IN SEARCH OF EFFECTIVENESS:

INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis documents the process by which scientific management techniques are transformed in the course of their confrontation with the specific organizational context of the Department of Social Services, a human service agency which provides social services to families and children in Massachusetts. The thesis also anaylzes the appropriateness of scientific management for the human services in general.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context and Climate

Between 1960 and 1973, social welfare expenditures such as income maintenance, health, housing, education and social services increased from 52.3 to 215 billion dollars, an increase accompanied by a shrinking resource base.[1] "The net effect of these developments has been to create a politics of scarcity where emphasis is increasingly placed on choosing from among program alternatives those that produced the greatest increment of desired social and behavioral change for the dollar expended. In this context, decision makers, both executive and legislative, increasingly look to experts who can provide them with hard information on which to make these difficult choices."[2] The previous emphasis on maintenance and expansion has given rise to concern with description, control, and evaluation; in brief, the politics of scarcity has ushered in the "era of accountability". Accountability is the act of ascertainting and reporting the nature and effect of one's efforts such that allocations to support these efforts can be deemed justifiable. It includes identifying the goals, problems, resources, and technology necessary to achieve organizational objectives. Accountability also includes making available to funding sources information such as how funds were spent, who received benefits, and whether funds were administered honestly and efficiently. This quest for accountability has been heightened by the recent fiscal pressure under which human service agencies have been operating, pressure stemming from federal, state, and local budget cuts.

The culmination of these two developments -- the escalation of

human service expenditures and shrinking resources -- has prompted both the reorganization of human service systems at the state level in an effort to rationalize them, and has also prompted human service organizations to search for new ways of achieving their objectives and using their resources more efficiently and effectively. Efficiency will be taken to mean the "ratio of the quantity of units produced from a system to the quantity of units put into the system," while effectiveness is the degree to which an organization reaches its objectives which can be stated in terms of output or outcome.[3]

Many commentators such as Jerry Turem and Richard Steiner have argued that bad management has hampered human service organizations' attempts to adjust to the new call for efficiency and effectiveness. According to Turem, the "elements of management that are badly developed in social welfare programs include personnel appraisal and evaluation based on product and output, not style of work; accountability systems that account; and information systems that inform."[4] This growing concern with improved management and its linkage to organizational effectiveness, has generated interest in a variety of management techniques, many of which have been developed in the business sector; these techniques, against the background of widespread criticism of public sector administration, have been both admired and widely emulated. The most popular techniques are those drawn from the schools of scientific management and operations research, and tend to be analytical, quantitative, and technical.

While it is undoubtedly the case that management is one cause of the problems facing human service organizations, it is by no means clear that it is the only or the most important one. Indeed, as the

next chapter takes up in greater detail, human service organizations face a variety of problems that may not in fact be amenable to the solutions posed by scientific management; instead, these problems may influence the very success of the solutions themselves. Of crucial importance is the turbulent political and financial environment which is exacerbated by fiscal pressure and the reality of public providers as the providers of last resort; the growing strength of outside pressures such as the courts and diverse constituencies; the presence of intra and intergroup conflict which is intensified by the growing demands and pressures; and the specific tradition and history of each organization which determines its receptivity to change. In brief, all solutions in general, and the techniques of scientific management in particular, will be heavily influenced by the institutional, political, and behavioral environment of the human service organization with which they interact.

2. Statement of Intent

This study will explore and evaluate the process by which a human service agency, the Department of Social Services of Massachusetts (DSS), adopts three scientific management techniques. DSS is a particularly interesting organization as it is the recent product of efforts to reorganize the Massachusetts human service system, specifically the child welfare system, in order to make it more politically and financially accountable and programmatically effective. As a new agency in a turbulent environment, DSS is subject to all the problems and pressures mentioned previously. Its adoption of scientific management is part of its effort to transform itself in

such a way as to become a more effective organization. The three management techniques it has adopted -- ASSIST, a computerized management information system; the Internal Management Plan, a management by objective system; and the Standards of Practice, guidelines for professional practice -- are illustrative of the central concepts of scientific management, namely the monitoring of performance through information systems and standards of performance, program planning by means of pre-determined objectives, and the simplification and rationalization of work through standards of practice. And it is because of the close linkages between the central tenents of scientific management and ASSIST, the IMP, and the Standards, that an examination of these techniques will yield insight as to the relevance of scientific management for the human services in general.

My argument is that these techniques are molded and shaped by the particular characteristics and texture of DSS in such a way that they become woven into the very organizational fabric they were initially intended to transform. This essay will focus on the interplay, in an organization in transition, between these management techniques and organizational structure, systems of authority and control, and labor management relations.

The case study has been chosen as the vehicle through which to explore these issues because it lends itself to the close examination and, hopefully, illumination of the process by which these scientific management techniques are transformed in the course of their confrontation with a specific organizational context. Moreover, the case study lends itself to careful examination of the process by which the above techniques were implemented, and thus helps to uncover

those implementation strategies which were beneficial and detrimental to their success. In addition, the case format is quite useful as a base from which to construct general lessons for human service agencies. The material for the case study of the Department of Social Services was obtained through a series of interviews with Central Office staff, and staff of the Regional and Area Offices of Region IV -- Greater Boston. Samples of these interviews and a note on interviewing method are contained in the Appendix. These interviews were supplemented by written material from the Department.

II. HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE 1980's: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

A. Human Service Organizations in the 1980's: Problems

The literature cataloging the difficulties faced by human service organizations, particularly with respect to defining, measuring, and evaluating programs, is enormous. A distillation of the most important points will be presented here. One major difficulty is that human service organizations generally, and treatment organizations specifically, seldom have certain knowledge of goal attainment and this makes it difficult to assure the public that one is acting both competently and effectively. This uncertain knowledge results from the formidable task of defining effectiveness. There are three sources of difficulty in defining effectiveness and judging success.[1] First, "the change goals of each are sufficiently ambiguous that they do not provide clear guides either for designing strategies or assessing results. What is precisely meant by "mental health," "rehabilitation," and "better social functioning?""[2] Second, the difficulty of operationalizing statement of tasks is compounded by the uncertainty of the validity of the many treatment procedures, the consequences of which are only partially demonstratable. "Evaluation cannot, therefore, as in certain other enterprises, center on the operational processes of the agency without begging the question of outcomes."[3] Finally, treatment organizations are deprived of information about their clients' performance after termination of client status largely because follow-up studies are so expensive to conduct.[4]

The absence of methods whereby effectiveness can be objectively

assessed has encouraged human service organizations to act in the following ways. First, intraorganizational behavior becomes common whereby change in a client is assessed in terms of responses to agency expectations and relations with other personnel such that the model patient is the one who conforms to rules.[5] Second, the limited measures of achievement make it easier to focus on means, and this can lead to the displacement of goals, and thus overconcern with inputs and secondary objectives like organizational stability.[6] Finally, it has encouraged adherence to a self-justifying doctrine or belief system which comes to replace rational objective inquiry and planning. An "insider mentality" easily develops. To summarize, unlike the private sector which can demonstrate success through bookkeeping processes, it has been difficult for human service organizations to develop measures of effectiveness where expenditures could be related to output because knowledge about the impact and consequences of organizational actions is so incomplete.

More general problems arise from the turbulent environment within which human service organizations find themselves, the nature of both their finances and constituencies, and staff characteristics. The turbulence of the human service environment is expressed by the lack of a well-defined and easily quantifiable market, the unpredictability of the effects of other organizations, the instability of resources, and the obligation to provide services mandated by law even though recipients find them undesirable.[7] By contrast, the business organization has a market that can be identified and quantified, predictable relations with other organizations, known resources which are interchangeable, and products/services that are

either desirable, hence produced, or undesirable, hence abandoned.[8] Financial resources of human service agencies are subject to public policies and come from disparate sources and reimbursement schemes. These resources are not subject to market forces, and thus do not rely on consumer taste, needs, desires, or complaints; there is a clear separation between the person who pays the bill and the person who is the client. Business organizations have a direct relationship between the quality and quantity of production and the amount of revenue generated.[9] The human service organization is plagued by multiple constituencies, all of whom have different values, needs, and politics, while the business organization's constituency is motivated by economic factors. Finally, human service organizations are staffed by professionals who have loyalties to their profession and to the client, loyalties which create the need for discretion and autonomy but which can complicate monitoring, controlling and evaluating staff performance.

These characteristics make it necessary for the human service manager to spend greater amounts of time on planning and inter-organizational coordination, and make decision-making more difficult due to the fact that "many of the questions and problems which arise in the human services are not readily amenable to sophisticated analysis, since they are much more complex, wider in scope, and have far-ranging social and political implications."[10] Moreover, these characteristics increase the likelihood of inefficient and ill-managed organizations, especially if the human service manager is not well-trained in administration which is sometimes the case.

These problems can only be exacerbated by conditions which have become more prevalent in the 1980's. There has been increased

citizen involvement and more intense focus upon local problems thereby promoting responsiveness to citizen-defined needs.[11] The administrative process is growing more complex and politicized due to the involvement of increasing numbers of citizens and the intrusion of the courts. The persistence of these multiple constituencies will make it easier to block than to push through initiatives. Funding sources are also becoming more complex due to the increase in inter-governmental transfers and the broadened role of state and local government in resource allocation resulting from the bloc grant system. In addition, the increasing use of private enterprise in the delivery of public services will exacerbate the problem of resource accountability. The unionization of professionals and other public sector employees will continue. Finally, and most importantly, the regulatory pressure for accountability and efficiency, even in the face of serving the needs of the most complex clients (the public provider as the provider of last resort), will become even greater in this decade of fiscal restraint.

B. Human Service Organizations in the 1980's: Prospects

Numerous solutions to the difficulties facing human service organizations have been posed. Because the quality of management is the one variable which can be influenced in the increasingly uncertain and complex enviornment within which these organizations operate, it is not suprising that there is considerable disagreement over precisely what this would entail. At the risk of simplification, two basic schools of thought can be distinguished: on the one hand the administrative management school, and on the other hand, the

scientific management school. As the scientific management school is quickly becoming the more prominent of the two, we will focus primarily on it. However, for comparative purposes the administrative school will be briefly discussed.

The Administrative Management School: When interest in more effective management developed during the 1970's, the social service profession in particular, was unprepared to deal with the managerial mentality. "The knowledge and skill, research and trained personnel needed to respond to demands for more rigorous and sophisticated approaches to administration were insufficient."[12] This sparked a general concern that social service administrators would be displaced by "generalist managers," and prompted schools of social work to establish specialized training programs in administration whose task it would be to develop a model of administration specific to the needs of social service agencies.

Within the broad field of administrative management, two orientations can be discerned. The first is the POSDCRB approach of the 1930's. According to this approach, the manager's tasks consist of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting. POSDCRB also advocates the unity of command and control, hierarchy, and centralization. The bureaucratic model formulated by Max Weber shares much with this conception, e.g. a well-defined hierarchy of authority, division of labor, and a system of rules. Indeed, the theory of legal-rational authority embodied in bureaucratic theory informs administrative theory, and both posit bureaucracy as the most efficient form for complex organizations.

The second orientation is the process or human relations approach

which stresses the relationship between organizational process and output. Rennis Likert, a prominent member of this school, describes four different types of management styles which are designated as levels. Level IV, or participative management, is the style which produces the greatest productivity and efficiency, the lowest operating costs, and the best staff morale. Participative management is characterized by teamwork and cooperation, widely dispersed decision-making, extensive group participation and involvement, highly motivated and responsible personnel, and open communication among all parties. This results in accurate and complete information because control is spread throughout the organization and hence there are no incentives for distorted communication or misinformation. Similar arguments have been made by members of the human relations school-- Mayo, Roethlisberger, and more recently McGregor and Bennis--who underline the significance of relationships among members of work groups and the effects of these relationships on productivity and organizational effectiveness.

The administrative management school, while clearly not of a single mind as the previous discussion testifies to, loosely endorses the view expressed by Rino Patti, a prominent commentator on the subject of social welfare administration:

> "Social work must turn to the task of cultivating a model of administration that is distinctly adapted to the needs of social welfare agencies and the norms and values of the profession. Among other things, the profession must specify the instrumental values, the means that should be employed by social agencies to achieve their goals. Accountability and efficiency, which have loomed so importantly as of late, are certainly among such values. However, social workers have also sought to promote the protection of clients' rights to confidentiality and privacy, advocacy on behalf of unserved populations, consumer participation, responsiveness to community interests and professional development."[13]

This position that effective administration is necessarily grounded in

and adapted to the needs and requirements of social welfare or human service organizations contrasts sharply with that of sicentific management which embraces a more generic view of management. A generic view is appropriate, according to this position, because the similarity of organizational processes makes it possible for the manager to apply his knowledge and analytical skills to any context.

Scientific Management: The school of scientific management has recently become increasingly popular as a potential source of answers to the dilemmas faced by the public sector in general, and the human service organization in particular. Scientific management can be defined as the effort to plan, standardize, and improve human effort and productivity at the operative level in order to maximize output. The underlying methodology is that of instrumental rationality, a view of the world in which the relations between means and ends is deliberate and logical such that methods are selected which will most efficiently achieve ends. Scientific management, coined by Louis Brandeis in 1910, was both developed and formalized by Frederick Taylor who was interested in improving work efficiency by increasing the individual worker's productivity. This would be accomplished by "specialization of work through the simplification of individual tasks, predetermined rules to coordinate the tasks, and detailed monitoring of performance."[14]

Scientific management became more prominent when it linked up with operations research during World War II. According to Herbert Simon:

"Historically, operations research and management science did

> not in fact emerge out of scientific management or industrial engineering. As a sociological movement, operations research, emerging out of the military needs of WWII, brought the decision-making problems of management within the range of interests of large numbers of natural scientists, and particularly of mathematicians and statisticians... There was soon widespread fraternization between those exponents of the "new" scientific management and men trained in the earlier traditions of scientific management and industrial engineering."[15]

Operations research/management science, which can be used interchangeably (although some argue that management science is more concerned with developing general scientific knowledge, while operations research focuses exclusively on problem solving),[16] is the "application of orderly analytic methods, often involving sophisticated mathematical tools, to management decision-making, and particularly to programmed decision-making."[17] Both operations research and scientific management concieve of the manager as an administrator who "uses systematic analysis and quantitative techniques to optimize performance toward certain objectives. The growing sophistication and development of techniques in mathematics, statistics, economics, and engineering, together with advancing computer technology, have provided the primary tools for analyzing complex problems."[18] And it is precisely the fact that scientific management and operations research offer the promise of rationality, and thus a means for the resolution of complexity and conflict at a time when "social processes for making decisions, planning, setting priorities, allocating resources, and choosing among alternative use of funds are extra-ordinarily difficult because of the discordant preference patterns and needs in our highly pluralistic society," that accounts for their popularity.[19]

This growing popularity is attested to by the number of articles

found in journals such as Social Work, Public Administration Review, and Administrative Science Quarterly, articles which both discuss and often advocate the use of computers, systems analysis, programming, planning and budgeting (PPB), and management by objectives (MBO). William Reid, in a not untypical article entitled, "Developments in the Use of Organized Data," argues that systems analysis, MBO, and PPB will provide the kind of detailed information about programs that will allow management to exercise purposive control and direction.[20] Richard Steiner, following Peter Drucker, argues that measures of effectiveness presuppose the ability to define goals in terms that can be objectively assessed. Steiner proposes the following process in order to facilitate goal definition and the establishment of effectiveness criteria:

1. Determine the function and mission of the organization;
2. Derive clear goals from the mission;
3. Determine targets and performance standards;
4. Select methods for measuring whether performance has been met in relation to goals;
5. Gather feedback; and
6. Audit and evaluate objecitves and results to determine whether program met its stated objectives.

In short, by focusing on the relationship between actual results and anticipated results, it becomes possible to "redirect the organization's people, resources, and systems toward goal achievement."[21]

Management information systems in particular will provide specific up-to-date data on inputs, costs, and outcomes, and will replace periodic reports of progress based on "off-hand judgements

and scattered program statistics." They will also be useful for program development because they can generate comparative data on cost-effectiveness.

