

CARIB/INT 79/12

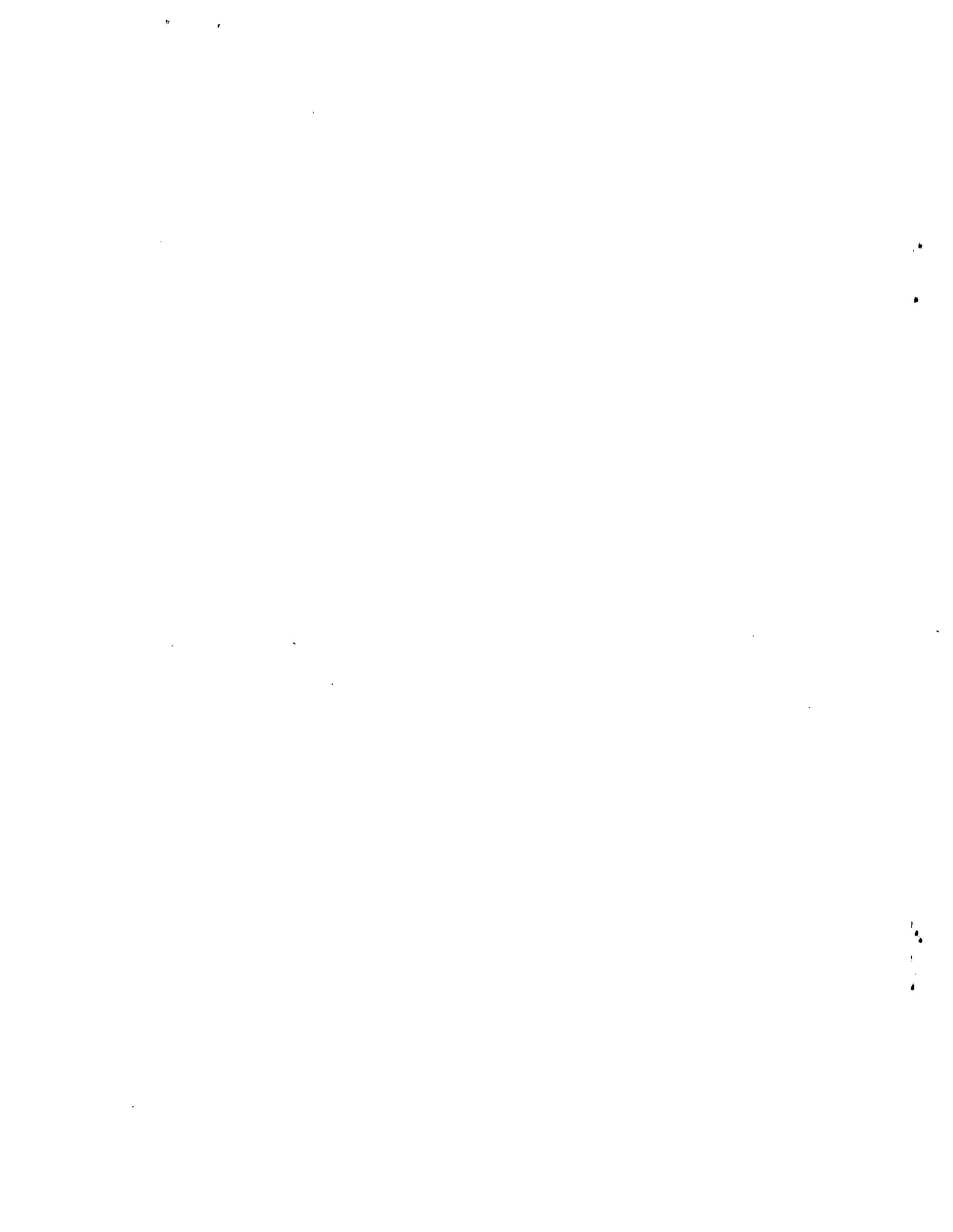
Distribution: Restricted

Date: 26 June 1979

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA  
Office for the Caribbean

ISSUES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN  
FOR THE THIRD DEVELOPMENT DECADE

Prepared by  
Jean Casimir  
Social Affairs Officer



ISSUES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN  
FOR THE THIRD DEVELOPMENT DECADE

I

The sub-region as a new socio-economic entity

The Caribbean countries have embarked, by launching the CDCC in 1975, on an exercise aiming at self-reliance and self-propelled development, that is to say, in an effort to reduce their dependency vis-à-vis the former metropolitan countries. This dependency, according to the Committee, originated in traditional patterns of foreign trade<sup>1/</sup> which generated unique production and social structures, should be remedied by developing intra-Caribbean contacts and trade, and creating a basis for expanding commercial relations with Latin American groupings sharing purposes similar to the CDCC.<sup>2/</sup>

---

<sup>1/</sup> In the overall Work Programme of the Committee, the chapter on International Trade, the one before the last, starts with the following statements:

"One of the most outstanding characteristics of the majority of the Caribbean countries is that they are highly dependent on foreign trade. Moreover, a very important part of their exports consists of raw materials whose production and trading are still mainly in the hands of transnational enterprises".

