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HUMANITARIANISM AND BUSINESS

by

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Overview

Since the 1980s, the increase in the number of associations for social solidarity has led these associations to apply marketing techniques to attract funds and generally to follow in the footsteps of business models. Is this a commercial deviation or a reasoned evolution, a loss of identity or a gain in efficiency, self-denial or a rational introduction of marketing into a system in order to change it ? The difficulties of how to obtain funds led to a revolution which, for many militants and volunteers, appeared to be corrupt. Market and media regulations were at odds with the ideals of solidarity. Laura Haddad, a marketing professor, draws on her research on humanitarian associations to cast some light on the delicate relationship between charity and business.

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TALK : Laura HADDAD

The subject of my doctorate thesis was French associations for social solidarity. At present I am an associate professor at the Reims Management School and I am particularly interested in the relationship between associations and marketing. For the past few years, these associations have been confronted by the dilemma of either responding to the call for increased professionalism in the organisation and the methods used for collecting funds, or preferring the preservation of the ideological content of the associations. In the words of Antoine Vaccaro, president of an agency for collecting funds, « *the commercialisation of private financing and the emergence of a so-called 'charity business' have generated a deviation from a minority of the associative sector and thereby caused upheavals with important consequences for the Third Sector as a whole* ». What are these upheavals ?

Background

Associations for social solidarity already existed at the time of the Greeks in the form of committees designed to help people in difficulty. In France, in the Middle Ages, this type of aid became more widespread under the control of the Church. Since giving alms and charity were certain methods of ensuring one's passage to Heaven, donations were important. Later on, the State took control of these institutions and a humanitarian spirit took over from charity. The French Revolution brought with it the idea of charity and suppressed all associative groups. Finally, in 1901, the Waldeck-Rousseau Law heralded the beginning of associations and allowed « *the convention by which two or more people permanently share their knowledge or their activity in a non profit-making way with an objective other than to share the profits* ». Since that time, the number of associations, especially those for social solidarity, has increased exponentially.

In 1863, the creation of the Red Cross resulted in a small revolution. For the first time, it was possible to care for all war victims regardless of their allegiances. However, after the Second World War, the Red Cross was accused of disregarding concentration camps and it subsequently lost a great deal of credibility : one of its founding principles, « *the more silent we are, the more we will be heard* », was called into question. . All the associations which have been created subsequently have based themselves on another model.

In Post-war France, associations such as ATD Quart Monde and Emmaüs were concerned with a small section of the population called the under-class who lived in very poor and difficult situations. Later on, in the 1970s, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as *Médecins sans frontières* appeared. They expressed a desire to be politically and religiously independent, which was a novelty at the time, and they both worked towards a charitable approach focussed on the Third World. In France, following Abbé Pierre's famous radio broadcast in 1954 made in order to collect funds for the under-class, the NGOs were the first associations which fully understood the need to use the media. From then on, the two objectives of providing emergency aid and assisting development were opposed by humanitarian associations which promoted direct aid to those associations which preferred to teach populations to be self-sufficient. In the 1980s, humanitarian action was refocused on France, where instability, poverty and exclusion are increasingly present.

At the same time, a decrease in investment in the individual by both from trade unions and associations, led to the emergence of so-called *charity shows*, in the form of concerts relayed by television, or the recording of a pop song for famine victims in Ethiopia, for example. It was at this time that marketing emerged, since it seemed necessary, in order to mobilise individuals, to offer them stars, sequins and superficial glamour, in contrast to the bread and circus games (*panem et circenses*) of Roman times.

The French associative sector

Of the 750,000 associations present in France (the exact number is unknown), 15 % to 20 % are humanitarian. Approximately 1,500 of these can collect funds ; 200 actively collect money, have a marketing or communications department, and use direct marketing or the media. The humanitarian sector can be split into four areas ;

- the health and medical sector collects the majority of donations ;
- organisations such as *Tiers Monde* (Third World), *Action contre la faim* (War on Hunger), *Terre des Hommes France* (World of Man), etc. collect less and less money ;
- the secular, social sector, with associations which operate in France and abroad such as the *Secours populaire* or the *Restaurants du cœur* ;
- and finally, the socio-cultural sector with for example the *Secours catholique*.

The sectors are, to a slight extent, in competition with each other in collecting funds.

