any system can in principle be seen and described in the time framework from $t = -\infty$ to $t = +\infty$, but usually in a particular time framework. With respect to such a system one can identify phase systems. A phase system is the original system (all components and relations or perspectives) as described during a time period which is a subset of the original one. Also here there are two problems which can be identified. The first problem is again the choice of the time framework for the focal system, the answer to the question over what period to describe the planning process. The second problem is the problem of identifying phases and stages in the process which show some coherence.

The combination of all the preceding problems leads to new ones. For instance subprocesses usually tend to have a different pace and therefore by origin parallel processes are in very different phases at a specific moment in time. For the description of a complex planning process implies that although an overall chronological sequence is taken, it cannot be followed strictly. Sometimes subprocesses are described over a
specific period in order to show their coherence.

A problem inherent in this method of research is handling the data needed to substantiate the description of the planning process. Sources for the data were:

- meetings of planning committees, planning-conferences, which I attended as a participant-observer.
- key people in the planning process, with whom I had personal discussions.
- memoranda, documents and minutes of meetings as prepared in the planning process.
- publications about the planning process.

I substantiate my observations in the dissertation (see De Smit, 1981). For the period in which I did not participate nor had the opportunity to make direct observations I provide there an overview of publications. For the period in which I participated, I provide in the dissertation a list of documents, and minutes of meetings, which are in my possession and in the archives of the Ministry of Education and Sciences or the Academic Council. In this list I indicated the main events or remarks which underline the observations made by me personally. Most data came from minutes of meetings of the A.G.P. (Advies Groep Planning - Advisory Group on Planning), which I served as an advisor, the P.O.O. (Planning Overleg Orgaan - Planning Consultation Group) and the P.P.C. (Permanente Planning Commissie van de Academische Raad - Permanent Planning Committee of the Academic Council).

In order to facilitate understanding of the various events I give a brief chronology in Appendix 3.
A.3. Chronology

Apr. 1967 Minister Dr. Gerard Veringa (Christian-Democrat) takes office.

Jul. 1968 The Center for Education Research and Innovation (CERI) was created in Paris by the European countries of the O.E.C.D.

Apr. 1969 Student riots in Tilburg and Amsterdam asking for University democracy.


Mar. 1970 McKinsey is commissioned by the Ministry to develop recommendations for improved planning system.

Oct. 1970 McKinsey report is ready and accepted by the Minister.

Dec. 1970 The new law for University governance and democracy (WUB) is published.

Jul. 1971 The new law (WUB) is in effect for 8 Universities.

Jul. 1971 Exit Minister Veringa. Minister Maurits de Brauw (Liberal Conservative) takes office.

Oct. 1971 The McKinsey proposals are presented to Parliament by a memorandum for the Minister.

Jan. 1972 The new law for University governance and democracy (WUB) is in effect for all Universities and is mostly top-down implemented. Implementation at all levels takes until 1979. In 1973 all Universities had elected University councils and University boards.

Jun. 1972 Minister de Brauw resigns (about the raise of tuition) his colleague Ruud van Veen adds higher education to his responsibilities.

Oct. 1972 New elections and the formation of a new cabinet starts. Present cabinet is in demission. Ministry continues the (preparation of the) implementation of the McKinsey proposals. This means; forming groups at interuniversity level, and having discussions with Universities at one hand, and starting the implementation of the new organization chart for the Ministry itself on the other hand.

May 1973 The new cabinet is formed (the previous one was a coalition of the Christian-Democrats and Liberal Conservatives, this one is a coalition of Christian-Democrats and Labor). For the first time since decades there is not a Christian-Democrat as Minister of Education. Dr. Jos van Kemenade (Labor) takes office as Minister and Dr. Ger Klein (Labor) becomes Under-minister for Higher Education.

Oct. 1973 The Universities refuse to provide the necessary information for the McKinsey planning process. They also reject the McKinsey proposals, in particular the idea of an Independent National Steering group.
Dec. 1973  Joint committee of Universities and Ministry starts to study the problems. The committee is chaired by the Director-General Dr. Gottfried Leibbrandt (Leibbrandt Committee)

Feb. 1974  Report of the Leibbrandt Committee proposes a different way of developing a planning process and structure. It proposes to create POO and AGP in order to develop a planning system (so to engage in meta-planning). Catchwords were "Joint effort" and "Learning by doing". It mentions the need for multi-year agreements.

May 1974  The Academic Council counteracts the McKinsey proposals by the creation of a Permanent Planning Committee (PPC, Permanente Planning Commissie).

Sep. 1974  The Permanent Planning Committee of the Academic Council, PPC, is installed and consists of the planning portfolio holders of the university boards and the heads of the planning bureaus.

Oct. 1974  The first Planning Consultation Body POO, (Planning Overleg Orgaan) meeting in which the Universities and Underminister agreed on the way to develop planning.

Nov. 1974  The new (McKinsey) organization of the Ministry was implemented. (Including a unit which was designed to assist the National Steering Group).

Dec. 1974  The Underminister proposes a new way of budget allocation in a memorandum called "multi-year data 1976-1980". Universities disagree first, try to develop an alternative, and finally come to an agreement that in the future this type of proposals should be a joint effort of the Universities and the Ministry, so the ATOOM group is proposed.

Mar. 1975  Second POO meeting in which the AGP (Advisory Group on Planning, Advies Groep Planning) was nominated. Also the draft memorandum "Planning of Higher Education" is discussed.

May 1975  Memorandum "Planning of Higher Education" is given to Parliament.

Sep. 1975  Third POO meeting to agree on the (by the AGP) proposed workprogram.

Oct. 1975  The ATOOM committee (Administrative Technical Consultation About Resources, Administratief Technisch Overleg Over Middelen) is formed. It is chaired by the Ministry and its members were the planners of the Universities and a small number of civil servants. So now metaplanning (POO/AGP) and planning (ATOOM) developed along separate lines.

Nov. 1975  Parliament committee (on Education) discusses the "Planning" memorandum.

Dec. 1975  Planning conference at Noordwijkerhout to bring the major participants up to date.