<sup>2/</sup> While the first operative paragraph of the CDCC Constituent Declaration signals out trade as an important mechanism to foster cooperation among the member countries, the second one details the core of the strategy to be followed:

"The Member Countries declare their political will and resolution to:

2. Carry out trade analyses, with emphasis on tariffs, customs procedures and other related aspects, with a view to harmonizing and simplifying the mechanisms to promote trade between the countries of the sub-region".

In the chapter on Regional Cooperation of the Work Programme, it is decided that activities of the Committee will correspond to the will expressed in the constitutive document of SELA, strengthen CARICOM and its links with CDCC non-CARICOM countries, expand intra-regional trade, and establish links with other sub-regional Latin American groupings such as the Central American Common Market and the Andean Group.

To identify the requisites of social development in the next decade and the range of viable progress towards self-reliance, the question has to be raised on how far it is possible to advance towards the re-orientation of Caribbean production and trade.<sup>3/</sup> The experience accumulated since the creation of CARIFTA, compared with the other Latin American exercises should assist in the extrapolation. The strategy proposed has serious social and political implications and it is not exempt of ambiguities and possibilities of diversion.

The CCCC strategy for development aims, from a sociological point of view, at fostering a certain development and reconversion of the most powerful sector of the Caribbean economic élites. It is based, from an economic point of view, on an attempt to re-orient external trade of individual countries in order to secure relationship of mutual support between trade and production. It follows the pattern inherited from the operation of colonial plantation systems, modified under the assumption - which deserves close scrutiny - that more diversified and more controllable external markets should stimulate more diversified and more controllable productive systems. The strategy lies heavily upon the political commitments to create such a privileged context for Caribbean commercial relations.

An attempt to diminish and eventually cancel the high degree of external dependency of Caribbean countries by intensifying sub-regional relationships, creates by the same token a new economic milieu, where activities other than trade can be organized. It refers to the production of goods and services in a space controlled by two or more states.

---

<sup>3/</sup> In the discussions which follow, the economy of a country is conceived as a peculiar set of social relations and economics as a scientific accounting of the output obtained from such social interchange. The economic fabric of a society is therefore not distinguished from any specific social fabric.

Exploitation of marine resources, development of air and maritime transportation, communications and related services, as well as tourism, and also coastal area development, particularly in its environmental aspects, require agreements between two or more governments and participation of enterprises rooted in different national markets.

The sub-regional service sector has evolved up to now in the traditional frame inherited from colonial times, and is geared in a large measure towards extra-regional relations. Its corresponding productive system is fashioned by transnational corporations. The possibility of servicing primarily the Caribbean countries represents a formidable challenge; and private initiative does not seem to possess the resources nor the experience to compete successfully and modify the established trends. In fact, few governments are in a position to initiate actions in the sub-regional service sector, and those who have done so are experiencing recurrent economic losses. As for the production of goods, there is no significant collective action to be registered in the exploitation of marine resources; joint ventures in the exploitation of mineral and other natural resources have not been encouraging, a few agricultural ones have led to better results.

Progress and attempts, during this decade, to occupy the sub-regional economic space created by the successive integration schemes have followed a pragmatic approach and evolved according to a case by case consideration. Global strategies formulated up to now show the economic advantages for the national situations which are expected to derive from sub-regional activities, and imply a conception of the economic interrelationships within each territory. The impact on national structures of economic activities which can be organized at sub-regional levels refer, besides the acceleration of these activities and the increase in the bargaining power of their actors, to consequences expected on employment situations, food supply and protection of Caribbean sites and natural resources.

The sub-regional milieu as conceptualized by the Caribbean countries seems characterized mainly by political variables. Nonetheless, note must be taken of the fact that not all Caribbean entrepreneurs and workers are equally equipped to evolve beyond the national trade activities and even governments face serious difficulties to invest at this level. If the next development decade has to witness some progress in Caribbean self-reliance, there is an urgent need to assess with anticipation sub-regional activities with their respective sub-regional investments, risks and profits. Indeed the political parameters cannot be overlooked and the good will of each state - within the respect for the sovereignty of the partners as well as the special consideration for the LDC's, as enshrined in the Constituent Documents - may set several processes into motion. Nonetheless, there is obviously a problem of collective investments and distribution of returns (profits and losses).

The behaviour of each sub-regional economic unit, regardless whether it is a state or an individual, cannot evolve without any consideration of extra-regional factors on the one hand, nor can it discard on the other, the variety of resources owned and controlled by other units. The present inequalities between countries will not necessarily diminish because intra-regional economic ventures are successful, and the role of political decision is precisely to achieve a workable arrangement between the need to assist less endowed partners and the need to satisfy those who are taking the bulk of the risks. The difficulty of building up this workable arrangement is always increased by the appeal of eventual extra-regional partners, who are in a better bargaining position since they do not share the numerous political commitments binding one Caribbean country to another.