PPB and MBO have a long history of application in the public sector thus affording an opportunity for evaluation. In 1960, PPB, which included elements of operations research such as output and cost-benefit analysis to provide measures for the evaluation of short-term performance, was introduced in the Department of Defense (DOD) to enable it to assess the usefulness and cost of weapon systems. It is a well-known fact that PPB was not successful in DOD partly because it generated extensive paperwork and was accompanied by numerous new rules and regulations. Nontheless, in 1965, PPB was introduced in other parts of the Federal Government. The results were mixed: "In the few agencies where program budgeting was seriously tried, notably HEW and OEO, the system helped decision-makers somewhat to explore costs, consequences, and alternatives, but the program budget did not affect either the allocation or the amount of money appropriated."[22]

MBO, the predecessor to PPB, also promised more effective (result oriented) government to be accomplished by measuring actual against anticipated results and deploying resources accordingly. MBO, like PPB, has its origins in Taylor's interest in quantification with heavy emphasis on the capacity to state objectives in unambiguous terms. MBO also assumes that sufficient information is available for decision-making, organizations are clsoed and participants are readily identifiable, and the choice of objectives governs the means to achieve them.

MBO has had mixed success. For example, during the Nixon presidency,

> "Government-wide MBO could more properly be identified as a strategy for hierarchical control. Proposals were from lower to higher echelons, but it was up to the boss to decide. It was seen as an advance that the boss now had some clear options and could make known to subordinates exactly what he wanted... essentially it was a restatement of hierarchical accountability with ambiguity removed."[23]

In addition, the characteristics of public organizations, e.g. fluid environment and external pressures, as well as the possibility that ambiguity may be necessary for successful public policy, have hampered the success of MBO. In the human services, the same problems exist and are joined by the special difficulty of measurement which makes success more likely in quantitiable areas. On the other hand, Drucker argues that public institutions do provide results that can be measured, and others argue that MBO has made better communication possible because of its emphasis on goal setting and definition.

Computerization is a recent development in the public sector, but especially in the human services. Computers in the human services have become more common in the last decade, but are plagued with problems such as high costs, lack of competent personnel in program and design, and a pervasive ignorance, fear, and opposition to computer technology:

> "Many professionals maintain this stiff opposition as they move higher and higher in the human service system. In fact, certain sections of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare are dominated by direct practitioners who rose through the ranks and who refuse to apply or even acknowledge the computer's capabilities."[24]

A recent review of journal articles on computers in the human services revealed the types of applications that were most prominent. The use of the computer for accountability was a recurrent theme --

"reliable, organized and easily retrievable information that computer technology brings."[25] More specifically, the article found that 80% of the respondents used the computer for administrative purposes, 13% for educational purposes, and 6.7% for direct service purposes.[26] Computers in social welfare/human services have thus been used primarily for clerical purposes and routine administrative tasks, and their use for direct service remains minor:

> "Only a single article was devoted to the possibility of using the computer to assist the social worker directly... there was virtually no discussion of computer support for tasks involving referral, placement, assessment, and treatment."[27]

According to these authors, this limited use results from a lack of understanding of the potential of computers in decision-making. However, there has also been debate about the problems encountered when computers were used to evaluate social welfare programs. "For the most part, these problems could be attributed to the difficulty inherent in measuring and quantifying the intangibles of social work intervention."[28] Thus we see that the computer, like MBO and PPB, has also had mixed results when used in the public sector.

Despite the growing popularity of scientific management in the public sector, its mixed legacy has generated both skepticism and criticism. These criticisms are of two types. The first criticism is that the techniques of scientific management are more successful when a situation is well-structured and routine such as inventory and product control. That most situations, both private and public, are not well-structured is recognized by Henry Mintzburg, well-known for his work on the nature of managerial work. "The management scientist has sought elegance in his techniques. This may have

been appropriate so long as he was dealing with highly structured problems. But those at the policy level are not so neat, and it will take a long time for him to learn how to structure them."[29] Related to this is the criticism that quantitative data have their limits and will miss complex and slippery aspects of organizational activity. Yet, the risk exists that those using these techniques may act as though they can deal with complexity, thus imposing artificial precision by screening out that which cannot be made quantifiable, specifiable, or predictable.[30] The second criticism, nicely summarized by Mintzburg, is that much of what managers do is often not scientific:

> "The evidence suggests that there is no science in managerial work. That is to say, managers do not work according to procedures that have been prescribed by scientific analysis. Indeed, the modern manager appears to be basically indistinguishable from his historical counterparts. He may seek information, but he gets most of it in the same old way, by word of mouth. He may make decisions dealing with modern technology, but he uses the same intuitive (non-explicit) procedures or "programs" in making them."[31]

Quite often the information system the manager uses is "current, tangible and non-documented - he designs his own MIS by building laison contacts and training subordinates to bypass superiors in delivering information to him."[32] Finally, consensus, bargaining, and negotiation, the scourge of management scientists, is central to managerial work, and cannot be replaced by the rational analysis of costs, effects, and risks.

Criticisms notwithstanding, scientific management has captivated the organizational imagination; its importance and centrality cannot be denied. Indeed, scientific management--both its generic conception of administration and its operations research techniques--has dominated and threatens to eclipse the model of administration (dis-

cussed earlier) which is embedded in the specific features of a particular organization. Because scientific management has become hegemonic, it warrants further investigation and evaluation. We will now examine a specific attempt to apply scientific management to a human service organization, namely the Department of Social Services in Massachusetts, a human service agency which provides social services to families and children. This examination which will be informed by the criticisms raised above and the issues posed in the Introduction, will seek to illuminate the process by which scientific management techniques are transformed in the course of their confrontation with the specific organizational context of the Department of Social Services; it will also seek to analyze the appropriateness of scientific management for the human services more generally.

III. CASE STUDY: THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

A. Introduction

1. Background

The Department of Social Services, a new state agency in Massachusetts, was selected for detailed examination because it affords a rare opportunity to observe the application of these management techniques to a human service organization in the process of transition.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) was the product of a long and difficult battle for the reform of children's services in Massachusetts. For nearly a decade, the pervasive sentiment existed that the child welfare system was "fragmented, inefficient, and ineffective."[1] David Finnegan, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, had championed the idea of massive state reorganization in 1976 whereby a new Department of Family Services drawn from the Department of Youth Services (DYS) and the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) would be created. When this proposal was rejected, Finnegan commissioned a study of children's services in order to determine the number of children served by the state, the unit cost of service, and the degree to which the public sector has exercised fiscal and quality control over these services. This study, known as "The Children's Puzzle" uncovered the following:

> "Seven months ago, you commissioned a task force to conduct a state-wide investigation of publically supported services to children. Your initial belief that there exists a tremendous level of duplication and overlap was found to be absolutely correct. The cost of that duplication to the Commonwealth means that fewer children receive services to which they are entitled by law, that fewer children receive quality services that correspond to their individual needs, and that many children receive no services at all. The human and financial waste is incalculable."[2]

More specifically, the study found that the profound level of duplication resulted from the many state agencies with mandates to serve children; state personnel were not held accountable for what they do and accountability in general would only result from increased central direction; standards for professional practice as well as capable leadership were missing; and DPW was a mess--"social services are drifting out of control. The various social service programs consist of 63.8 million dollars of purchased services--the cost of administering those programs exceeds 13 million dollars. During the past two years, there have been three Assistant Commissioners for Social Services, a fact that has seriously hampered central policy and direction. The turnover and turnaround of Central staff has likewise contributed to a lack of direction for the agency. The level of morale among the social services staff would be distrubing to even the most casual observer."[3]

"The Children's Puzzle" recommended that DPW be abolished and that "all social services should be transferred to a new department to be named the Department of Human Development"; "program and fiscal audit functions should be combined in each of the agencies serving children", and "the House Ways and Means Committee should consider establishing a professional unit empowered to monitor, and occasionally audit, the federal and state monies expended by public and private agencies who provide services to children and families."[4] "The Children's Puzzle" recommendations for reorganization were based upon the need, as the study perceived it, for the rationalization of the human service system. A new and <u>comprehensive</u> state agency responsible for all children's services would prevent children from "falling through the

cracks," yet also yield cost-effective service and political and financial accountability. The managerial methods recommended to complement and implement this rationalization--a comprehensive management information system, detailed monitoring, and fiscal and programmatic auditing--were implicitly informed by scientific management. This "scientific management" orientation was further developed in the founding legislation of DSS, particularly the mandate for an information system, and also, as we shall see, by the initial planning group of the new agency. These recommendations were taken seriously at the State House which appointed the Florence Rubin Commission--composed of six members, two of whom, Mary Jane England and David Sheehan, later became Commissioner and Legal Counsel of DSS--to develop a legislative package.

Meanwhile, in May of 1978, the Gallison child abuse case (handled by DPW) in which a woman had killed one child and severely abused another, hit the papers. It was subsequently "learned during the investigation which immediately followed that the DPW worker in charge of the case was an inexperienced former junior clerk with a secretarial school diploma."[5] The report blamed DPW, specifically the presence of "poorly trained and supervised workers, a lack of long-term planning and monitoring of children in State custody, a lack of due process and careful case review by the courts in handling children's cases, a tendency to institutionalize children in lieu of preferable community-based options, and a lack of case responsibility as clients are transferred from local area workers to workers on other levels of the agency."[6]

The Gallison case and subsequent negative publicity about DPW

culminated in the passage of the Rubin Commission legislation on July 22, 1978. This legislation known as Chapter 18B of the General Laws, established a new department, the Department of Social Services within which the social service functions of DPW would be concentrated. DSS was mandated to:

> "Section 3. The department shall establish a comprehensive program of social services at the area level and to promote such program shall divide the Commonwealth into regions and areas consistent with those established by the Secretary of Human Services as provided in Section Sixteen of Chapter Six A.
>
> (A) In order that the area-based social services be adapted, organized and coordinated to meet the needs of certain population groups, the department shall provide programs of service for:
>
> (1) Families, children and unmarried parents, which program shall, among other objectives, serve to assist, strengthen and encourage family life for the protection and care of children, assist and encourage the use by any family of all available resources to this end, and provide substitute care of children only when preventive services have failed and the family itself or the resources needed and provided to the family are unable to insure the integrity of the family and the necessary care and protection to guarantee the rightw of any child to sound health and normal physical, mental, spiritual and moral development.
>
> (2) The aging and other adults in need of social, legal, health, rehabilitation, employment, or other services.
>
> (3) Other population groups which require special adaptation of the services provided because of special needs.
>
> (B) The department shall:
>
> (1) Formulate the policies, procedures and rules necessary for the full..."[7]

Governor King opposed the new agency, particularly the entitlement features such as "assist and encourage the use by any family of all resources to this end,"--the strengthening of families, of which daycare was the most prominent entitlement feature. Unable to actively oppose DSS, King appointed Mary Jane England, an Assistant Commissioner

in the Department of Mental Health (DMH) as Commissioner of DSS. Her appointment over John Macmanus, Assistant Commissioner and Director of Social Services in DPW, symbolized the desire to break completely with DPW, a desire which underlay much of the new orientation, structure, and operations of the new agency.[8]

Chapter 18B already expressed the crucial ways in which DSS would differ from DPW; DSS was mandated to be decentralized and to have a comprehensive management information system (MIS). Decentralization was mandated because the overly centralized structure of DPW whereby Central Office directed all administrative, financial, budget, personnel, contracts, monitoring, and program support functions, hindered it from responding to consumer needs, and thus contributed to both inefficient and ineffective service delivery. An MIS was considered important because the information possessed by the state in general, and DPW in particular, had been judged to be woefully inadequate. "The Children's Puzzle" first uncovered the fact that the state did not know the number of consumers it was serving, who they were, and where they were located. It was believed that an MIS would provide this information in a comprehensive and timely way.

These concerns were given more substance during the planning period of the new agency spanning 1979 and 1980. The planning group headed by Commissioner England also included five colleagues from DMH in addition to David Sheehan, a lawyer who had been on the Rubin Commission and would become DSS General Counsel, Alan Frohman, a management consultant who had been educated at the Sloan School, and John York, the only member of the inner circle who had a substantial background in child welfare. He figures prominently in our story

because he later became the Director of Region IV, the Region discussed in the case study. This group articulated the philosophy and the organizational structure of DSS; its work was influenced by three crucial factors: antipathy to DPW, experience in the Department of Mental Health, and the desire to reform social services in such a way as to make them cost-effective and efficient yet comprehensive (entitlement), of high quality, and responsive to consumer needs.

The mission of DSS was first and foremost to strengthen the biological family which meant a reduction in reliance on substitute and foster care and decreased use of legal means to remove children from their homes. Related to this was the promotion of permanency planning--long term planning with hopes of adoption for children who must be taken into state custody. Both objectives were part of a larger nation-wide movement to reduce the use of foster care and promote stability. Families were to be strengthened by providing preventive services (counseling and support) in the home to avoid removing children. To this end, the planning group strived to "develop an agency that would have a mandate as well as the ability to provide a good range of preventive and supportive services not limited to "protective cases" and available to all income groups."[9]

The planning group operationalized the legislative mandate that DSS be decentralized. According to the Commissioner, Community Mental Health Centers grounded in the community and run by Citizen Boards to ensure community participation, provided the model for the organizational structure of DSS. The other significant initiatives--the management information system, later known as ASSIST, and the Internal Management Plan (IMP) were more fully developed in

the "strategic" planning sessions in which the consultant, Alan Frohman, figured prominently. Frohman suggested that the planning group treat DSS, a 200 million dollar agency, like a "Fortune 500 Company" and adopt the kind of strategic planning methods used in the business world. This was the origin of the Five Year Plan which mapped out the long-term needs of DSS and adumbrated ASSIST which the group decided would be automated, area-based, and on-line. The introduction of ASSIST pushed the planning group to define its long-range information needs, needs which ASSIST would help the agency to meet. DSS needed financial information to determine cost-effectiveness of service, consumer information to determine the number of consumers served and their location, information so satisfy government reporting requirements for grants, and personnel information to monitor agency progress towards professionalism. With respect to personnel, DSS requested and received hiring discretion in order to upgrade the quality of their workforce. To this end, all DPW workers were interviewed to determine whether their credentials were satisfactory. Of course, this did not endear those workers who were in fact rehired--82% of them--to the new agency. The planning group also outlined the system of management to be used, a system which would promote managerial accountability by clarifying lines of authority and mutual expectations. The group used a system known as responsibility charting popularized in the "Harvard Business Review" whereby the manager states objectives and outlines a method for reaching them. The Internal Management Plan was the result.

In summary, the planning group's conception of DSS combined a strong reform impulse--an impulse exemplified by the emphasis on

prevention, entitlement, decentralization, and the general conviction to right the wrongs of DPW, with the quest for a new and rational "scientific" management. The scientific management orientation was manifest in the readiness to apply techniques developed in the business sector--management information systems, strategic planning, and responsibility charting--to the new agency, an attitude suggestive of the generic management approach. ASSIST and the Internal Management Plan epitomized this approach.

2. A brief descriptive note

DSS has a decentralized structure composed of 6 Regional and 40 Area Offices with Area Boards; this structure was developed by the planning group and heavily influenced by the organizational structure of DMH:

> "Decisions on the working structure of the new Department were based very heavily on the models that the initial planners brought with them from the Department of Mental Health."[10]

The Regional Offices are the administrative links between Central and the Areas, and provide all administrative--personnel, budget, programs--services required by the Areas to carry out the service delivery process. The Area Offices are accountable for their own budget and are theoretically to conform their services to the needs of their communities.

Top Central Office staff (the key leadership group) such as the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioners are from the Department of Mental Health (5), the Office for Children (1), and Senate Ways and Means (1). The remainder of Central staff have been recruited

both from DPW and outside the agency altogether. The Regional Directors, are "generally leaders in the child welfare field," and five of the six have MSWs."[11] Finally, 82% of the social workers are from the Department of Public Welfare, while supervisors, required to have Master's degrees, have been recruited from "schools of social work, private agencies, and individually."[12]

In addition to its chief responsibility of handling abuse and neglect cases DSS also offers the following services to consumers who have been assessed as eligible: adoption, camping, daycare, counseling, emergency shelter care, homemaker services, housekeeping chores, and substitute care--community residential care, group care, and family foster care.