Public financing, even if it is on the decrease today, provides associations with up to 129 billion Francs (19.7 billion Euros), while private donations amount to 15 billion Francs (2.3 billion Euros). The number of donors in France is small by comparison with other countries, and most importantly, it is not increasing. The social sector is essentially subsidized by the State. By contrast, the international sector, principally made up of NGOs, is self-financing (80 % is from private donations) so that it escapes pressure from the State, and can resort to marketing.

Elements in the evolution of fund raising

Perhaps you can remember fêtes or Salvation Army collections outside department stores. This sort of fund raising was often organised on an ad hoc basis and needed huge personal investment which was carried out by volunteers and active members on a local scale. Sums collected were modest.

In the 1960s, several thousand associations were created every year, and 40,000 to 50,000 in the following decade (1970-1980). This explosion gave rise to lively competition because donors' budgets are finite. A double-sided element comes into play : the State withdraws financial help while associations for social solidarity want to free themselves from State control. As a result, associations develop methods of appealing to donors in a way which is much more structured than before. Finally, since individuals commit themselves less and less, other methods have to be found to motivate donors and to find volunteers. Marketing in associations, which is an application of the concept and techniques of marketing aimed at social objectives achieved as a result of the intervention of private non profit-making organisations, is emerging.

The State, an important element in the financing of associations, has reduced its subsidy. It encourages donations by offering tax relief. Furthermore, as a result of scandals, for example the *ARC* (French Cancer Association), the State now controls the appeals for private capital and the way in which it is used. Competition, as already mentioned, is also present in fund raising. About 20 million people each donate a little more than one thousand Francs per year (152 Euros), which is distributed to several associations. The size of the average donation is decreasing, as is the number of donors who are mainly from the executive professional class, the retired, the self-employed, both men and women.

Communication and marketing agencies study the reasons why people give money. Studies carried out by sociologists and psychologists are able to distinguish three categories : firstly, the 'selfish' donation which is motivated by self-interest, for example of the person who gives money towards cancer research in the hope that later on, he can benefit from technological advances in this area. Secondly, some researchers think that the 'altruistic' or 'selfless' donation, in other words not expecting anything in return, still exists. Thirdly, the 'compulsory' donation, a sort of counter-donation, is becoming increasingly common : examples of this are letters in the post which contain small gifts such as post cards, stamps or seeds for planting which oblige their recipients to donate.

Techniques for fund raising have changed a great deal. Villages fêtes have been replaced by direct mail, telephone calls, and advertisements in the media. Collaborations emerge between associations and companies which sponsor them, corporate patronage and “product-sharing” which means that when one buys a product, a percentage of its sales price goes towards an association. These are highly specialised business techniques. Hitherto associations functioned exclusively with volunteers, but now some associations have created marketing and communications departments, and almost all of them have used the services of an external company at least once.

Financial and accountancy professionalisation

In 1991, as a result of a number of important scandals, the State took drastic measures in order to control funds which had been collected. For example, it is now compulsory to declare beforehand a fund raising campaign at the *Préfecture*, and to produce an account explaining the use of resources and the funds collected (running costs, publicity and marketing costs, commercial activity) which can be consulted by every association member or donor. Such legislation is precisely defined and restrictive.

These same scandals made donors ask certain questions and raised doubts. Since then, donors demand that the use of the funds be made clear : this therefore forces associations to set up accountancy and financial structures which are as professional as those found in a company, and in some cases, even more so. At the same time, they call for a limit on running costs.

In order to respond to these pressures, associations need expert skills and this has caused a real revolution. Employees and executives educated in business schools are now replacing the active members. Training programmes for managing associations – humanitarian or otherwise – have been devised, as have postgraduate study programmes at universities.

Is this a move towards associative companies ?

Competition, scandals, pressure from the State and difficulties in finding new donors have caused a shift in the associative world towards real professionalisation to a greater or lesser degree within the humanitarian sector depending on the clout of the volunteers. And yet, all these associations were founded according to the model of the 1901 Law (concerning non profit-making associations) and have been confronted with the same constraints and the same pressures.

The life cycle of associations is constant : a small base is created which collects funds, acts and makes itself known ; militants or active members join its ranks and the association grows in size to a critical level. It is at that moment that the question of the evolution of the organisation arises, especially for associations created before 1980 since those that came into existence after this date often started off with a professional structure. Culture plays a fundamental role in this move towards professionalisation. Two associations illustrate contrasting attitudes : *Terre des hommes France*, where militants have greatly curbed professionalisation ; and *Action contre la faim*, where professionalisation has toned down the original culture.