A pragmatic approach to this situation does not allow a systematic search for self-reliance, because extra-regional economic forces remain in this case, the "invisible referee" of these negotiations. Long term political commitments rest on hard economic facts. What steps should be taken to at least foresee the impact of the "invisible referee", if not to eliminate its influence? What is the economic logic of the

negotiations that have taken place between Caribbean governments during this decade? What can be expected in the next one? What are the areas of flexibility and of viable intervention? What are the extension and characteristics of an intra-Caribbean economic pace which will eventually be integrated by the largest Caribbean enterprises, i.e. Caribbean multinational ventures? In one word, the forecasts of the economic parameters and consequently negotiations which are taking place and are expected to be intensified in the near future, are hampered by the lack of a Caribbean doctrine of economic integration. It cannot be expected that sound prognoses will guide decision-making on national activities, if economic laws and principles of that space are not codified.

## II

### Reorganization of National Context

The Caribbean governments expect, by articulating the sub-regional economic space as some kind of buffer between the individual countries and the external world, to be able to re-structure the plantation economy (or plantation-like economy) they have inherited. This re-structuration is conceived as a gradual self reinforcing process: the sub-regional instances stimulating and being in turn stimulated by the national ones. Areas of action signalled by the CDCC refer to the upgrading of the productive capacity of the member countries basically in agriculture and industry, and to socio-economic measures designed to assist and monitor this development and to ensure a more equitable distribution of its outputs. Intra-Caribbean cooperation should ease and accelerate the intended structural changes.

The re-structuring of the Caribbean societies along the line described previously is a political project and its main protagonists are not openly identified in the Constituent Document of the CDCC. Nonetheless, the success to be achieved during the next development decade will vary according to the ability of these protagonists to

implement or to resist the implementation of projected structural changes. The active role in the execution of the strategy will be played by the civil service. The merchant class will play a passive role inasmuch as it has to be induced to reorient its traditional activities. In this chapter, the circulation of goods and services will be discussed as social development issues are raised in relation to the productive sectors. Some special considerations are necessary in relation to the public service before considering these sectors.

The art of governing is in fact one of the principal issues of social development to be contended with at the national level, because its instruments and its mechanisms have been created during colonial times and they bear consistency with the fundamental dependency enacted by former metropolises. Two dimensions of structural changes are pointed out by the Committee: the need for intra-Caribbean horizontal cooperation and the need for developing and upgrading planning mechanisms.

Much hope is placed on the benefits of intra-Caribbean horizontal cooperation. The Work Programme of the CDCC has underlined the importance of the exchange of information, and actions, even though still incipient, have been taken. These would reach their full deployment in the 1980's. Nonetheless, the question remains: to what extent can governments overcome the inherited balkanization processes during the coming years? Which areas are more suitable for these purposes and what is their relevance in the overall strategy? What are the main obstacles to horizontal cooperation? Will the CDCC be able to harness within a consistent strategy the TCDC funds available in the U.N. system? To take full profit of these available resources to launch solid infrastructures for sub-regional cooperation, there is need to accelerate the flow of information within the governments themselves and then to harmonize national policies at a sub-regional level. What accounts for the present lack of communication between different government departments? Is any betterment foreseeable during the next decade? What steps should be taken to ensure such progress?.

With respect to the planning systems and taking into account the external constraints limiting the Caribbean efforts towards self-reliance, what objectives should be achieved in the next decade to make socio-economic planning a meaningful exercise? Which area of social development can help to lessen the impact of external forces, - endorsed by local groups - on medium and long term planning? For instance, which groups are prepared to accept some sacrifices required by the modification of traditional patterns of development? Which sacrifices are most likely to be acceptable? Finally, what can be done to make these sacrifices acceptable to given groups?

A further issue of concern in the implementation of the CDCC development strategy is the size and importance of public services (both civil and military). The traditional pattern of consumption of the public servants, rooted in a differential of income quite well protected by their associations and trade unions, is not unrelated with the demands for imports of foodstuffs and expensive durable and semi-durable consumption goods. What should be done to reorient this purchasing capacity in support of inward-oriented activities? Furthermore, the impact of both services on the labour market, (on the preference of students for liberal arts instead of technical careers, on the attitudes toward manual occupation and private entrepreneurship, on sectoral imbalances between wages and salaries, etc.) must be assessed. Are these problems inherent to the services themselves, and only aggravated by the context in which they operate and which make of them the only safe harbour for the supply of labour? While the public employees are in a position to display patterns of conspicuous consumption fostered by the import trade, are they not the only sector of the labour force which cannot be affected seriously by the impact of dependency relationships?