The Region selected for examination is Region IV--Greater Boston--which is the largest Region in the State. The primary Area Office examined is Waltham; staff from the Cambridge and the Coastal Area Office were also interviewed. While it is certainly not the case that Region IV is representative of DSS as a whole, it is reputed to be one of the better run Regions, and thus offers a rich and important glimpse of the agency at its best. In those numerous instances when the experiences of Region IV diverge significantly from the general experience, I have tried to make this clear.

B. ASSIST: Area-based Social Services Information Systems Technology

1. Background

> The commissioner shall develop and implement a management information system which shall contain fiscal and personnel data, client data, and program data necessary for the ongoing administration of effective service delivery. Said information

> system shall include but not be limited to a service plan for each client, with provisions for periodic review thereof.
>
> General Laws, Chapter 18

> ASSIST typifies DSS' resolve to remedy its predecessor's management, operational and informational deficiencies.
>
> The Commissioner's Annual Report
> October 1982

Soon after DSS was established, the consulting firm of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co. (PM & M) was retained to evaluate the computer system inherited from the Department of Public Welfare (DPW), systems which PM & M subsequently judged to be inadequate. The POS-8 system which pays group and foster care providers was prone to "overpayments, errors, or fraud." PM & M thus recommended the acquisition of a more comprehensive management information system.

The legacy of DPW's problems, the recommendations for a new system, and the legislative mandate, all prompted DSS to develop a new computerized management information system--ASSIST. This decision was supported by the State Legislature which appropriated funds for data entry operator positions, and by the Federal government which provided a two million dollar grant.

2. Organizational Structure

A new Office for Systems was created by DSS to assume responsibility for the development of all computer efforts. Under DPW, Systems was merely a part of the Program unit for social services; Systems is now a full-fledged office with its own Assistant Commissioner and four unit heads. The Office for Systems is organized into four major divisions: Advanced Systems Design, Systems Design

and Programming, User Laison and Support, and Systems Maintenance. Advanced Systems Design is engaged in statewide planning and development efforts which are theoretically to be accomplished through a user-driven approach in which the specific users of ASSIST such as the Office of Administrative Services or the Office for Programs become central participants in the design of the modules relating to these areas. The Systems Design and Programming unit is responsible for developing and maintaining the programs for the new computer systems. This work is largely carried on by in-house staff in order to build expertise within Systems, thus avoiding heavy reliance on outside consultants. The User Laison and Support unit is responsible for the implementation of new systems. To this end, it develops methods and procedures for implementation and training, and also provides technical assistance to field staff through the Regional Systems Managers. At the request of the Office for Systems, the Deputy Commissioner of DSS established the ASSIST User Committee, a forum in which to discuss and make recommendations on issues affecting the on-going use of ASSIST. The User Committee is comprised of representatives from all Central Office divisions as well as one representative from each Region.

The user-team approach to module design and the User Committee reflects the Office for Systems philosophy that ASSIST be user-driven. According to this philosophy, the Office for Systems is to act as a service bureau which incorporates agency needs into computer programs. In essence, Systems merely facilitates the translation of these needs into useful technology.

3. The Planning Process

As previously mentioned, the Office for Systems figured prominently in the Five Year Plan promulgated during the initial planning phase of DSS in the summer of 1979. The decision to have a computer system had forced the planning group to consider the broad range of activities that this system could help the agency to accomplish, activities related to consumer needs, purchase of service, personnel, and financial management.

The development of the computer system--ASSIST--began to move more rapidly during 1980 and 1981 at which time the Assistant Commissioner of the Office for Systems initiated a series of conversations with other Assistant Commissioners to get a sense of what their priorities were with respect to information collection. These conversations as well as the broad plan articulated in 1979 formed the basis of the Office for Systems contribution to the Five Year Plan. After the Systems component was formulated, it was presented to the Systems Policy Group, a special group outside the Office for Systems composed of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, the Assistant Commisioners, and the Regional Directors. This group reviewed the plan, established priorities for the implementation of the modules, and deemed it acceptable. It was then presented to the Area Directors who also accepted it.

ASSIST was to meet the following broad goals: efficiency of operational goals; control of organizational performance; and information to support intelligent planning. More specifically, the ASSIST data base would have to allow "control access to data, reduced

redundancy of information, accurate and timely Department-wide updating, and the ability to develop new applications such as statistics with minimum field effort."[13] In order to meet these goals, the Five Year Plan recommended that ASSIST have statewide on-line retrieval of data meaning that all Area and Regional Offices would have immediate access to the computer and that data from all Areas must be stored on the same computer. It was considered important for the Areas to have access to the central computer because it is their responsibility to keep the consumer list up-to-date, and this requires that they are able to add, and change this information. The IBM 3031 was selected for the task. This computer consists of a central processing unit, storage units, and an operator's console. In addition, there are terminals and printers in each of the Area and Regional Offices which are linked to the central processing unit by leased telephone lines. The IBM 3031, located in the Bureau of Systems Operations which is Massachusetts data processing facility, and part of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, is on loan to DSS from A and F. A and F approves all expenditures for management information systems and prefers that State Departments use their services. Thus, due to this arrangement, DSS purchased only the terminals and was able to depend on technical assistance from BSO.

Seven modules were planned for ASSIST: consumer registration, consumer tracking, purchase of services-contracted providers, purchase of service-non contracted providers, employee personnel/payroll, employee staff development, and financial management systems. These can be broken down into four subsystems: consumer needs which

includes consumer registration and tracking; purchase of service; human resources which includes staff development and personnel/payroll; and financial management. The Plan called for the consumer needs subsystem--consumer registration and tracking to be developed first (and at this writing it is the only subsystem which has been implemented) because of DSS' need to know what its actual caseload was, and who and where its consumers were.

The Office of Policy and Programs was designated as the official head of the user group for this subsystem; it was initially conceived that the consumer modules would reflect the model of service delivery and the definitions of service categories that Programs was developing in its Standards of Practice, Standards which would guide social work practice in the field. However, Programs had effectively been "emasculated by the Legal Department" quite early in the Department's history for reasons which are quite complex. Briefly, Programs did not have an Assistant Commissioner until quite late, and this lack of leadership in combination with ambivalence in the Commissioner's Office over what the Standards of Practice ought to be, created a void which the Legal Department quickly filled by substituting Departmental Regulations for the missing Standards. And at the time the module design process was getting underway, the Standards had not yet been completed.

Nonetheless, Programs, in conjunction with the Advanced Systems Design unit, conducted a requirements analysis, the purpose of which was the determination of what data the field--Regional and Area management and social workers--required to enable them to register and track consumers. The "field" group was composed of three

representatives per region, and one of the representatives from Region IV did not think that any Area or Regional Directors were part of this group which effectively meant that the "field management" perspective was under-represented. Central Office staff also played a major role in this process, many of them came from the Department of Mental Health (DMH), were unfamiliar with the field of child welfare, and only a small minority had service delivery experience. The "field" group met for two months, and in the absence of specific guidelines from Programs, produced a document outlining the "essential" data they thought should be collected for the consumer module. The domination by Central Office staff and later by the Advanced Systems Design unit, in conjunction with the absence of guidance from Programs, acted to diminish the influence of the "field" group in the overall consumer needs subsystem design process. From this point on, user involvement became deficient. At the same time that the "field" group was assembling its data, an outside consultant reviewed the state and federal reporting requirements that DSS was obliged to comply with; this data was also included in the module.

In the meantime, because Programs was so indeterminate about what it wanted to include in the module, and because the "field" group was not knowledgeable about technical design issues, the Detail Design Task Force of the Advanced Systems Design Unit "forged off down a path of its own," and began to make fundamental decisions about design issues independent of the "field" group, and prior to a clear articulation of the model and the goals of service delivery. Systems built the following assumptions into their design of the consumer module. It was decided that the individual consumer, not the family,

would be the primary unit of analysis; this meant that information would be collected about the individual consumer. When some members of the "field" group contested this decision, arguing that the family, not the individual, was the significant unit in child welfare, Systems promised that it would be possible to tie the consumer to the family via family inquiry functions and family events. At this writing, these do not exist. One major repurcussion of this design decision has been the difficulty of assembling information on "the collection of individuals in a family"--the case--which constitutes the operational unit for the field of child welfare.

Another design element which would have an important impact was the decision (made during the Five Year Plan) to have an on-line system, the assumption being that all information is current and updated due to the fact that it has been entered as soon as it is available or just as an event occurs. A third feature was the decision not to accumulate information by supervisory unit, but rather to have the information flow directly from worker to Central Office.

This design was then presented to the Systems Policy Group and the Area Directors for approval. It was not until the Forms Design Project of April 1982 that the implications of these decisions became strikingly clear. Incidentally, the third module--Purchase--is being planned in a slightly different way. The Office of Administrative Services is leading the user group and is presently soliciting data requirements from top managers in Central Office since it is felt that they will be the primary users of this module. Interestingly enough, purchase of service has been decentralized and is now the

responsibility of the Area Offices.

4. Consumer Tracking and Registration: ASSIST in Theory

The consumer registration module was designed to contain data on individual consumers such as identity, marital status, and location, as well as "events" which describe the consumer's situation like legal status, case open and close dates, and worker assignment. The tracking module adds to the event history and also provides data for "longitudinal analysis of service delivery, service outcome evaluation, and other statistical uses."[14] Phase I of the tracking module includes major case activities that occur during entry, assessment and service delivery; Phase II includes the monitoring of case reviews and consumer progress.

In addition to these modules, ASSIST can perform the following functions at the present time: inquiry, update, and statistical summary. The ASSIST user can do a name search which determines whether a consumer is previously or currently known to DSS; family inquiry was to provide a list of family members and give access to registration data as did the name search but has not been developed at the present time; consumer inquiry provides registration information on individual consumers. The update functions consist of consumer add, consumer update, consumer event add, and event delete. The statistics function yields case and event counts, while the social worker or caseworker summary generates a list of cases assigned to a social worker.

In general, the inquiry functions such as name search and consumer inquiry into event and registration data for caseload, were

designed for use by social workers and managers; social workers have access to their caseloads while managers have access to those of their Regions and Areas. Within the statistical function, only the caseworker summary was designed for social worker use. In addition to generating a list of families assigned to a social worker, the summary can also be used as a management tool to "reconcile the statistics on the case count and to insure that all consumers are registered on ASSIST."[15] The remainder of the statistical inquiry was designed as a tool for Area and Regional management who need caseload statistics, particularly monthly case counts by area and social worker, which would be used to determine staffing patterns. Because cases are given out on the basis of the number of families as opposed to single-service cases it is important that this distinction be made, particularly now that a recent court decision has mandated a 20/1 caseload limit.

Management receives the following output reports from ASSIST: a weekly listing of social workers by Area with the number of consumers and families assigned to each worker; a monthly family count by Area indicating the number of families served by each Area; a monthly statistical summary report indicating the number of consumers served by Area according to age and location; a monthly statistical summary of service events recorded on ASSIST for a given month by Area; a monthly statistical abuse/neglect report indicating the number of these events recorded on ASSIST for a given month by Area; and quarterly statistical consumer counts by ethnicity, legal status, and handicap. In addition, the expungement report provides a weekly list of those families whose records are scheduled for expungement on the 90th day following unsubstantiation or screen-out of a 51A report. This report is useful

for social workers who are able to select the expungement option best suited to the case situation.

None of the above output reports provide the kind of detailed information that would allow the identification of case by type--single, child welfare, placement (by type)--information which would facilitate decisions about staffing and also assist the manager in monitoring his or her progress towards agency goals like permanency planning, i.e. the reduction of the number of children in residential/substitute care by providing permanent arrangements through adoption or return home.

5. Training and Implementation

Once the consumer registration and Phase I of the tracking modules were completed and the terminals installed, the ASSIST and case recording forms needed to be designed. It was in the process of designing the forms--the vehicle through which the consumer modules would be operationalized--that Programs and Systems came to loggerheads. The problem stemmed from the incompatibility between a mode of service delivery based on family units and non-linearity (circular and non-chronological), and a computer system based on individuals and linearity (straight and chronological) or "event histories". The outcome, according to one participant, was "appalling". This will be taken up at greater length in the following section.

The atmosphere within which the training and implementation process took place was one of high expectation on the part of DSS managers, with the exception of those involved in forms design who felt slightly uneasy, but particularly so amongst social workers due

to the fact that ASSIST had been touted as a tool to aid them in their work. The chapter on ASSIST in the Commissioner's Annual Report of October 1982, is entitled, "Management Information Systems: The Computer Helps the Social Worker." Another official DSS publication states that, "the case workers are both the most important data gathers as well as data users." According to one DSS manager, this public relations campaign was launched because ASSIST could only be successful if social workers would fill out the forms necessary to feed into the computer. But, on the other hand, workers clearly needed to perceive ASSIST as useful to them if they were to be persuaded to use it, and the campaign was geared to this purpose as well.

Three offices were involved in the training process: the Office of Policy and Programs; Office of Human Resources; and the User Laison and Support unit of the Office for Systems. It was agreed that the training of trainers model would be used. According to this model, a preliminary group is trained and trains another group which then proceeds to train yet another group. This model was selected over that of a single group of "professional" trainers who would train the entire Department, for the following reasons. The Office of Human Resources wanted to increase the number of people who were capable of training by building this capacity in-house. Secondly, it was felt that the trainer model would allow the training to be tailored to the specific needs of the Areas and Regions. Thirdly, all the Offices agreed that the smaller scale which accompanied the trainers model would create an environment more conducive to the raising of questions and problems. In addition, as a result of budget

cuts, many training positions in the Regions had been eliminated. Also, according to one DSS manager (and this is his opinion), the trainers model was decided upon because the Central Office was "afraid of going into the areas to train because it didn't know the staff."

It is important to note that there were really two parts to the training process. The first part consisted of training in the new Standards and forms (case recording and computer) about which more will be said in the next chapter; convergent with this was the actual training in the use of the ASSIST hardware, hardware which had arrived in the Regional and Area Offices of Region IV during January of 1982, six months prior to the Standards and Forms training. The first training session for Part I of the Standards and Forms was held at Buzzards Bay during August of 1982. The participants were sent by the Regional Directors and tended to be clinical directors in the Area Offices like Supervisor II's and Area Directors, as well as regional staff. This group was trained by Central Office Staff from Programs and Systems, and would then go into the Areas to train. In the case of Region IV, a second training session was held for those who could not attend the Buzzards Bay session. This consisted of a one day meeting held in Newton during September of 1982. Those from Region IV who trained at Buzzards Bay led this training session. The Waltham Area Office sent four staff to this session, and they in turn conducted four days of training in the Area Office.

This training of trainers model was heavily criticized by those in Region IV who participated in it. Common complaints from Regional systems staff, Area Directors, supervisors, and social workers, focused on the fact that trainers were not well-prepared, and could

not always answer all the questions that were directed at them. There was a general feeling that too much material was presented in too short a time, and that follow-up sessions were necessary. It was suggested that a group of professional trainers, part of neither Programs nor Systems, should have conducted the training to insure uniformity in the training process.

Regional Systems staff played a large role in the actual training and implementation of ASSIST hardware. They provided hands-on training on the computer terminals to Area Directors, supervisors, and social workers, and were also responsible for training the data entry operators in the data entry procedures. In Region IV not all staff were trained to use the computer, and the selection of those who would be trained had a rather random quality about it. There were those staff at both Central and Area who resisted learning for reasons ranging from, "I don't have time to play around and teach myself," to "I hate computers." Clearly, the original hope that all DSS staff would become conversant with the computer has not materialized. Of course, there was considerable Regional variation in the hardware training process, and the Office for Systems did not originally intend for every staff member to have explicit computer training. However, if all the staff had been trained on the computer hardware, they might have been more comfortable with it, hence more willing to use it.

