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ACCESS FOR EXPORTS, THE NEW PROTECTIONISM AND ALL GATT: Notes Toward Negotiable Proposals*

Reginald Herbold Green

*On a cloth untrue
With a twisted cue
And elliptical billiard balls*

—Gilbert and Sullivan

I

Exports, Development and The New Protectionism

THE attainment of domestically integrated economies with reasonable levels of productive forces per capita, free from massive dependence on foreign loans or grants will, for most peripheral economies, require increased exports of processed and manufactured goods to OECD economies. That requirement in its most general form flows from objective realities in respect to size, economies of specialization and scale, and import requirements of any non-autarchic development strategy. Recent experience suggests it is relevant to Cuba, the Korean Peoples Democratic Republic, Vietnam, China, Tanzania, Algeria, India, Rumania (and is perceived as a requirement by their leadership) as well as by Jamaica, South Korea, Singapore, Brazil, Kenya, Tunisia, Venezuela, Turkey, even if in the latter group of cases the roles perceived for such exports are both different from and wider than those perceived in the former.

In the 1970's—and especially since 1974—the 1945/70 tide toward free trade promoted by the OECD economies and articulated through GATT appears to have crested and begun to ebb. "Voluntary export quotas", imposition of "anti-dumping" duties, "negotiated" approaches to "orderly marketing" like the 1978 version of the long term multifibre International Textile

*This paper was read at the seminar entitled "Legal Aspects of the New International Economic Order" sponsored by the Centre for Research on NIEO and the Christian Michelsen Institute, and held at St. John's College Oxford, in March 1979.

Arrangements, have proliferated. Their underlying causes are unemployment and payments deficits in general and those related to weakening industries in particular. Their main targets have been the peripheral economies and particularly those exporting textiles and garments, albeit there have been quasi negotiated arrangements and increasingly serious threats against Japan (a major structural destabilizer of the GATT system) and an ominous—if still largely unimplemented—general assault on the NIC's "Newly Industrialised Countries" usually defined as Brazil, Mexico, (South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, India sometimes plus Greece, Turkey, Portugal, Yugoslavia and Rumania) as "unfair competitors" and "job importers".

While in principle the New Protectionism could have been carried out via GATT's anti-dumping (VI), balance of payments defense (XII), or adjustment/market disruption (XIX) Articles, in fact it has largely been enforced or "negotiated" in forums parallel to GATT—apparently on the grounds that this lessened the danger to the basic ideology and articulation of free trade embodied in GATT. Equally, many of the restrictions clearly violate GATT and could have been the occasion for activating its investigation, enforcement, or compensation procedures¹ but that too has not happened—apparently because the victims believed that those victimizing them in fact controlled GATT so that at best they would get no relief and at worst a general modification of GATT rules against them. Indeed the set of limitations on trade which are quantitatively largest, regionally most damaging to the periphery and qualitatively the most obscene in terms of GATT's philosophy—the Multifibre Textile Arrangements (MFA)—have been registered as protocols to GATT.²

II

Toward A New Role for GATT

This paper is based on eight contentions:

- the First World employment and balance of payments problems are real, likely to continue and/or recur and inevitably give rise to pressures for restrictive trade policies;

1. For ldc's many of these procedures do not work because when concessions are made—not negotiated—as with GSP no claim for compensation is deemed to arise if they are revoked.

2. For more details see V. Cable, "Britain, the 'New Protectionism' and Trade with the Newly Industrializing Countries", *International Affairs*, January 1979 and W. D. Soysa, "Protectionism and Its Implications For Industrialization In Developing Countries With Special Reference to Sri Lanka's Strategy", Marga Institute, Colombo, 1979 (mimeo).

- therefore the New Protectionism is a fact of life—a bad thing but equally a thing—and one which is likely to remain a force through the 1980s;
- because industrial market economies with current account surpluses—especially Japan and Federal Germany—have the power to retaliate, the full weight of the restrictionism is likely to fall on peripheral economies and among them especially on those states which are relatively small First World markets (e.g. not Brazil) but are significant manufactured goods exporters in "critical" lines (e.g. not Upper Volta);
- to seek to handle the process of reacting to, negotiating on, containing, halting or rolling back the tide of protectionism outside GATT while preserving the illusion of a triumphal march to free trade within GATT is a dangerous piece of self deception;
- it is especially dangerous to the peripheral economies who are more likely to lose heavily in *ad hoc* negotiations pitting each one separately against EEC or the USA or Japan than collectively and on broad front criteria formulation and enforcement procedures within GATT;
- therefore, orderly marketing—adjustment time—payments defense issues should be brought back within GATT and faced squarely in that forum;
- at the same time the obligations of the NICs (workably defined) *vis a vis* the industrial market economies, each other and the weaker peripheral economies may need reconsideration and reformulation;
- these changes would require amendments and or additions to GATT's articles.

The balance of the paper concentrates on identifying the nature of problems and the potentially effective GATT amendment remedies as seen from the periphery looking into:

- First World restrictionism subject to no effective international forum adjudication, time limit setting nor compensation payments;
- "structural surplus" economies;
- NIC protectionism *vis a vis* OECD economies, each other, weaker peripheral economies.

It does not seek to enter into actual legal drafting but to arrive at statements of potentially useful provisions which could serve as a first draft toward negotiating drafting instructions.

III

Four Assumptions Not Made

It is advisable to specify at this point four possible basic assumptions in respect of trade, trade negotiations and international institutions (in particular GATT) which do *not* underlie or inform this paper:

- a general theoretical or operational commitment to free trade;
- a belief either in the power of pure reason and equity to overcome particular interests or in the unlimited negotiating power of the periphery *vis a vis* the centre;
- an acceptance of the contention that legal or institutional form can be the main contributor to solving problems or ensuring results;
- a belief that the proposed changes are the sum total of alterations needed in respect to GATT.

Free trade in practice has historically been the right of the economically strong to enter without let or hindrance into the economic domain of the weak (whether states or enterprises or classes). GATT does represent an affirmation of that philosophy as opposed to the coordinated, international management of trade philosophy embodied in the still born International Trade Organization (Havana Charter) for which GATT was (is for that matter) theoretically the interim or continuation committee.

What is assumed is that under most circumstances some trade is better than none whether in a market or a planned economy. Further, for the stronger (core) economies to raise access barriers to the exports of weaker (peripheral) economies is unjust, inimical to peripheral interests and theoretically unsound on most paradigms (including the neo-classical, which by and large justifies unilateral free trade at least by high productivity, flexible, industrial economies).

Further, the sum total of the changes proposed (including the longer term ones in Section VIII) would swing GATT toward a managed, not a free trade body. That, however, is a long term issue because, until periphery power in ability to operate the procedures of and protection by the forms and practices of GATT is greater than at present, a GATT managed world trade would be a core OECD state managed one and peripheral concern for greater international forum co-decisions relates solely to forums in which co-decision (not centre taken or manipulated decision) is a reality.

The changes sought—even in Sections IV and V and much more in VIII—can be achieved only if at least a number of core

OECD states can be convinced they are *in their interests*. *Pure reason* and *solidarity* may help by providing an acceptable rationalization or rationale for self-interest—but they will not override it. Similarly a coherent periphery position backed by considerable solidarity is needed to put enough power behind the proposals (or variants thereof) to get them on the agenda but the periphery does not have the power—in GATT at any rate—to override a united OECD block which believes it is defending critical interests.

Why would (might) some OECD states support change? The New Protectionism raises spectres of the Old Predatory Protectionism of the 1930's—OECD states are deeply afraid that it will spill over into escalating restrictions crippling major trade flows and setting off a full scale depression. The case can be made that in these circumstances getting restrictions into the hard light of GATT and into a framework of rules increasing their transparency is a way to limit them. Further it can be argued that restrictionism is cancerous—the periphery today, the fringe OECD states tomorrow, Japan the day after... unless a formal structure to limit and police it is created. These cases are by no means outside the range of even core OECD decision taker and analyst discourse and the fringe OECD countries (e.g. Turkey, Greece, Portugal, Spain) are almost as alarmed as the NICs.

Legal forms and *institutional procedures* do not solve problems. This is particularly true when concrete, detailed action is the immediate aim. However, absence or inappropriateness of forms and procedures can make problems insoluble i.e. they can be a part of the problem.

GATT at present lacks usable rules and procedures and the restrictive abortion of relatively free trade is a backroom practitioners art, subject to no effective or public rules or procedures. Because GATT is a forum for achieving and procedurally overseeing freer access for more trade, it is a hopeful setting for rules and procedures (and their use) as favourable to periphery exports to the centre as international power and domestic problem constellations permit. That is the case for recreating usable rules to regulate the New Protectionism and for locating them in GATT—to claim more would be unrealistic and unwise.

IV

Adjustment, Restrictions, Order and Access

Totally free access to industrial economy markets for periphery manufactured exports is not a short term practicability. Indeed it is not even the immediate critical problem. What is crucial now

is to limit, and if at all possible halt, the erosion of access already formally provided for under GATT.³

What one is up against, on the periphery side, is best shown by a paraphrase of a sometime negotiator for an OECD state:

The art of negotiating trade concessions is to give the fullest and most sweeping freedom to those states for those goods which they cannot conceivably export to you over the relevant time period and to put in broad safeguard clauses to use if your projection was wrong.

Even in the relatively buoyant 1960s with free trade still advancing, and Third World manufactured export capacity very limited, special regulations were imposed when major Third World exporter breakthroughs occurred in respect to industrial economy sectors facing serious technological and demand pattern transitional problems. In the harsher climate of the late 1970s (meteorologists may disagree but trade analysts and politicians are increasingly convinced that at least in respect to trade flows we are entering a new ice age!), and with much greater periphery capacity to use formally available access, these restrictions have escalated, proliferated, broadened, reproducing like cancer cells.

These trends may be radically strengthened so far as EEC is concerned when (if) Greece, Spain and Portugal expand The Nine to The Twelve. Measures against other NICs and the industrial exporters of the "extreme periphery" are likely to be draconic theoretically to accommodate the new members' sales to the old Nine but in practice even more to protect the weaker enterprises of the Nine. The present picture of a spreading "fresco" of protectionism (only trivially offset by the more publicized "fresco" of cooperation and trade agreements with ACP, Mediterranean, etc.) may change to one of Little Europe hauling up the drawbridge and dropping the porticullis against Third World processed and manufactured exports.

The question is not whether it is necessary for peripheral economies to hang together to do battle to hold the access rights they now have—failure to do so means having their prospective and even present exports hung separately by protectionist lynch mobs. The question is whether restrictionism should be taken out of the hidden ante-rooms and bilateral pressure tanks and put squarely into GATT. For three reasons there seems a strong case for such a shift:

3. See papers cited in note 2 and R. H. Green, "EEC Enlargement and EEC/South Trade: Prospects and Portents" in *The Renegotiation of the Lome Convention: A Collection of Papers*, Catholic Institute of International Relations, London, 1978.