The policy of horizontal cooperation and mutual assistance to which the Committee adheres represents indeed a major innovation in Caribbean government and administration. Up to now it takes place mainly on bilateral bases. Programmes for the removal of language

barriers are being launched and should ease the processes of mutual exchange. Moreover, a Council for Science and Technology has been created and thoughts are given to a Council for Social and Economic Development. How can it be ensured that the sharing of knowledge and the production of indigenous science and technology will assist not only the scientists and bureaucrats themselves, but the population at large, by becoming social innovations. For instance, from the availability of the technology for low cost housing and food production, which will undoubtedly strengthen the position of the Housing or Agricultural Department, to the actual betterment of these situations, which will profit the population there is some distance. What modification in income distribution, land tenure or marketing systems will allow the urban and rural marginals to apply these new technologies?

Beyond the supporting services for the dissemination of science and technology, beyond the exchange of information and the problem of language barriers at sub-regional levels, there are a series of questions related to internal cleavages within each country, which should be addressed. The distances between the public service and the population, a legacy of colonial times, is most certainly one of them. How far can social dialogue be fostered during the next decade? What set of interests should be acted upon, to provoke a two-way dialogue between administration and the general public, a self-propelled movement toward some kind of unity in the ruling of the affairs of the State? Why is it that in the Caribbean public administration is largely perceived as antagonist or at least indifferent to the interest of private citizens? How can a civil servant change the attitudes of the rural and urban marginal population when its own behaviour, as far as administration is concerned, is still a testimony of old colonial times?

In the agricultural sector, assuming that the civil service is in a position to break the vicious circles which tend to restrict its actions to the self-perpetuation of inherited structures and attitudes, how is it possible to stimulate economic structural changes? The Work

Programme signalled three basic constraints: structure of land tenure, lack or limited application of technology and the actions by trans-national enterprises. In most countries of the Caribbean, basic development policies are rooted in the principles of free market economy and the stimulation of private enterprise. Within this frame of reference, and paying attention to the basic scarcity of agricultural land, how far can land tenure reform progress? Is it possible during the next decade to secure a viable size of agricultural exploitations for the rural labour force, or alternatively to hire the labour force at acceptable levels of income and of working conditions?

The Work Programme states that problems in the sector relate to variables like employment, supply of industrial outputs, levels of living of rural populations, migration from rural areas to cities, use of resources and development of tourism. Taking into account most particularly the present trends in the output from the educational services what proportion of next decade's labour force will be willing to accept employment in marginal or even non-marginal agricultural enterprises as low status workers? The identification of realistic qualitative and quantitative targets in human resources development for rural areas has some technical solutions, but what seems difficult and up to now impossible is to achieve any target within the present organization of rural economies. Youth development schemes and incentives to cooperatives have been adopted throughout the sub-region, is it expected that such programmes will significantly assist in solving the problems signalled by the Work Programme?

Furthermore, how can the Caribbean countries absorb higher levels of technology in specialized agricultural ventures if the present economic organization of the rural areas were to be prevalent in the 1980's? Or alternatively, which social processes will make structural changes politically viable and necessary, and to what extent can the surplus income expected from reorganization of agricultural economies be distributed mainly to the working population? To what extent the

marketing system is the principal bottleneck to rural development?

Transnational enterprises as diagnosed by the Work Programme have indeed negative effects on the development of Caribbean agriculture. But due to their longstanding tradition in the region, they have established workable relationships with groups of nationals and most particularly with producers' associations and importers of food products. What does a government need to be able to interfere in these arrangements during the decade to come? The same is true for on-going workable agreements set up by oligopsonistic supermarket systems in their relations with food producers. How can one expect a significant increase in the income of their own account or small producers of foodstuff, if their produce is distributed together with their imported substitutes by the same decision making units? To what extent the low productivity of independent agriculture is due primarily to a lack of technical and financial resources and secondarily to a depleted bargaining power, or inversely? Can a government count on the main consumers of imported food, the civil servants, to implement inductive planning?.

The Committee has recognized as fundamental the stimulation of active participation of the rural population in the development process. Recent colonial administration has bequeathed upon the Caribbean cleavages between urban and rural populations very difficult to overcome. The problem of local government and of its acceptable mechanisms is probably one of the most acute bottlenecks in sub-regional social development. In some countries, military occupation of the countryside set up during North American occupations has not been removed completely. In others, bilingualism prevents a two-way dialogue between the élites and the masses. Added to this, discrimination against the peasants and rural wage earners are not totally uprooted from the administrative and legal apparatus.\* The unfitness of the majority of the population to fully

---

\* For instance, rural education does not cater for the present needs of this population, for their calendar of activities, their aspirations to social mobility, the distances between the school compounds and dwellings,...

participate in the power structure and their consequent inability to negotiate a better deal are not unrelated to the processes of out-migration, particularly severe in the northern Caribbean and the LDC's.

Quite understandably, the proportion of welfare services imparted to the rural population still reflects these imbalances. How can the governments increase the proportion of their investments in the rural areas when this population is, at its best, indifferent to political and administrative processes? To what extent the rural population can be mobilized for self-help activities, or is it possible to launch self-propelled economic development in this context without granting, at national and sub-regional levels, the status of valid partners to the traditionally discriminated rural folks. In which areas can viable policies be formulated to decrease the depopulation processes and hopefully attract youngsters and much needed technicians and professionals?