Regional Systems staff has also provided technical assistance to the Area Offices. For instance, if a computer problem occurs that cannot be corrected by the operator, a call is placed to Regional systems which will instruct the Area to make further calls to Central

Systems or to the technical support unit of BSO. The Area then enters the problem on the Trouble Log which is mailed to the User Laison Unit of Office for Systems. Moreover, the Regional Systems managers (chief systems manager at the regional level) are part of the Regional Systems Group which meets every two weeks with Central System managers to discuss operational problems with the Computer. It is in this role as laison between Central and the Areas that area problems are transmitted to the Central Office. In its laison role, Regional Systems also passes along directives and instructions from Central.

Every Region has a representative on the ASSIST User Committee, formed in November of 1982 under the auspices of the User Laison and Support Unit of the Office for Systems to provide a forum for the discussion of issues, problems, and proposed changes relating to ASSIST. The Committee, which meets once a month, is, in theory, to be composed of individuals from outside of Systems. For example, the representative from Region IV is a manager in Programs at the Regional Office. However, most Regions have sent their Systems Operators--the top systems managers--as representatives. Central Office is also heavily represented on the Committee.

Although some members of the Committee have attempted to raise fundamental questions about the design of ASSIST and what its purpose should be, the meetings are usually so well-structured, more so after a particularly unwieldy session where these issues were raised, that this kind of disucssion has been inhibited. The Committee rarely initiates changes but usually responds to proposed changes made by Systems, changes which must go through this Committee before they can be translated into designs by the Advanced Systems Planning

unit. Complaints from the field about the nature of the output reports and the amount of paperwork generated by the forms are also raised in the Committee, and Systems, which keeps catalogues of these complaints, explains to the Committee why some can be corrected and some cannot. As of this writing, the entry forms are being revised, but the Committee has not seen a draft of the revisions, and some minor attempts have been made to condense the forms, attempts which can only meet with limited success if information continues to be generated for the individual consumer.

The representative from Region IV in conjunction with the Regional Director determined the means by which the representative would communicate with the Areas. It was decided not to have a Regional ASSIST User Committee in Region IV but to use existing forums for discussion of Systems issues. The following forums have been used: Area Directors monthly meetings which the representative attended; monthly meetings with in-take personnel and screeners who were the first to apply the new Standards and Forms on entry; and monthly meetings with Supervisor II's who are the assistant Area Directors in charge of clinical practice. It was felt by the representative that these meetings were adequate to receive feedback from the Areas. In addition, the representative visits Area Offices on a monthly basis to check case records in order to determine whether or not they were being filled out correctly. In this way, the representative is, in theory, able to gauge the level of understanding with respect to the Standards and Forms. In turn, the representative sends memos and copies of reports generated by the User Committee back to the field; Area Directors and Supervisor IIs are usually the recipients

of this information which they presumably share with their Area staff.

In addition, each Area Office has an Area Systems Contact who is the key person to provide feedback on ASSIST forms to Regional Systems. In Waltham, the Supervisor II performs this function. In theory, Central Systems then works with Region IV's User Committee representative to "ensure that area comments and recommendations concerning redesign are addressed." While it is the case that the User Committee representative does communicate with Regional Systems and sometimes finds out about major "operational" problems in Areas, the representative did not think that the Area Systems Contacts actually existed, and remains skeptical about the ability of the Committee to respond to "recommendations concerning redesign."

5. Everyday Life Under ASSIST: ASSIST as experienced by Data Entry Operators, Field Managers, Social Workers, and Central Office

Data Entry Operators

In October of 1982 when a data entry operator sat down at a computer terminal to do a name search, it took anywhere from thirty minutes to a few hours for the information to appear on the screen. Many were forced to work before or after the normal working day. This was the beginning of the "slow response time" problem that has continued to plague ASSIST. Unfortunately, the capacity of the computer was overestimated by the technical staff at BSO; DSS has already used up the core with only their first subsystem in place. Next month they will receive another computer with greater capacity and this should relieve the problem.

Field Managers: Regional and Area Directors and Supervisor IIs

Field management was generally enthusiastic about the possibility of a management information system that would allow for the manipulation of data in a variety of ways to aid in decision-making and the monitoring of their work environment. In particular, Regional and Area management wanted caseload information for staffing, service delivery figures such as the number of children in group and foster care, and the kinds of support services, e.g. homemaker, counseling, daycare, that were being provided. The Director of Region IV had hoped that ASSIST would help him to monitor the goals set forth in the quarterly Internal Management Conferences such as permanency planning which requires detailed information on the composition of the Regional caseload. However, the output reports generated by ASSIST are basically weekly and monthly counts of cases and these numbers "don't mean anything to anyone." At present, ASSIST cannot help the Regional Director to track the number of children in substitute care, an arduous task which is done manually by the Supervisor IIs in the Area Offices. In fact, he is in the process of refining his manual system precisely because of the precision and detail it affords; at his request, the Supervisor IIs manually compile the monthly statistical case count which the Areas submit to the Regional Office, a count which could be done on ASSIST except that he wants it broken out by counts of cases by type per worker (voluntaires, referrals, adult), placements, and total family counts. Another persistent problem with the ASSIST output reports is that they are seldom up-to-date, a problem which was to be remedied by giving field managers "turn-around" reports--written reports which the

social worker can update and give to the DEO for re-entry. These promised reports have not yet been delivered, and managers have been devising their own forms for this purpose. The Office for Systems is aware of these difficulties and is presently doing its best to remedy them. New programs can be written which will allow for more detail.

Social Workers and Supervisors

> ASSIST will help social workers provide the services necessary to help maintain intact families, reunite separated family members, and provide each child with a permanent home... will help workers organize their caseloads, make available profiles and trends within their caseload and the community, aid in the consolidation of paperwork, and support compliance with government reporting requirements.[16]

There is a pervasive sentiment among social workers that ASSIST has not helped them to perform their jobs--the delivery of services to consumers--but, on the contrary, has interfered with this. The primary foe is the computer forms which must be filled out, forms which "take time away from casework" and are considered an extra chore to be done. Social workers carry all of their case information in their heads and in the case record, and therefore feel that they are merely duplicating the case record onto the ASSIST forms, an activity that has not generated the benefits promised. According to one supervisor, "at least the case record captures whats really going on in the case, you don't just check boxes."

The rhythm and mode of the social workers' worklife is at odds with that of the computer. ASSIST and its accompanying forms are designed for data to be entered just as it happens and in a certain order, yet social workers enter data periodically when they get the chance. Moreover, service delivery tends to be more messy and

activities less chronological than the computer design allows for; the "life of a case" may be more circular than linear.

The information generated by ASSIST, for example, the social worker summary, has been unhelpful because, as previously mentioned, social workers already have this information in their heads; they know what their cases are. Supervisors, on the other hand, find this more useful. The summary could be more helpful to social workers if it specified case by type and also provided names and addresses of family members as well as type of family. Social workers would also benefit from a registry of types of placements available which would greatly expedite the matching of consumers to facilities. They would also like to have computer face sheets containing crucial identifying information for the front of each case record. Some suggested that clerks be hired to fill out the computer forms, and all have requested a condensed case record as well as a reduction in the number of pages per family generated by ASSIST, a virtual torrent that complicates rather than streamlines their files.

According to one SupervisorII, ASSIST has had a negative impact on worker morale both in her office and across the state because of the additional work unaccompanied by immediate benefits. There has, thus far, been little discussion in the literature indicating that social workers can derive direct benefits from management information systems; they continue to be indirect users and to derive indirect benefits. However, had the process of user participation inDSS been more successful, some of the design problems mentioned which affect social workers might have been avoided. Also, the suggestions outlined above could easily have been operationalized

and fortunately remain possible enhancements to ASSIST. The difficulties surrounding the forms and the paperwork burden will prove far more intractable; they may not be solvable without major systems alterations. As of this writing, none of the above suggested changes have been implemented, although the forms--abuse and neglect--are in the process of revision. The slowness of the revision process has caused many to feel that their "complaints go unheard normally." Their User Committee representative, whom some did not know existed, says that the changes social workers want, specifically reductions in the numbers of forms, cannot be made without redesigning the whole system. In the meantime, their indifference and hostility to ASSIST grows.

Central Office

Central Office is the most pleased with ASSIST which has proven helpful in generating the counts they need. It is true that accuracy has been a problem, but ASSIST makes it much easier to get the kind of summary statistics that are useful for decision-making and compliance with government reporting requirements. ASSIST has become an important tool for compliance with the Lynch Order by producing a report which identifies completed service plans and case reviews, and has also helped with staffing levels.

C. Standards of Practice

1. Background

The Department of Welfare (DPW) had seven volumes of Standards, which, according to one social worker, no one actually read or

followed with any degree of regularity. When DSS became operative, one priority was to write new Standards which reflected the enabling legislation, regulations, and the major goals of the agency. The Standards, derived from DSS regulations, give the regulations specific form and content; they act as a working document for field staff to guide their practice. "The Department's Standards of Practice define the requirements of the service delivery process and establish minimum expectations for good practice in the field."[17] The Standards should help to promote a standardized quality of service delivery by making the requirements of this delivery clear.

The Central Office of Programs and Policy assumed responsibility for writing the Standards. As indicated earlier, Programs and Policy got off to a late start partly because it did not have an Assistant Commissioner until February of 1980, quite late in the planning stages of the agency. A first draft was completed in June of 1980, but rejected by the Commissioner as inadequate because it was not "a concise statement conveying the basic philosophy and principles of the Department's new approach."[18] The draft, according to the Commissioner, was too detailed and thus did not sufficiently "empower" workers, who as professionals should be able to use their judgement in meeting the broad goals of the Department. The other position on the Standards reasoned that workers needed very detailed Standards because DSS was a new agency and therefore had a responsibility to clearly indicate where DSS policy and regulations differed from those of DPW. A certain amount of guidance was necessary to implement the regulations, and workers did want to know what they would be held accountable for; indeed, according to some in this

camp, workers both required and wanted "cookbooks". Workers themselves were ambivalent about the kind of standards they wanted. While all wanted some kind of guidance, (especially since DSS was a new agency) some workers preferred more detail than others.

This latter position eventually prevailed, and a quite detailed set of Standards was written. The Standards were formulated to be a methodology of how to deliver services in the field. It was believed that following the Standards would improve case management, and improved case management meant more efficient service delivery. Essentially, the Standards became a way of managing the service delivery process by functioning simultaneously as a management tool and guidelines for practice.

Part I of the Standards - entry, assessment, and service plans was in draft form by 1982; Part II will cover service provision, substitute care, case review and case closure.

When Part I was ready for review, each Region set up Regional Review Panels composed of inside and outside reviewers which met in three all day sessions. During the review process, the controversial points, problems, and criticisms that surfaced were compiled into written reports and incorporated into subsequent drafts of the Standards. Local 509 of the Service Employees International Union which represents DSS employees,[19] also had an opportunity to review the Standards through its Standards of Practice Review Committee. The Standards occupy an important place in labor management negotiations, and in this way, the Union operates as a channel through which feedback on the Standards is communicated to the Central Office.

The new Standards and ASSIST required the design of new forms

and the redesign of many of DPW's forms. The Forms Design Project which begain in April of 1982 had the purpose of designing a new case recording manual to accomodate the documentation required by the Standards, as well as the computer forms to accompany the Registration and Tracking modules of ASSIST. As mentioned in the previous section, the Standards and the Consumer Needs Subsystem of ASSIST were initially designed to correspond to each other, but the delay in the Standards created a disjuncture between the Office of Programs and the design unit of Systems which effectively insulated Systems from the requirements of Programs. This implicit conflict became explicit during the Forms Design Process, when both the Central Offices of Systems and Programs battled over how to operationalize the modules; this was compounded by the fact that there was little agreement in the field as to how the forms should be designed because the Areas has always used slightly different forms, thus no single model or set of guidelines existed.

A Forms Design Committee, composed of three representatives per Region chosen by the Regional Directors, was given this task. The Union also sent two representatives to the Committee because the Forms would have such a significant impact on the work process. Six drafts were produced, the fourth of which was presented to Area Directors for comment, comments which were integrated into subsequent drafts. The Forms were so awful, according to the representatives from Region IV, that they decided to prep their Area Directors in the Forms thus enabling them to go to the statewide Area Directors meeting where they pushed to make the Forms more amenable to service delivery in the field. Some case recording pieces were changed,

but the ASSIST forms could only be slightly altered because the design of the modules, indeed the system as a whole, dictated that the forms have a certain architecture, one which could not be changed without substantial alteration in the computer system as a whole.

Training in the Standards and Forms occurred in August and September of 1982 as described in the previous section. Implementation began in September, and the period between October 1 and December 1 was designated as a statewide testing period in which problems arising from the Standards and Forms were addressed. After the implementation process, representatives from the Office for Programs and the Office for Systems went to the Regional Offices and requested that the Regional Directors in conjunction with Area Directors implement a process whereby feedback from the field could be solicited. It was decided by Central not to use a standard questionnaire. This resulted in the feeling among social workers and supervisors that they were unable to communicate directly with the Central Office.

After the testing period was over, the Office for Systems compiled a catalogue of complaints, criticisms, comments, and suggestions which they presented to the Area Directors in a statewide meeting held in Hyannis in March of 1983, the purpose of which was to explain why some changes had been implemented and others not. The Area Directors upon returning from this meeting each used a different method of communicating this information to their staffs.

The entire Standards and Forms process generated criticism from direct line workers and supervisors who felt that as the primary users, they did not have enough direct involvement in the design of either.

According to one supervisor, Central Office "should have observed us to see what it is we actually do." Moreover, because so few changes were actually made as explained earlier, many workers felt that their suggestions and criticisms had neither been listened to nor acted upon.

2. Permanency Planning: The Standards in Action

Permanency Planning, the attempt to reduce the number of children in residential care by providing permanent arrangements either through adoption or return home, is a major goal of DSS. It is a response both to the fact that "DPW was criticized for using foster care on a permanent, not a temporary, basis and with failing to try to prevent such placements, failing to monitor the status of children in care, and moving too few children into adoptive homes,"[20] and to the importance placed upon permanency planning concepts by Federal programs such as Title IV-E. DSS regulations and Standards of Practice embody the concept of permanency planning by requiring written service plans and service reviews emphasizing re-unification goals every six months;[21] full case reviews every six months for all children in placement to determine the need for continuation; improved screening and needs assessment at entry in order to promote appropriate placement; and supervisory monitoring of assessments for quality and accuracy. The Standards relating to permanency planning and all other activities which fall under entry, assessment, and service plans, have the purpose of raising the quality of service delivery by guiding case management practices. The Standards provide very specific and detailed instructions about how to perform an activity, instructions which breakup every activity into small pieces, thus rendering the activity

easier to complete and encouraging compliance with the Standard. Even though the Standards attempt to structure activities very carefully in order to promote a level of quality and compliance, "they do not guarantee good work"; supervision remains necessary.

Most of the supervision occurs at the Area level, the nature of which varies among Area Offices. In the Waltham Office, all major events must be authorized by the Administrative Review Team, composed of the Area Director, Supervisor II, program specialist, business manager, supervisor, and social worker presenting the case for discussion. The ART meets weekly to review all placements, case closures, and court actions contemplated by social workers. In addition, supervisors check case records to determine if they have been filled out accurately and thoroughly. Case records, the major written record which, among other things, serves as a means of evaluating services provided to consumers. The Supervisor II checks case records for content and specific compliance with procedures such as case review, and in this way directly monitors the work of the social worker and indirectly monitors the quality of the supervisor's training of the social worker in the use of the case record. The nature of supervision in the Waltham Office is somewhat collegial because it occurs in conference settings. The Area Director makes a point of seeing herself in partnership with her staff: "You can't impose or just shove things on people because they are professionals." However, supervision from the Regional or Central Office when it does occur, is not perceived as collegial, but authoritative, partly because staff have such little contact with Central Office, yet are expected to implement the policies formulated there.

