

dissemination services. Thus it is unnecessary, in other words, for the government to develop activities that are already being handled in one way or another by other private or semi-public authorities.

The internal organization, the cohesion of the socio-economic sectors, and the extent to which they co-operate with the government vary from country to country, depending on the individual political and cultural traditions of each. This necessarily affects the organization and method of operation of an STA system. In Canada, the economic sector seems to be too split up - and not just geographically - to permit, for example, a takeover of important elements of what is currently considered to be the function of Canadian STAs. The suggestion that the system could be privatized generally meets with a negative reaction from the potential users: there is no sectoral (private) body that is manifestly seen as being sufficiently representative nationally. Although sectoral "self-administration", which is so deeply rooted in the German political traditions, is not totally lacking in Canada, it is definitely not well enough developed to be able to take over a very large part of the operation unopposed. This observation suggests that the establishment and operation of an STA system in Canada must be carried out by the government.

The traditions attached to the political relationships between the government and the economic sectors also play an important part in the creation and operation of the Swedish system, which is attractive because of its autonomy. The system, and particularly the home base, operate with almost no intervention by the departmental bureaucracies, whose authority is felt only in the "board of management", a joint body (bringing together representatives of private industry in addition to departmental representatives) which meets only once every few months. In Sweden it is common practice to use joint bodies of this type. Thus this is a normal way to manage, not an ad hoc mechanism. It is a method of managing - and not, as is often the case in other countries, an exercise of putting up a smokescreen or making something legitimate by co-opting. However, Canada could borrow from this aspect of the Swedish system by associating with the STA system a joint body whose authority would be limited to that of an advisory board.

If co-operation between the government and the economic sectors in Canada does not seem as easy as in the Scandinavian countries, it might be advisable to examine the experience in France. It is well known that the French government does not have the easiest of relations with industry. As in Canada, the STA system in France for a long time served the public administrations and research institutes almost exclusively; as in Canada, the system is attached to the Department of External Relations. The Department of Industry and Research (or its equivalent) is the other support point; it succeeded the DGRST, and it is pushing for a more "industrial" orientation for the STA function. As in Canada, there is an obstacle to such an orientation: the potential industrial users are unaware of the system's existence or of the services it could provide to them, since in any case they are not naturally inclined to work with the public authorities. The association of former and currently active scientific attaches (AVRIST) has clearly given itself the objective of doing "public relations" work in