The Committee views the development of the industrial sector in the frame of the modifications foreseen in trade relations. The emergence of a specific strata of manufacturers depends on the reconversion of capital invested in trading to fabricating activities, i.e. on the reconversion of traders into industrialists, or it will take place in such activities where trading is less profitable than producing. The correction of external disequilibrium intended by the Committee implies then, at the same time, certain levels of protection and a remarkable, increase in productivity to cushion against the impact of foreign producers.

Since the level of productivity has to be upgraded, beyond the means for vocational training, progress has to be achieved in manpower planning, as well as workers' education in order to protect the level of employment which is presently unsatisfactory. To which level can the absorption of the labour force in the secondary sector be expanded during the next decade? And if the process of industrialization will be subject to modifications in trade patterns, which are known for their high level of returns, to what extent can one expect attractive rates of profits in the industrial sector together with a betterment in the

level of income of the industrial workers and an increase in the total number of such workers? Is industrialization by invitation an alternative to this issue? If it is not, how can its negative effects be controlled?

To the problem of harmonizing, at regional levels, the interests of different groups of local merchants and of negotiating the complementarity of the national industrial capacities is then added the issue of strengthening in each country the bargaining power of the local manufacturers. But local manufacturers and merchants are seldom two distinguishable groups, therefore to what extent protectionism is not incompatible with high productivity? Much stress is put on the productivity of the labour force and particularly, in obtaining from the state the financing for upgrading it. How is it possible to harmonize operations in protected markets with a steady increase in the absorption of more qualified and presumably more expensive labour force? Considering both contexts for industrial and agricultural development, the need for some degree of protectionism as well as the frame so created for the introduction of structural changes in both sectors, how can it be ascertained that the Caribbean societies will reap on the next decade, the fruits of costly investments made in human resources development, instead of simply preparing the surplus of labour force to meet the higher requirements of metropolitan migration offices? Would it not be more profitable to leave the private sector to bear with the onus of upgrading the qualification of the labour force, as it absorbs it?

One obvious structural change which has taken place during the present decade is the expansion in the number of publicly owned enterprises and in the entrepreneurial capacity of the state. The Committee has further requested the preparation of feasibility studies on the setting up of Caribbean multinational enterprises to exploit specific natural resources. How will this development affect social stratification in the countries of the sub-region? Will the traditional traders in the less developed countries, where the state is relatively devoid of entrepreneurial capacity, be able or willing to adapt to this situation, and if not, how will the gap with the MDC's be lessened?

III

Social Sectors and Self-Propelled Development

The setting up of structural relations from which some avenues towards self-propelled development have to be devised is a matter of negotiations between social groups located in different even though inter-connecting spaces. The previous chapters have tried to address themselves to this issue. It would appear that the hold of the import-export trade - and therefore of the traders - on the economic structure does not give too much hope for self-propelled development if the automatic play of market mechanisms is not subject to some kind of political interferences.

Social negotiations consist of long term hidden processes, ... relatively difficult to monitor and modify. But they take, in the short term, the form of concrete and overt decisions by individuals and/or identifiable decision-making units, which can be registered. Social structural changes have to be introduced through the mediation of this behavioural dimension which embodies the general field of action for sectoral social planning.

The basic dependency inherited from colonial administrations constitutes the frame within and from which social behaviour is evolving and therefore the major obstacle in organizing local resources for a self-sustaining development exercise. The first resources of and prime factor for societal maintenance and progress is obviously the population itself. Demographic censuses in the Caribbean are so recent that one can safely state that the governments do not know, with acceptable approximation, what is available for development planning. Decolonization efforts have just started and their slow pace is linked with this absence of information.

The Committee is aware of this deficiency and has made special mention of the need to grasp the actual levels and trends of demographic variables. While in some Caribbean countries high rates of natality are associated with equally high rates of mortality, in nearly all of them, the urban areas are receiving the best of the human resources originating in the countryside, while former metropolitan countries, individually or as a group, are playing the same role with respect to the sub-region as a whole, by attracting the best from the country. Moreover, some Caribbean countries face a very high population density and others are relatively empty, but endowed with substantial and unexploited resources. The trends of intra-Caribbean migration are orientated towards the member countries with a more complex and advanced economic apparatus, even though these MDC's have to reckon with their own problems of unemployment and income distribution.

One would wish but cannot actually foresee a solution to the demographic issues during the decade to come; but it would appear that the case is made for a sub-regional population policy. Is it possible, during the third development decade, for every Caribbean national to have unequivocal proof of citizenship? How many Caribbean nationals actually live in the Caribbean? How many of them live in Caribbean countries other than their native ones? How many are making a living outside the Caribbean? How many of them have dual nationality? Is it understandable that a colonial government could dispense from knowing how many of its subjects live in the metropolitan country, while it would insist on precise statistics related to the export-import of material goods. An independent government striving for self-propelled development has to reverse such a state of affairs and the question is how can the CDCC member countries at least monitor demographic growth and mobilize and orient their relative surplus population towards Caribbean territories. What steps in that direction should be taken during the next decade?