3. The View from Below

The new Standards have generated much controversy and criticism among social workers and supervisors. This criticism has crystalized around the following issues: workload, the shift from clinician to casemanager, discretion, and supervision. A universal complaint is the amount of work that has accompanied the new Standards. According to one social worker, the amount of work actually doubled for any given event due to the explicitness of the steps to be followed and the amount of accompanying documentation required. For example, abuse/neglect screeners could not keep up with in-coming calls because they had more information to process with each call. The explicit and demanding nature of the Standards, in combination with high caseloads, makes it impossible to comply with every point in the Standards. Particularly difficult are the deadlines associated with abuse and neglect cases in which written emergency investigations must be completed within twenty-four hours; non-emergency investigations within seven days; and full case assessments within thirty days after the opening of a case. The rigorousness of the abuse/neglect Standards was a response to previous negligence on the part of DPW, but more recently to the Mallet case in which a child in the care of DSS was murdered. The Mallet case starkly illustrated just how vulnerable and liable social workers are, and made many social workers appreciate the explicit and rigorous nature of the standards pertaining to abuse and neglect.

The paperwork generated by the new case recording manual, the ASSIST forms, and the requirements set out in the Standards for full documentation, makes the workload seem even heavier. There is a

pervasive feeling that the Forms are redundant, especially the computer forms which essentially duplicate major parts of the case record onto the computer. This contrasts with the promise that:

> The new forms will help workers organize their case recording activity. They will standardize the information necessary for records of entry, assessment, service plans and case review. They will also improve the quality of service plans and make the plans uniform and consistent. Designed to be simple and easy to fill out, they are a move in the direction of eliminating unnecessary paperwork. They are designed to minimize collection of redundant data and integrate collection of manual and automated data. In short, the forms will provide a structure for reliable, systematic information gathering both in case records and on ASSIST.[22]

There has also been concern with what is perceived to be a shift in the definition of social worker, implicit in the Standards of Practice, from that of clinician to casemanager. As a casemanager, the social worker plugs clients into services attempting to avoid duplication, meets deadlines, fills out forms, makes fewer clinical decisions, and sees clients less frequently, who, according to one social worker, "suffer because we as workers and clinicians cannot be there for them as before." The neglect of thier clinical skills, skills which they view as the basis of their professionalism and as an integral part of their job, has contributed to the feeling that being a casemanager is a lot like being a clerk. On the other hand, case management is an integral part of the purchase of service system whereby DSS contracts for services with private providers rather than providing them in-house. This type of arrangement transforms the role of social worker into a casemanager whose primary responsibility is to ensure that clients are linked up with appropriate and available services.

According to social workers, the fact that the Standards are

"rigidly enforced" through a system of supervision "takes the professionalism out of the job." Even at the Waltham Area office where a "collegial" style of supervision predominates, social workers feel that they are constantly being monitored through the administrative review team, case conferences, and other monitoring devices--"people are there and you have to answer to them." For example, the Area Director's signature is required in order to proceed with activities such as case closure or court orders, which, according to one supervisor, could just as easily be handled by the social worker or the attorney. This scrutinization can be partly attributed to the fear that cases are not being adequately reviewed, a common occurrence during the DPW days; it also stems from the desire on the part of top management to ensure that the principles of permanency planning are being implemented. In addition, a social worker must receive supervisory permission to do "counseling" with a client. In essence, the area-based system of service delivery put discretion into the hands of the Area Director, but not necessarily into those of the worker. On the other hand, workers often feel neglected by management because they are not praised for the good work they do.

These concerns have been exacerbated by the effort to comply with the Lynch Order handed down by Judge Keaton in September of 1982. In 1978, Patricia Lynch filed suit against DPW for putting children into foster care unnecessarily. On September 20th Judge Keaton handed down an Order stating that DSS must comply with case plan, case review, caseload and case assignment requirements in order to be eligible for Title IV-E funds (Adoption Assistance and Foster Care funds for AFDC eligible children). On December 30, 1982, DSS filed a Title IV-E Plan

which was accepted by Health and Human Services on February 8, 1983. It was agreed that DSS would comply with the Title IV-E Plan by February 1, 1983, giving the Department approximately two months to comply with the following requirements: All AFDC children in out-of-home placements had to have service plans and case reviews, a requirement which DSS extended to all children in out-of-home placements as well as cases resulting from substantiated abuse/ neglect reports. Case reviews, in particular, were to be done:

- Within six (6) weeks of the placement of a child in substitute care, a limited case review must occur.
- Six (6) weeks after that initial review, that is, three (3) months after the child is placed, a limited case review must occur.
- Within six (6) months of the date of placement, a full placement case review must be completed.
- Thereafter a cycle of limited case reviews alternating with a full review three (3) month intervals should be followed until the case is closed or the child is no longer in placement.[23]

It was the full placement case review that had to be completed for most cases in order to be in compliance with the Order; a third party not involved in the case and the parents must also be included in this process. In addition, all cases were to be assigned within twenty-four hours, and caseloads could not exceed 20/1.

The need to implement the Order in a short period of time put enormous pressure on the Central Office which immediately took charge of the compliance effort. Central Office relied upon its direct line authority over the Regions and Areas, authority which was expressed in a continual stream of directives and instructions as well as through the development of mechanisms for monitoring activity in a much more detailed way. Central Office established a Compliance Team composed

of the Deputy Commissioner, the Commissioner's Executive Assistant and the Commissioner. The Commissioner "reserved for herself the overall responsibility to issue clear directives to all DSS staff to comply with the Order."[24]

At the Regional level, the Regional Program managers, normally responsible for implementing programs and policies at the Area level, were instructed in the new directives by the Compliance Team which attended their meetings in order to "assure that a consistent message was transmitted to the field."[25] Area Directors were required to develop workplans "demonstrating the steps each Area would take to ensure that there would be service plans and case reviews for all children in placement and in protective cases."[26] These plans were consolidated into regional work plans which were evaluated by the Deputy Commissioner. Technical assistance was provided by both Central and Regional staff to Area Offices. This assistance took the following forms. Reviewers were dispatched to Area Offices to read service plans and case reviews which they then commented upon either verbally or in writing. Regional Offices provided information and acted as trouble shooters for any type of problem that arose. Region IV, in addition to providing Area Directors with help in developing workplans, guidelines, and monitoring reports, twice sent Regional staff to each Area Office to conduct reviews of case records and service plans. "At each site visit, conformance to the Department's service planning and case review requirements was assessed, progress monitored and verbal feedback provided to Area Directors and Supevisors. When necessary a corrective action plan was developed and followed up on by Regional staff."[27]

Compliance with the service plan/case review part of the Lynch Order was very difficult for the whole agency, but particularly so for social workers, many of whom actually did this paperwork during after-work hours. The nature of the compliance effort, especially Central and Regional monitoring of case records, the results of which were not directly communicated to workers, added to the feeling among many that they had little control over the policies and procedures which they were expected to implement.[28]

All of these issues--overly rigorous Standards of Practice, paperwork, high caseloads, and the additional pressure of the compliance with the Lynch Order--culminated in a demonstration by the Union in January 1983, the theme of which was "People not Paperwork". This demonstration was indicative of the low morale and discontent among DSS workers, discontent that had been brewing from the very inception of the Agency. According to the Commissioner, these feelings among social workers are the result of their vulnerability now that they are liscensed and thus liable for their actions; the "empowerment" of social workers is as the root of their discontent.

On the one hand, one could argue that the Standards as well as compliance with the Title IV-E requirements helped to make service delivery more efficient by forcing immediate implementation of service plans and case reviews, thus compelling the kind of case management practice which leads to permanency planning. On the other hand, the hardships accompanying both of these measures has also diminished the morale of the workers, who argue that they would be more efficient if they had fewer forms, more time to do "clinical" work with their clients, more training, and fewer abrupt changes in

policy.

D. Internal Management Plan (IMP)

1. Background

The organizational structure of DPW was extremely centralized with budget, personnel and policy authority all residing at the Central level. The Central Office however, had no direct line authority over the Area Offices, and the Area Offices, denied budget and personnel authority, had no incentive to manage. This created two problems: continual deficits and an absence of control and accountability. The decision to have a decentralized area-based organization in which the Regional and Area Offices were to have responsibility for budget accounts, contracts, and human resources, with the Regional Office acting as the administrative liason between Center and Area, was in part a response to this centralization. The Internal Management Plan (IMP)--quarterly management conferences held between Central Office and the Regions, the Regional Offices and the Areas--is the institutional mechanism which both links the various organizational levels of DSS together, and provides management at these levels with the incentive to manage.

2. IMP in Theory

The IMP, as conceived by Central Office, would perform the following functions: eliminate deficits; make management accountable for their actions by "elevating (the) managerial accountability of field directors";[29] monitor progress towards agency goals; and facilitate communication within a decentralized agency. According to

Central Office, the IMP is first and foremost a decision-making plan and not a monitoring or reporting device. The IMP would make it possible for "the manager to be clear about what he or she is supposed to do" in contrast to both DPW and DMH (the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Office of Administrative Services whom I interviewed, came from DMH) where the lack of clear expectations, plans, and agreements between different organizational levels resulted in a muddling of the ends to be accomplished and the appropriate means for accomplishing them. The IMP would make expectations clear by establishing a minimum level of state-wide performance standards which each manager would be responsible for attaining. But, within these parameters, each manager is able to exercise discretion over just how to meet these objectives--"each level is empowered to act according to its needs and desires."

3. IMP in Practice: Central and Regional Conferences

Each year, a set of goals is formulated by the Executive Committee composed of the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and the Regional Directors. (In FY 82, for example, agency goals were essentially the goals mandated by the Lynch Order.) These goals form the basis for the IMP conferences held between Central Office and the Regional Directors four times a year. With each successive IMP during the course of a year, the manager negotiates performance targets such that by the end of the period, all goals have been completely attained.

The FY 83 second quarter IMP between Region IV and Central Office had as one of its goals "to continue the implementation and monitoring

of a three-part case review system to ensure: preparation of a service plan for each consumer based on DSS standards. Performance of 100% case reviews based on DSS standards. Identification of children in need of placement plans."[30] The Regional Director then measures the progress he has made with respect to this goal, progress which is indicated by the level of compliance (with this goal) among Area Offices in the period from the previous IMP to the current one. This is followed by an outline of the objectives which the Director will pursue in order to meet the goal in the future: "Region IV will have full and up-to-date case reviews on 60% of its active clients. Area Offices will perform full quarterly reviews on all children five years and younger who have been in sub-care for more than 18 months.....During the second quarter the Regional Program Staff will visit each Area Office and monitor what tools are presently used to monitor case reviews."[31] These objectives are followed by a description of the indicators to be used in the measurement and attainment of the objectives.

The Regional Director then submits this written document to Central Office which distributes it among various divisions--Programs, Administrative Services, and Human Resources--for review. If there are disagreements about numbers such as case counts or service delivery figures, these are revised. This is followed by the actual IMP conference in which the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and the Regional Director meet face-to-face for two to three hours to discuss the "merits, accuracy, and reasonableness of the IMP."[32] The regional Director's performance is checked against the agency's yearly goals, and specifically against the objectives he set for himself in

the previous IMP. He is responsible for explaining why he has not reached the objectives he had set for himself, and in this way both the managers performance as well as progress towards agency goals are monitored simultaneously. If it should be the case that a manager exhibits an "unacceptable pattern of management default",[33] dismissal is indicated.

What transpires during this conference is a series of negotiations in which the Regional Director attempts to enlarge his "window of discretion"--the area in which he is free to determine the way in which he will implement the yearly goals. For instance, one goal might be a reduction in the number of children in residential care, (part of the agency mission to keep families together) but the Director might not have been able to reduce his numbers enough to satisfy the Commissioner. He then justifies his action by arguing that his Region has more white upper-middle class consumers who demand residential care, and because DSS is designed to respond to the needs of the community, it has the obligation to provide this kind of care. The Director might also argue that residential care is often the only solution for deeply troubled kinds and thus is a necessity. This face-to-face negotiation culminates in a final management plan agreed upon by both the Commissioner and the Director, and this document guides the Director's actions for the next quarter. This Director, who was a member of the initial DSS planning team and has had a long history in the field of child welfare, is hindered in only 10% of what he does. His ability to carve out an arena of discretion and to initiate and defend his actions are the result of his personal power and prestige within DSS as well as his expertise in child welfare. Not

all Regional Directors fair as well in the process.

4. Evaluation

The Regional Director had much praise for this system of management which contrasts so strikingly with the "crisis management" so prevalent at DPW. The opportunity to negotiate objectives and performance targets as well as the ample opportunity to plan (due to the need to accumulate valid information on a quarterly basis) and to make one's case to Central Office, were the most highly valued components. This Director, however, did not like the tendency towards the standardization of Regions--"if they do it in that Region, why can't you do it here?" The amount of paperwork associated with the IMP process can also be formidable, and the IMP forms, distributed by Central Office to obtain the minimum amount of information necessary to discuss the issues, can change with each IMP depending on what information Central wants to collect. The Regional Director also has the option of submitting additional forms and figures of his own. Central Office has also been pleased with the IMP process but worries about its time consuming nature as well as its tendency to focus too narrowly on major objectives to the detriment of on-going operations.

5. IMP in Practice: Regional and Area Conferences

This same process is repeated between the Regional and the Area Directors on a quarterly basis. While it is the case that the Regional IMPs are most important, (in the sense that the Regional Directors remain free to move resources around the Region regardless of what is negotiated) Area IMPs provide the Director with valuable information about the Areas which he can then incorporate into his Regional

IMP. While the Regional Director sets the agenda in the sense that he has his goals in the same way that Central has theirs, "the agenda can be negotiated."

We will look at an example of the IMP process in the Waltham Area. In general, the Area IMPs focus on program expansion, and in the case of Waltham, the Area Director prepares for her IMP by documenting the kinds of needs the Area has; if, for example, the Area needs more staff, she will focus on caseload and types of cases. The documentation of need--"the building of a case"--for more residential group care is always difficult because it conflicts with agency policy of serving children in their homes and reducing the use of substitute care. In this instance, the Area Director would compile statistics supporting her request. This Director has had a long tenure with DSS (and substantial Central Office experience), and like the Regional Director, is knowledgeable about child welfare. These two qualities, experience and knowledge, impart considerable confidence to the Area Director and contribute to her strength and power. She views the IMP as a means of initiating change and mustering support for her plans--"as an opportunity to get together to see what it is you're managing gives you more power--these are my problems, this is what I need to change. The IMP is the most important thing that has happened to this agency."

The IMP becomes a tool of power for the Area Director and a means of improving the effectiveness of service delivery when it is used to muster the resources necessary to respond to Area needs. The budget is also a potent tool primarily because the budget process is area-based. The Area develops a budget request which is submitted

to the Region in May and negotiations ensue. The Area Plan and the Area Board gives the Director power in the budget process. The Area Plan is an invaluable source of information for the Director who treats it as a living document and uses it to justify her claims and actions to the Region--"the Plan says that we need x amount of service". The Area Board, because it is responsible for documenting community needs, can easily galvanize community support for the budget request. Yet, larger constraints exist. One example is the continual request for more staff, a request which has been largely ignored in part because Central Office wanted additional staff to come through legislative appropriation rather than from other Area Offices.

The Area Director did concede that the IMP cuts both ways: it is a means of control as well as power; other Area Directors who are not as aggressive feel that they are being controlled through the IMP process which they view as a device to monitor their compliance with agency directives.

An important component of the IMP process is the Financial Management System (FMS) which complements the IMP by providing managers with the kind of financial data they need to maintain spending within appropriate levels. The FMS fosters managerial accountability by indicating the amount of resources available, and thus enables a comparison to be made between actual and targeted spending. That is, if one is aware of the resources available, one can be held accountable for deficits. And the elimination of deficits--4.5 million accumulated under DPW--lay behind the development of the FMS. The development of an accural or incurred system organized on a service specific basis gives the manager ample information on present

and future resources by indicating over or under consumption of resources, thus allowing for planning.

More specifically, an Internal Spending Plan (ISP) is formulated which provides data on current and projected financial performance for the year. Its main advantage is its up-to-date information on projected expenses. This best estimate of projected fiscal year expenses is then comapred with the predetermined and approved ISP, and the comparison indicates how well the manager is doing according to plan, thus facilitating control of costs and promoting effective management of resources.

The only difficulty with the FMS is its reliance on internal discipline; it is still possible to pay the bills without doing the FMS forms. The FMS also requires additional staff and staff is nearly always in short supply.