Dec. 1975  The Ministry published the memorandum "Higher Education in the Future", a policy document which had not been developed in cooperation with the Universities.

Jan. 1976  Planning conference at Zandvoort for about thirty top civil servants of the Ministry.
Feb. 1976 Fourth POO meeting, the Underminister proposes to integrate planning and metaplanning. AGP and its taskgroup II will make a proposal.


Jun. 1976 A two days conference at Noordwijkerhout of AGP/Taskgroup II solves remaining issues and the "adjustment" memorandum is ready. Actual planning will be in POO/AGP and "multi-year agreements" will be made.

Aug. 1976 Letter from the Underminister reactivating the procedure for development plans.

Oct. 1976 Fifth POO meeting, the workplan for arriving at multi-year agreements in September 1978 was agreed upon as well as the "adjustment" memorandum (the development plan procedure had been integrated in this). For the development plan "guidelines" are going to be developed jointly and "policy indications" are to be provided by the Underminister.

Feb. 1977 The "pink" memorandum or "policy indications" are offered to the universities and create a big turmoil.

Mar. 1977 The sixth POO meeting made the position of the Universities position on the "policy indications" clear. Also ATOOM was ordered to prepare only for 1978 and no more.

Apr. 1977 The final guidelines and the "explicative" memorandum was sent to the universities. The memo "explained" the role of the "policy indications" with respect to the guidelines.

May 1977 ATOOM 1978 is ready.

May 1977 The Contactgroup Development Plans and Multi-Year Agreements (COM, Contactgroep Ontwikkelingsplannen en Meerjarenafspraken) starts to work (most members were almost the same as ATOOM, but the members from the Ministry were different).

Jun. 1977 The seventh POO meeting addresses the workplan and time schedules. A test-run is decided upon to check the guidelines.

Sep. 1977 The cabinet falls. The Underminister Ger Klein leaves the office. Jos van Kemenade (the Minister) adds higher education to his responsibilities while acting as caretaker.

Fall 1977 Universities prepare their development plans (supposed to be handed in, in January 1978) in a politically unstable situation of cabinet formation. General fear of budget cutting.

Oct. 1977 The Permanent Planning Committee of the Academic Council (PPC) reacts to the "unrealistic" student forecasts of the "policy indications". New forecasts (which are 30% up) demonstrate the impossibility of budget cutting.

Oct. 1977 The eighth POO meeting is chaired by Van Kemenade, devoted to "Adjustment" memorandum and the "problem" of increase in students.

Feb. 1978 Informative POO (ninth) to inform the new Minister.

Feb. 1978 Most development plans are handed in.

Mar. 1978 First multilateral consultation discusses methods to evaluate development plans and to arrive at a draft allocation. Most Universities did not keep to the guidelines, this makes evaluation difficult.

Mar. 1978 The tenth POO meeting addresses the question of how to arrive at a proposal for allocation. The preference is on identifying boundaries and reducing the boundary space during negotiations in multilateral meetings.

Apr. 1978 Second multilateral consultation decides to take the existing staff of 1977 (and not the development plans) as a starting point. A draft evaluative framework is handed out during the meeting.

Apr. 1978 Third multilateral consultation about evaluative framework.

May 1978 First memorandum of the AGP about the next planning cycles.

May 1978 The Minister publishes his "Opening up Higher Education" as a policy document for Parliament proposing two phase instead of one phase university education.


May 1978 The Academic Council comments upon the development plans as handed in by the Universities.

Jun. 1978 The eleventh POO meeting agrees to use the Intentional Task and Budget as a basis for bilateral further negotiations towards draft multi-year agreements.

Jun. 1978 Bilateral consultations between Ministry and every university.

Jul. 1978 Fourth multilateral consultation to revise the draft Intentional Task and Budget and to discuss draft multi-year agreements.

Aug. 1978 The Ministry announces a change in "project" organization within the Ministry for dealing with the next planning cycles. The first will be handled by a group called "operational planning" and the second will be prepared by a group called "innovative planning".

Sep. 1978 During the twelfth POO meeting the multi-year agreements are signed by all but two universities. The discussion about the next cycles is postponed.

Nov. 1978 The thirteenth POO meeting agrees on global workplan for the next cycles.

Jan. 1979 The fourteenth POO meeting agrees on a detailed workplan, installs workgroups. The work for the next cycles starts.
A.4. Discussion of Criticisms

A number of questions have been formulated that implied criticism about the research on which this book is founded. Four of the most important questions are discussed in this Appendix.

The first of these questions indicated a need for clarification of the use of the term metaplanning. In section A.4.1, this question and a clarification is given.

The second question focussed on when, why and how the idea of planning was introduced in the Dutch University System. This issue is discussed in section A.4.2.

The third question was based on the recognition of the 'rain-dance' nature of the planning process as described and assumed that the 'real decision-making' took place elsewhere. The question focussed on the possible use of the idea of front versus backstage (see Goffman, 1959) in order to explain the question why universities do so well when the planning process leads only to 'rain-dancing'. This question is discussed in section A.4.3.

The fourth question can be seen as an extension of the third. Assuming the usefulness of the dichotomy of the third question, the question of 'what happened in reality' was raised. Since my research was not aimed at unraveling the important future oriented decisions that took place, but instead was aimed at the joint planning process, this question can only be answered in a limited way. This is done in section A.4.4.

A.4.1. The Use of the Term Metaplanning.

In policy sciences a variety of different possible meanings of the term metaplanning are known. I mention four of them:

a) The planning by superordinate agency whose subordinate parts plan as well as are subjected to the superordinate agency's plans.

b) The planning of the capability or resources for planning processes (e.g. the planning of education for planners).

c) The 'foresightful' regulation of interorganizational behavior negotiated among the organizations involved.

d) The future oriented processes of the political system within which actors (universities, ministries, and interest groups) take certain roles (possibly to be called 'pre-planning').

