

## The AT mafia: 'Back to 3,500 BC'

*While the environmentalists have not yet been able to force windmills, human dung for fertilizer, and other Stone-Age naturalisms on any significant portion of the population in the advanced sector, the peoples of the Third World are seen as a more tractable target. A sample of appropriate technologies at work is offered by a recent issue of the magazine Mazingira: The world forum for environment and development (No. 5, 1978), which is published "with the support of" the UN's Environment Programme. (The same UN environmental umbrella also shelters the Friends of the Earth and other environmentalist-lapping-over-into-terrorist operations.) The magazine's masthead notes that "Mazingira means environment in Swahili," and adds that it is printed on partly recycled paper.*

"Six developing countries are now in the process of testing and modifying a wind powered water pump which has been developed by the Intermediate Technology Group with financial support from Christian Aid . . . .

"The prototype was developed with help and hospitality from the Engineering Department of Reading University, UK.

"It is specifically intended for local production in workshops of light engineering plants.

"The wind machine has a 6-metre diameter and

is capable of driving a variety of reciprocating piston, diaphragm, or inertia pumps. Output varies from 0.5 to 7.5 kW depending on wind speed. Different rotor and pump options allow it to be used either for low lifts with high volume or high lifts with low volume, for irrigation and borehole pumping respectively."

*But even more "appropriate" is this plan for "Reviving Babylon's bricks" in the starving Sudan:*

"An ancient brick-making process — first used in Babylon in 3,500 BC — is being revived in the Sudan in an attempt to find a local cheap source of bricks. In the Sudan, as in many developing countries, concrete blocks are expensive and local sun-dried bricks have low life expectancy and encourage the breeding of insects and fungi in their porous structure. Burnt bricks are of better quality, but are relatively expensive and make catastrophic demands on limited timber supplies.

*Perhaps the most telling statement of purpose in the magazine appears in a caption to a picture. Below a photograph of an Oriental man carrying a heavy burden on a yoke is the comment:*

"Age-old technology — perhaps painful, certainly appropriate."

but to arrange for present technology to be adapted to the needs and requirements of the small business and small farmers."

G. William Miller, for his part, proclaimed that it was obviously impossible to raise the Third World to: the same standard of living that exists in the United States . . . I don't believe that we have the resources in the world in terms of human managerial resources or labor resources, nor do we have the material resources to accomplish this in a short time.

Nor would it necessarily be desirable to establish the American standard of living as it now exists, in many ways wasteful, in many ways perhaps less rewarding than alternate cultural opportunities, as the norm for the world. I don't suppose that any of us would propose, in thinking of the use of technology to create development in the world, that we try to close that gap instantly.

Another important speaker at Kissinger's meeting was H. Guyford Stever of the National Research Council. "Technology transfer, unless carefully grafted to local values and conditions, may be rejected," he said. "While technology is at the heart of the development process, a new and more mature

attitude toward the application of technology has emerged." This more mature attitude, he explained, included the recognition that development could no longer be thought of in terms of "the reaching of a specific goal at a specific time," and that the "prevailing belief or hope for many years that development such as that achieved in industrialized nations could be transplanted to an LDC" (less developed country) was chimerical.

"Agricultural self-sufficiency" through appropriate technologies is the best the Third World can hope for, he concluded, and called on the private sector and international aid agencies to persuade the Third World to accept this as inalterable fact.

—Cynthia Parsons

### The Stever report

*Stever was chosen to prepare a report to help define the official U.S. stance at the United Nations conference. His paper was issued in April 1978. Titled "U.S. Science and Technology for Development: A Contribution to the 1979 UN Conference," it was put together with the help of the Brookings Institution as well as the National Academy of Sciences, which*