Both the IMP and the FMS have thus far been the most effective and well-received of the techniques under discussion. They have provided managers with the information and responsibility necessary to eliminate deficits and to engage in long and short-term planning, both of which have improved the overall quality of management. In addition, managers are very positive about the IMP and the FMS which have encouraged managers to become more active participants in agency operations.

IV. ANALYSIS

A. ASSIST

In its most general form, the ASSIST case documents the series of difficulties encountered by DSS in developing and implementing its computer system, difficulties which have their origin in organizational behavior, politics, and structure. As such, the ASSIST case is a fine example of the problems and dilemmas which result from the interaction between a computerized management information system and a particular organization. Indeed:

> The introduction of a sophisticated information technology is as much an emotional human problem that requires interpersonal competence (as well as technical competence) and that requires knowledge about human aspects of organizations such as personality, small groups, intergroups, and living systems of organizational norms.[1]

The three major bodies of actors--Central Office, Field Management, and Social Workers--each offers a different explanation for the difficulties. Indeed, the divergent explanations are conditioned by each group's particular relationship to the computer system, and more generally, to the agency as a whole.

Central Office: As mentioned previously, Central Office is the primary user of ASSIST and has thus far been the most pleased with its performance. It is the opinion of Central Office that the major difficulties ASSIST has encountered are essentially technical--slow response time and the sheer newness of the hardware and the accompanying forms. These problems have alienated the staff somewhat from ASSIST, but they will be resolved in due time.

Moreover, according to Central Office, the fact that the new and complex Standards of Practice are reflected in the computer system has

created the misperception that ASSIST is Systems rather than user driven, which has caused some resistance. Finally, ASSIST has standardized certain aspects of administration and service delivery which has caused resistance and resentment among those managers whose freedom has been impinged upon.

Field Management: Field management, also primary users of the computer system, feel that ASSIST has failed because it was not designed with field operations in mind; the overriding concern was Central Office's need for information to comply with government reporting requirements. This situation resulted from a lack of explicit goal formulation, a lack exacerbated by the indeterminancy of Programs, which did not know what information it wanted to collect. The negative reaction which ASSIST has engendered among some field managers thus stems neither from its newness nor from the staff's fear of technology, but rather from its uselessness and inconvenience.

Social Workers: Social workers, designated as the secondary users of ASSIST, were to derive indirect benefits because they would not use information for decision-making as would Central Office and Field Management. However, they have experienced ASSIST more as data collectors than as data users, and this has given rise to their perception of ASSIST as a tool which managment uses to monitor both the agency and their individual performance. Moreover, the fact that social workers have as of yet derived so few benefits from ASSIST has led them to locate its failure in the design and implementation process, a process in which they feel they were not adequately represented, if not altogether excluded. The inadequacy of the user participation process resulted in ASSIST not being as useful to them as it might

have been and also prevented the design of ASSIST from corresponding to the nature of their work life. The training process and the difficulty of communicating problems and concerns, coupled with the absence of any substantial response to their problems, has left them with the feeling of having been ignored and of being, ultimately, of no consequence.

The common thread which emerges from these disparate explanations is their detection of the same phenomenon underlying the dysfunctions of ASSIST, namely the breakdown of user participation; and this breakdown has expressed itself in the bestowal of benefits on one user group at the expense of the others. Ironically, the original blueprint of ASSIST was replete with user participation mechanisms, the benefits of which are well known yet warrant recital: 1) more accurate assessment of user information requirements; 2) prevention of costly systems features that are unacceptable to users; and 3) greater acceptance and support of the system and greater user understanding. In addition, user participation is the most beneficial when it occurs in the initiation and design phases--prior to implementation--because of the importance of user influence in determining the scope of the system.[2] The process by which the collapse of user participation occurred will first be reconstructed; then this process will be situated within the broader organizational context, a context determined in large part by behavior, politics, and organizational structure.

The failure of user participation or the "user-driven" approach in the development of ASSIST can be located precisely in this early initiation and design phase. The decision to have a computer system

had already been made at the time of the founding of DSS, as indicated by the legislative mandate, and some crucial design decisions were then made in the Five Year Plan, such as the area-based and on-line features. When the first module was being developed, Programs, which had been crippled by a lack of leadership coupled with domination by the Legal Department, was unable to provide the guidance necessary to develop the consumer modules. Thus the goal of this module--what is it that we want to know and in what form--was not made explicit as the service delivery model had not yet been fully articulated in the Standards of Practice. And in the earlier stages of the Department there was some ambivilence about precisely how DSS' field practice would differ from that of DPW.

Programs led the user group, which in adition to being dominated by Central Office staff who had by and large did not have the experience with field operations, also lacked the technical expertise necessary to be influential in the design process. The design unit which was designated to play the role of "translator" began to exercise greater control over the design process and proceeded to make fundamental decisions about the consumer module, decisions which were made in the absence of solid knowledge of child welfare and thus had significant operational implications. First and foremost, the individual was selected as the unit of analysis. Yet the relevant unit in child welfare is the family, and the purpose of DSS is precisely to strengthen family life. Second, the mode of data entry was based on linearity, and designed for the entry of data events "just as they happen." This conflicts both with social work practice and with the usual chronology of cases, which follow a different tempo.

Moreover, the decision to include data to fullfill government reporting requirements created an "overload" which eventually filled up the core of the computer and slowed down the system.

The decisions were approved by the Regional and Area Directors who did not see the implications until the module was implemented, at which point it became obvious that ASSIST was not sufficiently tailored to the needs of field operations. But once the decisions had been implemented it was virtually impossible to rectify the situation short of redesigning the entire system, and the amount of time and money which had already been invested made this an unlikely possibility.

The User Committee was also unable to respond to any of the major difficulties--burdensome paperwork, invalidity of output reports, update problems--in an aggressive way. The Committee was effectively transformed into a body which merely reacted to System's directives; as such it had the patina of user participation but not the substance, and thus performs merely a legitimating function. The impotence of the User Committee, coupled with the paucity of social worker participation in the development and design of ASSIST, has served to deepen social workers' skepticism, hostility, and resistance towards ASSIST and towards computerization in general.

In order to explain why events unfolded as they did it is essential to look at the organizational context within which ASSIST developed, a context laden with complexity, and historical particularity, and which ultimately shaped its fate. The factors which have been crucial in fashioning this context can be grouped under the following headings: behavior, politics, and organizational structure.

1. Behavior

Central Office: As described in the Introduction, the origins of DSS were rooted in the desire to radically transform the way social services were organized and delivered in Massachusetts. DPW had represented all the negative aspects which had to be overcome; DSS' mission and organizational structure as well as the decision to have a computer system were the products of this antipathy. The selection of Mary Jane England, a psychiatrist and Associate Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, as Commissioner of DSS, over John MacManus, the Assistant Commissioner and Director of Social Services at DPW, "marked a clean break with past history, in which child welfare and public welfare had been closely associated, and in which professional social workers provided the leadership in child welfare services." This break with DPW and the social work community in general became even more clear when prominent members of Central Office were recruited either from the Department of Mental Health or outside DPW altogether. The only expert in child welfare was John York, who later became the Director of Region IV.

The new turn that was so consciously taken had two important consequences. First, the Central Office staff from DMH were imbued with a mental health model ofchild welfare. In this model the individual was the relevant unit of treatment; the model of treatment and service delivery which these individuals carried with them and utilized in their practice was essentially that of DMH. Secondly, the majority of Central Office staff had relatively little contact with field operations, which made it difficult for them to understand both the field management perspective and the service delivery process;

the fact that Central Office was so heavily represented in Systems development meant that it was their perspective which dominated the process and which ultimately determined which set of user needs would predominate. In essence, the computer had been imposed from above, in the same way as the mission and structure had been, in the hope of radically restructuring the DPW legacy. As such, ASSIST was deeply rooted in the initial concpetion of DSS, and as we shall see, came to reproduce the dilemmas associated with this conception. This conception of organizational reform prevented Central Office from gaining a more complete understanding of the work processes of both field management and social workers.

In addition, those members of Central Office who had been recruited from DPW still carried the centralized DPW model in their heads and had not fully come to grips with the fact that DSS was an area-based system in which the Region, but especially the Area, were the cornerstones of the service delivery process, a process in which both field management and social workers figured prominently. Hence these individuals continued to operate in the centralized mode of DPW, in which Central Office made the crucial decisions. All of these factors undermined "user participation" from the very start; users, other than Central Office, were misconstrued and misunderstood. The past experience and behavior of Central Office effectively created barriers to the understanding of the needs and requirements of other organizational users.

Social Workers: Social Workers have traditionally viewed their profession as a humanistic one, which means client-oriented and, more specifically, clinical. In the case of social workers at DSS, this

perspective has made them resistant to those initiatives which interfere with their ability to provide the kind of client-oriented services within which their professionalism is grounded. The computer system interferred with their professionalism for two reasons. First, they perceive ASSIST as a means of monitoring and supervising their activity which hampers their professional discretion. Second, the standardization and the paperwork that accompanied ASSIST has threatened the "human" element of their profession--working with individual clients--which they view as the core of social work activity. These attitudes have given rise to an aversion to the computer system, and when this proclivity was combined with inadequate training and operational problems, the initial behavior was merely reinforced.

2. Politics

The political context within which ASSIST was inserted was particularly tense, due to DSS' troubled history of labor management relations. This tension had its origins back in the initial planning (1980) stages when DSS decided to "professionalize" its work force--by requiring Master's Degrees for supervisors and Bachelor's Degrees for social workers--in order to overcome the incompetence it believed was so pervasive in DPW. To achieve hiring discretion, DSS fought the grandfathering clause whereby DPW workers would be guaranteed jobs in the new Department. To this end DSS make it mandatory for each DPW worker to fill out a nineteen page application called the Human Resource Inventory, this within a weeks time. The "Inventory created enormous resentment on the part of the workers, 82% of whom passed the Inventory and were hired by DSS, much to the surprise of management."[3] The whole affair left a bitter stamp on labor-management relations and hindered

the kind of changes that DSS management was committed to making. On the one hand, Central Office clearly wanted social workers to adapt their behavior to the new DSS philosophy, yet it did not respect the expertise and knowledge that they brought with them from DPW as was made clear during the Human Resource Inventory episode which enraged long-time DPW workers. "Their major complaint was that DPW workers were being subjected to a much more searching, and, in their view, demeaning investigation than applicants coming from outside with much less experience. It was proof to them that the DSS leadership placed no value on their knowledge, experience, and competence."[4] This rendered Central Office insensitive to both the needs and problems of workers. The social workers, on the other hand, were rather hostile towards DSS, which made them less inclined to cooperate with the Department on many of the new initiatives it was developing.

The manner in which ASSIST was introduced by management, and its subsequent reception by social workers partook of these conflicts, conflicts which helped to undermine ASSIST's success. Management for its part did not really understand how workers actually did their jobs, but was primarily concerned with how they ought to do them, and thus proceeded to impose a system from above with inadequate worker input, which implicitly denied the importance of user participation. This initial mistake was compounded by the nature of the training and implementation process, which did not succeed in familiarizing all workers with ASSIST hardware. When workers began to complain about ASSIST and its attendant paperwork, management did not respond seriously to these complaints--"workers always complain." Yet, management was also constrained by the design of ASSIST from

substantially altering the amount of paperwork. This would have required radical alterations in the computer system as a whole. Social workers in turn were unwilling to give ASSIST the benefit of the doubt when it began to have technical and operational difficulties; they saw it as a management tool imposed on them offering few benefits, if any.

The other set of power relations which affected the development and implementation of ASSIST were those between field managers and Central Office, a story which will be described in more detail very shortly. For now, it suffices to say that field managers were able to gain some autonomy vis á vis the Center in terms of administration and case practice. ASSIST interferred with this freedom by standardizing and centralizing power, hence was resisted by those managers who were powerful, managers who already felt that they did not have sufficient influence over the ASSIST process, feelings which of themselves already constituted enough of an incentive not to wholeheartedly support ASSIST.

Finally, Central Office in general, and the Office for Systems in particular, found themselves in a position where they had invested so much effort and money in ASSIST that its success became crucial to their authority and legitimacy. Thus, when operational difficulties surfaced, the substantive problems underlying these could not be addressed without jeopardizing the entire project. This made the Office for Systems weary of real user participation, led to the emasculation of the User Committee, and thus virtually inhibited the ability of ASSIST to respond to criticisms and proposed changes.

3. Structure and Organization

The organizational structure of DPW was very centralized, with budget, personnel, and policy all concentrated at Central Office.

Central Office, meanwhile, had no direct-line authority over the Area Offices who, although having neither budget nor personnel authority, were not really accountable to Central for their actions and thus were able to exercise considerable discretion with respect to the implementation of Central's policies.

DSS, as we know, had a decentralized structure based on the Region and the Area; policy was to be formulated in Central Office, and the Regions and Areas were to be given personnel and budget authority, thus providing them both with the incentive to manage and implement Central's policies. However, during the first year of operations, Central Office did not succeed in gaining the degree of control and direction desired partly because of the absence of a Deputy Commissioner whose function it was to link Center and Periphery.[5] This lack of mediation created a split between Central Office and the field, which when coupled with the absence of uniform procedures, allowed the field to develop individual ways of doing business.

We have already observed the Center-Periphery split in terms of ideology and experience. Top Central Office staff were motivated by an ideology based upon the rejection of the philosophy and operations of DPW which DSS was to radically alter. The manner in which these alterations and reforms were to be formulated and executed partook of a particular conception of change in which the reforms were to be imposed from above. This conception was coupled with the fact that these individuals had backgrounds in either the Central Office of DMH or DPW and thus lacked field experience. These impediments to understanding the field were aggravated by the tense nature of labor management relations. Indeed, the tension was partly responsible for the inclina-

tion, on the part of Central Office, to impose change from above. This split was clearly exacerbated by the organizational strucutre of DSS. When ASSIST was introduced, it both reflected and reproduced this separation and its attendant difficulties, most notably expressed in the structure of the user participation process--specifically the User Committee, which became the institutionalized expression of this cleavage.

The organizational structure also greatly influenced the manner in which the feedback mechanisms and process were designed and structured. The amount of discretion exercised by the Regional Office in the design of systems of feedback, channels of communication, and choice of representatives to review panels and committees, did lead to the under-representation of direct service workers in Region IV. Moreover, these channels, especially in Region IV, were most accessible to Area Directors and Supervisor IIs than to social workers; Area Directors and Supervisor IIs participated in monthly meetings which were also used as forums for feedback on systems issues. Moreover, there was no guarantee that the content of these meetings would be communicated to Area staff. Thus, the area-based structure imposed certain constraints on the possibility of communication, there is no certainty whether information will actually get to workers or whether they will be able to communicate with the Region or the Center. This has been the source of some frustration for workers.

This analysis would be incomplete without a discussion of the rather dramatic effects that ASSIST has, in turn, had on the structure of DSS. First, ASSIST has caused some recentralization of decision-making authority in Central Office; this has manifested itself in the

following ways. The computer forms have standardized the collection and dispersion of information and have exerted pressure for uniform administration and case practice procedures. The decision-making power of field managers with respect to administrative forms and procedures was in part removed from them and placed in the Central Office for Systems. Moreover, there has been a shift in the location of decision-making towards the Center due to the prominence of the computer and the concentration of technical expertise in the Office for Systems.

Secondly, ASSIST has introduced a degree of rigidity into the decision-making process because the cost of computer change is so high and the reprogramming of interdependent systems so difficult. All changes must be closely scrutinized: "There is a strong motivation to build a protective wall around the new systems, allowing only "qualified people" to make "authorized changes."[6]

Finally, ASSIST has increased the degree of control which Central management can exercise over both field management and the labor force because of its role as a monitoring device. Workers feel that Regions and Areas can more readily survey their actions; likewise, field management worries that Central can more easily monitor its activities. Indeed, ASSIST began to play this role more explicitly during the Lynch Order: "As managemnet becomes more sophisticated about monitoring compliance and new management tools become available to it, it will manage more effectively, and the degree of compliance will improve."[7]

On the one hand, ASSIST has been moulded by the organizational strucutre of DSS, a structure characterized by a cleavage between Center and Periphery. Because of this cleavage, ASSIST has been unable

to succeed at supporting area-based service. On the other hand, ASSIST has accelerated the implicit trend in DSS towards increased centralization, a trend expressed by concentrations of power and expertise in the Central Office.