- single sector or product arrangements—e.g. MFA—are by their nature derogations from GATT rights. When negotiated in isolation the real break is to have the agreement at all—thereafter its tightening is relatively easy and raises no new principles. Even relatively acceptable initial terms, in this context, are eroded and "orderly marketing" becomes a rush to "disorderly restrictionism".⁴ In GATT with a set of rules and limits on restrictions (and sanctions to enforce the rules and hold the limits in place), the pattern could be changed—extending or tightening restrictions would be as much an issue of principle and a critical break point as their initial imposition;
- case by case negotiation of "orderly marketing" is in fact a state substitute for (or support of) corporate cartels. The history of cartels makes only too clear that they injure the weak (including industrial economy labour) and freeze the status quo—hardly periphery goals. Further, by operating at the sectoral level they push the macro considerations (the one most favourable to balanced trade expansion) out of the picture;⁵
- any capitalist industrial economy responds to a range of enterprises, interest groups, sub-classes. Some are "free traders", some "protectionists", some have more complex positions.⁶ To negotiate in GATT puts all the interest groups in play—restrictions benefitting one can be perceived to threaten others. Not so when separate, less public talks are held with only the protectionist lobby addressing the state's negotiators.

The reasons GATT has not been used to date are two fold:

- a despairing hope that by keeping restrictionism out of GATT it would remain "exceptional" and "incidental"—a hope that the proliferation of "exceptions" should by now have dimmed if not destroyed;

4. The grim history of restrictions in textiles from orderly marketing and assured access to growing (if limited) volumes to the present reality of net cutbacks and no assurance that even the exception riddled "agreed" amounts will be allowed is a lesson. Cf. V. Cable, *Developments in International Trade Policy and Their Implications for Developing Countries*, Commonwealth Economic Papers, London, 1978.

5. For a neo-classical version of this argument see J. Tumlrir "Salvation Through Cartels? On the Revival of a Myth", *The World Economy*, Vol. 1-4, October 1978.

6. For a more detailed (and more squarely in the liberal analytical tradition) presentation of this case see J. Tumlrir *National Interest and International Order*, Trade Policy Research Centre, London, 1978 and for a more eclectic one G. K. Helleiner, "The Political Economy of Protectionism", *Oxford Economic Papers*, Vol. 1, 1977.

the exceedingly cumbersome and broad brush nature of GATT Articles VI (anti-dumping), XII (balance of payments) and XIX (disruption). To act under any of them requires a vast amount of time consuming data collection and analysis on the one hand and on the other wipes out almost all effective restraints or limits once the Article is invoked.

Consideration here will centre on reconstruction of Article XIX because to date the problems confronting periphery economy access do relate primarily to "disruption" of specific product market claims (or realities). A possible set of changes include:

- clearer criteria for establishing disruption, or a clear and present probability of disruption, justifying recourse to negotiated access management;
- provision for the limitations to relate only to countries whose rapid increases in imports were critical to the disruption and not to others—preferably applying even if this meant restrictions within a free trade area or economic union were a precondition for any restrictions against outsiders;
- strict time limits on, and non-renewability of, limits set under the new Article XIX and with pre-determined (and not easily reopenable) phasing out;
- initial quotas no lower than in the twelve months preceding formal invocation of Article XIX and annual growth in access of at least 5% a year in quantitative terms;
- a requirement on the imposing state to *negotiate* not simply quotas but also a domestic adjustment/transformation programme which would make them unnecessary by the end of the period, i.e. domestic adjustment policy to become an internationally negotiated issue just as much as quotas when ever restrictions were imposed;
- negotiated compensation—in alternative market access or cash—to all states for both actual and reasonably projected (in the absence of quotas) export losses;
- a ban on "voluntary" quota agreements outside GATT i.e. making these grounds for GATT action and especially removing provision to register them under GATT;
- provision of an independent arbitral capacity (or a fact finding unit reporting to governing body) to pass on breakdowns in negotiation and/or asserted violations (including failure to carry out adjustment programme);
- any agreement to take a form parallel to an IMF "letter of intent" with the GATT secretariat responsible for monitoring and reporting on performance;

- failure to reach a negotiated agreement within three months of invocation to give either (any) party the right to invoke arbitration but no right to impose restrictions unless/until a negotiated or arbitrated settlement was reached.

To achieve all of these provisions in one go is probably impossible. However, a substantial advance on most of them is by no means inconceivable given the growing alarm at the quiet advance of the "New Protectionism" and the growing fears it is about to break loose in a more virulent form.

Equally, to achieve the proposed changes would not improve present formal access rights. It could protect them against erosion and safeguard to some extent their utilization in practice as capacity for exporting become available. Those would not be negligible gains. They should allow certainty for present and moderately growing levels of exports and reduce uncertainty in respect to rapid or new product growth. Since uncertainty is the most effective single non-tariff barrier the cumulative gains should be larger than mere comparison of quota levels would suggest.

V

Penalizing Structural Surpluses—Can GATT Do Anything?

Structural surpluses—i.e. visible and invisible exports radically above imports and not structurally tied to long term, predictable investment in the deficit states—are inherently destabilizing. In the case of the surplus OPEC countries, the OECD states have on the one hand raised prices so exporting their deficits (raising each others' inflation and the periphery's deficit) and on the other scooped the surpluses into their own financial institutions for rechannelling—thus no massive, immediate threat to trade exists. Federal Germany does not in fact have a huge overall current surplus (it has a large invisible account deficit) nor a steadily escalating one and does have large, predictable capital outflows—thus it is a manageable problem.

The key destabilizing, trade threatening element is the Japanese surplus, its evolution and its structural relation to Japanese growth. Japan's surplus is large and on a rapidly rising trend. It is underpinned by a set of policies, structures, institutions (e.g. the domestic commercial sector) and tastes which in practice make access to its markets very difficult and to date are being liberalized only glacially and—some would say—trivially. Japanese growth—even more than German—is tied to exports so that domestic imperatives to grow or reduce unemployment create problems abroad via rising Japanese surpluses not problems at home via deficits (as in the UK or USA).

On the face of it rules against "persistent creditor" or "structural surplus" economies do not work. The IMF's "scarce currency" clause is a dead letter, debtors not creditors are leaned upon. Nor is this a purely theological (saving good/borrowing bad) response—much as one may suspect the overall IMF *weltanschauung* of including that element. The currencies the IMF must obtain to support programmes *vis a vis* debtors are precisely the currencies of structural surplus states—leaning on them let alone invoking the "scarce currency" clause would create grave practical problems.

Can GATT do better? Perhaps it can—to require greater access from, or to revoke access rights given to, a single "structural surplus" economy under clearly specified GATT provisions would not seem to create massive side effect problems for GATT as "scarce currency" clause invocation would for IMF.

A possible approach would:

- declare that "structural surplus" states were under an obligation to give additional access or be subjected to access removal to eliminate the structural surplus;
- define "structural surplus" as visible plus invisible exports in excess of visible and invisible imports by at least \$20 million a year and at least 10% of imports on a three year moving average;
- possibly include a proviso that non-renewable resource exports (and some balancing import amount) should be excluded from calculations to avoid penalizing—e.g.—Kuwait for building up external assets against the day its non-renewable oil pool is gone or e.g.—Nauru from doing the same in respect of phosphates;
- provide a mechanism for discussions among the "structural surplus" state and a representative group of states in deficit with it (chosen by those they represent e.g. 3 by OECD, 3 by 77—perhaps on a regional basis) and powers to impose a solution if one cannot be negotiated;
- build in a bias toward trade creating (more access to surplus state markets) measures but recognize that until these take effect either temporary tariff surcharges (shifting trade elsewhere) or compulsory low interest loans by surplus state to debtor state repayable only when specified changes in the lenders' imports are achieved (to finance the deficit) may be essential bridging measures.

These are not measures that could normally be sold to the general public. However, the critical nature of the Japanese problem and Japan's malign neglect of its causes or ways to moderate

them) has infuriated many OECD states and the USA has become (or is believed to have become) a semi-permanent structural deficit economy. Both factors increase the chance that "structural surplus" economy proposals for addition to the GATT articles might get a serious hearing among at least some industrial market economy officials and decision takers.

VI

Toward Selective Reciprocity?

The case for reconsidering the binary division in GATT with " ldc's" *de jure* and *de facto* free from any requirements as to guaranteeing tariff rates or access provisions—at least so far as it relates to the NIC/Code Balance of duty reductions and access improvements—is not primarily related to equity, still less to the First World "differentiation" theories which when applied to this type of issue become a new variant of "divide and rule" or limiting concessions to those unable to use them.⁷

Two rather different factors are relevant:

- For economies with substantial manufactured goods exports to core economies to maintain very high tariffs and/or other restrictive barriers against the *same* products is needlessly provocative⁸ (and also gives rise to deep suspicions of dumping);
- In a bargaining situation it is usually profitable to make some offers to concessions with fairly limited and certain costs to oneself, especially if these are apparently valued by the other party at more than their cost to the offerer.

If this approach is to be pursued a workable definition of the economies in the intermediate class is required. A possible starting point could be:

- GNP (not GDP) per capita at least \$1,500 (in 1979 constant price terms);
- manufacturing contribution to GDP at least 25%;
- manufactured goods contribution to total visible (goods) and invisible (services) exports at least 33 1/3%.

On these criteria very few economies would fall into the category—the "European periphery" would and might logically claim

7. For a discussion of "differentiation" see I. Sabri Abdalla, "Heterogeneity and Differentiation—The End of the Third World?", *Development Dialogue* (Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Uppsala) 1978-2.

8. Cf. Confederation of British Industry Evidence, *House of Commons Select Committee on Overseas Development* HC-179 (London, HMSO, June 1977) and *Second Report of the Select Committee on Overseas Development* Vol. I, HC-586 (London, HMSO, July 1978).

the special status albeit for tactical reasons Spain, Greece and Portugal probably would not. However, several NICs might soon "qualify" and/or the criterion might be marginally reduced in the process of negotiation (e.g. \$1,000; 20%; 25%).⁹

The nature of the requirements for the intermediate category would also require negotiation—evidently they could not include full reciprocity if the category is to have any meaning other than removal of non-reciprocity from the less weak peripheral economies. A first approximation might include:

- continued eligibility for GSP;
- requirement to offer reciprocal concessions to core economies and to fellow intermediate economies on particular manufactured goods of which their exports to the core and each other (taken separately) were significant (say in excess of \$2,500,000 at 1979 prices) and at least double imports from the same group of economies;
- products to be defined in realistic business terms e.g. "cricket equipment" not "sporting goods"; "sulphuric acid" not "non-organic chemicals"; "hand made leather shoes" not "footwear";
- concessions to be negotiated in terms relevant to the economies concerned (e.g. simple tariff concessions are hardly relevant for "planned" or "foreign exchange budget" economies);
- failure to agree not to subject either party to unilateral restrictions in any way different from failure to agree in other aspects of general GATT negotiating rounds.

It is doubtful that these provisions would cause a great flood of core exports to NICs. Brazil's shoe industry for example would not be imperilled by British exports nor South Korean by those of the USA. Some cross trade in the same items (but different styles, qualities) would result—perhaps especially among intermediate category economies—but a case can be made that this would be desirable and its scale is certainly likely to be handlable.

