

term apply to solar collectors manufactured by Honeywell Corporation when the technology is appropriate but is produced by a large, high-technology "inappropriate" concern?). Some purists felt that having a center at all went against the doctrine of decentralization. The appropriate technologists and the community organizers on the committee suffered from a communications gap, according to board chairman, Milwaukee social worker Anthony Maggiore—the

former, for example, had to drop some of their utopian visions and learn about grappling with the rude and intractable realities of poverty.

Finally, there was extensive debate over the center's relation to MERDI. Most of the planners did not like the idea of NCAT being part of MERDI, as Plunkett had envisaged, because they felt the institute was overly oriented to high technology and were put off by all the bankers and copper magnates on the board.

Ultimately NCAT was planned as an organization independent of MERDI but with a contractual relationship to it.

The NCAT board will eventually have 27 members, including representatives from Community Action Programs (CAP's), representatives from all the usual downtrodden constituencies, technical people, and a smattering of "establishment" types.

If the members appointed so far are any indication, the leadership is unlikely to be co-opted by industrial tycoons. They include people such as Sam Love, environmentalist and energy consultant who predicted the energy crunch long before most; David Morris, codirector of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance in Washington, D.C.; Helga Olkowski of Berkeley, a pioneer in integrated (non-chemical) urban pest control; Alfred Navarro of the California farm cooperative movement; and Holloway, a University of Minnesota architect who is interested in "squatter architecture" and predicts that by 2000, 50 percent of the world population will be living in squatter communities.

The \$3 million appropriation to CSA, engineered by Mansfield shortly before his departure from the Senate, is divided three ways. A little over \$1 million is for grants ranging up to \$50,000 from NCAT to CAP's, of which there are over 865, and Community Development Corporations. These will channel applications to NCAT for grants to inventors and community projects (the immediate priorities are insulation, particularly for mobile homes, and supplemental energy sources). One million dollars is for outreach, education, training of community workers in the uses of appropriate technology, a technical assistance hotline between NCAT and CAP's, and regional conferences.

Finally, there is an \$800,000 contract for a "technical research staff" in MERDI that will do research and evaluation on small technologies. This might involve comparing different kinds of solar collectors, or delving into the cheapest methods of processing cellulose for building insulation. MERDI, for example, is currently developing a home furnace that is tiny, efficient, and capable of switching among coal, oil, and gas. MERDI will be in the position of supplying the quality control—everyone is concerned that new technologies be sound ones acceptable to the population as a whole, and not half-baked innovations that cast low-income people as guinea pigs in poorly thought out programs.

NCAT is still at the embryo stage, and there is not too much to be told yet about its mode of operation. It has an execu-

A New Center for the Humanities

The humanities have been sinking into kind of a funk over the past dozen years or so, and have suffered perhaps even more than other fields from fragmentation and the prevailing trend toward overspecialization. Despite the existence of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), little federal money has been sent the humanists' way—rather it is to the sciences and social sciences that policy-makers look for guidance in approaching public issues.

Now, a prominent group of academicians is seeking to bring humanities back into the mainstream through the establishment of a National Humanities Center, to be built on Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. The new center is to be modeled, more or less, on the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, and the Princeton Center for Advanced Studies. The center, whose existence will be formalized at an April board meeting, will open its doors in September 1978. A \$2-million building, financed by local contributions and foundation grants, is now under construction. The first president is to be Charles Frankel, professor of philosophy and public affairs at Columbia University. Planning was done by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences with a grant from the NEH.

The center wants to bring together humanists of all disciplines, including science, to enrich the stream of thinking that eventually finds its way into public policy-making. Some resident Fellows will be invited to work on their own projects. Other individuals will form interdisciplinary teams to apply themselves to projects thought up by the center. Examples of proposed topics are "The idea of the individual, 1700 to the present"; "the historical and cultural background of environmental and ecological problems," and "the state and future of clinical psychiatry."

The founders of the center believe it has much to contribute in bringing historical, ethical, and philosophical perspectives to bear on current issues. Frankel believes that "to some extent humanists have been dehumanizing themselves in an effort to ape the success of other fields"—to wit, the rage for quantification that has gripped the social sciences. It is time now, he says, for the humanities to be brought "off the defensive and out of retreat" and for other disciplines to benefit by their methodologies.

Scientists will be brought in on appropriate projects, such as the one on man and the environment. In addition, there is a project under discussion whereby postdoctoral scientists from the California Institute of Technology would spend half an academic year at the center.

The advent of the center has been a source of great excitement in the tri-university area (Duke, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina), according to executive director William J. Bennett. He says 12 other universities vied to be host of the center, but North Carolina seems to have offered the most in the way of financial, logistical, and moral support, as well as general "ambiance."

The 30-member board is weighted with distinguished academics, including two scientists: Harvey Brooks of Harvard, and Caryl Haskins, former president of the Carnegie Institution. It also includes William Schuman, composer and president emeritus of New York's Lincoln Center; lawyer and diplomat Sol Linowitz; and John Chancellor of NBC.—C.H.