In this book the term metaplanning is used in analogy to metacommunication (see Chapter 1). Metacommunication is defined by Watzlawick and others (1967) as communication about communication. When Watzlawick makes a comparison between metacommunication and metamathematica (see Nagel and Newman, 1958), he emphasizes the problem that both for metacommunication and for communication the same language has to be used. (In mathematics there are two languages available). This
problem is also apparent and a source for confusion by the use of the term metaplanning.

So the term metaplanning is used as planning of planning. This implies that metaplanning is seen as the integral process of dealing with the system of decisions about planning. This means that all decisions regarding organizing and shaping the planning process are seen as part of metaplanning. As such the use of the term encompasses the use of it by Faludi (1973) who sees metaplanning as the process of systematically designing planning agencies and their procedures, as becomes clear from my use of the concept of planning. Planning implies decisions about ends, means, resources, organization and implementation, therefore metaplanning implies decisions about the ends of planning (what is the function of planning, what are the ideals, objectives and goals which are pursued by planning), means of planning (how are these ends being pursued), resources of planning (what kind and amount of resources are needed), organization of planning (how is the planning process being organized), and implementation of planning.

The definition of metaplanning does not imply a specification of the decision-maker(s). Nevertheless it should be emphasized that the focus of the research involved, was on the joint planning and metaplanning of the Ministry and the universities. So in principle the proposition could be made that metaplanning of the Dutch University System will be done partly by the Ministry, partly by the universities, and partly by a joint activity of Ministry and universities.

In view of the foregoing it will be clear that a superordinate agency can be involved in both metaplanning and planning, but the meaning as indicated under a) is not in accordance with my use of the term metaplanning.

The meaning as indicated under b) is correct, but is only part of the integral metaplanning activity.

The other two meanings only fit insofar as the 'regulation' or 'processes' are aimed at influencing planning.

A.4.2. The Emerging of Planning in the Dutch University System.

The book discusses only very briefly the historical context in which planning emerged in the discussions within the Dutch University System. An additional discussion of why planning emerged at the point in time as it did, what function it was expected to have, and the context in which it emerged, might be valuable.

In itself this question demonstrates the systemic nature of the planning process, since my main focus was on the time period in which I participated in the planning process (1976-1979), and the analysis of the earlier period was limited to the start of McKinsey in 1969. There is no doubt in my mind that further analysis of the preceding
period will give rise to new issues and problems for which going back further and deeper might be useful. Yet the explicit recognition of the necessity of planning is such an important event in the context of this research that an extension of this discussion might be of value to the reader.

The idea of planning was introduced in the Netherlands in the thirties by the political party of the Social-Democrats (see Wentink, 1976 and S.D.A.P., 1931). Three main influences contributed to the launching of this idea; the multi-year economic planning as established in 1928 in the Soviet-Union, the multi-year economic planning as implemented in Nazi-Germany in 1932, the discussion in the U.S. after the great depression about planning as reflected in projects like the Tennessee Valley Authority project and publications like the book 'A planned Society' by Soule in 1932 (see Van Vught, 1979 and Soule, 1967).

It took until after the second world war before some effort to implement the idea of planning was undertaken. The Social-Democrat party became part of the afterwar government coalition and the need for rebuilding the Dutch society provided the opportunity for the centralistic form of planning which was advocated at the time. The specific form in which this implementation took place was strongly influenced by the cooperative model of economic planning as developed in France. This mode of planning or 'planification' is seen by Luthy (1955) and Bloch-Lainé (1959) as a new form of capitalism and labelled respectively as 'synthetic capitalism' and 'économie concertée'. This specific form of planning made it possible for the Christian-Democrat coalition members to support the implementation of planning, since it de-emphasized the idea of centralism to a degree which was acceptable for them. Nevertheless by mutual consent of the coalition members the after-war implementation of planning was limited to two aspects of government; the national economy and city and town planning (ruimtelijke ordening). In economics impressive results have been made partly due to the Central Planning Bureau headed by Jan Tinbergen (who later got a Nobel Price for economics) and Fred Polak (whose ideas about planning as presented in the forties and fifties would so much later catch on in the U.S. (see Polak, 1951 and 1961), although it took until the sixties before those impressive results could be seen.

The advocates of planning emphasized a more integral approach ever since the forties. This and the success of economic and city planning as well as the pressing problems in other sectors contributed to a revival of the discussion about comprehensive planning in 1968. In April 1968 the Minister of Education and Sciences, Gerard Veringa, installed the Committee for Preparation of the Future Societal Structure (Commissie Toekomstige Maatschappijstructuur). This committee would later propose the creation of a Social Planning Bureau and a National Council for Planning.

Parallel to these discussions in the society about the application of the idea of
planning towards other sectors, the Ministry of Education and Sciences was facing serious problems. These originated both from the post-war baby boom and the transition from elite to mass higher education (see Verberg, 1974) which resulted in a strong increase of number of students.

In view of these problems, and considering both the success of planning with respect to the national economy and the physical rebuilding of the country, as well as the commitment of both Social-Democrats and Christian-Democrats (who were the most powerful political parties) to extend planning to other sectors of government, the Minister of Education and Sciences initiated the idea of planning for education. In the discussion about planning for education the advocates for planning were supported by the discussion in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, see their report 'Educational Policy and Planning in the Netherlands' of 1967). Yet the implementation of planning for education would face additional and peculiar problems arising from the specific characteristics of the Dutch Educational System.

In view of the school struggle of the 19th century the idea of autonomy of schools was (and is) very strong. Many schools in particular at primary, secondary and vocational level (the colleges) are non-state controlled and have religious affiliations. The idea of planning tends to threaten this autonomy and was encountered with great distrust by the Christian-Democrats. Since only three out of twelve universities were denominational universities, the university system was in this respect the least influenced. Furthermore the need to make crucial decisions was evident in view of the explosive growth of the universities during the sixties (see both Parliament No.128, 1971 and Verberg, 1974). This growth resulted in an almost doubling of the expenditures for university education during the sixties. (The percentage of expenditure on university education and sciences of the total government expenditure as well as the percentage of the national income was in 1961 3.10 resp. 0.84 and in 1970 5.97 resp. 1.70. More recently on March 26, 1981 the director-general Dr. Gottfried Leibbrandt indicated at a conference in Ede that the budget changed from 1958 to 1968 in fortyfold, if corrected for inflation fourteenfold, by a quadrupling of students.)