9. The core level (top of intermediate) might be \$2,500 *per capita* GNP, Manufacturing 35% of GDP, Manufactured Exports 50% of total of over \$2,500,000,000. The last alternative relates to the special USA case where invisible exports plus non-manufactured visible exports could conceivably exceed 50% of total exports in some years (e.g. those of grain and soy beans shortages).

VII

In respect of intra-periphery and especially intermediate—"extreme periphery" reciprocity a more compelling case for action arises. To take the intermediate/extreme periphery case first:

- the "intermediate" economies should extend GSP to the "extreme periphery";
- they should also extend any provisions for removal of non-tariff barriers applying among core countries (and to core imports from themselves and the "extreme periphery") to the "extreme periphery" economies;
- they should be free to negotiate general tariff (or other access provision) preferences (reciprocal, semi-reciprocal or non-reciprocal) with other intermediate and "extreme periphery" economies as a group¹⁰ without either extending them to core economies or purporting to create a free trade area (or even the first steps toward one) with the recipients.¹¹

More broadly GATT provisions should be amended to facilitate general peripheral economy preference areas (relating to tariff and non-tariff barriers). While there is no reason these would need to be negotiated within GATT (and probably good reason to seek to create a Third World organized and staffed forum) there is need to safeguard that such arrangements could be registered under GATT and would not give rise to demands for parallel concessions by core economies—both probable difficulties under current articles for schemes not claiming to aspire to free trade area status and/or not regionally bounded.

In such schemes reciprocity among comparable economies is a good working guideline with partial reciprocity among those clearly very unequal (e.g. Tanzania and India, Singapore and Papua New Guinea) a possible complement. One reason for getting the negotiations—as opposed to the registration—out of GATT would be to allow these issues to be settled within the Third World without the degree of core intervention inevitable if they were bargained at the same times and places as present GATT general negotiating round topics.

10. This would interact with proposals of UNCTAD Group of Experts on Economic Co-operation among Third World Countries cited in *Financial Times*, 1 March, 1979.

11. This is the present set of conditions under which partial preferential areas can be approved by GATT. Admittedly the EEC-Yaounde arrangements were approved on this basis despite the fact that they neither were nor tended to ward a free trade area, but EEC's ability to have rules (or submissions) read "leniently" is one thing and that of the 77 quite another.

VIII

Toward Structural And Long Term Restructuring of GATT

Beyond the structural changes proposed above—which are largely short term and defensive (both from a Third World point of view and from the optic of GATT as an instrumentality for sustaining and expanding world trade)—two other areas of GATT manship require at least a few notes. They are inherently longer term and directed toward winning new ground.

First some change—whether or not involving changes in the Articles—is needed to redress the present imbalance whereby although all GATT members can participate to some point in the governing body and therefore in amending Articles and setting Guidelines for negotiating rounds, only three—EEC, USA, Japan—are any longer able to participate effectively in the actual negotiations which implement (or grossly distort) the Guidelines. This is not a uniquely Third World concern—the Nordic states, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the Southern European periphery and GATT's European Socialist members perceive themselves as facing the same problems; a potentially valuable reality as it increases the weight of those with a common objection to the *status quo* and a potential common interest in change.

The reasons for this narrowing of GATT negotiations' effective actors (which was not envisaged nor intended by its founders) are threefold:

- negotiations have become so lengthy and complex that 20-30 full time professionals engaged in preparation and negotiation, a global commercial data collection and analysis network and a state apparatus able to devote regular attention to GATT issues is now essential to be even theoretically able to participate effectively;
- because offers once accepted must be made global, (apart from unilateral concessions like GSP which are not formally negotiated and thus—at least under present GATT procedures—can be withdrawn without compensation or challenge) only offers to one of the Big Three and indeed only trilateral packages among the Big Three are, in practice, negotiable. No concession package with Sweden or India is viable because its generalization would have an impact swamping the original balanced package e.g. a Swedish concession to India and an Indian to Sweden (both—say—on machinery designed to promote roughly balanced additional cross trade in different lines) would be overtaken by the improved access

each would have to give to the USA, Japan, EEC so both Sweden and India would be likely to be net losers;

- as a result, only the blunt weapon of threatening to block the whole package in the governing body (as the peripheral economies have half threatened to do unless the Tokyo Round guideline on access improvement for tropical products is less blatantly ignored) remains to the outsiders and what results from its use is still in the hands of the Big Three.

What to do to correct this pattern is less clear—breaking up the USA, Japan, or the EEC is not precisely a practicable proposal. Some very tentative suggestions may be worth consideration:

- if peripheral economies—regionally and/or through the services of a Third World technical secretariat (as tentatively proposed at the February 1979 Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 at Arusha)—pooled their data collection, formal analysis and preparation of alternative positions (for adoption, amendment or rejection by states), the genuinely technical barrier to effective participation could be overcome;
- similarly grouped offers and proposals—especially if then negotiated on the side with the smaller industrial market and industrial socialist economies—could perhaps be significant enough to interest one or more of the Big Three and thus to have a real role in negotiations;
- if the peripheral and smaller industrial economies developed (negotiated) firm, articulated common proposals they could probably secure a place for some of them in the guidelines for negotiating rounds and make clear to the Big Three that unless these guidelines were taken seriously (including negotiating compromises with the proponents as a group, not cutting unilaterally) there would be no majority in the governing body for approving the final draft package arising from the round.

Beside the institutional structural change (but likely to be assisted by progress on that front) lies the need for formalizing generalizing and institutionalizing the supposed preferences now given the peripheral economies and turning them into something real. Step by step work under the basically defensive approach proposed in Section IV would be possible but tedious, cumbersome and in danger of continuous overtaking by events.

A more daring initiative would propose:

- freedom from tariff and non-tariff barriers for all periphery exports to industrial (market or socialist) economies by—say—1992 (ten years from the earliest date such a scheme could conceivably be negotiated)

- this freedom to be non-reciprocal for extreme periphery economies and non-reciprocal or partly reciprocal in respect of intermediate economies;
- removal of tariffs and other restrictions to be provided for in a predetermined schedule (not necessarily one tenth a year);
- any derogation from the timetable to be under the "adjustment" provisions proposed in Section IV and subject to international monitoring and limitation;
- self reliance exceptions by individual industrial economies to be negotiable in agriculture (where, as a fact of life, no adjustment of the type needed to allow totally free access would be deemed politically possible) but to create fixed limits on protected production and to ban exports of excluded products¹² (except via grants in kind to genuinely globally controlled international agencies);¹³
- a parallel advance in peripheral economy (including intermediate category) preferential trade access to be carried out under parallel phasing and recorded with (under) GATT.

This is an ambitious objective. Even its partial attainment would radically alter the structure of international trade and would, in practice, move GATT toward the position of an International Trade Organisation with significant management powers. The latter is true—if for no other reason—because with the degree of access proposed cases requiring "adjustment" invocation and probably new approaches to increasing predictability and certainty in trade flows would become more frequent and more important. Assuming that the Article changes proposed in Section IV and the institutional procedural changes proposed earlier in this section had been achieved, there is no reason that this move to managed markets (unlike the present French calls for "managed free trade") should be adverse to peripheral economy interests.

To get this set of changes the peripheral economies must offer something. Reciprocal free access would hardly be appropriate—development crushing on the periphery, it might well not prove export promoting at the centre because its impact on periphery

12. i.e. Fiddles such as the EEC's importing cane sugar from ACP states while dumping a larger quantity of subsidized beet should be blocked.

13. i.e. the old US use of food aid to prop up farmers and commercial exports as well as knocking out (or heading off) potential Third World competitors in grain needs to be guarded against. On the face of it the USA has no need to put maize, rice or wheat under special provisions; it is and is likely to remain a net exporter and a highly competitive one. EEC is quite another matter but their export dumping does not centre on grain at least in most years.

development would cripple their earned import capacity. What might be more suitable bargaining counters would be:

- agreements on supply—not necessarily in unprocessed form—of critical raw materials including provision for relatively equal access by industrial (market or socialist) economies but not excluding preferential access for other peripheral economies nor ecological/development timing limits on production;
- agreements to utilize proceeds of exports to industrial economies and (of interim loans from such economies to bridge the gap between granting of access and ability to produce exports to utilize it) to increase purchases of industrial economy exports (possibly in line with negotiated sectoral targets as to purchases and uses) thereby creating a parallel rise in exports by most OECD economies giving an impetus to their escape from the 1974-198 ? balance of payments constraint low growth/high unemployment trap.¹⁴

IX

Global Trade Expansion And Core Recovery

So long as the core OECD economies remain in their present stagnation with growth fallen from 6-8% to 2-4% (apart from the destabilizing Japanese predatory export led growth) and unemployment risen from 2-4% to 6-8%, action by the periphery on the trade access front will be primarily a holding operation. Only with higher growth and lower unemployment rates will their constraints on creating new output and employment be reduced radically and real liberalization of imports be attainable.

Until (unless) that happens the purpose of the GATT changes advocated is:

14. This export growth led model is, at present, more acceptable in OECD official and political circles than a state expenditure led recovery scenario. It is argued that it would use idle capacity, restore the share of "productive" (vs "public service") activity, bolster private sector surpluses, reduce government deficits and balance of payments strains. This rather "production capitalist" line of argument is open to challenge but it is an intellectual and political force and might be made use of by the periphery for overlapping ends of its own. An alternative to loans would be large SDR issues (\$6-10 billion annually for five years) allocated 100% to peripheral states so that industrial economies could raise exports to earn back their reserve needs (the basic mechanism of the 19th century gold standard in which periphery gold allowed/required industrial economy export surpluses to build reserves). However, this approach seems most unlikely to be negotiable with the OECD members in the next two to four years, whereas the guaranteed loan approach might be.

- sustain as much as possible of what access has been achieved formally now that it can increasingly be made use of on the productive forces side;
- ensure that the formal structures make discriminatory access withdrawal for peripheral economies difficult and thus raise the costs of any access reduction by involving other core economies;
- create a set of structures favouring trade creating versus trade destroying adjustment mechanisms and thus—hopefully—reducing the degree of structural rigidity accompanying low growth/high unemployment in the major industrial market economies;
- facilitating trade creation through access improvement among peripheral economies both as a valid goal in its own right and as an alternative to—probably unattainable—rapid growth of peripheral economy exports to core OECD members.

To say this is not to argue for an OECD return to the 1960's—"grow on regardless". It is not even to enter the "alternative development" dialogue's northern branch:

- a. quite different patterns of development in the North (including ones consistent with nil growth of use of non-renewable resources) could also generate 4-6% growth of GDP because they would create new services (market or public) and new products;
- b. really different life and work patterns if accepted—would reduce registered (and, more critical, worker and politician perceived) unemployment to or below 1960's levels;
- c. therefore a 4-6% growth/2-3% unemployment industrial market economy is consistent with "Another Development" as well as (perhaps more than) "Grow On Regardless" and would probably be consistent with significant trade liberalization in favour of the periphery (as sketched in VIII above);
- d. unfortunately the present reality is *failed growth* economies and strategies whose stresses, problems and reactions are quite unlike those of planned "steady state" or "alternative development" ones;
- e. for the 1980's it is wishful thinking to see "Another Development" sweeping most core economy polities or productive structures. The main lever (if any) for renewed trade liberalization on their part will be at least partial recovery of growth on lines doubtless modified from the pre-1974

period but very far from "steady state" (let alone "zero growth") proponents' visions.

