

THE PLANNING MACHINE

PROJECT CYBERSYN AND THE ORIGINS OF THE BIG DATA NATION

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(2014)

Drawn (and redrawn)
by hand by graphic designers.

Historical and statistical
information about
production.

"Lilany sou a Computer and a Baby Allout its Be Bossn."
(Computers are like children and Chilean bureaucrats
must not abandon them)

- song by Ángel Parra, Chile's leading folksinger (1972)
devised a system
with the help of
consultant → STAFFORD BEER → leading theorist of cybernetics

→ brought in by Chile's top planners to help guide the
country down "The Chilean road to Socialism."
→ Democratically elected
Maoist leader.
→ Took office in Nov 1970

believe a supermodern information system
that would make 'worker participation' possible
and bring socialism into the computer age.

"Cybernetic Revolutionaries"
(History of Project Cybersyn)
- by Eden Medina

WHY?

Scholars began noticing that
social, natural and mechanical
systems exhibit similar patterns
of self regulation.

"Curseiness of things" → required human
involvement

WHY?

By analyzing enterprise data, computers
could warn managers of → incipient instability.

"The on-line control computer ought to be
sensitively coupled to events in real time."
(Arrival of smart-net connected devices)

THE INTERNET OF THINGS → Beer (1964)

Cybernetically sound decisions about
the economy
were made
here.

OPERATIONS ROOM
CONTAINED
AT THE CENTER

PROJECT CYBERSYN

(Cybernetics Synergy)

PROJECT CYBERFOLK

TRACKS

The realtime happiness of the entire
Chilean nation at any moment in
response to decisions made in the op-
room by using the **algedonic meter**.

ALGORITHMIC REGULATION

NORBERT WIENER

I WROTE

"Cybernetics, our Control and Communication
in the Animal and the Machine." (1948)
(Human behaviour based on the reader
and the thermosstat)

ELABORATES ON

A new mode of governance.
(Replace rigid rules with fluid and personalised
feedback loops generated by customers).

→ Collect as much relevant data from as many
sources as possible.

→ Analyze them in real time.

→ Make an optimal decision based on the current
circumstances (rather than idealized projection)

OPERATIONS ROOM

DESIGNED BY

INSPIRED
by beer resemblance to Apple WHY? → Jonathan Iue

FRIEDRICH HAYEK → champion

BEER
BELIEVE

Serious + Internet connectivity → NEST
(provides a homeostatic solution) → GOOGLE NOW
market conditions
when orders is placed.

It is ubiquitous in both the natural and the
mechanical worlds.

"Information is a National Resource."
- Beer (1975)

They have a clear goal,
(survival) and are full of
feedback loops (between
the company and its suppliers
or between workers and
management.)

(Big data +
distributed
systems)

MONICA PODDAR

WEEK 9: READING