

The problem is not the lack of knowledge, but the inefficient utilization and application of that knowledge in the decision-making process. This results both from the manner in which the information is presently organized, and from the translation problems between the scientific community and the political community There is a great need in Canada to develop a federated information system which integrates our emerging data and knowledge about social, economic, political, and related matters. This venture could be aided by greater encouragement for interdisciplinary efforts in the social-science community A great deal of poverty research has appeared in the form of voluminous reports, utilizing specialized social-science terminology, and employing tentative and conditional statements. This often has limited value to the political decision-making community which requires generalist knowledge, statements of some certainty, and popular language.⁴

THE SOLUTION

To meet these needs, the Committee recommends the establishment of an Applied Social Research Council at the federal level. This council would conduct applied social research in support of government agencies at all levels. It would also serve to co-ordinate research programs, to disseminate research results, and to evaluate the effectiveness of agency programs.

It is emphasized that the need is for applied social research. For our purposes social research can be classified into three distinct types:

1. *Policy research* is concerned with the analysis of the goals and values of society and with the objectives of government. It takes the long view. The newly-approved Institute for Policy Research will be concerned with

such large questions as education policy, taxation policy, transportation policy, monetary policy, linguistic and cultural policy, health care policy, and broadcasting policy⁵

Policy research asks fundamental questions about the goals of society, takes a long time to answer such questions, and recommends futuristic policy changes which take a long time to implement. In a sense, the Special Senate Committee on Poverty has been concerned with policy research on poverty. Effective policy research is dependent on other sources for the basic information needed to carry out its particular function.

2. *Conclusion-oriented research* is concerned with the expansion of existing knowledge. This is the type of research most often associated with the academic community within the universities. This type of research is usually initiated by the investigator himself to satisfy his personal, intellectual curiosity and has no specific application as an objective. The value of conclusion-oriented research lies in its contribution to new knowledge which can be used for designing new and innovative social programs. It also contributes advances in methodology and techniques which can be used in more practical and immediate applications. Conclusion-oriented research results, generally, must be translated into practical programs before their value in solving real-life problems can be tested.