Data Processing And Human Resources

THE daily and intellectual life of each individual and community is destined to be changed by the computer. Its influence, whether in the industrialized countries or the Third World, will be irreversible and all-embracing.

Many people fear the computer's invasion of office and factory, suspecting it will sow unemployment and de-personalization. They feel excluded from the new data-processing universe, and do not know how to approach it.

Automation must not be forced down people's throats. The choice and decision can be made to see to it that the data processing revolution is accessible to all, and that it

be something more than a tool to add sums or to administer—

the most powerful springboard for creativity, innovation and the faculty to learn. To facilitate the transition, a World Center (Data Processing and Human Resources) was set up in France following a report on the theme by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, author of the "World Challenge", to President Francois Mitterrand.

The Center has already begun to function, its international research teams link the humanities and the data-processing sciences in the framework of social experiments and pilot projects both in France and elsewhere. During these experiments, social groups and persons from all classes and cultures are called upon to define themselves, to invent new and individualized uses for data-processing in the bid to forge original audiovisual and communications networks—in a nutshell, a natural language between man and the machine.