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VIEWS OF THE COUNCIL OF SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION ON THE
PREPARATION OF LONG-RANGE RESEARCH PLANS IN HUNGARY

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FOREWORD

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Following is the translation of an article by Istvan
Ruszinyak in Magyar Tudomány, Vol 5, No 1, Budapest,
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The Council of Science and Higher Education at its meeting of 3 November discussed the preparation of long-range research plans, summarized the experiments, and studied and determined the steps to be taken.

I. The Council of Science and Higher Education, discussing the results of preparatory work, found the work of the preparatory committees generally satisfactory; and the prepared plan-studies make possible the completion of the long-range research plans.

1. Thus far experience has justified those fundamental principles and methods which were laid down by the Council of Ministers and the Council of Science and Higher Education.

a. The work done up to this point justifies the decree issued at the beginning of 1959 by the Council of Ministers, namely, that the most important problems on the development of the national economy, cooperation among the member states of CEMA, and the development of sciences have to be assigned as research subjects.

b. The principle that practical problems should be chosen and examined from both the economic and scientific viewpoints seems to be justified. The extent of experimental and theoretical work has to be in balance according to this principle.

c. It was correct to distribute the main research tasks among the high commissions and to register every research institute in the country in order to establish good cooperation.

d. And finally, it was correct to assign the task of plan-studies to the eminent theoretical and experimental representatives of the fields, the preparatory committees.

2. The preparatory committees did a good, responsible job and thereby established the basis for a long-range research plan, which will make possible greater purposefulness in research, better coordination among research institutes, and more effective use of material and manpower.

a. It is already possible to say that the proposed main research tasks correctly reflect the needs of scientific research.

b. One important result of the preparatory committees' work is the agreement among scientific workers on the systematic

coordination of scientific work. Several thousand people worked on the preparatory committees; they determined carefully the long-range research tasks as well as the research subjects of the next few years.

c. The cooperation of the research institutes in planning and personal discussions with the scientists concerned made possible the establishment of such perfect coordination, of which there was so far no example in our scientific life.

d. The work of the preparatory committees was also very important for the registration during the course of the preparatory work of future scientific capabilities, and for education. These young scientists got a wide view of the problems in their fields and good practice in scientific planning; their work was a main contribution toward the success of the plan-studies.

3. The long-range research plan is not ready yet, but its positive effects are already realized. Administrative organizations already use the plan-studies as a basis on which to work out their research plans for 1961. In this way the plan already helps the coordination of research work.

4. Besides the favorable results we discovered several negative experiences about which we must be more careful in the future.

a. The correct concentration of material and manpower does not prevail in the work of every preparatory committee. Some committees, in determining the research problems as well as the material requirements, planned for the optimum and therefore the plans are far from reality. One main task includes too many research problems, which makes coordination difficult.

b. The preparatory committees in selecting and distributing the problems did not realize the possibilities of international cooperation. They made only very few proposals increasing international cooperation and they did not point out those subjects where, at present or in the future, the use of the results of other friendly countries' research work would be desirable.

c. The economic needs of the research studies are not as sound as the determinations of the research tasks. Therefore, the economic data collected (after necessary modifications) is an important basis for the planning of the national economy, but they cannot be used directly in the 5-year plan. They help, anyway, in determining the correct data necessary to the elaboration of the scientific aspects of the 5-year plan.

II. The Council of Science and Higher Education, based on the plan-studies, handed down the following decisions:

1. The long-range scientific research plan has to be worked out as a long-term document of our scientific policy, which determines the main research tasks from the needs of the national economy, science, and culture. The purpose of the plan is to concentrate the work, material and manpower of the research institutes for these tasks. The long-range plan makes more sound the determination of the proportions and schedule of the development of research work and also the financial requirements, in that it serves as a basis for the 5-year and one-year

research plans of the institutions.

2. Based on the plan-studies the main research tasks which should be completed during the Second Five-Year Plan have to be pointed out. This program has to be prepared as part of the Second Five-Year Economic Plan, and it has to contain the required data for the period of the Second Five-Year Plan as regards administrative, material and manpower developments.

3. Because of this dual-purpose planning we must do the following:

a. The preparatory committees have to finish their present work without delay and transfer the completed plan-studies to their superior institution and to the Secretariat of the Council of Science and Higher Education. (Until 15 November 1960, 67 preparatory committees sent in the complete plan-study and 85 committees sent in the "A" part of the plan-study.)

b. The Secretariat of the Council of Science and Higher Education has to pre-organize the collected plan-studies. During the course of this work it has to reveal possible disagreements, overlappings and contractions; it also has to collect the task and main task modifications and examine the proposals for new main tasks.

c. Also, the Secretariat of the Council of Science and Higher Education has to collect the economic needs of the plan-studies and draw up (with the help of the Central Planning Office and the Ministry of Finance) what funds are available for research purposes during the 5-year plan and that are the proposals for the Second Five-Year Plan; then it must compare these with the needs of the plan-studies with respect to main tasks and institutions.

4. After this pre-arrangement, central task planning committees formed from the members of the Council of Science and Higher Education, representatives of the institutions responsible for the main tasks, and the heads and secretaries of the preparatory committees, must examine the plan-studies. The centralized revision of the plan-studies has to be done in the following respects:

a. First, decisions have to be made on disagreements, overlappings, and possible contraction or separation of the main tasks pointed out by the Secretariat of the Council of Science and Higher Education.

b. After the above-mentioned preparation, the main research tasks have to be re-examined from the viewpoint of the importance of the proposed research, of a realistic judgment of the available material and manpower, and of possible international cooperation, and decisions have to be made on which main research tasks should be abolished. (As a result of this re-examination the number of the main tasks will possibly decrease.)

c. After this re-examination, those main research tasks which have exceptional importance for the development of science, or for practical economic, social or cultural development, have to be selected and handled as exceptional research tasks of the Second

Five-Year Plan. The available material and manpower have to be concentrated for these research tasks. (One institution should have only as many main research tasks as it can handle in a really exceptional way.)

5. The heads of the institutions involved and of the preparatory committees have to be informed of the results of the re-examinations and their opinions have to be considered. After this is done the long-range research plans have to be submitted to the Council of Ministers.

6. Simultaneously, those main research tasks which should be accomplished during the Second Five-Year Plan should be selected and transferred to the Central Planning Bureau as part of the 5-year economic plan.

7. The material resources for the scientific research of the 5-year plan shall be determined by the Central Planning Bureau, taking into consideration the material and manpower needs proposed by the institutions involved and the Secretariat of the Council of Science and Higher Education; they will be submitted to the Council of Ministers with the completed 5-year plan. In accordance with this, the research tasks of the long-range research plans have to be completed from those material resources of the institutions involved which are made available to them by their superior organizations in their annual budgets, installation plan, and 5-year development plan. There are no special material resources for the completion of the long-range research plans.

8. Preparatory committees proposed developments beyond the Second Five-Year Plan, such as establishment of new institutions, extension of existing institutions, purchase of important equipment, and so on. These proposals have to be examined and considered when the development principles are determined.

9. The first period of the preparatory committees' work on completing the plan-studies is ended. In the future members of the preparatory committees should be included in the pre-arrangement and re-examination work and in other work necessary for the completion of the long-range plans. Therefore, the preparatory committees will be discharged only after governmental approval of the long-range research plan.

10. In the development of the 1961 scientific research plans of the institutions the proposals of the long-range research plans have to be considered even before approval of the plan.