The main characteristic of the Caribbean during the 20th century is the inability to provide full and productive employment to the labour force. The under-utilization of the labour force inherited from colonial times is consistent with the neglect - to say the least - of the population and it is known that labour surpluses have been systematically created through a long series of discriminatory measures. How is it possible to reverse these trends during the next development decade? What discriminatory measures should be eliminated with urgency? Colonial governments have shown nearly an exclusive concern for unlimited supplies of labour, in fact since slavery plantations. The whole structure of the plantation system was based on this policy, while the demands for manpower and the conditions under which Caribbean people had to work were subject to lenient regulations. Depopulation, i.e. out-migration processes, have been triggered under these circumstances, giving way to large movements of re-settlement within and outside the Caribbean, during the renaissance of the plantation system fostered since the turn of the century.

The labour market for a non-qualified labour force has lost long ago its national boundaries and tends to operate within a sub-regional and extra-regional frame. Conditions of transportation to the calling points, legal problems involved in crossing international boundaries, levels of salaries and of living in general, as well as conditions of work of the migrants and most particularly, of the female ones, protection and education of their off-spring, together with their possibility of repatriation, constitute a very serious area of concern.

The internationalization of the Caribbean manpower should deserve some consideration during the 1980's. With the regionalization of trade and the progress in economic integration/cooperation, what are the appropriate steps towards some degree of compatibilization of regional working conditions? What can be done to offer to migrants a decent standard of living and to prevent them from deterring the bargaining power of national workers?

Policies implemented during colonial times, obstructing access of the population to available land resources, depressing rural salaries, preventing collective bargaining of rural wage earners, instituting discriminating taxes and even establishing forced labour for maintenance of roads and other services, have gradually cornered independent farming and limited severely its competitiveness. Relations unknown to classical economic theories have emerged between wage earning activities and various own account ones, resulting in very complex and varied forms of bargaining prices for labour time and provision grounds. With the development of international trade to embrace the import of goods traditionally produced by indigenous agricultural ventures, together with the modernization of internal trade, the income distribution patterns have evolved towards more pronounced cleavages. On the other hand, farming as a principal occupation has lost all attractiveness for the labour force. Occupational multiplicity has become the normal pattern of employment for the rural (and large sectors of the urban) populations. On the other hand, new mechanisms of association have emerged relating modern manufacture and agro-industries to sub-marginal and even archaic forms of production and by-passing the legal frame which regulates labour relations. Within this context, what are the main instruments of income distribution available to governments? What will be the main characteristics of a realistic policy of income distribution for the next decade?

The Committee has endorsed the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Development and added to its overall Work Programme projects related to this special strata of the Caribbean population. Neglect for women is not unrelated to the treatment given to the individual, the family and the community life during colonial times. The burden of services the population has been able to secure through its own initiative rests nearly exclusively on women's shoulders: provision of water services, nutrition, child care and education, implementation of hygiene principles, attention to the sick and the old, ... mostly all services are rendered by women. This hardship should have increased considerably with the acceleration of long range emigration and the entry of larger numbers of females into the labour market under most unfavourable conditions.

To what extent can the legal apparatus and officially sponsored institutions cater for the specific structure and needs of the Caribbean families and discard imported models and normative prescriptions? How far is it possible to progress in the eradication of a colonial outlook to the family and its main component? What progress should be made in institutionalizing local current practices such as common law marriage? In other words, should the most current - and by far - Caribbean type of mother still beg for recognition and protection during the next decade? Should Caribbean intellectual creativeness be exercised to devise adequate forms of official sanctions to common law practices?

There are two angles in the entry of women into the labour market. The first one is the need for women, most particularly felt among the higher strata, to fully develop their capacity, and which has come to the social awareness only recently. The second one, due to the empoverishment of the working class, dates from the earliest times of Caribbean history. Last developments in this respect are linked to the phenomenon of social pathology of great concern. Pressures on Caribbean women, together with school age children, to enter into the labour market increasing the already uncontrollable labour force surplus have resulted in a deterioration in the general bargaining of the working class and the results obtained thereof. What progress is expected for the highest strata of women during the next decade? How can it be ensured that the process of integration of women into development will not profit only the urban middle classes? How can it be ensured that those who want and have a right to work will find appropriate occupations? What steps should be taken to avoid that the expansion of the labour market so originated will not disrupt traditional institutions for child up-bringing?

Evidently since the commercial activities are the most lucrative ones and since therefore the sea ports remain unquestionably the most important - if not the only - urban centres, what progress can be made towards decentralization? The government's machinery is still the largest sole employer and the public servants are still in control of the

bulk of the purchasing power in any given country. Can it be foreseen and will it be desirable for the next decade to have some changes in the pattern of urban development based on the reallocation of the different branches of the public service? What other alternatives are there to reverse the drift towards the sea ports?