What happens in the centre does concern the periphery—and is therefore its business. To date by not cutting back as much as the centre since 1974, the periphery has acted responsibly in global as well as prudently in developmental terms. Had all peripheral economies followed orthodox IMF trade-production-employment models in 1974 the OECD prolonged recession would almost certainly have been "aggravated" into a full depression so that 1979 target debates were not about how to get 3% vs 5% growth but about how to get 0% vs -3%.

What leverage the periphery has in terms of liberalization lies in its potential ability to play a significant role in restoring growth and employment in the OECD states or *per contra* of entrenching stagnation and increasing unemployment at the centre via import restriction. The broad lines of the case are:

- the present level of trade deficits is not sustainable for many peripheral economies—some have no real access to centre capital markets and some have external debt burdens which make sense only in the context of rapidly rising convertible currency export earnings;
- therefore, in the absence of significant, as well relatively predictable and safe, increases in access to First World markets they will be forced to cut back on imports with serious implications for several OECD members' balance of payments employment and growth;
- a reformulation of GATT and of the patterns of access of which it is a manifestation will allow a moderate growth in imports (balancing export growth) which will make exports to the Third World a moderately positive force but hardly one for global recovery;
- only rapid reduction in access barriers—in the short term supplemented by large additional state guaranteed commercial or quasi-commercial loans—could provide the leeway for an upsurge in periphery imports which would permit parallel export growth led recovery in the majority of OECD members (the loans to start the process, the access provisions to justify the loans, the export growth to validate the loans).

Whether the last part of this scenario is attainable or worth attaining is debatable. It is worth seeking if one assumes that over the next decade the OECD states will remain the largest markets for periphery exports (even if intra-periphery and periphery-socialist trade grow); that any likely development strategy

(capitalist or socialist, externally oriented or integrationist) in the majority of peripheral economies will require absolutely increased (even if restructured and/or lower relative to GDP) imports; increases in the level of productive forces and of trade do not in and of themselves make structural reform and radical socio-political change impossible. If *per contra* one expects the "final conflict" by 1984 if the centre remains stagnant; believes major absolute reductions in imports are usually consistent with development; sees structural change and trade expansion as necessarily solidifying *ancien regimes* (despite their apparent failure to do so in Cuba and Iran) and weakening revolutionary ones (despite the apparent contrary evidence of the Korean People's Democratic Republic and China) then the whole of the foregoing scenario is dangerous "possibilism" or opportunist "Third Worldism" and should be opposed as such, precisely because it may be achievable.

POVERTY IN SRI LANKA

G. I. O. M. Kurukulasuriya

This study proposes to have a close look at the nature of poverty in Sri Lanka at a particular point of time and identify its distribution in terms of economic sectors (urban, rural and estate) and in terms of defined geographical zones. It attempts, in so far as the data permits, to indicate a *Poverty Line* for "absolute poverty". It describes briefly some aspects of the privations associated with poverty in the different sectors and geographical zones. The point of time taken is one at which considerable data is available, namely, 1973—when the Central Bank of Ceylon carried out its third survey of Consumer Finances. It is close enough to the time when the Department of Census and Statistics conducted its Socio-Economic Survey 1969/70 so that the data from that survey could be used to supplement the findings of the Central Bank Survey.

The estimates of poverty levels presented in this study relate to the socio-economic circumstances and current prices prevailing in 1973. The steep inflation that followed on the energy crisis, the subsequent changes in the exchange rate of the Sri Lanka Rupee, the changes in wages and salary rates, the altered scheme of food rationing, the new investment climate and the policy of economic liberalisation followed by the present government are among the numerous factors that have since then altered the economic situation. The study however does not attempt to update the information available for 1973 as this would require a new country wide investigation. As a matter of fact the fourth survey of Consumer Finances is at present being carried out by the Central Bank and it would take perhaps six months before the findings are published. This study however provides base line data which will enable a comparison of situations between points of time and help to discover further refinements in the study of this important subject.

Poverty may be broadly defined as a condition wherein the flow of consumable resources available to a household falls short of a minimum that is deemed necessary for its members to meet their essential needs so as to be able to maintain their productive capacity and enjoy a minimum of well being. A sense of well being is in its essence something that is subjective although it rests on physical and material considerations. Any measurement of poverty, however, has to fall back on using some objective indicators of well being although the objective indicators and the

This article follows on work done for the Marga Institute's Study *An Analytical Study of Poverty in Sri Lanka* (March 1978) for U.S.A.I.D

subjective experience of poverty are not the same thing. A choice of indicators is no easy matter. They have to relate to the specific country situation and take into consideration the relative position of the lower income classes in relation to the condition of the community as a whole. We can, on examination of the over-all patterns of consumption at different levels of income, arrive at a country-specific understanding of *relative poverty*. But, we can, with a little more certainty arrive at a level of *Absolute Poverty* in terms of firm indicators when we take absolute poverty as the *inability to enjoy a diet that provides a minimum recommended nutrition in terms of bare calories and proteins*.

Our question then is "what is the *per capita income within a household* among the lower income classes at which this minimum of diet can be enjoyed?" This figure of per capita income would be the cut off point for absolute poverty. Households that cannot achieve this are suffering absolute poverty. The Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 provides the data for carrying out an analysis in terms of income and physical consumption that will indicate the presence of poverty stricken households in terms of economic sectors and geographical zones. The households ranked in terms of household income are grouped in the survey into slabs showing small rises in household income. The average physical consumption of specified food items is given for each of these slabs and we also have the average numbers that constitute the households in each of the small income slabs.

We may note at the outset that poverty cannot be measured in terms of the levels of *household income* as such or in terms of the *income of income receivers* as such. Consumption is carried out within households wherein provision is made collectively for accommodation, food, social and recreational activities and facilities for carrying out one's daily chores. Well being within the household depends among other things on the size of the household and the total household income available to it. *Per capita* resources within the household (regardless of the level of "household" income) is a key indicator of poverty or the absence of it.

The Sources and the Nature of Data

The Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 is the main source of data in this study. The data in this survey (and also in the Socio-Economic Survey 1969/70) has been gathered in terms of economic sectors and geographical zones.

The zones in the Survey of Consumer Finances are as follows:-

- Zone I consists of housing units in the districts of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle and Matara, excluding the housing units in the Colombo Municipality.

- Zone II consists of housing units in the districts of Hambantota, Moneragala, Amparai, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam.
- Zone III consists of housing units in the districts of Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa.
- Zone IV consists of housing units in the districts of Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Ratnapura, Kegalle and Kurunegala.
- Zone V consists of housing units in the Colombo Municipality.
- All-island is a totality of the 3 sectors or the 5 zones.

In the case of the Socio-Economic Survey 1969/70, Zone V (Colombo Municipality) is incorporated in Zone I, which includes Colombo District as a whole.

The *Urban Sector* consists of all housing units in the Municipal, Urban and Town Council areas.

The *Estate Sector* consists of all housing units in the tea and rubber estates of over 20 acres with more than 10 resident workers. In the Socio-Economic Survey 1969/70, coconut estates of that order are also included in the Estate sector.

The *Rural Sector* consists of all housing units which were not included in the *Urban* and *Estate* sectors.

The cultivation of coconut is least labour-intensive and the greater part of the land under coconut is in home gardens and in small and medium holdings owned by individuals and families rather than by joint stock companies. Except for large estates of over about 250 acres, the number of resident labourers is few: the coconut estates draw on the labour of villagers from the surrounding villages. The coconut cultivation sector has therefore been included in the Rural Sector in the Survey of Consumer Finances although about 1.2 million acres of land are under coconut and about 40% of the production is exported.

It may however be noted that in 1973 as much as 18.21% of the land in tea was small holdings of 10 acres or less and 38.18% of land under rubber was in such small holdings. The estate sector takes into account only estates of over 20 acres and with more than 10 resident workers.

The Survey of Consumer Finances sought to obtain by means of a sample survey direct estimates of personal incomes, expenditure and the pattern of food consumption. The survey examined the distribution of incomes both in terms of Income Receivers and in terms of Spending Units which *de facto* are the households. On the side of expenditures a special feature of the survey of Consumer Finances 1973 was that it gave the data on the physical consumption of food, with the items and quantities, on

a per capita basis as taking place within very small slabs of ranked household income. It also gave the per capita expenditures on food and on other lines of expenditure such as clothing, housing, fuel and light, education and so on. Data on the physical consumption of food and on expenditure both on food and other items are given in terms of *two months* incomes of households, at the levels Rs. 0-50, 51-100, 101-200, 201-400 and thereafter for *two months* income slabs of Rs. 401-800, 801-1600, 1601 to 2000, 2001-3000 and over 3000. Data on the pattern of distribution of incomes of households is given ranked in terms of very small slabs of *two month* incomes, namely in slabs rising by Rs. 25 for the income range Rs. 0-200 and in slabs of Rs. 50 for the range Rs. 201-500. From Rs. 501-1000 it is given in slabs of Rs. 100 and thereafter in slabs of Rs. 200. The data is available in terms of both Sectors and Zones.

In the Survey of Consumer Finances the data on actual food consumption within households was carried out over one week with three checks and this was done in the months of January and February 1973. This was a period before the paddy harvests and at a time when the crops of jak fruit, breadfruit and other fruits were very low. Domestic food inventories in the rural sector were relatively low. Data on the daily average physical consumption in the rural sector has thus been recorded at a level that would have been lower than the daily annual average consumption. Rural incomes were however adjusted in terms of the incomes realised throughout the year. Food intake in relation to income levels would have tended to be under-stated in the rural sector.

Incomes included gifts of cash or consumption items, income in kind, inclusive of the free rice ration, the value of which was included under gifts and charitable allowances in the Survey of Consumer Finances.

Although both the Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 and the Socio-Economic Survey 1969/70 took into account *income in kind*, the Socio-Economic Survey of 1969/70 did not include in 'income' an imputed value for the measure (2 lbs.) of free rice issued weekly to all persons. In the Survey of Consumer Finances the free measure of rice was valued at Rs. 2 which was the subsidised price of the part of the ration that was paid for. Thus, in the Socio-Economic Survey 1969/70, the food actually consumed was related to a somewhat understated level of household income—a factor which is significant in the case of low income households.

It is also important to note that in the Sri Lanka situation there are certain benefits available to and enjoyed by all the people but which have been explicitly excluded from the total incomes in both these surveys. There was the value of the free medical

services, free drugs etc., actually availed of from State and Municipal medical establishments, free education, free mid-day meals received by some school children and free school books given to some children. Thus the money value of income given in the surveys is understated to the extent the households, especially of the poor, availed of these services.

