



**ORGANIZATIONS
AND SOCIETY
and INFORMATION
SYSTEMS**

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of policies among the countries. The proceedings produced following HCC 3 should form an invaluable reference book for international agencies and help guide individual governments in formulating their own policies.

TC 9 plans to present a summary of this report at IFIP Congress '86.

HCC 3 is the Third Human Choice and Computers Conference, the previous two having been held in Vienna in 1974 and in 1979, with support from the Austrian government. Proceedings were published by North Holland Publishing Co.

TC 9 now has a new Chairman, Hal Sackman, who is an old friend of WG 8.2

Fred Margulies, until recently, Vice-Chairman, has sent copies of two papers he has written. One of these 'Man's Role in Man-Machine Systems' which he has co-authored with H. Zemanek, analyses the changes which the man-machine relationship has undergone. The authors suggest that automation can provide an opportunity for reversing the deskilling that has occurred until now.

The second paper - User Participation in Systems Development - a case study of participative design, describes how a group of Austrian designers were participatively involved in the introduction of a CAD system into their offices.

NEWS FROM IFIP

Bill Olle has sent the minutes of the 11th meeting of TC 8 national representatives held in Paris on 23rd September 1983. Notes about this meeting were in our last newsletter.

IFIP Congress '86

The organization of IFIP Congress '86 is already underway with Dines Bjørner from Denmark in the role of Program Committee Chairman.

This will be held in Trinity College, Cambridge, England, from September 1st - 5th 1986. All presentations (invited papers, panels and solicited papers) will stress the bridges between the many worlds of science, technology and applications. A feature of this Congress will be a large number of invited papers, many of these being followed by 'responder' led discussions. There will also be a large number of panels - essentially featuring two 'extreme' positions and a mediating (chairman) position.

The Conference programme is divided into three streams. Stream 1 - Computation, Stream 2 - informatics applications and Stream 3 - informatics in the developing world. Our TC 8 Chairman, Giampio Bracchi, has written to Dines Bjørner pointing out that whereas Stream 1 (Computation) has a carefully structured list of topics, Stream 2 (Informatics applications) constitutes an ad hoc list of titles. It also has some gaps, in particular any consideration of information systems methodology. Giampio asks that the following subject areas be included.

- 1) Methods and tools for Information Systems Planning, analysis, design and evaluation.
- 2) Organizational and managerial problems of information systems.
- 3) Decision support systems.

Giampio, in his letter, also offered Dines the cooperation of the three TC 8 WG Chairmen, A. Solvberg, L. Methlie and Enid Mumford in the selection of topics for the Congress.

Microelectronics Monitor

IFIP Secretariat has sent a copy of this bulletin which is produced by UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) The Microelectronics Monitor provides notes and abstracts from many journals. These are chosen to highlight an important market tendency, technical development etc. It is extremely readable and gives an excellent overview of the latest thinking. For example, under 'new developments' it discusses whether 'Biochips may be the brains of tomorrows computers.' It has sections on 'market trends and company news', 'applications', 'software and computer education', 'government policies', 'legislation and standards', and 'socio-economic implications'. Here is its last page, some examples of 'computer lingo'.

The fast growing breed of computer programmers, aided by other computer specialists, have added many colourful words to the English language, particularly slang words. The process shows every sign of continuing.

Debug In computer parlance, the word usually means an error made by the programmer when he wrote the program, thereby conveying to the computer a scheme of action which is not exactly the one that is needed to get the work done.

Gigo (Guy-go, abbreviation of Garbage In, Garbage Out). Bad data leads to bad results. Your staff may find that the provident fund values shown on their pay slips don't make sense. The programmer is likely to explain this by saying that this is a case of GIGO. The accounts people feed in "garbage" into his computer program which prints pay slips. So, in turn, the program puts out garbage. You had better check with the accounts people; they are likely to claim that the programmer runs a "bug farm".

- Hacker
- 1) Refers to a dedicated computer programmer, expert at his job, who spends all his living hours at the computer centre.
 - 2) An otherwise sensible boy who found himself a computer terminal while his friends found themselves girlfriends and/or wives.

Interrupt Mode The computer goes on doing some specified work, interrupting this occasionally to attend to urgent minor tasks that need a little attention. You are in an interrupt mode when you are handling such a minor task needing immediate attention. Or, you can "turn the interrupts off", or you can have "interrupts stacked up dangerously" waiting for attention.

Kludge An inelegant, clumsy way to "fix" a bug.

Pert Chart A graphical way of describing a complex plan of action. Invented in the fifties for handling major government funded projects in the US, the Program Evaluation and Review Technique views a project in terms of "events" and "activities". A Pert chart clearly shows what goes on in parallel with what, and what has to be completed before something else can begin.

Save World A hacker working at a computer terminal does not want a power failure to wipe out all his work. He gives a "save world" command once in a while, telling the computer to store in a semi-permanent way all that has been typed in. Hackers learn early in their careers to set up the computer to do an automatic "save world" every five minutes or so.

Stack Computer programmers store key information about what they are doing in a "stack" before they switch attention to an "interrupt". On returning from interrupt they "resume" the previous work by "unstacking" the detail that had been put away. You can get a "stack overflow" if you keep honouring all kinds of interrupts at a rate you cannot handle easily. But don't hesitate to stack up uninteresting jobs when something more exciting comes. You can go back to them later.

Timeshare Like a wizard playing chess "simultaneously" against a dozen opponents, large modern computers work independently in parallel

for a few dozen "users". Even small computers work simultaneously for three to six users who sit at interactive terminals.

By Dr. Ramani, a senior research scientist with the National Centre for Software Development and Computing Techniques. (India).

(Science Age, August 1983).

If you would like to have a copy of the Microelectronics Monitor please let the IFIP Secretariat know. Write to:

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IFIP Secretariat,
3, Rue du Marche ,
CH-1204, GENEVA,
SWITZERLAND.

OTHER CONFERENCES

News of conferences comes in by every post and it is only possible to mention one or two of these.

The First International Conference on Organizational Symbolism and Corporate Culture will be held at the University of Lund, Sweden, from 26-30 June 1984.

The Third Workshop on Capitalist and Socialist Organizations Focussing on Organizational Behaviour and the Impact of New Technology will be held in Helsinki, 29-31 August 1984. The sponsors are the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management and Helsinki School of Economics.

CAITS (Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems) is having a one-day seminar on Human - centred systems - new technology for trade unions? on April 28th in London.

Change of address:

Mr. Guy Fitzgerald has moved from the
University of Aston in Birmingham.

His address is now:

Mr. Guy Fitzgerald,
School of Industrial & Business
Studies,
University of Warwick,
COVENTRY, CV4 7AL.