B. Standards of Practice

When DSS became operational, one of its concerns was to render the service delivery process more efficient, accountable, and effective. And the Standards of Practice, traditionally not conceived as a tool through which service delivery is managed, have assumed this function in DSS. I would suggest that these Standards are the major means by which DSS seeks to manage the services delivery process in such a way as to obtain efficient and effective service.

1. Efficiency

The quest for cost-effective and efficient service delivery had prompted an attempt by DSS to measure the unit cost of service which includes the cost of the service itself and the cost of the case manager. In order to measure the cost of the case manager, it is necessary to calculate the amount of time a social worker spends on each case event (equivalent to billing out one's time), a measure which depends on workload standards which have not yet been formulated. However, in the absence of workload standards, DSS has discovered alternative methods of promoting efficient service delivery. One popular method has been the contracting out of services (other than 51A investigations and care and protection petitions) to private providers, whom it is believed, have both the expertise and economies of scale to offer quality service at less cost. DSS provides case

management whereby the social worker manages (in contrast to DPW where Central Office was responsible for case management) the service delivery process by preparing complete assessments and service plans; monitoring the service quality provided through private provision and making all relevant service determinations, e.g. length of stay in placements; and watching for duplication of service. The Standards are central to this process. Indeed, the Standards define the role of the social worker as case manager whose function it is to allot different services to clients and also coordinate, plan, and oversee all aspects of a case. Moreover, the Standards provide a detailed set of guidelines by which this allotment of services is to proceed.

2. Effectiveness

As was made clear in Chapter II, it is very difficult for human service agencies to measure their effectiveness or the degree to which they have been successful in meeting their goals. In the case of DSS, these goals are the prevention of child abuse and neglect, the strengthening of the biological family, and the promotion of permanancy planning. The outputs that are measurable--the number of children returned home, the number of adoptions completed, and compliance with service and case reviews--do not indicate the degree to which these goals have actually been fullfilled, nor do they comment on the quality of these efforts. Of course, it is possible to ascertain the number of adoptions that have failed or the incidence of child abuse in families which have received support services, but it is almost impossible to measure such things as whether or not children left in their biological families are happier, or whether prevention has been successful. And the absence

of this "objective" information--difficult to obtain because of the problems associated with the tracking the progress of clients, which even if possible, would still leave unresolved the measurement dilemma--has increased the tendency to focus on outputs or internal criteria.

Effectiveness/success begins to depend on the degree of training that staff receive and the overall quality of their work. In this way, compliance with the Standards, because they guide field practice by establishing a minimum level of quality, become a substitute for effectiveness. The importance that is subsequently placed on the quality of case management and worker performance leads to an emphasis on rule following and compliance, both of which breed an excessive concern with technical means and secondary objectives--a typical form of displaced behavior.

This emphasis on outputs, performance, and compliance has contributed to the feeling among social workers that their professionalism is being undermined, and has therefore had a deleterious effect on their morale. The definition of the social worker as a case manager who specifically does not do clinical work without supervisory permission, has served to undercut the core of social workers' professionalism which rests on their clinical as opposed to their case management skills. The detailed nature of the Standards effectively removed social workers' discretion over the service delivery process, discretion which DSS management did not want to grant them because of its desire to fundamentally alter the work process. The system of supervision has essentially had the same result. Perhaps if social workers had been able to participate more fully in the formulation of

the Standards as opposed to merely sitting (being represented) on Regional review panels and commenting on them, the feelings of deprofessionalization may have been avoidable. A more participatory process would increase the likelihood that the Standards would reflect the social workers' conception of their work practices and professionalism. Finally, the Legal Department's interference with social workers' decisions to file care and protection petitions which has been justified on the basis of the promotion of Departmental goals, is an invasion of their professional domain within which they are entitled to make these "clinical" decisions.

These feelings of resentment coupled with the hardships imposed by the documentation required by the Standards and ASSIST, have made it more, not less, difficult for social workers to deliver services efficiently and effectively.

C. Internal Management Plan

The Internal Management Plan (IMP) shares many of the same attributes as management by objectives:

> The system of management by objectives can be described as a process whereby the superior and subordinate managers of an organization jointly identify its common goals, define each individuals major area of responsibility in terms of the results expected of him and use these measures as guides for operating the unit and assessing the contribution of each of its members.8

Yet, unlike this description of MBO, the IMP focuses less on the joint identification of goals and more on the mutual definition of responsibilities, clarification of expectations, and measurement of results. And, in general, the IMP has been judged a success by the managers interviewed precisely because of the elements of participation and negotiation, elements which have allowed managers to feel that they

are contributing to the running of the agency and thus have managerial autonomy and responsibility. This participation has allowed them to more easily internalize organizational goals, as it contributes to the feeling of unity between the individual and the organization, and this is quite important given the fact that DSS is a new agency. The participatory process has also aided managers in assimilating the demands of the new environment more rapidly due to their involvement in shaping that environment. Finally, the IMP has improved the quality of their management as it enabled them to accomplish objectives on a short-term basis, has clarified these objectives, and has made planning possible.

We have also observed a substantial difference between Regional and the Area IMP. The Area IMP plays a less significant role in overall decision-making and goal formulation, and concentrates instead on the actual service delivery process--expansion of services, budgeting, and purchase of service. The Regional IMP, while it makes a significant contribution to the formulation of agency goals and has important decision-making functions within the Department, remains more of a monitoring device than a decision-making plan; the Regional IMP monitors Regional and Area compliance with agency goals for the Central Office, and in this way the Regional and Area IMPs become a way for the Center to indirectly monitor the Area. The monitoring function of the IMP became clear during the Lynch Order when it became a means to monitor compliance with the Order, yet it performed this function even earlier according to an observer of the 1980 period: "The reports submitted for Central Office scrutiny provided the basis of evaluation assessment of Regional operations....IMP represented new oversight

mechanisms used to review Area operations."[9] Central Office is the most powerful participant in the process because of the fact that it controls the kind of information that will be discussed by requesting that forms be completed on specific topics such as the number of children in placement, cost sharing, and case review activities; in essence, Central Office sets the agenda. As the Assistant Deputy of the Office of Administrative Systems said jokingly, "he who controls the forms controls the system."

It must be concluded that while the IMP has been positively evaluated by managers, its success as a tool for the promotion of self-management, innovation, communication, and participation is as much the result of the power and personality of the managers interviewed as the structure of the IMP itself. Indeed, the structure of the IMP, precisely because it is participative, engages the manager and encourages the exercise of discretion providing managers with their opportunity to use the power they have. These managers, due to their knowledge and strength, have turned the IMP to their advantage and use it to enlarge their sphere of autonomy and discretion thereby resisting domination. Indeed, the IMP may not be so effective at fostering cooperation organizational unity precisely because the element of power looms so large. Successful management for Regional and Area Directors is dependent upon the flair and skill with which they advocate their position--build their case--such that they increase their chance of getting what they want. Moreover, it is quite conceivable that managers will withold damaging information to make a better impression.[10]

In brief, the IMP has not really brought the kind of organizational

ransformation envisioned by advocates of MBO whereby power is shared equally throughout the agency and complete self-management prevails. Central Office remains the major decision-maker and the IMP is a useful tool that enables Central to track the progress of program goals like permanancy planning and case reviews. Yet, the difficulty of measuring DSS goals like prevention has lead to a reliance on numbers which substitutes for the success of the objectives, and a manager may not always be able to quantify his successes, e.g. the results of the expansion of day care is not easy to determine. Also, the stated objectives may not in fact be the real ones, and the manager may be offering services which are expensive when the real goal is to save money.

One positive last word--the IMP has, within these constraints, been well received and has given managers the ability to respond to specific conditions; as such it has helped DSS to cope with an uncertain and turbulent environment.

V. CONCLUSION

> Your literary men and your politicians, and so do the whole clan of the enlightened among us, essentially differ in these points. They have no respect for the wisdom of others, but they pay it off by a very full measure of confidence in their own. With them it is a sufficient motive to destroy an old scheme of things because it is an old one. As to the new, they are in no sort of fear with regard to the duration of a building run up in haste, because duration is no object to those who think little or nothing has been done before their time, and who place all their hopes in discovery.
>
> Edmund Burke
> Reflections on the Revolution in France

1. The Failure of Rational Form

The Department of Social Services introduced ASSIST, the Standards, the IMP and decentralization as part of its effort to radically reform and transform the DPW legacy into a new organization. They were one set of tools to be used to implement the organization's new philosophy of permanency planning, prevention, entitlement, and decentralized community-based care. The state of the art computer with its on-line feature and ability to engage in strategic planning; the clear statements and measurements of objectives; and the detailed and rational work process were all to contribute to the effectiveness of the new agency. These generic tools borrowed from the school of scientific management were to help DSS in its reform efforts by thoroughly re-orienting and restructuring the management of DSS--making it more modern, rational, efficient, and accountable--and through its management, transforming the agency as a whole.

This conception of organizational change and reform adhered to by the top management of DSS--reform draped over the organization from above independent of the context and tradition of the way of life below--is very much in the "enlightenment" tradition of reform in which

social structures are perceived as infinitely malleable and amenable to rational change introduced from above or outside. Both the techniques used to implement this conception of reform--monitoring, performance standards, and program planning--and the method of implementation in which top managers were responsible for planning, organizing, and controlling the work process while workers abdicate their discretion in these matters to management, is central to the spirit of scientific management. According to Frederik Taylor, the father of scientific management:

> It is only through enforced standardization of methods, enforced adoption of the best implements and working conditions, and enforced cooperation that this faster work can be assured. And the duty of enforcing the adoption of standards and of enforcing this cooperation rests with the management alone...[1]

We see, within DSS, the convergence between rational reform and scientific management, both of which are grounded in instrumental rationality, a view of the world in which the relations between means and ends is deliberate and logical such that methods are selected which will most efficiently achieve ends. The selection and implementation of methods is the prerogative of those experts at the top who are reputed to have the most comprehensive perspective.

This convergence, as documented in the case studies, resulted in the partial failure of ASSIST and the Standards of Practice, and the partial success of the Internal Management Plan in helping DSS create organizational reform. These successes and failures are attributable, in all of the cases, to the manner in which the political, behavioral, structural and normative context of DSS interacted with the rational reform conception and the techniques of scientific management such that they themselves came to reflect and

reproduce the context they were intended to transform. All three cases illuminate the process of mutual determination whereby the techniques were both transformed by the organizational context, and transformed it in turn. This process illustrates the shortcomings and the significant tensions existing among element of the reform vision, tensions which are inherent to the conception of rational reform and scientific management adhered to by DSS management.

ASSIST affords the most interesting example of the dilemmas associated with rational reform and scientific management. The blueprint for the introduction of ASSIST was replete with user participation mechanisms, mechanisms which were to ensure the adaptation of the computer to the needs of DSS. However, major decisions were made about ASSIST by the initial planning group within DSS before the user participation process even got underway. And once the process did begin, it was inadequate; user participation could not entirely succeed given the organizational context which prevented it from being genuine. This context was constituted by the following factors. The key planning group of the new agency was guided in its work by the desire to break away from the past by creating a new agency radically different from that of DPW:

> "A prime motivating factor in the Department's development was the rejection of the philosophy and operations of the Department of Public Welfare. DSS was to radically change the meaning and mode of service intervention then existent in DPW... given the strong ideological drive of the founders, and their negative assumptions regarding the operation and professionals associated with the Department of Public Welfare, the work on developing the organization proceeded with little reference to the DPW child welfare and social work community."[2]

Five members of this initial planning group had backgrounds in the

Department of Mental Health; other Central Office staff were recruited from the Central Office of DPW or outside DPW altogether, and many lacked field experience. These two factors--ideology and experience--led Central Office to act in a centripetal manner and made them wary of field operations, field management, and social workers, which they did not entirely understand. These structural impediments to understanding the field were exacerbated by the tense history of labor management relations and the conception of social workers as part of the tainted DPW legacy, both of which conditioned management's view of labor. Indeed, the tension between management and labor was partly responsible for the inclination to impose change from above. This tension was also responsible for the less than positive attitudes which Central Office and the field held about each other. Finally, the structural cleavage between Central Office and the field, a cleavage derived in part from the DPW legacy and widened due to the factors mentioned above, resulted in a lack of mediation and created barriers to communication among staff which hindered the implementation of ASSIST. This was aggravated by the presence of decentralization which imposed certain constraints on the possibility of communication between different levels of the organization: there was no certainty whether information would actually get to social workers or whether they would be able to communicate with the Region or the Center. In these ways, the living organizational context of DSS shaped ASSIST, and ASSIST in turn reflected this legacy--its characteristics, successes, and failures.

The Standards of Practice were conceived as tools to change and shape behavior, and like ASSIST were promulgated from above. How-

ever, the Standards dealing with abuse and neglect, were imposed from above in response to tremendous outside pressure directed at DSS, pressure generated by the Gallison Case (prior to the beginning of DSS yet crucial in its orientation) and, more recently, the Mallet Case, in which a child in the care of the Department was murdered. This pressure (public and professional--National Association of Social Workers) made it crucial for the agency to be detailed and explicit about abuse and neglect procedures in the field, and to ensure that all staff immediately complied with them.

The Standards were also influenced by DSS' desire to more effectively manage the service delivery process by planning, standardizing, and improving human effort and productivity in order to maximize output and reduce duplication. Here too, conflicting demands on the organization became apparent. On the one hand, Central Office must be accountable to its funding sources by assuring them that it is delivering only the services needed and doing so at maximum productivity. On the other hand, the agency must be accountable to its consumers and the community by trying to deliver the quantity and quality of services needed. In its attempt to be accountable to its funders and to promote agency goals by managing the service delivery process, it imposed performance standards from above which indirectly monitored and measured the quality and quantity of services delivered in the field. This also had the secondary effect of limiting the discretion of social workers, and to a lesser extent, Area Directors, with respect to service delivery, e.g. it is an agency goal to reduce the use of residential care, the use of which is closely monitored, yet clients often require this kind of

treatment even though it is terribly expensive. While it is admittedly difficult to devise Standards of Practice and performance which everyone can agree on, these standards promoted "the one best way of doing a task" by offering detailed rules and procedures for their execution. And it was this kind of formulation in conjunction with the limited participation of social workers in this formulation, that made them feel their discretion over their work life was being invaded. This sentiment, coupled with the substantial difficulties and grueling pressures associated with social work practice, helped to undermine worker morale and generated some organizational conflict and divisiveness.

The IMP has met with the kind of approval denied ASSIST and the standards, precisely because it has partially succeeded in becoming less of a "technique" and more a form of shared action. IMP's success is attributable to the fact that it engages itself with the work life of those who interact with it by encouraging and rewarding their talents and strengths. Indeed, IMP's emphasis on process expressed through participation is its most appealing attribute.

Of course, the IMP reflects the organizational structure of DSS characterized by the cleavage between Central Office and the field, the product of both the ideology and experience of Central Office as well as the DWP legacy in which Area Offices exercised discretion with respect to the implementation of Central Office policies. The decentralization effort was to cure this latter tendency by giving Regions and Areas incentives to implement Central policy. In actuality, decentralization came to resemble deconcentration or the devolution of administrative responsibility, but not necessarily

substantive decision-making power, onto the Regions and Areas. The IMP was formulated to complement the deconcentration effort by creating links between Central Office and the field. In this sense, the IMP reflects deconcentration because it gives field management responsibility for those decisions which are essentially administrative. Yet, it has been successful in providing managers with the incentive to manage by making them participants in some aspects of the decision-making process, and making them accountable for their actions. Thus, while the IMP also reflects its organizational context, it is the only initiative which is helping to transform one element of that context, namely the Center-Periphery split, by creating the possibility of mutual communication, and hopefully understanding.