There was also a tendency to understate the value of income in kind in the rural sector when it came to home grown food. As these items were valued at prices fetched in the nearest market, the villagers' home grown (and consumed) food would have been put down as income at a very low value although the same physical quantities would have been bought and sold at much higher prices in urban markets.

The Over-all Distribution of Relative Poverty and Affluence

The first and most general picture of the spread of poverty and affluence in the country can be had by examining in broad terms the general all island distribution of incomes. It would also indicate the relative poverty of the "poor" and also relatively how many are "poor". A few more observations on the general structure of the Survey will put this information into perspective.

The Survey of Consumer Finances used a two-stage sample design using the census blocks prepared by the Department of Census and Statistics in 1971 and the Housing Units contained in these blocks. In the Sri Lanka situation information on housing units to which the population is attached is firm because of the long standing island wide schemes of rationing and subsidies. The survey treated as a 'household' a person or a group of persons living together in a Housing Unit but it was realised that some housing units held more than one "Spending Unit". This was generally in some urban areas. In the survey sample there were 5088 "households" and 5363 spending units. For the purpose of studying the prevalence of poverty it is the spending unit that was used because it was the true social unit and it was defined in the Survey as one or more persons who are members of a household who shared major items of expenditure including food expenses.

The over-all findings of the survey are given in Tables 1 and 2, and Table 3 gives the all island spread of household incomes. From Table 3 it is clear that the size of the household (spending unit) increases with the rise in the 2 month income. It is around two persons per household at the lowest income levels and rises to over six persons at the higher income levels. The all island average is 5.33. At the poorest levels the households contain few because they cannot sustain any more. The six households (out of

Item	All Island	Urban	Rural	Estate
Total persons in sample	28,587	5,378	20,432	2,777
Total 2-month Income	3,333,465	812,990	2,213,895	306,580
No. of Households/Housing Units	5,088	931	3,627	530
No. of Spending Units	5,363	1,023	3,803	537
No. of Income Receivers	7,326	1,285	4,746	1,295
Average No. of persons per Spending Unit	5.33	5.25	5.37	5.17
Income Receivers per Spending Unit	1.36	1.26	1.26	2.41
Income Receivers as percentage of population	25.63	23.89	23.22	46.63
Average Income per Spending Unit	621.57	794.71	582.14	570.91
Average Income per Income Receiver	445.02	632.68	446.48	236.74
Average per capita income per Spending Unit	116.62	151.37	108.41	110.43
Female Income Receiver as percentage of total Income Receiver	24.97	19.46	19.91	48.96
Income Receivers below 18 years of age as percentage of Total Income Receivers	3.66	2.49	2.99	7.26

Sources: Central Bank of Ceylon, Survey of Consumer Finances 1973, Table No. 4 and 6 and Tables in Vol. II on Income Receivers and Spending Units; Marga Institute.

OVERALL DATA FROM THE SURVEY OF CONSUMER FINANCES—1973

TABLE 1

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OVERALL FINANCES CONCERNING THE ESTATE SECTOR

Item	1 zone	2 zone	3 zone	4 zone	5 zone
Total persons in sample	9,107	4,254	2,905	11,358	1,051
Total 2-month Income	362,572.1	462,821	333,385	1,127,007	134,959
No. of Households/Housing Units	149.1	225	153	2,028	163
No. of Spending Units	297.1	177	177	2,100	181
No. of Income Receivers	337.2	882	610	3,159	245
Average No. of persons per Spending Unit	21.5	5.52	5.29	5.47	5.81
Income Receivers per Spending Unit	83.1	41.1	41.1	1.50	1.35
Income Receivers as percentage of population	46.92	20.72	20.99	27.81	23.31
Average Income per Spending Unit	233.77	600.29	607.26	536.67	745.63
Average Income per Income Receiver	182.81	524.74	546.53	356.76	550.85
Average per capita income per Spending Unit	91.41	108.75	111.71	99.20	128.34
Female Income Receiver as percentage of total Income Receiver	26.21	15.30	9.51	30.14	19.18
Income Receivers below 18 years of age as percentage of Total Income Receivers	3.05	3.85	3.28	4.21	2.85

Note: The Estate Sector falls into Zone 1 and Zone 4. Source: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973, Table No. 4 & 6 and Tables in Vol. II on Income Receivers and Spending Units.

TABLE 3
THE DISTRIBUTION OF SPENDING UNITS IN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME SLABS—ALL-ISLAND

(5363 Spending Units in Sample)

Income Slab of Spending Unit 2 months/Rs.	No. of Spending Units in Sample	As % of total Spending Units	Corres- ponding No. of persons in Sample	% of total persons	Persons per Spending Unit
0- 50	6	0.11	11	0.04	1.83
51- 100	50	0.93	82	0.29	1.64
101- 200	314	5.85	707	2.47	2.25
201- 400	1466	27.34	6217	21.75	4.24
401- 800	2439	45.48	14139	49.46	5.79
801-1600	893	16.65	6111	21.38	6.84
1601-2000	88	1.64	587	2.05	6.67
2001-3000	64	1.19	440	1.54	6.88
Over 3000	43	0.80	293	1.02	6.81
Total	5363	100.00	28587	100.00	5.33

Sources: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 and Marga Institute.

5363) in the household income slab Rs. 0-50/2 months may be ignored as these households happened to be inadequately examined and were unusual cases. But, the general picture is that as much as 34.23% of the households in 1973 received incomes (in cash and in kind taken together) amounting to Rs. 400 for two months or less. Another 45.48% were in the range of Rs. 401-800 for two months. The rest, at over Rs. 800 for 2 months, amounting to 20.28% were those who apparently enjoyed a notable measure of well being. At this point it may be noted that as the households were small at the lowest income levels, the affected populations were different in percentage. At below Rs. 400/2 months it was 24.55% of the population in 34.23% of the households. At Rs. 401-800/2 months it was however 49.46% of the population in 45.48% of the households and at Rs. 801/2 months and above 25.99% of the population were in 20.28% of the households in 1973.

Tables 1 and 2 also give us a fair indication of the over-all spread of relative poverty and affluence in the country. It should be noted here that the sectors and zones are of varying sizes. The urban sector held 19.08% of the households and 18.81% of

the population. The Rural sector held 70.91% of the households and 71.47% of the population. The Estate Sector which as the smallest and largely confined to resident estate workers, held 10.01% of the households and only 9.71% of the population. This sector cannot easily be compared with the other two sectors because by definition it is different and does not hold households engaged in a wide spectrum of occupations and sources of income. As much as 48.96% of the Income Receivers in this sector are women as against around 19% in the other sectors. As much as 7.26% of the Income Receivers are persons under 18 years of age as against 2.49% and 2.99% in the Urban and Rural Sectors. Furthermore, as much as 46.63% of the population are income receivers in the Estate Sector as against 23.89% in the Urban and 23.22% in the rural sectors. The lower deciles of income Receivers in the Estate Sector would be largely women and children who by law and practice get lower wages than men. The over-all average income *per Income Receiver* was highest in the Urban sector at Rs. 632.68/2 months as against Rs. 446.48 in the Rural sector and only Rs. 236.74 in the Estate Sector. However, when it comes to the over-all average income *per Spending Unit* (which is the natural household), the Urban Sector continues to be the best off at Rs. 794.71/2 months as against Rs. 582.14 in the Rural Sector and Rs. 570.91 in the Estate Sector. For a more precise indicator of poverty within households one may look at the over-all average *per capita* income per spending unit. In this the Urban Sector comes off best at Rs. 151.37/2 months and the Estate Sector comes next at Rs. 110.43 This is followed by the Rural Sector at Rs. 108.41.

We may next look at the over-all picture zone-wise. Zone V Colombo Municipality has the highest over-all average income *per Spending Unit* at Rs. 745.63/2 months followed by Zone I (districts of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle and Matara) at Rs. 723.78. This is a relatively large zone holding 32.85% of the island's spending units. Next comes Zone III (districts of Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa) at Rs. 607.27/2 months but this zone though holding the greater part of the Sri Lanka Tamil households accounts for 10.24% of the island's spending units. Fourth in order comes Zone II (districts of Hambantota, Moneragala, Amparai, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam) which has 14.38% of the island's spending units and over-all average income per spending unit at Rs. 600.29/2 months. Last comes Zone IV which holds as much as 39.16% of the island's spending units inclusive of 88% of the island's Estate spending units which are in this Zone. The figure for this zone (Districts of Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Ratnapura, Kegalle and Kurunegala) was only Rs. 536.67/2 months.

When it comes to the critically important *per capita income within households* the over-all figure of Rs. 141.36/2 months of Zone I heads the list with Zone V (Colombo Municipality) coming second with Rs. 128.34. Zone III comes a good third at Rs. 114.79 and Zone II with Rs. 108.75 follows it. Again Zone IV comes last with Rs. 99.20.

The survey used a double classification in terms of (a) Economic Sectors and (b) Geographical Zones. It is therefore important to note how these two aspects were inter-related. We may note that the geographical Zone V (Colombo Municipality) is entirely urban. Surprisingly, it was Zone III (districts of Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa) that had its residences most clustered in the urban areas, and was 27.31% urban. The next most urban was Zone I (districts of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle and Matara). The least urban was Zone IV (districts of Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Ratnapura, Kegalle and Kurunegala) at only 6.07% urban. The most rural was Zone II (districts of Hambantota, Moneragala, Amparai, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam) at 91.72% rural. The least rural (apart from Zone V) was Zone I at 69.53% rural. In the case of the estates 88.6% of them fell into Zone IV and 11.32% in Zone I. We may note here that Zone IV not only held most of estates but was also the least urban. The over-all picture is given in Table 4.

Determining an Index of Absolute Poverty

The privations experienced by the poor have many aspects and the poor in the various sectors and zones do not suffer these privations uniformly. In Sri Lanka where the state offers substantial free services in health care, medication and education, the availability and ready access to these facilities by households that need them result in a consequential increase in disposable incomes that can be spent on other lines of consumption. Any generally applicable index of absolute poverty cannot take into account all aspects of privation. But, some suitable index is necessary if we are to identify with some precision the presence of poverty and its extent.