Terre des hommes France

Terre des hommes France, founded in 1961 by Édmond Kaiser, defends economic, social and cultural rights in developing countries. This association had very few employees in its headquarters, but there were many committees scattered around France for fund raising. It suffered a very serious structural crisis in 1995, but its base of militants, who were dedicated to the original values of the association, refused to create a different organisation. Today, *Terre des hommes France* has got over this crisis, its budget is stable and there are less than ten employees working at its headquarters compared to six hundred volunteers throughout France. There is no communications or marketing department. The association carries out its

projects at a reasonable rate. However, it has kept its original culture because militants still manage the association.

Action contre la faim

At the opposite end of the spectrum is *Action contre la faim*, created in 1979 by a group of French intellectuals, notably Françoise Giroud. Its international mission is to intervene in urgent situations. According to the words of its President, its first crisis in 1986 caused a necessary change in its organisation which was accepted by its militants. The association recruited employees and its headquarters was structured like that of a company with a very strong hierarchy, and with the passage of time local committees disappeared. A few volunteers still come to lend a hand at the headquarters, but it is the salaried employees who manage the association. *Action contre la faim*'s budgets soared and it now recruits graduates exclusively from the *HEC* and *ESSEC* business schools for its communications and marketing department.

Repercussions of professionalisation

Because of its professionalisation, the association has acquired important legitimacy and *savoir-faire* which the State increasingly uses to detect and deal with new cases of exclusion in emergency situations. In twenty-four hours, an association such as *Médecins sans frontières* can mobilise a cargo of material, human and financial resources for an emergency situation, an organisational process which would take the State several weeks. Associations are also judged to be essential because of their close involvement in the field of action, in areas where contact with people on the margins of society is extremely important. They represent fertile soil for thought aimed at social progress in France and internationally. They are valued for their speed of action, their independence and their role in informing citizens about education and training.

However, with professionalisation there is a delicate balance between employees and volunteers with respect to management. The latter are frightened of being deprived of any powers of decision-making. Volunteers tend to have been with the association for a very long time and they represent the culture and history of the association. It is difficult for them to see employees, who have no past history of activism, making the changes. An emotional aspect is very clearly present in this microcosmic world of associations and helps promote the impression that change is bad. Some people even wonder if an association without volunteers is still an association.

Professionalisation has also given rise to a debate about running costs which was reopened in 2002 by the resigning president of *Action contre la faim*. She wrote some quite scathing articles, declaring that the association had lost its soul and its original culture because of professionalisation, and that now everything was discussed as if the association was a business. It is this ambiguity which is underlined by the person in charge of an association who declared « *people want us to be more professional, with more complex structures, but at the same time they want us to spend less on running the association* ». The donor finds it hard to accept that 20 % of his donation goes towards running the association and towards employees' salaries at the headquarters. In other words, this change to professionalisation should not appear to be at the cost to the donor since it is not the true mission of the association.

Finally, militants have noticed a weakening or even a resignation in the founding spirit of the association which has become more difficult to manage, and where values are shared less, and priority is given to profitability. For an association founded on a strong ideology which is very far removed from a business-like mentality, the search for funds might endanger its identity.

Conclusion : difficult arbitration

The introduction of a company atmosphere into associations brings with it some paradoxes, and relatively difficult arbitration. Should one adapt one's communication to suit the donor ? What remains of the association's original message ? How can it preserve its integrity and its ethics ? Can the association and its missions be conditioned by the market or the media ? The association is able to answer these important questions on the basis of its own culture, history, and motivations. Pierre Gaborit, who has studied communication in associations, pinpoints two possible failures : « *either the danger of slipping into a trade union style model which then becomes political ; or into a managerial, modernistic and entrepreneurial model.* » However, he adds that associations play a special role which makes them essential to city life.