So the initiative for planning of the Dutch University System was taken by the Minister although he knew that careful manoeuvering was necessary in view of his Christian-Democrat constituents. The third major political force, the Liberal-Conservatives (VVD) were certainly not in favor of increasing government influence and creating centralized planning systems.

In view of this the suggestion of the OECD to use the internationally known management consulting firm McKinsey and Company for the design of the planning process made things more acceptable for the free entreprise oriented Liberal-Conservatives. Furthermore this added to the credibility of the effort as an effort to increase efficiency and reduce unnecessary growth of government expenditure on universities.
The actual proposal of McKinsey reflected both the trend in planning in the Netherlands (an Educational Plan Bureau next to the Social Plan Bureau and the Economic Plan Bureau, which had been so successful) as well as the political views of the Christian-Democrats and their fears for too much government control (therefore an independent National Steering Group).

From this historical perspective both the reasons for the Social-Democrat Underminister Ger Klein for not enforcing the implementation of the McKinsey proposals, as the lack of interest for planning of the Liberal-Conservative Minister Aaron Pals are clear. The position of the universities requires additional explanations.

First of all the political views as existing in the society were reflected in the universities, so each proposal with a distinct political overtone of one political group would be distrusted and resisted by the two other major groups. Secondly the problem of rising expenditure and explosive growth was externalized and not recognized as something that should lead to basic rethinking of the operation of the universities (why should the abundance of resources not simply continue?). Thirdly the university autonomy and the newly created power for the students, non-academic staff and the assistant and associate professors (the university democracy as created in the WUB) was to be protected from centralized planning that might impinge upon it (see Academic Council, 1971).

In view of this the logical step to make for the universities was the refusal to provide information to the Ministry necessary for the implementation of the McKinsey proposal. Yet it was important to play along with the Underminister in such a way that no strong centralized planning would be created instead. The creation of a planning ritual which would silence the planning advocates, but which would have hardly any effect seems the obvious solution.

A.4.3 Planning as Ritual.

Both the quote from Ackoff about 'rain-dancing' at the beginning of Chapter 3 and the overall result of the research as reflected in this book point at the ritualistic aspects of planning. The question was raised, whether planning theory could shed some light on this phenomenon. The suggestion was made to discuss the possible use of Goffman's (1959) analytical framework ('front' versus 'backstage') for this type of research. Central theme in the discussion was the fact that the Dutch universities apparently do so well without effective planning and that more insight in the theory-in-use as opposed to espoused theory (see Argyris and Schon, 1974), of weather control as opposed to 'rain-dancing' would be necessary.

For the sake of clarity it is important to distinguish the central theme, leading to the assertion that 'real' planning or 'real decision-making took place outside the
planning process as described, from the ritualistic aspect. The focus of this research was on the joint planning process of Ministry and universities, this implies the recognition of parallel planning and decision-making processes both in the Ministry and universities in which important decisions were made. The decision to restructure Dutch university education (see Parliament No. 15034, 1978) is one of the clearest examples of such decision-making processes. So the fact that important decisions were made outside the joint planning process is in-it-self not a reason to qualify this process as a ritual. Before entering into an attempt to use this concept, however it might be useful to clarify its meaning.

Several authors have pointed to ritualistic behavior in public policy making and planning (see Edelman, 1964, Olsen, 1970, Westerlund and Sjostrand, 1979), in particular Goffman (1959) provides a conceptual framework. Goffman suggests that any social establishment may be studied profitably from the point of view of impression management. A quote of him illustrates this:

> Within the walls of a social-establishment we find a team of performers who cooperate to present to an audience a given definition of the situation. This will include the conception of own team and of audience and assumptions concerning the ethos that is to be maintained by rules of politeness and decorum. We often find a division into back region, where the performance of a routine is prepared, and front region, where the performance is presented. Access to these regions is controlled in order to prevent the audience from seeing backstage and to prevent outsiders from coming into a performance that is not addressed to them. Among members of the team we find that familiarity prevails, solidarity is likely to develop, and that secrets that could give the show away are shared and kept.

In this perspective of the theatrical performance (which is largely based on an antropological study a Shetland Island crofting community), the crucial concepts are front, backstage, team and audience. Front is used to designate that part of the performance which can be seen as the ritual, and which is watched by the audience. Backstage is defined as the place where the performance is prepared and where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course. In his analysis of a hotel of the Shetland Island, Goffman describes the behavior of the personnel in the kitchen as backstage and distinctively different from their behavior at other places (front). Team is used to designate the troupe or cast of players which cooperate in the performance to the audience.

Use of these concepts in the specific context of this research requires the answer to a number of questions. Another quote from Goffman illustrates the first of these questions.

> In this report, use has been made of illustrations from societies other than our Anglo-American one. In doing this I did not mean to imply that the framework presented here is culture-free....

In other words the set of general dramaturgical rules as inherent in one culture can be very different from the other. In this respect it must be questioned whether the cultural setting of the Netherlands allows a fruitful use of this framework which is...
founded in the Anglo-American culture. Already Lewin (1936) discovered differences in culture between the U.S. and Germany as reflected in the outer part of the personality which is the part that is so important for role-playing behavior. This can be seen as a warning signal that important differences might exist between the U.S. and the Netherlands. It would require more research to determine those differences, although both sociological literature (see Schutz, 1970, and Gouldner, 1954) and my experiences allow me to hint at some of the important differences for the use of this conceptual framework.

The difference in role-playing and non-role-playing appears to be less clear in the Netherlands. As a consequence the dichotomy between front as backstage is not so clear. An important area in-between exists. Audience and teams are mixed and change role overtime.