An impressionistic view of relative poverty as between sectors and zones can no doubt be had from the average incomes of the spending units and the average per capita incomes in the spending units in the respective sectors and zones. However, because incomes go to satisfy needs through the mechanism of prices the relative *income* and expenditure in money terms should be taken as a measure with some caution. In the case of some items such as fish, vegetables, coconut and certain starch foods consumed by the poor, there are considerable variations in price from region to region. An index of actual *consumption in physical*

TABLE 4

"HOUSEHOLDS" AS HOUSING UNITS SAMPLED: THEIR ZONE-WISE AND SECTOR-WISE DISTRIBUTION AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF SPENDING UNITS BY ZONES

Urbanisation and Estates by Zones

	(1) Urban		(2) Rural		(3) Estate		(4) Distribution as "Households"		(5) Distribution as Spending Units	
	No.	% of total urban (931)	% of total in rural (3267)	No.	% of rural in zone total	% of total in Estate (530)	No. in Zone	% of all-island total (5088)	No.	% of total (5363)
Zone I	440	47.26	31.46	69.53	60	11.32	1641	32.25	1732	32.29
Zone II	60	6.44	18.33	91.72	—	0.00	725	14.24	771	14.38
Zone III	145	15.57	10.64	72.69	—	0.00	531	10.44	549	10.24
Zone IV	123	13.21	39.56	70.76	470	88.67	2028	39.85	2100	39.16
Zone V	163	17.51	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	163	3.20	181	3.37
All-Island	931	100.00	100.00	71.28	530	100.00	5088	100.00	5363	100.00

Sources: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973, Vol. II, Table P.1. and Marga Institute.

terms seems most appropriate as a starting point in constructing an index of absolute poverty and food be taken as the most appropriate group of consumption items for this purpose. We have therefore examined the physical consumption of food per head at the lower levels of household income and attempted to arrive at the level of *per capita* income among the low income classes at which food adequacy is in fact marginally satisfied in terms of a minimum recommended intake of calories and proteins. This *per capita* income within the household is used as the cut off point of "absolute poverty" in examining the distribution of poverty.

The Food Consumption Pattern

An over-all view of the relative expenditure on food items in the island is given in Table 5. It will be noticed that for the island as a whole food takes up 55.19% of the total expenditure. Among the poorer classes in the income range up to Rs. 400 per 2 months in 1973 the expenditure on food ranged from 57.64% of the household income to 68.28%. However, because the household size rose steadily with the level of household income the proportion of household income spent on food continued to be almost as high in the not-so-poor household income class of Rs. 401-800 for 2 months. The *proportion* of household income cannot by itself indicate the level of consumption. Taking into account the prevailing prices of common goods consumed by the poor across the island, a truer indicator of the situation is the *per capita* outlay on food in terms of money. Here we find a similarity in the per capita outlay in the income class Rs. 101-200 for 2 months and the class Rs. 201-400 for two months. A positive improvement appears in the case of the class Rs. 401-800 for 2 months. (vide Table 5).

In regard to sector-wise characteristics it may be noted that the money outlay in food by the Rural Sector is generally lower than in the Urban and Estate Sectors. This is because of the lower prices of food (of the kinds of food consumed by the poor) in the Rural Sector. In the Estate Sector the per capita outlay on food is notably higher. This is partly because the average numbers constituting a household in the respective income classes is markedly lower in the Estate Sector (vide Table 5) Furthermore, an analysis of the food actually consumed by the respective income classes in the different sectors showed that the Estate Sector households opted for a better choice of food items. It is not practical to reproduce in detail the diversities in the food options, in terms of physical quantities, exercised by households of the same income class in the different sectors. But the question of the choice of foods (in relation to nutrition) by different sectors is important enough to draw attention to a few of these features. We give below the average quantities of food consumed

TABLE 5

RELATIVE EXPENDITURE ON FOOD ITEMS/2 MONTHS BY SPENDING UNIT AND PER CAPITA						
Sector	Average No. of persons per Spending Unit	Total Average expenditure of Spending Unit	Spending Units' Food Expenditure as % of total expenditure	Average Per Capita Income in Spending Unit	Average Per Capita Expenditure on Food	Rs.
National Average		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.
All Sectors	5.33	622.24	55.19	116.60		64.42
All Income Groups
National Average by Sectors						
(1) Urban	5.25	836.27	47.38	151.17		75.47
(2) Rural	5.37	578.31	56.60	108.35		60.96
(3) Estate	5.17	598.12	59.56	110.40		68.91
Income Group Rs. 101-200						
(1) All Sectors	2.25	183.55	63.65	70.98		51.92
(2) Urban	2.34	223.99	57.64	68.45		55.17
(3) Rural	2.27	173.76	65.08	70.08		49.81
(4) Estate	1.70	190.27	65.73	95.26		73.56
Income Group Rs. 201-400						
(1) All Sectors	4.24	349.51	62.83	73.33		51.79
(2) Urban	3.82	322.04	65.42	79.89		55.15
(3) Rural	4.37	351.56	61.65	71.04		49.60
(4) Estate	3.80	370.58	68.28	83.57		66.58
Income Group Rs. 401-800						
(1) All Sectors	5.8	583.79	60.47	97.43		60.87
(2) Urban	5.4	679.84	52.60	108.63		66.62
(3) Rural	5.9	561.34	61.74	94.96		58.74
(4) Estate	5.7	573.45	67.58	97.11		68.00

per head for 2 months by the Income Group Rs. 201-400 by sectors in the case of some selected items.

TABLE 6

AVERAGE QUANTITIES OF FOOD CONSUMED PER HEAD/2 MONTHS

(Income Group Rs. 201-400)

Item	All Island	Urban	Rural	Estate
Rice rationed free (measures)	7.32	6.49	7.32	7.45
Rice rationed paid	4.96	6.15	4.70	5.58
Rice unrationed, paid	2.90	3.70	2.83	2.58
Wheat flour (ozs)	109.82	53.01	79.64	404.29
Other Grains (measures)	2.22	0.29	8.60	1.44
Bread (ozs)	91.82	141.15	92.75	29.84
Beef (ozs)	3.26	8.68	2.68	1.71
Fresh fish (ozs)	20.29	42.63	19.33	2.77
Dried fish (ozs)	13.42	10.09	13.97	12.96
Eggs (No.)	0.91	1.67	0.66	2.03
Pulses (ozs)	18.48	13.90	17.16	33.59
Coconuts (No.)	13.25	10.90	13.51	13.76
Milk (bottles)	1.03	1.25	0.59	4.21

Source: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973. Tables S 589 to S 592.

The above dietary options of the income class Rs. 201-400/2 months deserves careful consideration. It appears that only in the case of rice, dried fish and coconuts that there is a close similarity of consumption. It is in such a context that we examine *nutritional adequacy* in the different sectors and zones.

The physical quantities of food consumed per head by the lower income classes were examined in terms of their nutrient content in calories and proteins.* It appears that the average daily *per capita* consumption at the household income level Rs. 201-400/2 months is marginally adequate. Adequacy levels were taken in terms of the *daily recommended nutrient allowances for Sri Lanka* prepared by the Department of Nutrition, Medical Research Institute, Colombo. The per capita adequacy of calories and proteins depends, among other things, on the age and sex composition of the community referred to. The norm of adequacy was drawn up after examining the age and sex composition of the

* The rates of conversion of the physical quantities of foods into their nutrient equivalent in calories and proteins was done on the basis of the Schedule in "The Effect of Income on Food Habits in Ceylon" by L. N. Perera, W. S. M. Fernando, Beatrice V. de Mel and T. T. Poleman (Marga Journal Vol 2, No. 1-1973).

TABLE 7

**AVERAGE PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION OF LOW INCOME GROUPS
Household Income Group Rs. 201-400/2 months**

Sector	Per Capita Norm for actual age composition		Actual Per Capita Consumption		Percentage of Adequacy	
	Calories	Proteins	Calories	Proteins	Calories	Proteins
All Island	1950.30	40.86	1917.03	41.5	98.29	101.57
Urban	1938.34	41.05	2217.67	63.4	114.41	154.45
Rural	1952.76	40.80	1779.03	39.3	91.10	96.32
Estate	1944.52	41.12	2469.82	57.4	127.01	139.59

Sources: For age composition; Survey of Consumer Finances 1973, Vol. II, Tables P and M6 to M9 and Marga Institute.
Note: The data given above relate to the average daily per capita consumption.

persons in the income class Rs. 201-400 (vide Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 Vol. II Tables P 4 and M 6 to M 9). In that income class the number of persons below 9 years of age was higher than the national average as also persons over 55 years of age. The sex ratio had more females than the national average but this feature was ignored and sex was taken as evenly distributed. The per capita norm so determined and the actual turn out in consumption are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

TABLE 8

DAILY AVERAGE PER CAPITA INTAKE OF CALORIES AND PROTEINS

Sector	Calories	Proteins
National Averages		
All Sector/All Income Groups	1965.79	44.05
Urban	1906.42	44.13
Rural	1900.78	42.16
Estate	2378.80	56.63
Income Groups Rs. 101-200		
All Sectors	1762.21	42.72
Urban	1424.91	33.24
Rural	1776.16	38.55
Estate	2736.97	58.65
Income Group Rs. 201-400		
All Sectors	1917.03	41.5
Urban	2217.67	63.4
Rural	1779.03	39.3
Estate	2469.82	57.4

Note: The above table on the per capita food intake also reflects the effects of the availability and choices of varieties of foods consumed in the respective sectors, the variation in the proportion of income spent on food and the number constituting the average household in the respective income slabs.

It will be noticed that *this income class* (Rs. 201-400 for 2 months) *as a whole* is marginally adequate in food intake at its prevailing level of per capita income. The urban sector of this income class and the estate sector when taken separately are above the level of adequacy. It is the rural sector which shows some inadequacy because of special reasons.

The per capita income associated with these levels of nutritional intake in this household income slab were as follows:-

TABLE 9

NUTRITIONAL ADEQUACY AND PER CAPITA INCOME

(Household Income Slab Rs. 201-400/2 months)

Sector	Per capita income (2 months)		Percentage Food Adequacy	
	Rs.	Calories	Proteins	
All Island	73.33	98.29	101.57	
Urban	79.88	114.41	154.45	
Rural	71.04	91.10	96.32	
Estate	83.57	127.01	139.59	

Adequacy is reached roughly at the per capita income level of Rs. 73 for 2 months or Rs. 36.50 per month. The case of the Rural Sector however calls for further comment. The figures for rural income took into account the returns of the annual harvests for these households and also a money value (though understated) of the home grown or gathered food. But the actual nutritional intake came to be understated because of the timing and season of the survey. The actual consumption of calories and proteins in the Rural Sector as a *daily per capita* average throughout the year would have been higher than 1779.03 calories and 39.3 grams protein at the per capita income level of Rs. 71.04 for 2 months. Exactly how much higher would be a matter of estimation. A five per cent higher intake per day would make it 1867.98 calories and 41.27 gm. of protein and a ten per cent higher intake would make it 1956.93 calories and 43.23 gms. of protein at the per capita income level of Rs. 71.04/2 months. Allowing for this it would be reasonable to consider Rs. 73 per 2 months as the per capita income level at which the marginal households would be able to reach a bare minimum adequacy of calories and proteins per day.

This per capita income level within a household is therefore taken as the poverty line of *Absolute Poverty* in the Sri Lankan situation where everybody can also avail himself of certain unaccounted benefits flowing from free or subsidised goods and services.

Taking a per capita income of Rs. 73 for 2 months we next examine the data on *per capita* household income. For this operation we examine the averages for the *smallest available* income slabs both sector-wise and zone-wise. As already stated, the income slabs from Rs. 0-200 go up by slabs of Rs. 25 for 2 months, from Rs. 201-400 by slabs of Rs. 50 for 2 months and Rs. 400-1000 by slabs of Rs. 100 for 2 months. Short of examining the per capita income in each and every household in the sample survey, this procedure gives an adequate identification of the poverty groups.

