provides for the adjustment of the procedure for computing the discount rate in the evaluation of water resource projects, the subcommittee is also requesting the Council to reanalyze the adequacy of the present procedure.

CONGRESS AND THE PPBS

The use of new techniques for budgeting obviously poses an important question for the Congress. As indicated earlier, a failure by Congress to apprise itself of the new techniques could make it easier to create a complex methodology which could frustrate congressional understanding and control of programs. If mastery of the new technique is limited to the executive branch, there is danger that both the Congress and the States may become less than equal partners in the program decisionmaking process. On the other hand, full utilization of the PPBS techniques in the appropriation process might prove to be an extensive undertaking. In essence, there seem to be three alternatives.

(1) Congress could utilize a large staff of its own personnel and attempt to develop alternative analyses to those being done in the executive.

(2) Congress could utilize a smaller staff which would analyze the PPBS reports emanating from the executive. However, it was felt that congressional staff might have trouble obtaining studies that were less favorable to the Administration's or agencies' program and budget proposals. To counter this danger, it was suggested that a small staff might conduct very critical and deep studies of a few programs rather than attempt an overall examination; such critical analyses of a few programs would then stimulate the executive agencies into submitting more complete reports to the smaller congressional staff.

(3) A third possibility would be for Congress to contract for nongovernmental organizations to carry on its PPBS analysis. This would minimize the need for Congress to invest heavily on its own into PPBS. For a trial period, this might prove to be the most feasible approach, but there is the question whether nongovernmental organizations should be allowed to participate to such a degree in these decisionmaking processes. Another criticism of the contract system is that such groups—most notably universities—may not be accustomed to analysis of public programs.

The General Accounting Office already carries on substantial PPBS-type analysis; techniques such as cost information classified by major organizational segments and by budget activities are now employed by GAO. The General Accounting Office is engaged in studies looking into cost ramifications of adopting PPBS analysis to see whether currently used GAO methods provide the same information as that generated by PPBS. Within GAO, a new systems analysis section has been established in the Office of Policy and Special Studies, and over 200 GAO employees have taken special PPBS training courses. With an established background in PPBS systems currently existing at GAO, there may be justification for carrying out congressional studies in conjunction with the General Accounting Office, rather than for employing a separate congressional staff.