But even if one overlooks the problem of a possible difference in culture, other questions remain to be dealt with. In view of the variety of parallel decision-processes, a number of different 'backstages' (or 'kitchens') exist from which the performance in the joint planning process is prepared; the Ministry, the universities, the Permanent Planning Committee, and all kinds of informal groups. Furthermore the 'joint planning process' is a rather crude label for the multiplicity of different performances that took place. I would differentiate f.i. the stage of the meetings of the Planning Consultation Group (P.O.O.) from that of other joint groups.

In sum, both the outcome of the analysis of Dutch university planning as the literature indicate to an interesting path for further research by applying these concepts of anthropology to planning, but this path shows some substantial hurdles, particular with respect to our understanding of the way culture determines our planning behavior.

A.4.4. Real Decisions.

The question of the real decision-making process, as well as the power scene as it really operates, was raised in the context of the division between 'front' and 'backstage' as discussed in section A.4.3. As such this implied the assumption that the real decision-making took place backstage. It has to be recognized that this backstage had not been my primary focus, so that no result of an extensive analysis can be expected, but nevertheless some indications of the 'real' system might be valuable.

In view of the preceding section it will be clear that a distinction must be made between important decisions that were simply taken outside the joint planning process and important decisions that were prepared and taken in some 'backstage' of this joint planning process.

It is relatively simple to provide examples and illustrations of the first category.
It must be noted though that in view of the agreed upon definition of planning, and the agreed upon planning process these examples need not to have been outside the joint process.

1) As mentioned before the restructuring of the entire system of university education.
2) The decision to provide the professor status to the part of the full professors that did not possess this status beforehand. This decision was made by the Ministry and resulted in a decrease in salaries for new to be appointed full professors.

With respect to the backstage it is more difficult to come up with examples for three reasons.

First I have an ethical problem, whether in this specific situation I should reveal backstage behavior. If I use the concept of team for the participants in the joint planning process then a number of subteams can be recognized. These are the various groups, that were involved. I was clearly a member of at least one of those subteams, and thereby of the team as a whole. In displaying backstage behavior I would adhere to a discrepant role, that of the 'informer'. Again a quote from Goffman (1959) illustrates the phenomenon

First, there is the role of 'informer'. The informer is someone who pretends to the performers to be a member of their team, is allowed to come backstage and to acquire destructive information, and then openly or secretly sells out the show to the audience. The political, military, industrial, and criminal variants of this role are famous. If it appears that the individual first joined the team in a sincere way and not with the premeditated plan of disclosing its secrets, we sometimes call him a traitor, turncoat, or quitter, especially if he is the sort of person who ought to have made a decent teammate. The individual who all along has meant to inform on the team, and originally joins only for this purpose, is sometimes called a spy.

The realism of this was made clear to me by the behavior of some of the civil servants and the professional planners after an interview with me as published in a newspaper. When I met a number of these participants at a conference they encountered me with remarks like; 'how dare you come here'. So apparently some participants already saw in this interview (in which hardly any real 'backstage' information was given) a sign of discrepant role behavior on my part. In view of the fact that I am part of the system, I must take the rules of the system into account.

In view of the unclear division between front and backstage some degree of discrepant behavior on my part is inevitable, but I will limit this as much as possible and certainly there where people can possibly be affected (and even harmed) in their functioning, I intend to not display behavior to that effect.

Secondly, in view of the multiple backstages, I participated only in one. With respect to the others I could only observe as a member of the audience. In this latter case I cannot know what happened backstage, unless this was revealed to me either by accident or through an informer.

Thirdly, in view of the complexity of the situation at hand as well as the prevailing culture the applicability of the conceptual framework of Goffman (front,
backstage, team of performers and audience) must be questioned (see the preceding section). Schutz (1970) in his discussion of interpersonal communication provides a nice illustration when he describes various forms of musical communication. His example of 'performer and listener' coincides with Goffman's conceptual framework, where the example of 'making music together' does not. From the analytical perspective it is unfortunate that there exist no clear definition of the situation even not with the various participants, as clearly illustrated by the 'us and them' (performer/listener) versus the joint venture and commitment perspective (making music together) discussion in the text (see Chapter 3 and De Smit, 1981). In view of this I would rather take 'making music together' as a starting point for an analysis than the Goffman framework although the inadequacy of either one seems apparent.

In spite of those reasons I will provide some examples or clues about backstage behavior. First there is the affiliation and relations of various participants (civil servants, professional planners) with political parties. In view of the prevailing definition of front (performance) these relations are supposed not to influence front behavior, yet a careful analysis of those relations would probably show that they do. Secondly, each organization in the interorganizational network forms a backstage in which the performance in joint setting is prepared. Within the Ministry there were clearly meetings organized in order to coordinate behavior and prepare concerted performance of the civil servants. Thirdly, within the most inner groups of participants there were small groups who jointly prepared issues in informal meetings. These groups had as a result of their preparation better knowledge and more concerted action, so were relatively more influential than otherwise would have been the case. Fourthly, the meetings of the Planning Consultation Body (POO) were staged clearly as a performance. As a result, insufficient prepared, unexpected events led to problems, which were solved by adjourning the meeting for half an hour, have a (backstage) meeting between Minister, top civil servants and key people from the universities (mostly the Advisory Group on Planning included) to prepare the continuation of the show.

I never detected any signs of a great masterplan by which the planning process was designed to be one big stagemshow and in which the 'real' decision-making or 'real' planning was structured to happen backstage.
This book contains a number of technical terms which are either specific to the situation or to a particular perspective on planning. In order to help the reader who is not familiar with this terminology, such terms have been assembled and explained here.

Academic Council (Academische Raad) A national advisory body in which all universities are represented. University representatives are chosen by the University Councils. The Academic Council is assisted by; sections for each discipline, permanent advisory committees on planning, education and research, and a secretariat.

Academic Statute (Academisch Statuut). The document which specifies the number of universities, academic disciplines, exams and program duration. It has been agreed upon by Parliament and has the status of a law.

Act of 1960 (Wet op het Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs 1960). This law specifies the objectives of university education and a number of governance principles like the dualistic principle, the Duplex Ordo.