The distribution of the average per capita income in households by household income slabs up to the level Rs. 900/2 months is given in Tables 10A and 10B.

The Geography of Poverty

A per capita income within a household, of Rs. 73/ for two months (ie. Rs. 36.50 per month) is taken in this analysis as the level of income a household needs in order to be able to provide its members a marginally adequate diet at the prices prevailing in 1973, in the context of the free rice ration and social benefits provided by the state at that time. This is no doubt a low figure and households just above this level of per capita income still continue to be relatively poor and would consider themselves "poor". However it cannot be disputed that those below this cut off point are most seriously affected.

The determination of where these deprived households are located may be best done by examining each and every household that fell into the samples of 5363 "Spending Units". As this was not practicable we have taken the averages for very small groupings of households ranked in terms of household income rising at Rs. 25/- for two months and Rs. 50/- per 2 months. In the Survey of Consumer Finances the households have been grouped in two ways: by economic sectors and geographical zones. There are certain differences, as already shown, in the pattern of household incomes and in the number constituting the average household even within the small income slabs when arranged in sectors as against an arrangement in zones. When households are grouped zone-wise in terms of small income slabs we find that each zone has a varying quota of Urban Households and Zone I and Zone IV contain the Estates. As a result when households are grouped into the respective small household-income slabs and the average per capita income taken, the number of households suffering absolute poverty (in terms of our cut off point) that show up are less in number in terms of zones than in terms of sectors. This is because absolute poverty, as defined, is negligible on the Estates and is low in the overall Urban areas. When these better placed households are spread across geographical zones they give an improved look to the all island situation viewed in slabs zone-wise. The sector-wise examination gives a total of 1066 affected households out of the sample of 5363 households i.e., 19.88%. The zone-wise examination shows up only 883 affected households i.e. 16.47%. When the entire 5363 households are grouped into these small income slabs (regardless of sector or zone) and the averages taken the affected households are 1024 i.e. 19.09%. The overall impression is that around 19% of the island's households suffer absolute poverty. The distribution of absolute poverty as shown up sector-wise and zone wise is presented in Table 11.

TABLE 10A

SPENDING UNITS: SECTORAL INCOME DISTRIBUTION PER SPENDING UNIT AND PER CAPITA

Income Group 2 months/Rs.	Average Number of Persons			Average Income Per Spending Unit			Average Per Capita Income*		
	Urban	Rural	Estate	Urban	Rural	Estate	Urban	Rural	Estate
0-100	1.8	1.7	1.3	82.50	78.27	80.33	45.33	46.54	60.25
100-125	3	1.6	2.3	109.00	114.09	117.67	36.33	72.60	50.42
126-150	1.9	2.1	1.0	139.87	139.72	138.50	74.93	66.92	138.50
151-175	2.7	2.2	1.4	164.60	163.58	162.78	60.96	75.99	112.69
176-200	2.3	2.8	2.0	187.72	188.52	190.67	82.33	67.90	95.33
201-250	3.2	3.1	2.5	226.74	228.12	224.17	70.02	72.61	88.90
251-300	3.6	4.1	3.4	274.92	276.59	274.92	76.55	66.99	79.70
301-350	3.7	4.6	4.1	325.13	325.58	238.79	89.08	70.12	80.11
351-400	4.6	5.1	4.3	376.44	376.58	375.29	92.16	73.73	87.07
401-500	4.9	5.4	4.6	426.37	426.60	424.44	87.46	79.09	93.05
451-500	4.7	5.4	5.3	477.40	477.74	475.06	101.32	88.97	90.16
501-600	5.4	5.9	5.4	544.87	544.32	541.37	101.43	91.93	100.61
601-700	7.8	6.4	6.4	649.42	649.90	652.02	83.45	101.84	101.20
701-800	6.2	6.6	7.7	746.76	746.54	752.39	119.99	113.81	97.75
801-900	6.6	6.9	7.4	852.49	847.01	847.81	130.11	121.95	114.81

* Actual Income Total divided by total persons.

Source: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973, Vol. II, Tables S 581-S 583 and Marga Institute.

Note: The data reproduced here is only up to the Household Income level of Rs. 900/2 months.

We may now look at the sector wise disposition of poverty. In the *Urban Sector* which holds 19.08% of the island's households 6.45% of the Urban sector households are affected but they constitute only 1.23% of the entire island's households. Population wise, the affected numbers are smaller because the poorest households are small in size. Only 3.68% of the Urban sector population is affected and it accounts for only 0.69% of the entire island's population.

In the *Rural Sector* which holds as much as 70.91% of the island's households as much as 26.06% of the sector-households are affected and they constitute 18.48% of the island's total households. Population-wise it amounts to 17.62% of the Rural Sector population and 12.60% of the island's population.

In the case of the *Estate Sector* which holds 10.01% of the island's households 1.68% of the Estate households are affected, amounting to 0.17% of the total island's households. Population wise it is 0.54% of the Estate Sector population and 0.05% of the island's total population.

The presence of Estates and the degree of Urbanisation show their effects in the *Zone-wise* examination of the presence of poverty in terms of the measure adopted. The large Zone I (the districts of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle and Matara exclusive of Colombo Municipality) which holds 32.85% of the island's households (and where 26.81% of the house-holds are Urban and 3.66% Estate) only 1.42% of the households show absolute poverty and they amount to only 0.47% of the island's total households. Population wise it amounts to only 0.47% of the Zone I population and 0.15% of the total island population.

Zone II (the districts of Hambantota, Monaragala, Amparai, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam) holds 14.38% of the island's total households. As much as 19.84% of the Zone II households are affected but they constitute only 2.85% of the island's total households. Population-wise, 15.23% of the Zone II population is affected and it amounts to 2.27% of the island's entire population. In this Zone only 8.28% of the households are Urban and there are no estates.

Zone III (the districts of Jaffna, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa) holds 10.24% of the island's households. We find that 10.02% of Zone III households are affected and they amount to 1.03% of the island's total households. Population-wise only 5.92% of the Zone III population is affected and it amounts to 0.60% of the island's total population. In Zone III as much as 27.31% of the households are urban in location and there are no Estates.

TABLE 11 Contd.

Sector/Zone	Spending Units/Households			Persons/Population						
	Total in Sample	No. Showing In-adequacy of House-holds	% of Sector (5363)	Total In Sample	No. Showing In-adequacy of Zone	% of Sector All-Island (285874)				
Zone II Hambantota, Moneragala, Amparai, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura & Puttalam	771	14.38	153	19.84	2.85	4256	14.89	648	15.23	2.27
Zone III Jaffna, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Batticaloa	549	10.24	55	10.02	1.03	2905	10.16	172	5.92	0.60
Zone IV Kandy, Matale, Badulla, Rathapura, Kegalle and Kurunegala	2100	39.16	607	28.90	11.32	11358	39.73	2280	20.07	7.98
Zone V Colombo Municipality	181	3.37	43	23.76	0.80	1051	3.68	221	21.02	0.77
	5363	100.00	883		16.47	28587	100.00	3363		11.77

The large Zone IV holds as much as 39.16% of the island's households. As much as 28.90% of the Zone IV households are affected and they amount to 11.32% of the island's total households. It amounts to 20.07% of the Zone IV population and as much as 7.98 % of the island's total population. Zone IV is least urban with only 6.07% of the households located in Urban areas and as much as 23.16% of the Zone IV households are located in Estates. It will be noticed that despite the fact that the poor on the Estates were nutritionally better off than their counter part in the Rural Sector, Zone IV has a marked incidence of poverty. The poor in Zone IV appear to be largely in the villages.

Finally there is Zone V (Colombo Municipality) which is 100% urban and has no estates. This is a small zone holding only 3.37% of the island's households. However, the survey showed that as much as 23.76% of the Zone V households suffered absolute poverty. It amounted to 0.80% of the island's total households. In terms of population, as much as 21.02% of the Zone V population was affected but this number amounted to only 0.77% of the island's population. This picture of the City of Colombo results from the congregation of casual labour seeking work, low-income unskilled labour, under-employed labour, slum households, beggars and persons of no determinate employment. Chances are high that there is a fair amount of undeclared or under-stated incomes in the city, arising from various illegal occupations such as gambling, thieving, illicit liquor and drug peddling, prostitution etc. Nevertheless the data indicates that a major pocket of urban poverty in the island is the City of Colombo.

In the case of all the zones care should be taken in the interpretation of data because each zone covers a number of Districts, each of which is different in economic viability. Subsidiary data relating to specific Districts have to be taken into account in gauging the extent of poverty from District to District within the same zone. Zone I (Colombo, Kalutara, Galle and Matara exclusive of Colombo Municipality) is the zone that is best off. This zone has trunk roads and a railway line running across its length. It has a network of subsidiary roads and many small townships affording employment opportunities in a wide spectrum of activities. Being on the Western seaboard and in the coconut belt it has a wide range of activity associated with fishing and the coconut industry, and subsidiary industries such as rope making, fibre products and handicrafts. Brick and tile making and carpentry are well represented in the region. This region has been well provided with educational institutions and a good part of it is the dormitory area of Colombo city workers. Nutritionally too the region has ready access to cheaper fish, coconuts and coconut products than the inland regions.

The largest concentration of rural poor are in Zone IV but this zone includes districts with varying socio-economic structures and agro-climatic conditions. The poor appear to be mainly in the village areas which are hemmed in between large estates which have their own resident labour forces. These Estates (being generally supplied with their requirements through the Company Agents or proprietors) do not depend on the surrounding villages for their needs. The rest of the rural poor are spread less densely in Zone II and to a lesser degree in Zone III.

It has already been stated that the level of "Household Income" as such is an inadequate measure of poverty. This comes out clearly in Tables 12A and 12B which examine the presence of poverty in terms of slabs of "Household Income". All households (sector-wise and zone-wise) in the "Household Income" level Rs. 0-100/2 months are in absolute poverty. There is however great variation in the presence of absolute poverty in the "Household Income" slab Rs. 101-200 and Rs. 201-400/2 months. In the sector wise grouping of households into small slabs of household income there does not show up any sign of absolute poverty once the household income rose above Rs. 400 for two months. In the zone-wise grouping the general pattern is the same except that in the small Zone V (Colombo Municipality) a few cases of absolute poverty (i.e 1.95% of the households at Rs. 401-450/2 months) show up above the level of Rs. 400/2 months). This may represent cases of over-crowding and the high presence of dependent members (school going children included) in these households.

In the sector-wise examination as much as 92.96% of the island's affected households fall into the Rural Sector which no doubt is a large Sector holding 70.91% of the island's total households. In the zone wise examination as much as 68.74% of the island's affected households fall into Zone IV which holds 39.16% of the island's total households.