DISCUSSION

Money and power

Question : *Various examples have demonstrated that people who contribute money may have vague aspirations to wield power. François Rousseau is currently preparing a thesis about militancy and management, and he analyses the example of the Léo Lagrange Federation. This is a working-class education movement which reorientates its management to be better suited to laws such as the Sapin Law. This change has been the reason for a great number of conflicts. This extraordinary lack of agreement makes me think of Mary Douglas, the anthropologist, who wrote about the pure and the impure. These sorts of transgressions are infringements which we find hard to accept. After all, if there is an efficient department which brings in money and does not get itself involved with management, then there is no more impurity. In what way does this hinder those who are on the active side of the association ? Do you know of any associations which know how to compartmentalise themselves ?*

Q. : *Remember that one has to be careful because an association's ideology is fundamental. ATD Quart Monde runs a mission for the poorest people. The mission is made up of committed employees who have very poor salaries, despite having families and being professional people. These people have to make the work of those whom we call volunteers the most efficient possible.*

Q. : *At Reporters sans frontières (RSF), we defend the freedom of the press wherever it is threatened. We help journalists who are in prison ; for example, in China, the Ivory Coast and Iraq this year. We have high running costs since our work is to inform and mobilise the international media in order to make governments react. I do not see fund-raising as a problem. At RSF, researchers study the freedom of the press and a communications, marketing and finance department looks after the fund-raising. The two departments are separate. The conflict between an association and professionalism bothers me.*

Inventing humanitarian marketing

Q. : *You are right, one should try to overcome this conflict. I wonder if marketing is at the centre of the problem. Associations are wrong to mimic the practice of mass consumption. Should they not create techniques which reflect their values ? Or encourage people to give ? The general public gives less today because it is irritated by the aggressive practices of associations. I think that there is a case for reinventing humanitarian marketing.*

Laura Haddad : I gave you the definition of associative marketing. Inappropriate use of these techniques produced a deviation from the norm. One has to establish a so-called 'value relationship' with the donor so that the donor becomes an 'involved donor' and participates in some way. Such an approach exists in the United States. Associations provide a choice between a monthly newsletter or reports. The donor becomes more receptive with what he receives and a different sort of relationship becomes established. *Médecins du monde* created

a committee of donors and now sends some of them into the field. They report back to the association about what the association is doing, give their opinion and are more involved than they would otherwise be by just signing a cheque. One should try to bring together marketing and the original traditions of the association.

Q. : *Rather than selling a photo of a child crying, wouldn't it be more lucrative in marketing terms to tell private donors the truth, as one would if they were financial backers, and to give them precise information about the actions of the association ? When you present a project to the World Bank or the European Community, you need an expert's dossier which holds water : otherwise it will not succeed.*

Q. : *RSF decided to publish a photo album. Market studies showed that people buy it not because it is RSF, but because it is an attractive book. They buy one hundred photos by Helmut Newton or by another well-known photographer for eight Euros, which is virtually nothing. All the money comes back to RSF, because we negotiated that it would all be free including the distribution. It is actually a donation and constitutes 60 % of our budget.*

L. H. : You say that people buy the album not because it is RSF but because it is an attractive product. I find this disturbing. It is business reasoning.

Q. : *The objective is to collect the funds necessary for our mission. We can offer the consumer an attractive album thanks to the photos of well-known photographers. Inside the book, there are about twenty pages which describe RSF's work. If the donor does not want to support RSF, it will not prevent him from buying the product for itself. In ten years' time, this album will still be on sale whereas people's generosity will have become exhausted.*

Q. : *Yesterday I called upon Act'up Paris. As far as the way in which it is financed is concerned, it is exactly the same as yours. Since the public does not know what Act'up is and Act'up needs money, Act'up thinks that it is alright to sell T-shirts with the Bouygues logo on them. Similarly they accept money from laboratories even if they take out action against the same laboratories the next day. It is a paradox.*

Is the State failing to face up to its responsibility ?

Q. : *To say that voluntary work is at the heart of associations and that we are polluting the pure world with money and professionalisation is rather a moral reaction. As far as I am concerned, the real problem is that the associative world accepts responsibility where the State had previously done so. What are telethons for ? To compensate for funds which are lacking in medical research. Why does Reporters sans frontières exist ? To compensate for the absence of meticulous diplomacy in so-called democracies which promote human rights. Shouldn't the State clarify its positions and reinvest ? Or, if not, we should not talk about associations any more but rather 'civic companies' with social responsibilities that occupy once again the area of public service. In my opinion, this is what the real debate is all about and not the immorality of the blend of business and charity.*

L. H. : Of course the debate should be raised to this level but the question is quite complex. It is effectively up to the State to take back certain duties that it had left to associations.

Q. : *More or less. If you look at the case of the AFM (Association française contre les myopathies), as was explained by Michel Callon and Vololona Rabearisoa of the École des Mines¹, initially it was a case of parents whose children had been effectively abandoned by everyone and whose doctors said that one should not become attached to these children, since they thought that there was nothing that could be done for them, and the State followed this advice. Associations often come about as a result of these so-called cracks in the wall, these*

¹ Les Annales de l'École de Paris du management, volume VI.

faults in society. Later on, it is a fact that the State can take back the associations more quickly under its own authority.