The different issues raised up to now explain why the problems of monitoring social and economic changes in the Caribbean are quite difficult to solve. The CDCC has acknowledged such difficulty and has called for some progress in socio-economic reporting and planning. Some initiatives have been taken by the Ministries of Planning and Development, while the question of upgrading social and economic research is still a matter of discussion. What consideration should be favoured when one focuses the whole matter of introducing structural changes in a gradual and controllable manner? How can methodologies and techniques produced in the Caribbean be utilized for upgrading socio-economic reporting and planning? What type of relations should be established between researchers and planners? Should the present institutions producing social and economic doctrines and methods be enlarged as a first priority, or should the relations between existing institutions be intensified before planning new expansions?

Congruent with total extroversion fostered by colonial development, social welfare services have evolved in specific geographical areas or in very restricted sectors, but always in a direction consistent with the deepening of outward-oriented activity. The CDCC has noted the serious imbalances between the member states and within the countries themselves. In some contexts, to have access to resources not monopolized by planters and other colonial authorities, such as the Crown itself, the population had to adopt a pattern of scattered and isolated settlements in small valleys, high lands or tropical forests of the interior. In these conditions, the supply of welfare services has to overcome difficulties originating in the very pattern of settlement as well as those deriving from the type of economic organization based on limited self-sufficient

agricultural exploitations. In other milieux, and most particularly in the plantation islands, the impact of legal measures oriented towards the creation of labour surpluses, has left most of the inhabitants totally dependent on such services the colonial authorities deemed necessary to provide, all avenues towards private initiatives being virtually blocked.

In either case, any service referring to the welfare of the population and capable of organizing local resources to meet local needs either was not favoured by any official sponsorship or was non-existent. Housing, water supply, drainage facilities, solid waste disposal, etc., were deficient. Social security, public health services, most particularly protection of family life and child care, nutrition and educational facilities, - everything had to be handed over by the colonial authorities, which had themselves taken the necessary steps to impoverish the population.

In the present circumstances, Caribbean governments are facing the obligation of delivering those services, but still with very little cooperation from the public. Voluntary services and self-help schemes do exist but their results are not very encouraging. Moreover, pressure is brought wherever some betterment is introduced in the welfare services and most particularly in those related to the physical environment. Governments cannot keep abreast with the demand for those services nor with the maintenance of already existing ones. Occasionally, international assistance has created some embarrassment precisely because of the difficulty to take over the services launched by external donors. There is therefore a serious problem of sectoral social planning which is to be added to the consideration of a decentralization process referred to earlier.

If the problem of upgrading the delivery of welfare services is correlated to the need for decentralizing governmental administrative machineries, a vicious circle of the most pernicious kind becomes apparent. The handing over of internal government to the local population has been processed in all former colonial (or occupied)

territories by cancelling the discriminatory measures which prevented natives from acceding to high administrative posts or by setting up new administrative machineries. This strategy has had as a side effect the need to disseminate public instruction and to raise the levels of schooling in a direction which will be assessed at a later stage. But it has basically created an urban middle class intimately linked with public and military services, and therefore rooted in the very process of introducing a disequilibrium between the primate city and its hinterland. Therefore the delivery of welfare services appears - in the country where it achieved remarkable success as well as in those where its deficiencies are noteworthy - as a programme of employment for the urban middle class. Its underlying function to absorb white collars and to provide occupations for the recently enlarged intellectual elite is, to say the least, as important as its overt role of satisfying welfare demands. What processes should be put into motion in order to break this vicious circle, and to make of the delivery of services the prime concern of the civil and military bureaucracies?

The CDCC has directed its attention with concern to two social sectors, namely Public Health, and Education and Culture. In the first instance, note is taken of the substantial differences and even extreme situation in the sub-region, and consequently, the possibility of international cooperation. The next decade could witness a Caribbean-wide mobilization to alleviate health conditions in the less developed countries, to monitor and plan for better delivery of the service. What are the obstacles toward self-reliance in this respect?