Act of 1970 (Wet Universitaire Bestuurshervorming 1970). This Law is a temporary addition to the Act of 1960 and specifies a democratic form of university governance. This is mainly done by giving the ultimate responsibility to councils of elected members of the academic community.

Advisory Group on Planning (Adviesgroep Planning). This coordinative committee for the joint planning process of Ministry and universities prepares the meetings of the Planning Consultation Body and provides advice. The A.G.P. has four representatives of the universities, four of the colleges, and four of the Ministry. The 'vrijgestelden' take part in its meetings.

Blue-print Planning. Central concept in this mode of planning is a 'plan, which will formally consist of one or more goal statements that are successively reduced to more specific policies, programs, and projects, all spaced out over a limited period of time and related to sets of priorities, standards, investment needs and financial arrangements' (Friedmann, 1966).

'This mode of planning is an approach where by a planning agency operates a programme thought to attain its objective with certainty' (Faludi, 1973).

Large scale engineering projects like barrages are usually seen as prototypes for this mode of planning.

Council is an administrative, legislative body or advisory body. Sometimes its members are elected, other times they are appointed. Public policy making in the Netherlands is full of a large variety of councils (council culture, raad cultuur).

Development Plan (Ontwikkelingsplan) is a university plan which describes how the university intends to structure its means and resources in the coming four years. It covers education, research, service, organization, personnel, buildings, and all other
resources. The Act of 1960 specifies that universities must make those plans.

**Duplex Ordo** (Dualistic order). This is one of the most fundamental principles underlying university organization in the Netherlands. It leads to the split in authority over means and resources (*taken en middelen*). University Level (formerly the trustees, nowadays the university council) has responsibility for resources. School Level (formerly the full professors, nowadays the faculty council) has responsibility over means.

Faculty Council (*Faculteitsraad*) is the ultimate authority in the school. Its members are chosen by academic staff, non-academic staff and students of the school. Its task is to coordinate and structure the education and research of the school.

Inactivism is a characteristic attitude in planning, next to reactivism, preactivism and inter (pro-)activism. This attitude is founded in the assumption that the current situation is quite acceptable, therefore one prevents changes from being made.

**Interorganizational Network.** This is a system of organizations. Each of those organizations has its own autonomy. There is no superstructure (or part) that is capable of controlling the behavior of all parts. Both the Dutch University System as a whole and each university by itself form such a network.

**Mess.** In view of the fact that problems never exist in isolation, it is recognized that every problem is part of a set of interrelated problems, a system of problems, 'a mess'. This idea of a system of problems is conveyed best by the French word *problématique*.

**Metaplanning** is planning of planning. Strictly this implies the application of all elements of the definition of planning to the planning process itself. So it means a process of decision-making with respect to the ends, means, resources and organization of planning.

**Multi-Year Agreements** (*meerjarenafspraken*) form the most important novelty in the changed planning process of the Dutch University System. It implies agreements covering a four year period between the Minister and the universities concerning means and resources. As such they enable the bridging of the gap between the different responsibilities of the agreeing parties. In view of the limited authority of the parties involved these agreements are limited to financial resources and some quantitative aspects of means (influx of students and the research capacity).

**Numerus Fixus** implies that a predetermined maximum number of students can be admitted to an academic program (both nationwide and locally). The *numerus fixus* must be formulated by the Minister, only after an advice to that nature by the Academic Council and needs approval by Parliament.

**Permanent Planning Committee (PPC)** is a committee for coordination of planning between the universities in which all universities participate by means of the planning portfolio holder of the board and the head of the planning bureau. Formally being a committee of the Academic Council, its relationship with that Council is ambiguous.
It was founded at February 2, 1974 after the refusal of the universities to cooperate in the implementation of the McKinsey proposals.

Planning Consultation Body (Planning Overleg Orgaan, POO) is a joint consultative body of representatives of the Ministry, the universities and the colleges (HBO) chaired by the Minister of Education and Sciences. Initially its role was limited to metaplanning, but since October 1976 it is involved in planning as well. Formally its members are twelve planning portfolio holders of the universities, twelve representatives of the colleges and a number of civil servants. In practice also the professional planners of the universities, the Advisory Group on Planning and representatives of the Central Bureau of Statistics, the Central Planning Bureau are present, so it was not uncommon that the meeting would have about one hundred participants. It was created in October 1974 as an attempt to make a new, joint start with the development of planning after the McKinsey rejection. It was supposed to be one of the most important means for developing planning in a process mode as opposed to the blue-print mode à la McKinsey.

Pro(Inter-)active Planning is both comprehensive (coordinated and integrated), participative and continuous planning. It is based on the assumption that the future is to a large extent controllable and that one should try to do so, it is therefore prospective planning. Furthermore it is founded on the recognition of the systematic nature of planning and hence it treats the five phases of planning (ends planning, means planning, resource planning, organizational planning, implementation and control planning) as interdependent parts of a whole.

Process Planning is a mode of planning, whereby programmes are adapted during their implementation as and when incoming information requires such changes. Process planning is to be contrasted with blue-print planning. Process planning implies the use of a plan which is continuously revised and updated as a consequence of (partial) implementation and new information.

Rolling Planning is a mode of planning in which plans cover a specific time period (f.i. four years) and in which the time periods of subsequent plans overlap (f.i., make every year a four year plan).

Stakeholders of an organization are those who have something at stake with the organization. The concept is founded on the stakeholder theory (see Ansoff, 1965). This theory maintains that the objectives of the firm should be derived from balancing the conflicting claims of the various 'stakeholders' in the firm: managers, workers, stockholders, suppliers, vendors. The firm has a responsibility to all of these and must configure its objectives so as to give each a measure of satisfaction.

This implies that stakeholders are all of those who invest some type of resource (including themselves) in the organization.