Q. : *But there is not the same independence as in an association. RSF can make declarations which the State could not allow itself to do.*

Q. : *Action contre la faim is often the only possible diplomat around, or at least the only authorised one. And what counts above all, is efficiency.*

Volunteers and professionals

Q. : *Can we seriously analyse the cost of professionalisation compared to the cost of volunteer work ? We know that during the war in Yugoslavia, there was a great deal of abuse and professionals admit that the efficacy of the donations was ultimately only about 20 %. This is a problem.*

L. H. : *It is very difficult to analyse efficacy in the field, but we understand that the budgets of associations which have taken a professional turn have soared.*

Q. : *In this analysis, one should also bear in mind that volunteers often invest more time in the association than the regulatory 35-hour professional week.*

Q. : *On the other hand, giving a volunteer work to do is not easy. Often he thinks he can do what he wants since he is not paid. It seems to me that a compromise is possible between professionalisation and militants. Among the retired and those who have taken early retirement, there are people who demonstrate remarkable professionalism.*

Q. : *I think that the distinction between a volunteer and an employee is not always clear : the employee is almost like a volunteer since he works such long hours and for so little money.*

Q. : *It is noticeable that recent graduates are attracted to working for associations, as if this was a job, but with some added meaning or sense. I am a parent whose child is in a business school : a certain number of these students seem to be disenchanted by companies and finance. Today, are those who work for associations, including those in the marketing department, not more receptive to the ideals of the associations ? Do they not want to work there to find some sort of meaning ?*

L. H. : *It is true that some militant students are ready to accept a decrease in their salary while at the same time having the same sort of work as in the private sector ; but these people are a minority. In fact, associations find recruiting difficult. Furthermore, companies still attach little value to this type of experience, and it is difficult afterwards to enter the private sector.*

Corporate patronage

Q. : *I am in charge of 'social action' (actions to help benefit the poorer sectors of society) at Deloitte. Both the State and donors have been mentioned, but we are forgetting support from companies. Today they are financial powers. We may regret this, but it is a fact. Some incorporate sustainable development and its regulations and the majority of donors are employees in companies. In addition, you recommend a new marketing strategy : what do you think about corporate patronage ? Is the strengthening of relationships between associations and companies not a path worth developing ? I think that, for many reasons, it is an inevitable tendency, including the constraints which have already been mentioned, the feeling of belonging and the pride of employees, and the issues of how the company is presented. What is your experience in this field ?*

L. H. : This phenomenon is becoming more important with these notions of sustainable development and the 'social' company, and it is turning towards the humanitarian and social movement which displays a certain ethic. There will always be associations which will refuse categorically all contact, working on the assumption that commercial and associative reasoning are incompatible. However, with time, some associations envisage partnerships in the form of product-sharing, corporate patronage or other types of action, and loaning volunteers and employees. It is a long process to put into place, and many people are frightened of the impact that it will have on donors and militants. They will have to choose their company partners carefully. These partners have to be ethically correct and have special connections with the association, its actions and its founders. It is not all that easy. As far as product-sharing is concerned, many people make sure that their mission fits the activity of the company in order to create a synergy. For all these reasons, this change takes time.

Q. : *It is possible to talk about reciprocal interests. Some companies act to improve their image. It is possible that Jean-Marie Messier thought that he could brush over the past by creating the Vivendi Foundation, even if this foundation carried out actions which were recognised as being very useful. Likewise Lafarge, which has had environmental problems, has set up a partnership with the WWF. WWF is interested because it knows that if one day the decision is made to stop all activities which then have to be explained to the press, the decision will have such an impact that it could be an important means of applying pressure. It is a subtle game.*

Q. : *As president of an association, I carry out research into corporate patronage and company foundations. Most of the time I believe that the foundations only exist in name. In many large companies, corporate patronage is only looked after by someone in the communications department. At the other end of the scale, I met the president of Maison des maladies orphelines : someone in his position is totally involved and has a totally different approach.*

Q. : *Do you not think that in the end what is important is to make these arguments, which are essentially different, complementary ?*