2. Organizational Effectiveness

The IMP has clearly had the most success in bringing about organizational effectiveness expressed in the following ways: it has moved the organization in the same direction, provided incentives for levels of management to be accountable and implement Central policy, improved the quality of information available for planning and decision-making, reduced, if not eliminated, deficits with the help of the Financial Management System, and improved the ability of DSS to tailor services to the community. However, the IMP partakes of all of the problems experienced by management by objectives systems: the difficulty of measurement such that less quantifiable objectives get short changes, and the possibility that stated objectives may not be the real ones. Moreover,

> rational behavior, in the instrumental sense, depends on understanding objectives with sufficient specificity to construct behaviors that are consistent with, and supportive of, their achievement. Yet we frequently cannot even identify the authoritative decision-maker in our complex system.[3]

As we have seen, the process of goal setting in DSS has been influenced by outside sources such as the Lynch Order and the Mallet Case, in addition to pressure brought to bear by individual consumers, communities and the State Legislative itself. At the present time, due to the fact that the State is beginning to experience financial difficulties resulting from Proposition 2 1/2, the State legislature is considering reducing appropriations for the Regional Offices which are the cornerstones of decentralization and the IMP process. DSS has very little control over this decision, yet it is a decision that would have profound effects on the agency.

ASSIST, thus far, has had more limited success in promoting organizational effectiveness because it has not been equally beneficial to all of its users in the performance of their tasks, and has not been entirely successful in supporting area-based service. In order for ASSIST to become a more effective tool, it must become more useful to both field managers and social workers. It must rectify the paperwork burden which has helped to empty the meaningful content from jobs, and focus more on service delivery rather than merely on data collection.

At the present time, ASSIST has been instrumental in helping the agency to acquire crucial information on consumers, information which it was not able to get prior to the introduction of the computer. In the future, ASSIST may prove more helpful to top management by increasing the volume and speed of information, and should allow

managers to direct the agency in a more detailed way.

However, as stated earlier, ASSIST is both recentralizing power in Central Office and standardizing elements of administration and case practice. This will create tension between ASSIST as a tool of accountability for Central Office, and ASSIST as a tool to aid service delivery at the Area level. This tension, which may well be inherent in any computerized information system, may increase if the Office for Systems is prevented from expanding its current consumer module to include additional data relevant for service delivery, and from developing its other modules, a likely possibility given the fact that Systems was denied 2.5 million dollars by the Committee on Ways and Means in FY 82. Moreover, the long-term effect of Proposition 2 1/2 and federal reductions on the state budget makes this kind of future expansion uncertain.

In addition, there is cause to be less than sanguine about the possibility that information generated by ASSIST, and management information systems more generally, will promote effeciency and effectiveness by telling us what we are doing and how we are doing it. This problem plagues all users of management information systems in fields such as the human services which confront the difficulty of translating the values of efficiency and effectiveness into empirically verifiable and consensual standards. The difficulty of measurement, if we can in fact agree what it is that is being measured, may result in the gathering of information that merely gives the appearance of accountability to both funding sources and superiors.

The Standards have also recentralized control by giving Central

Office the power to define the work process and the system of supervision. The Standards have attempted to create effectiveness in the field by detailing and rationalizing the work process, and as mentioned earlier, some of the explicitness was a response to external demands on the agency. Effectiveness and success depend on the degree of training that staff receive, training which effects the overall quality of their work. In this way, compliance with the Standards can become a substitute for effectiveness. The importance which is subsequently placed on the quality of case management and worker performance has led to an emphasis on rule following and compliance, and compliance with the Standards has helped to promote agency goals such as permanent planning and the expeditous handling of abuse and neglect investigations. However, the rigorousness of the Standards, particularly the accompanying documentation, has imposed hardships on social workers, and the emphasis on rule following has had the unfortunate effect of undermining worker morale. Like ASSIST, the effectiveness the Standards was supposed to engender has been partly threatened by the very process used to achieve it. While the Standards have enabled DSS to manage the direct provision of service by controlling the quality of case management, the agency has much less control over those services it purchases, thus it is more difficult to manage these services, i.e. ensure that services purchased are delivered efficiently. Of course, case managers monitor this process but the providers themselves exercise both discretion and political power over their provision of service. Recently, they have become more vocal in their opposition to the decentralization of the contracting and negotiation process, and growing audits and

regulations. In brief, purchase of service complicates the management of the service delivery process.

Given the profound difficulties that DSS has had to confront as a new agency attempting to cope with the strenuous demands of the child welfare and social services environments, the amount of success that it has enjoyed is extraordinary. DSS has eliminated its deficits, extended services to more consumers, created closer ties with the community, increased preventive care, and greatly increased its number of voluntary applications. Specifically, the IMP has been instrumental in the elimination of deficits, and decentralization and the IMP together have made the expansion of service possible by enabling Area Directors to respond to community needs. The Standards have contributed to the promotion of agency goals such as permanency planning and the more efficient handling of abuse and neglect cases through explicit guidelines for field practice. Finally, ASSIST has made it possible to locate each and every consumer served by the Department. However, it is no easy matter to determine the extent to which these successes have been wrought solely by the techniques under discussion. It must be conceded that other factors have also contributed to these successes. The pressure exerted by the Lynch Order was also instrumental in furthering the permanency planning process, and the Mallet Case led to the willingness to comply with rigorous abuse and neglect procedures even though this imposed hardships on everyone involved. But just as the successes are often partly attributable to outside forces, so to are the failures. The conflicting demands on the agency imposed from above (the State legislature, the public and the courts) and

below (individuals, communities, and providers); the unremitting financial pressure coupled with the reality of the public provider as provider of last resort meaning that the neediest individuals turn to the State for services; and the pervasive conflict among State agencies over responsibility for clients, are some of the external factors which themselves act as constraints on the success of even the most effectively managed agencies by thrusting management into "crisis management." And crisis management often translates into immediate policy changes, compliance deadlines, and hardships for everyone.

3. Lessons

A. General

The case studies provide a few central lessons about the appropriateness and relevance of scientific management for the human services in general. First, the introduction of scientific management and rational reform from above which does not take into account the particularity of an organizational context, a context shaped by history, ideology and politics, will have negative consequences. The reforms and techniques will be molded and transformed by the organization such that they have a result different from that intended, or they will be foiled by the opponents of the reform. This is not to say that rational reform is not appropriate but rather that its success depends on the enlistment of the support of those who it will affect implying that they must be consulted about the nature and implementation of the reform effort. This precludes the imposition of reform from above. Relatedly, no technique is neutral; the success

or failure of a technique depends on its substance, purpose and mode of implementation, all of which are influenced by the larger organizational context.

Secondly, the search for organizational effectiveness through the use of scientific and rational management techniques is insufficient without the cooperation and participation of those staff who will use the techniques. Indeed, organizational efficiency and effectiveness result as much, if not more, from "process" in Likert's sense--

- delegation of authority and responsibility
- communication which flows verticially and horizontally and is undistorted
- teamwork and cooperation
- widely dispersed decision-making
- goals established by group participation
- personnel motivated and feels responsible to attaining organizational goals
- employee development
- trust and integrity

as they do from the application of scientific management and analytic techniques.

Thirdly, the kind of management skill required in the environment of the 1980's--increasingly complex, politicized, and inter-governmental--are not merely those of scientific management but political and inter-personal skills such as the ability to negotiate, and technical skills to facilitate the understanding of legislation and regulation.

Finally, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability taken in their usual narrow sense, may not in and of themselves be appropriate or possible goals for the human services. Measurement and evaluation are formidable undertakings because human service outcomes are more

complex, have far-reaching social and political implications, and are influenced by a variety of external factors.

B. Specific Recommendations for DSS

1. DSS would be better served by a different conception of management which is closely adapted to its specific needs and rooted within the tradition of child welfare rather than the more generic scientific management school. Indeed, those managers in Region IV who experienced the greatest success with the IMP had extensive experience in the child welfare field. ASSIST should be more closely adapted to the specific needs of DSS and a genuine process of user participation would make this possible. This, in turn, depends on improved organizational communication and understanding.

2. New forms of communication between Central Office and field management and social workers should be established. The role of Deputy Commissioner, which is the mediating link between the Central Office and the Regions, should be strengthened to ensure that Regional concerns are communicated to Central Office. Moreover, social workers need a mechanism through which they can communicate with Central in the same way as managers have the IMP process. At the present time, the constraints of a decentralized system prevent direct communication and this has contributed to the feeling among social workers that their problems have not reached Central Office, which, they perceive, correctly or incorrectly, as the only place powerful enough to offer solutions to their problems.

3. Standards of practice and performance should be negotiated and set jointly between Area Directors and social workers (this in addition to labor management negotiations) through a device such as the IMP. This will increase cooperation and motivation, and will lead to improved worker morale which in turn will improve worker performance.

4. Involve all levels of the agency in goal formulation, especially Area Directors, social workers, and Area Boards, who have the most contact with communities and knowledge of their needs. At the present time, DSS has been lobbying for more social workers in order to comply with the Lynch Order and to reduce the caseload burden on existing workers. The Area Boards, if they become more directly engaged in goal formulation, could exert the political pressure necessary to muster the resources required to achieve this agency goal. Relatedly, DSS should seek to broaden the notions of efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability which have been thrust upon it from above such that effectiveness translates into the ability to respond to less powerful groups in the community who require services; accountability becomes social responsibility and not merely a question of how funds are spent; and efficiency becomes a measure of overall service quality and accessibility rather than merely a measure of the relation of input to output.
In its quest for these broader goals, DSS must encourage community feedback through the Area Boards, and form alliances with those groups who share its interests and are thus willing to exercise political clout on its behalf.

APPENDIX

I interviewed individuals at all levels of DSS - Central, Regional and Area. Region IV was selected for examination because it was suggested that I go there by my contact in Central Office. The Director of Region IV suggested that I look at the Waltham Area Office. I did not use a standard questionnaire. My technique was to go in with a few general questions and then probe when necessary. This strategy, which allowed the interviewee to draw out and describe the environment in his or her own terms, enabled me to get a quick feeling for the environment, an environment totally new to me. As the interviewing process continued, I developed a better sense of the issues involved and was able to focus more narrowly.

In total, I conducted twenty interviews which averaged 2 1/2 hours a piece. What follows are 3 examples of questionnaires which were used during the inverviewing process.

A. Rosemary McCrohan, User Laison and Support Unit, Central Office for Systems

1. Discuss the background of ASSIST and the Office for Systems. Why was ASSIST developed and what were the deficiencies of DPW?

2. Describe Central Office responsibilities for the development of ASSIST, Regional and Area responsibilities.

3. What does ASSIST do? What are its goals? How does it work?

4. Problems or changes and mechanisms for implementing change.

5. Evaluate ASSIST for each group of users--Central, Regional Management, Social Workers.

6. Impact or organizational structure, the structure of work, worker morale.

B. Beth Smith, Central Office of Policy and Programs

Interview I

1. How do the regulations of DSS differ from DPW?
2. How are they formulated and by whom?
3. How do the standards differ from DPW?
4. How are they formulated and by whom?
5. Problems/changes.
6. Impact of standards on work relations.
7. Discuss the relation of the standards to ASSIST and the IMP.
8. Discuss and evaluate the role of ASSIST in the service delivery process.

Interview II

1. How would you characterize DSS' style of management?
2. What do you mean by output and discuss the problems of measurement?
3. How do you evaluate agency success and effectiveness?
4. Discuss the impact of the Mallet Case and the Lynch Order on the service delivery process.

C. Eleanor Dowd, Area Director, Waltham Area Office

1. Describe Waltham.
2. Describe your responsibilities.
3. How much autonomy do you have within DSS?
4. How decentralized is DSS?
5. How important is the Area Office, compared with DPW?
6. Describe the IMP process.
7. How do you prepare for it?
8. Evaluate the IMP.

   a. Do you feel it has been successful?

b. Does it help you to do your job better?

c. In what way do you think it has affected the organizational structure of DSS?

d. Has it helped in the service delivery process?

e. How effective has it been?

9. Evaluate ASSIST

a. Usefulness.

b. Problems.

c. Impact on Area Office.

10. Describe worker morale--reason for why and how it became that way.

11. What type of supervision is used in Area Office: Supervisory or structural?

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Patti (1975:25)
2. Turem (1974:25)
3. Elkin and Cornick (1970:365)
4. Gruber (1974:622)

CHAPTER II

1. Hasenfield and English (1974:48)
2. Hasenfield and English (1974:47)
3. Hasenfield and English (1974:47)
4. Hasenfield and English (1974:47)
5. Hasenfiled and English (1974:47)
6. Hasenfield and English (1974:48)
7. Files (1981)
8. Files (1981)
9. Files (1981)
10. Steiner (1977:25)
11. Chapman and Cleaveland (1973)
12. Patti (1981:566)
13. Patti (1981:580)
14. Reich (1983:64)
15. Simon (1965:55)
16. Kast and Rosenzweig (1974:88)
17. Simon (1965:55)
18. Kast and Rosenzweig (1974:77)

19. Gruber (1974:633)
20. Reid (1974:)
21. Steiner (1977:82)
22. Gruber (1974:632)
23. Sherwood and Page (1976:8)
24. Schoech and Arangio (1979)
25. Boyd, Hilton, and Price (1978:370)
26. Boyd, Hilton, and Price (1978:369)
27. Boyd, Hilton, and Price (1978: 369)
28. Boyd, Hilton, and Price (1978:370)
29. Mintzburg (1973:196)
30. Patti (1975)
31. Mintzburg (1973:133)
32. Mintzburg (1973:97)

CHAPTER III

1. Gurin (1982:1)

2. Sheehan (1977:A-1)

3. Sheehan (1977:16)

4. Sheehan (1977:A-2)

5. Gurin (1982:5)

6. Gurin (1982:6)

7. Massachusetts General Laws-Chapter 18B

8. Gurin (1982:13-14) and Commissioner Mary Jane England April 1983. Both state that a prime factor in the development of DSS was the rejection of the philosophy and operations of the Department of Welfare.

9. Gurin (1982:13)

10. Gurin (1982:13)

11. Gurin (1982:17)

12. Gurin (1982:23)

13. Department of Social Services, ASSIST User Manual (R-8)

14. Department of Social Services, ASSIST User Manual (I-U)

15. Department of Social Services, Memorandum from the Office for Systems (1981)

16. Department of Social Services, Annual Report (1982:51-52)

17. Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (Feb. 1983:7)

18. Gurin (1982:30)

19. The Union, Local 509, represents social workers grades 11, 14 and 17 as well as supervisors and program specialists.

20. Department of Social Services, Annual Report (1982:19)

21. More specifically, services plans, "list service needs/goals, behavioral objectives and specific tasks to be undertaken by consumer(s), the DSS social worker, and other service providers," Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (1983).

22. Department of Social Services, Annual Report (1982:53)

23. Department of Social Services, Memorandum from Joseph Collins, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, (1983)

24. Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (Feb. 1983:15)

25. Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (Feb. 1983:16)

26. Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (Feb. 1983:17)

27. Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (Feb. 1983:24)

29. Department of Social Services, Deputy Commissioner of the Office of Administrative Services (DAS) (1983)

30. Department of Social Services, Second Quarter Internal Management Plan, Region IV (Sep. 30, 1982)

31. Department of Social Services, Second Quarter Internal Management Plan, Region IV (Sep. 30, 1982)

32. Department of Social Services, Deputy Commissioner of DAS (1983)

33. Department of Social Services, Deputy Commissioner of DAS (1983)

CHAPTER IV

1. Argyris (1971:291)
2. Robey and Farrow (1982)
3. Gurin (1982:23)
4. Gurin (1982:22)
5. Gurin (1982:39)
6. Whisler (1970)
7. Department of Social Services, Report to the Court (Feb. 1983:4)
8. Kast and Rosenzweig (1974:171)
9. Gurin (1982:51)
10. Argyris

CHAPTER V

1. Taylor (1947:140)
2. Gurin (1982:13)
3. Sherwood and Page (1976:8)

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   b. "The Commissioner's ANNUAL REPORT to the Statewide Advisory Council." Mary Jane England, M.D. 1982.

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   d. The FY83 Second Quarter Internal Management Plan, Region IV, 9/30/82.

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