Stylistic (or intrinsic) value of means expresses the degree towards which a means is an end-in-itself. It is to be contrasted with the extrinsic value of a means which indicates
the degree of usefulness that a means has for reaching some outcome.
System is a set of interrelated parts of any kind. A subset of parts viewed from the
same perspectives as the original system is called a subsystem. An aspect system is the
original set of parts viewed from a subset of perspectives as the original and therefore
having a subset of the original set of relations. A phase system is the original system
described for a subset of the original time framework. The systems view implies two
related positions; a holistic, which emphasizes the relation between the parts, and a
open system, which emphasizes the fact that every whole is part of another larger
whole.
University Council forms together with the University Board the highest authority
within the university. It has at most forty members who are chosen for at least two
years and are representatives of academic personnel, non-academic personnel,
students and some representatives of the society at large. The council decides about
the development plan, financial scheme and budgets.
Vrijgestelden are a small number of people who are temporarily freed from other duties
to devote their time to the joint planning process. In the period covered, there were
three 'vrijgestelden' one (fulltime) on behalf of the universities, one (fulltime) on
behalf of the colleges and one (halftime) on behalf of the Ministry.
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Chapter 1

1. The term meta-planning is used in analogy with meta-communication and meta-mathematics (see Watzlawick and others, 1967).

2. The literature about planning deals only seldom with meta-planning and if so mostly not very extensive. (See for use of the term meta-planning Wilson, 1969, and Faludi, 1976.)

3. Towns are hardly seen as instrumental to Society at large, whereas universities are.

4. McKinsey and Company had developed proposals which had not been implemented (see De Smit, 1981).

Chapter 2

1. The total enrollments for each type of post-secondary education are roughly equal with 133,199 for the universities and 123,584 for the colleges in 1977 (Parliament, 1978, No. 15300). Despite this approximate equality of enrollments, the two types of institutions receive very different levels of support. Approximately 68% of the 1979 budget for higher education went to the universities, while 15% went to the colleges. The universities and the colleges receive almost all of their income from the government, tuition and other outside income composing less than 3% of the total.

2. The University Education Act of 1960 says, that universities must:
   - educate
   - practice science
   - foster social responsibility.

   Education is understood to include:
   - preparation for the independent practice of scholarship
   - preparation for professional work
   - the furtherance of insight into the interdependence of the academic disciplines.

   The simultaneous realization of these ideals is at best problematic. An emphasis on science could readily lead to a program contrary to professionally- or socially-oriented interests.

3. This is the function which is most well-known to the taxpayer. But as such this function is vague, unless we specify the reasons for providing education. Phillips (1978) sees the Dutch educational system as conservative elite-preserving which seeks the conservation and reproduction of societal and sexual hierarchies. In sum, although the conclusions of Phillips (1978) seem a bit extreme, comparisons with other countries support his general position (see De Smit, 1981). Furthermore, there are no indications that the university acts in some way as a change agent in society in the Netherlands.

4. Five are state universities (Leiden, 1575; Groningen, 1614; Utrecht, 1636; Rotterdam, 1973; Limburg, 1976), one is a municipal university (Amsterdam, 1632), three are denominational universities (Amsterdam, Calvinist, 1880; Nijmegen, Catholic, 1923; Tilburg, Catholic, 1927). These universities have no schools for engineering or agriculture. Engineering and agriculture are concentrated in specialized universities; three of technology (Delft, 1842; Eindhoven, 1957; Twente, 1964) and one agricultural university (Wageningen, 1918). Their income consists of 1.7 billion from the government and less than 0.1 billion from tuition and from other sources.
5. The university degree of doctorandus ("drs") lies between an M.A. and a Ph.D. in the United States, as the "doctorandus" has no further course requirements and can immediately begin a dissertation in order to obtain the degree of "Doctor" ("dr."), equivalent to a Ph.D. However many never write a dissertation.

Chapter 3.

1. Major events and upheavals that led to the "adjustment" memorandum.

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<td>March</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>AGP/TgII, first brainstorming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>AGP/TgII, discussion first draft. Distrust between university- and Ministry representatives. No real discussion. University people fear grand redesign of AGP/POO and revival of the National Steering Group idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Note Planning in Parliament, amendment with respect to National Steering Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>AGP/TgII, discussion draft. Again no real discussion, university people wanted reaction Ministry on ideas of Parliament. Universities suspect grand redesign. Ministry suspects deliberate delayal by universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Meeting of representatives with Underminister Klein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>AGP/TgII, discussion draft. Universities notice &quot;secretariat&quot; instead of AGP and suspect still a desire to blow the AGP. Ministry is suspected to differ from Underminister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Joint meeting AGP/TgII and Underminister Klein. Issued to clarify were:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- role of AGP in view of POO/AGP;</td>
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<td>- in Parliament an amendment had been accepted which renewed the idea of the National Steering Group (McKinsey);</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- should negotiations take place within AGP (between Ministry and universities)?</td>
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<td>- civil servants of the Ministry denied the possibility of a joint venture and therefore the possibility to have the AGP deal with real issues;</td>
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<td>- can civil servants participate in the debate about issues that have to be decided later in the POO? In other words is a civil servant always speaking on behalf of the Minister?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Underminister took clear and firm position. It can be doubted however, that his subordinates really accepted this position. He said:

- POO/AGP structure remains for the time being, so there will be no National Steering Group.
- AGP functions as a joint venture on behalf of the POO therefore must keep deadlines as specified by POO. No negotiating in AGP if necessary multiple advice.
- Members of AGP should act independently and involved. Civil servants of the Ministry should share these characteristics, as a consequence the Underminister should have the right to differ in the POO meeting with the views expressed by his subordinates in
the AGP. This leads to the question whether the Directorate-General as highest civil servant should act as chairman of the AGP.

A two-day conference (17, 18 June) is planned for to be held by AGP and Taskgroup II to finalize the memorandum "aanpassing".

June 17,18 Joint conference in which agreement was reached on a joint text of the memorandum "aanpassing" by Underminister, civil servants and members of AGP/TgII. This conference revealed two remarkable items. First it showed the differences within the Ministry with respect to the mode of interaction with the universities. The long discussion about the idea of a joint effort, and of the notion of "commitment" demonstrated this. Clearly one group of the Ministry preferred the idea of "us and them", the idea of opponents in a game, where other groups agreed with the proposal. This issue has not really ever been solved, also the Underminister could not really change the attitude of all his civil servants in this respect. This relates to the second item, which is that there was an unwillingness to discuss these differences. A discussion on meta-planning level about the mode of interaction, or negotiations about this, was not possible. As a consequence these differences were covered in not too specific phrases which seem to be a specialty of civil servants.