Q. : *I do not think that they are complementary. However, sometimes there is a meeting between a company and an association, either with those in charge or the marketing team. We had an important meeting with Hewlett Packard which allowed us to undertake our latest photo album and HP was present at our event in the Canadian cultural centre. You say that an association, before forging an alliance with a company, checks its ethics. I am in charge of financial management at RSF and I can assure you that an association is extremely fragile. We publish a yearly report which lists all the journalists who have risked their lives for the freedom of the press ; it is very important to them. Two years ago, companies in the press sector were in a catastrophic situation and no-one was able to finance this work which is very expensive and is distributed throughout the World. We met Vivendi Universal, and someone from the communications department was struck by our message. It was also very popular with the employees. They paid for everything and simply asked that we put their logo inside the book. Do you accept this or do you not publish an annual report ? That is the question.*

Responsible companies

Q. : *Despite all the moral or material constraints, and the constraints regarding the decision time, etc., the relationship between the NGO and the company will become more important. It is unstoppable. Yes, there are self-interests behind all of this : we cannot ask a company to be altruistic, but we can ask it to be efficient and respect certain values. Today, in particular in liberal democracies, power resides in the economy and in finance. Some companies are aware of their responsibilities regarding the environment and also all along the purchasing chain. They will invest in one way or another according to their own interests or the personal convictions of their managers. The associative world is powerful but at the same time fragile. It is certainly possible to discuss matters and to work together.*

Q. : *Even if it is still marginal on the scale of World finance, one should not forget the existence of socially responsible investment and ethical funds. One of the major problems we come across in the corporate world is this return on investment which exerts a great deal of pressure. If all the elements of the process chain begin to doubt and decide to reduce this greed, the company would be able to involve itself in actions for social solidarity. Today, the government has taken certain measures to develop tax reductions for companies which undertake research. According to the same principle, could we not grant companies tax deductions for the time which certain of their employees would devote to voluntary work for humanitarian associations ?*

Q. : *This is a bit like 'solidarity leave', in other words, taking paid leave to carry out a project to help society at large. When a manager decides to invest in a sector, this choice may be guided or otherwise by a direct link with the legal department of the company. The company also has financial, commercial or other skills which it can put at the disposal of associations. Associations that call for solidarity leave suggest projects in very varied areas.*

Q. : *I worked for three years, on solidarity leave, on questions of social responsibility in the company. It is not easy to identify the relationships with associations since many companies do so secretly. Today we can mention Carrefour which waited five years before talking about its partnership with the International Federation for Human Rights. This type of agreement constitutes the beginning of a way to respond to pressure from certain investors, media and public opinion, and a recognition of its responsibility to society. Lafarge has cement works in sub-Saharan Africa where the employees are HIV positive. It has asked for help from Care, an NGO which has experience in the struggle against poverty and which knows how to set up relationships built on trust with employees and their families. Lafarge finances an expert assessment and this is a professional partnership.*

The view from across the Atlantic

Q. : *French companies could be inspired not only by management ideas used in American companies but also by their involvement in society. In the United States, the State is viewed with suspicion and companies have strong traditions or partnerships with NGOs, so-called 'communities'. A wealthy manager who does not give very much is not well thought of. Social pressure is important. In France it is the welfare state : American companies which are established in France have quickly understood this, and do not invest. One should not forget that French legislation is different and following some scandals, support from associations was almost considered to be fraudulent dealing with a company's assets. Companies were frightened.*

L. H. : *It is true that the problems which we have highlighted are typically French. In the United States, reasoning behind communications and marketing is integrated from the very beginning, without any moral questions being asked.*

Q. : *I also think that in the United States, as a pioneer country, the State has a less important role. Studies have shown that there are about twelve thousand company foundations in the United States, three thousand in Great Britain and in Germany and only fifty in France. It is also a question of attitude ; it seems to me that from my study on foundations, there are divisions in France between the company and the rest of society.*

Q. : *I would like to correct an error which is very common in France. It is wrong to say that with respect to finance, the State plays no part in the United States because it is present in a different way. American companies are not particularly generous. They have considerable tax advantages.*

The importance of the project

Q. : *Is it possible to say that marketing threatens associations when they are so fragile ? In my opinion, if associations have a strong project, they can stand up to these contradictions, and they can keep their financiers away from power.*

Q. : *RSF is managed by Robert Ménard. He has carried this project for the past eighteen years with a real sense of rigour. It is essential, since one always has to defend it, to keep to one's line and maintain a certain amount of charisma.*

Presentation of the speaker :

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