

assistance program as a single, unified program, and presents extensive details for each federally aided category in a series of appendixes. Responses from the Atomic Energy Commission, National Science Foundation, and Tennessee Valley authority include useful general introductions.

Undoubtedly some of the shortcomings of responses resulted from insufficiently detailed or insufficiently restrictive definitions and instructions in the questionnaire. A comparatively free rather than a tightly structured approach was used because this was an initial exploratory investigation. The questionnaire avoided a preliminary rigorous delimitation of the area to be covered and the interpretations to be adopted, because the committee wished not to foreclose or discourage responses that might offer unforeseen insights into the scope and significance of human resources programs.

In the light of this experience, however, and with the appropriate boundaries for inquiry now more clearly indicated, it may be concluded that further similar investigations should be preceded by a more detailed delimitation of the program areas to be covered and more restrictive definitions of terminology employed, particularly budgetary and economic concepts; and that provision be made in the work plan for returning the responses to the agencies for revision or completion following a review by the investigating staff. Indeed, further inquiries might be made more manageable by focusing each study on one predetermined part of the wide and complex field of human resources programs or on one selected aspect of the various types of programs.

During the present study, several replies were returned for clarification, correction, or explanation in the light of questions raised by committee staff. However, this procedure was held to a minimum in an effort to avoid shaping or reshaping the responses. Further limitations on the use of this procedure and its results arose from the pressure of deadlines in both the agencies and the committee, and from the unfamiliarity of many agency respondents with the budgetary and economic concepts involved in the questions.

A general impression that can be drawn from the responses is that either there is a scarcity of penetrating analysis in many program operating units of the executive branch or the assignment to prepare responses was often given to persons who were not familiar with program analysis. It is probable that the requirements of the planning-programming-budgeting system (discussed in pt. I) will stimulate development of economic and other evaluative analytical techniques in the departments and agencies. The committee staff was informed by staff members of several Federal agencies that their experience with the questionnaire helped them to understand and appreciate the orientation, requirements, and significance of the PPBS approach to their activities.

Concern with program analysis and evaluation has previously been expressed by the Joint Economic Committee. Earlier, the committee studied this subject with reference to the Federal budget, specifically in terms of making budgetary presentations more conducive to economic analysis. The committee's main criticisms were that the budgetary structure was oriented too strongly toward administrative and organizational structure and not enough toward end-product and activity goals or major policy objectives; and that the published pro-