June 22 Nota aanpassing is ready. Major points:
- "Going concern" of budgets, admissions, new schools and so on has consequences for middle and long term. Decision processes for the "going concern" show too little cohesiveness.
- Actual planning will be dealt with within POO/AGP.
- Multi-year agreements (meerjarenafspraken) will be made between universities and Ministry.
- It will be the joint responsibility to develop the planning and all three partners (Ministry, universities, colleges) will make a firm commitment to this process.

Remarkable is what was not mentioned. Not a word was there about development plans or their role in the planning process.

Aug. 17 Letter to the Underminister asking for development plans. This letter created distrust, since in the preceding six months no reference had been made to this. It gave the impression that the Underminister was speaking with double tongue. Later it became clear that the preparation of this letter had been done by a unit in the Ministry which did not participate in the development of the "Nota aanpassing". Subsequently loss of face was prevented by integrating the development plans in the process towards multi-year agreements. Some of the participants saw this as "token integration just to save face", while others saw it as an opportunity to improve the planning process.

Sept. 28 First lay-out of the process to realize multi-year agreements for 1979-1983:
- February, 1977 universities are supposed to start preparations for the budget 1979 and the development plans 1980-1983. Therefore policy indications and guidelines should be ready before that date. Policy indications should be made by the Ministry. Guidelines should be worked out in a joint effort. Both policy indications and guidelines should be subject to change and
open for discussion after February.
- February, 1978 should be deadline for handing the development plans to the Ministry. (This gave the universities a year to prepare their plans and to consult on school and basic levels.)
- the period from February until September was to be used for negotiations and discussion about plans.
- September, 1978 should be deadline for the multi-year agreements.

Also the function of development plans was explained, although almost no reference was made to multi-year agreements.

Oct. 12 AGP has problems with the relation between development plans and multi-year agreements. No advice to POO because:
- universities do not agree on the role of the Academic Council with respect to development plans;
- AGP differs internally (Ministry and universities) with respect to question of relation;
- question of degree of comprehensiveness of development plans need to be decided first. (An important role in this, besides the already mentioned change in way of dealing with one and the other, was the fact that development plans in the past were very unsuccessful. They proved to be lists of wishes of universities. Those lists were almost reaching for the sky, off limits and had very little practical value).

2. This leads to an interesting question. Does the change from a blueprint mode of metaplaning to a process mode also necessarily make the metaplaning process less transparent and therefore less open to public debate and participation?

3. For education the number of freshmen that the university would take in each year (per academic discipline) would be specified. Research would be specified for each academic discipline in terms of capacity (in full-time equivalents of academic staff).

4. The impact of party politics on the behavior of people and organizations is very important in the Dutch society. The Parliamentary System combined with the multi-party system, in which party programs and issues are the key elements, creates a high political awareness in the society. Organizations, like universities, who are completely subsidized, are heavily influenced by this political system.

5. Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972, propose a conceptual model for describing decision making in universities called "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice", since in their opinion the current conceptual models do not adequately describe the decision making processes in universities.

6. "Mechanics" is used here as machine-like. It refers to the bureaucratic, predictable functioning of organizations as was seen as the ideal model by Weber (1947). Again there is a cultural difference between the Anglo-American and the continental (post-Napoleonic) traditions, in which (at least in the Netherlands and Germany) bureaucracies often developed into smoothly operating machines without necessarily having the connotation of organizational slack and inefficiency.

7. As is also in accordance the "Garbage Can" model assumption about the limited stream of energy from participants for decision making (see Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972).

8. Not making decisions is in this sense comparable to non-communicating or non-behaving. It differs from the use of the concept "non-decision making" of Bachrach
and Baratz (1970), who refer to non-decision making as the process by which observable issues and conflicts are kept outside the decision making agenda's.

9. See Appendix 2 for a definition of subsystems and aspectsystems (also Kramer and De Smit, 1979).

Chapter 4.

1. Interorganizational planning constitutes an additional difficulty, since it implies a peculiar system of participants i.e. an interorganizational network. This type of system has as parts organizations and has no ultimate decision maker, so is multiheaded (see Ackoff, 1977).

2. See for instance Ackoff and Emery (1972) in their discussion of the uninodal versus multinodal and homogenous versus heterogenous organizations.

3. See the definition of a relation in Kramer and de Smit (1977), where a relation is defined as a constraint on behavior.

Chapter 5

1. My ideal university would foster variety in educational programs, in research methods, in research topics, and so on. It would serve as a meeting place or even a market place for ideas and viewpoints. An essential characteristic would be a high tolerance for different rationalities and conflicting value systems. This university would reject the consequence of bureaucratic thinking that implies conformity for all parts and would therefore be anti-bureaucratic. The ideal university system should consist of a number of different universities sharing these essential characteristics. Each university would be as different as possible from the others in order to foster different and new development as much as possible.

2. The so-called small universities were provided with additional resources as a consequence of a distinct choice of the Minister to favour the development of these small universities over the larger ones. This decision had nothing to do with the change in planning, therefore I will ignore the data from Rotterdam, Tilburg, and Twente.

Chapter 6

1. In the prevailing planning vocabulary the terms "tasks and budgets" or "taken en middelen" are used instead of means and resources.
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‘Planning Rituals’ reflects upon the development of a joint planning process of the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the Dutch universities. A review of historical material covering a decade and a field study reveal the inability of the participants in this process to engage in effective planning. The system of factors contributing to the failure of developing effective planning is identified.

Parallel to the empirical work an attempt is made to contribute to the development of a conceptual framework for analysis of planning processes. Based on the outcome of the evaluation, the analysis, and the conceptual perspectives, recommendations are made to overcome the paralysis experienced in the development of a planning process for the Dutch University System.

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