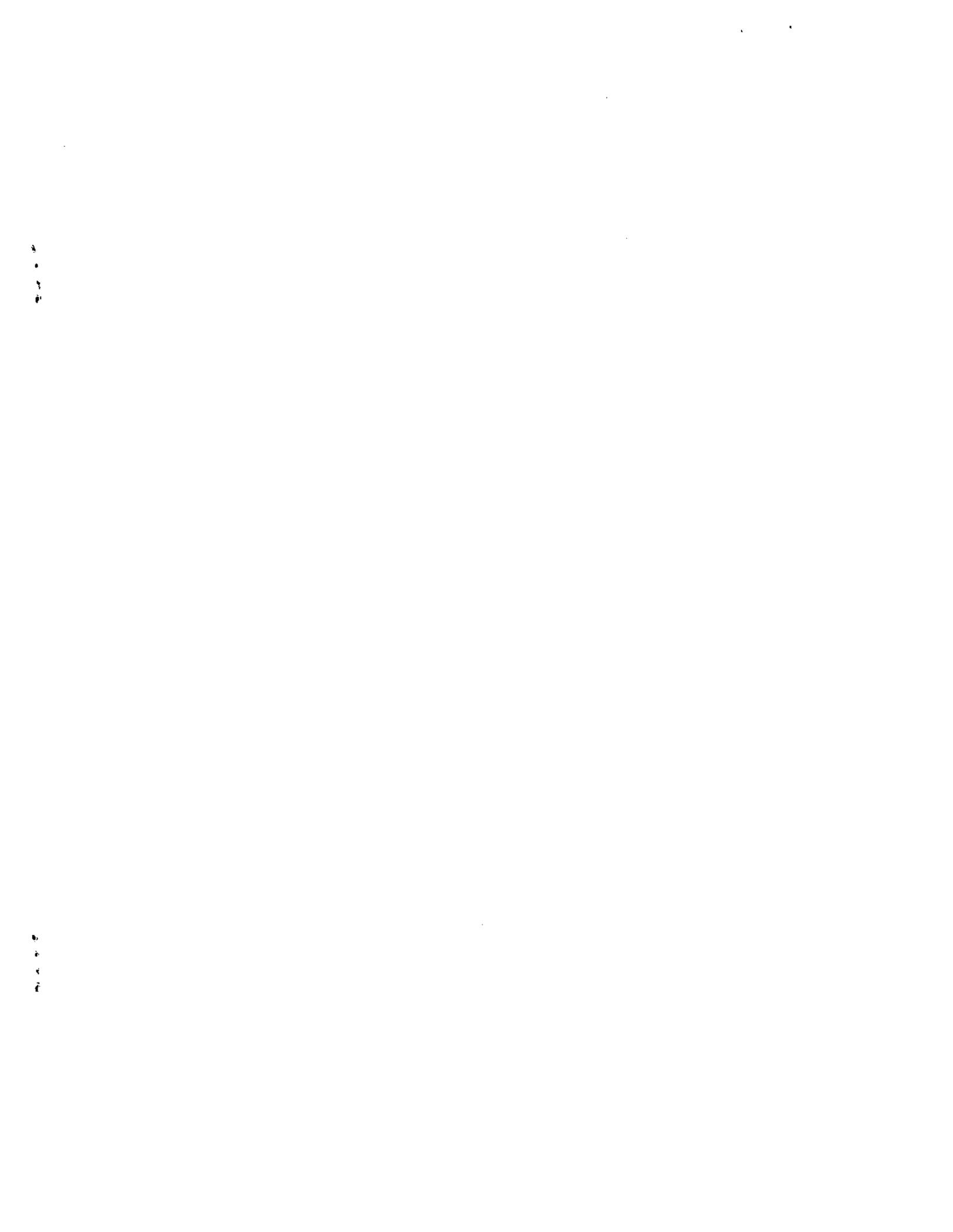
Within the context of total extroversion of the Caribbean societies which prevailed during colonial times, a cleavage has emerged between the few health services the Caribbean population was able to provide for itself and the delivery of the services by the colonial authorities. Training of medical doctors and other related professionals have been carried out within a pattern consistent with the total dependency of these professionals vis-à-vis the metropolitan countries. The geographical distribution of the health services, together with the emigration outside

the Caribbean of medical doctors and other related professionals, seem to indicate that while the countryside is financing health standards of the capital city, the country as a whole is subventioning health standards of the former metropolitan countries. Is it possible to reverse this process during the decade to come? Will intra-Caribbean technical cooperation not only assist in the betterment of conditions in less developed countries, but also in setting into motion new patterns in the delivery of the service. Where should reform be introduced? How can the sub-region take full profit of investments made in a medical school and similar institutions, and how can the delivery of health services be eased through the participation of the population itself to these efforts?

The issue is the same with respect to the general problem of public education whose delivery rests exclusively on actions by private and state owned institutions - with virtually no support from family and community life - and whose dissemination is concomittant with large trends of migration outside the Caribbean. Total dependency of the educational system is being tackled thanks to reforms envisaged in most Caribbean countries. The Committee has stressed the need for quantitative and qualitative improvements. Together with targets to be achieved during the 1980's there is some concern for the production of teaching aids relevant to the Caribbean circumstances. In view of the overall importance of the educational system, is it possible to plan for the achievement of its self-sufficiency during the next ten years?

Besides the set of problems referred to in the previous paragraph, the Committee has expressed concern for the preservation, strengthening and dissemination of Caribbean cultures. The divorce between family and community life on the one hand, and public and professional life on the other, is the case in point. Formal education, since its very inception, is metropolitan oriented. Much

Much more is taught and known of the outer Caribbean than of the inner Caribbean. What links the Caribbean together is dealt with as a vague sentiment of closeness and similarity and concern for local production of norms, values, knowledge and arts are commonly left to spontaneous and short lived initiatives. If a self-propelled effort toward collective development of the sub-region is being launched, what are the main courses of action for mutual knowledge and appreciation? What role should be assigned to the mass media in appraising local resources and local creativeness? Will the media by themselves modify their traditional approach to this industry?



1  
2  
3  
4

5  
6  
7  
8