SETL NEWSLETTER 84 REVISED 10/73

### J. SCHWARTZ NOVEMBER 5, 1972

PLAN FOR A LIBRARY OF ALGORITHMS

THE SETLB SYSTEM IS FAST ENDUGH TO ALLOW SMALL-SCALE COMPUTATIONAL EXPERIMENTS AND A MEDIUM-SCALE DEBUGGING EFFORT. PART OF OUR WORK CAN THEREFORE BE DEVOTED TO THE ACCUMULATION OF A LIBRARY OF INTERESTING DEBUGGED SETLB ALGORITHMS. THESE WILL BE USEFUL BOTH AS PROTOTYPES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFICIENT VERSIONS, AND IN TEACHING. CERTAIN ALGORITHMS, WHICH OF COURSE DESERVE PRIORITY, WILL SERVE AS PROTOTYPES FOR PARTS OF FUTURE VERSIONS OF THE SETL SYSTEM.

IT IS NOT TO BE ANTICIPATED THAT THE FIRST DEVELOPED VERSION OF AN ALGORITHM WILL OFTEN BE ITS PERMANENT "BEST FORM". THE BEST VERSION OF AN ALGORITHM IS THAT IN WHICH ITS ESSENTIAL STRUCTURE IS PORTRAYED MOST SIMPLY, AND IN WHICH POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS OF IMPORTANT GENERALISATION APPEAR MOST PLAINLY. TO ACHIEVE SUCH VERSIONS WILL REQUIRE A CONTINUING MANY-PERSON EFFORT OF RESTATEMENT, LIKE THE SOCIAL PROCESS OF "POLISHING" WHICH YIELDS REFINED VERSIONS OF MATHEMATICAL PROOFS.

THE PRESENT NEWSLETTER ATTEMPTS TO SET THE STAGE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LIBRARY OF ALGORITHMS BY GIVING, IN A FIRST VER-SION, AN INDEX OF THE ALGORITHMIC AREAS LIKELY TO BE OF IMPORTANCE TO US.

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## MANIPULATION OF GROUPS DESCRIBED BY GENERATORS AND RELATIONS

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