Characteristics of Zone IV

Zone IV consists of seven Districts: Kandy, Matale, N. Eliya, Badulla, Ratnapura, Kegalle and Kurunegala. It covers the tea and rubber-growing areas and includes Kurunegala District where the main export crop is coconut. In the survey sample as much as 88.67% of the households of the estate sector fall into this area but they account for 23.16% of the zone's households. As much as 70.76% of the households in this zone fall into the category of Rural Non-estate, namely, village households (Vide Table 4).

It may be noted that as much as 92.96% of the island's total households showing absolute poverty fall into the Rural Sector (Vide Table 12A).

ABSOLUTE POVERTY: THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS IN TERMS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVELS

TABLE 12A
ABSOLUTE POVERTY: THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS IN TERMS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVELS

A. As shown up by Sectors

Two-month Income of Spending Unit (Rs.)	Urban Sector		Rural Sector		Estate Sector		Totals for Income Slabs for all Sectors together		Affected Households as a percentage of Total Households in Income Slab (1066) shown up	
	TH	TA	TH	TA	TH	TA	TH	TA	TH	TA
0-100	6	6	44	44	6	6	56	56	100	5.2
101-200	58	18	236	177	20	3	314	198	63.06	18.6
201-400	185	42	1114	770	167	0	1466	812	55.39	76.2
401-450	75	0	330	0	57	0	462	0	0	0
450-500	53	0	284	0	52	0	380	0	0	0
Total up to Rs. 500	377	66	2008	991	302	9	2678	1066		
Affected Households										
a) As percentage of total affected households										
All-Island (1066)	6.19		92.96		0.84		100			
b) As percentage of total households in Sector (given in brackets)	6.45		26.06		1.68		19.88			
	(1023)		(3803)		(537)		(5363)			

Note: In the Sector-wise analysis the 1066 affected households shown up constitute 19.9% of the total households in the sample (5363). No household with a household income above Rs. 400 for 2 months is shown up as affected in the Sector-wise analysis.

TH — The total number of households in the Island sample which fall into the Income Slab for the particular sector.
TA — The total affected households in the Sector that fall into the specific Income Slab.

Two-months Income of Spending Unit (Rs.)	Zone I			Zone II			Zone III			Zone IV			Zone V			Zone VI			Totals for Income Slabs for all Zones taken together	Affected Households as % of Total Households in Income Slabs	Affected Households in Slab as % of Island's Total of Households affected (883) shown up
	VI	HT	VI	VI	HT	VI	VI	HT	VI	HT	VI	HT	VI	HT	VI	HT	VI	HT			
0-100	11	11	10	10	10	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6.34
101-200	99	30	30	30	30	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	19.71
201-400	407	111	111	111	111	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	72.93
401-450	137	0	66	66	66	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.01
451-500	111	0	46	46	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.95
Total to Rs. 500	767	25	380	380	380	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	591	0.00

Note: In the Zone-wise analysis the 883 affected households shown up constitute 16.46% of the total households in the Island sample (5363). No households with a household income above Rs. 450 for 2 months is affected by Absolute Poverty in the Zone-wise analysis.
TH — The total number of households in the island sample which fall into the Income Slab for the particular Zone.
TA — The total affected households in the Zone that fall into the specific Income Slab.
Sources: Survey of Consumer Incomes 1973 and Marga Institute.

Zone IV no doubt is a large zone holding 39.16% of the island's households but as much as 28.01% of the zone's households show absolute poverty. In the zone-wise analysis, this zone accounts for as much as 68.74% of the total affected households in the island (Vide Table 12B).

The relative size of the average household (spending unit) in the Rural sector may be a contributing factor to the inadequacy of per capita food at the lower levels of household income. The pattern of household sizes between Rs. 200/2 months and Rs. 400/2 months may be noted. It is as follows:-

TABLE 13
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS

Income Group 2 mths/Rs.	Urban	Rural	Estate
201 - 250 ..	3.2	3.1	2.5
251 - 300 ..	3.6	4.1	3.4
301 - 350 ..	3.7	4.6	4.1
351 - 400 ..	4.6	5.1	4.3

Note: The number of households in the all-island sample falling into the above household income slabs amount to—Urban: 185 or 18.08% of Urban households, Rural: 1114 or 29.29% of Rural households and Estate: 167 or 31.10% of estate households.

Zone IV, is the least "Urban" of all the zones and it is highly "Rural" besides containing the largest concentration of estates where, however, *per capita* nutritional inadequacy was not notably evident. The evidence points to a qualitative and quantitative inadequacy of food in the village areas of the zone and among persons whose occupations are tied up with *non-estate agriculture*, at the lower household income levels.

The Survey of Consumer Finances, also brought out the fact that persons in non-estate agriculture depend to a very considerable extent on supplementary non-agricultural sources of income. This is not so in the case where the main source of income of an income receiver is from, say, fishing or industrial work. An extract from Table 72 of the Survey of Consumer Finances given below in Table 14 brings out this fact.

Persons in non-estate agriculture in Zone IV have little or no supplementary employment in the organised large estates and with a very negligible presence of urban centres, they have little opportunity to acquire other skills and find other sources of income to supplement their earnings from non-estate agriculture. The lack of prosperous urban centres results also in the villagers getting poor prices for the surplus of their agricultural produce.

TABLE 14

TWO-MONTH INCOME FROM MAIN OCCUPATION—
ALL-ISLAND (Rs.)

(1)	(2) No. of income receivers	(3) Mean income from all sources	(4) Mean income from main occupation only	(5) 4 ÷ 3 × 100
Farmers ..	1551	530.16	288.74	54.53
Farm workers ..	565	282.84	176.15	62.19
Estate workers ..	1514	216.28	155.09	71.76
Fishermen/Hunters ..	84	523.60	391.61	74.84
Industrial workers ..	971	497.68	362.00	72.69

Further light may be shed on the conditions prevailing in Zone IV when we examine the occupational pattern of the *income receivers* in this zone. In doing so, we should have in mind the fact that the average household, both in the Urban and Rural sectors, have 1.26 income receivers whereas in the estate sector, it is 2.41 with 48.96% of these latter income receivers being women receiving lower wages than the men. As already stated, 23.16% of the households in the zone fall into the estate sector and as much as 70.76% of the households fall into the rural sector where non-estate agriculture predominates. When we examine the occupations of income receivers in Tables P 54 to P 71 of the Survey of Consumer Finances, we see that Zone IV holds 45.23% of the income receivers of the island who depend on non-state agricultural occupations. The next nearest zone in this regard is Zone II (Hambantota, Moneragala, Amparai, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam) where 22.66% of the income receivers are in non-estate agricultural occupations. As regards non-agricultural occupations in the zone, it is Zone IV that is least favoured at 32.16%. The next worst off is again Zone II with 44.62%.

The predominance of non-estate agriculture prompts us to have a closer look at non-estate agriculture in this zone. The cultivators are dependent on the available paddy land and highland in a territory surrounded by organised plantations. The cultivation is largely rain-fed. Unlike in parts of Zone III, (Jaffna District for example), there is no developed and traditional system of intensive cultivation of high priced items such as onions and chillies. The introduction of systematic cultivation of tobacco, potatoes, etc. for the city markets is of relatively recent origin. The resources available per worker in village agriculture in this zone are relatively lower than in other agricultural regions.

If we take the extents of non-estate agricultural land and match it with the numbers engaged in non-estate agriculture in the respective zones, we get a rough and ready index of resource availability from zone to zone. This has been done and presented in Tables 15 and 16. The cultivators in Zone IV are worst off in regard to acreage available per worker both in the case of highland and paddyland.

Note: The second part of this study dealing with other dimensions of poverty in 1973, such as poverty in relation to Income Receivers, Housing, Education etc. and the condition of people above "absolute poverty," but still falling short of satisfying "basic needs" will be presented in a subsequent issue of this journal.

TABLE 15
NON-ESTATE AGRICULTURE: INDEX OF RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

(1)	(2) Total Income Receivers in Sample	(3) Total in Agri- culture in Sample	(4) Total in Non-Estate Agr.		(5) Total Non-Estate Acreage	(6) Total Non-Estate Holdings	(7) Index of Acreage per worker $5 \div 4(a)$
			(a) No.	(b) % of (3)			
All Island	7326	3654	2140	58.57	3,887,287	1,646,461	1816.49
Urban	1285	75	66	88.00			
Rural	4746	2365	1995	84.36			
Estate	1295	1214	79	6.51			
Zone 1+5	2675	758	423	55.80	941,076	565,533	2224.77
2	882	488	485	99.39	984,764	283,283	2030.44
3	610	265	264	99.62	445,322	195,560	1686.83
4	3159	2143	968	45.17	1,516,125	602,085	1566.24
Total	7326	3654	2140	58.57	3,887,287	1,646,461	1816.49

Source: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 for sample of workers in Agriculture.
The Census of Agriculture 1973—preliminary release, for acreages.

USE OF MEDIA FOR PROMOTING INTELLECTUAL AND AESTHETIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

W. Diyasena

Providing children with basic amenities, such as food, clothing and shelter alone may not be sufficient to ensure a rich and full life for them, either in their present phase of development, or in the future, when they grow up to be mature adults. Children, by nature, are endowed with an abundance of curiosity, imagination and creativity, and these ever-present and dynamic attributes give rise to a wide range of cognitive, affective and aesthetic needs which must be adequately satisfied in order to bring about a sound growth and development of their total personalities. Thus, nourishment and care of the mind becomes as vital as the nourishment of the body, during practically all the phases of growth and development of a human being, from his infancy to his adolescence and beyond.

Generally, it is the organised formal school system which principally caters to this wide variety of needs. However the nourishment for the mind, provided by the schools may not be always adequate to satisfy the voracious appetites of children created by the many faceted needs mentioned above, so that it becomes incumbent on Society, through its other institutions and agencies that are concerned with the welfare of children, to produce and provide suitable sources of nourishment to meet the demands in respect of this particular sphere. These sources of nourishment take many and varied forms, such as children's literature, children's programmes through the mass-media, which includes the Press, Radio, Cinema and Television, Children's drama and theatre and the Arts for children. The purpose of this paper is to briefly review the current position in Sri Lanka, in respect of these nourishment sources that promote cognitive, affective and aesthetic development in children, in order to ascertain and evaluate the kinds of services they render to their target clientele groups and to explore, in broad terms, the possible avenues of improvement.

Children's Literature: (i) Books

Creative writing in Sinhala, for children in Sri Lanka was first pioneered during this century, by such well-known writers as Munidasa Cumararatunga, Martin Wickremasinghe and G. B. Senanayake. The popularity of some of these stories (e.g. *Heen Saraya*, *Madol Duwa* etc.) may have undoubtedly inspired many others to follow in their path. The other factors that promoted the growth of children's literature in Sinhala in the 1940's and after

TABLE 16

NON-ESTATE AGRICULTURE: INDEX OF AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

(1) Zone	(2) Total in Agriculture in sample	(3) Total in Non-Estate Agriculture in sample	(4) Acreage of asweddumised paddy land	(5) 4-3 Index of Acreage per Worker	(6) Acreage of Home Gardens & Highland	(7) 6-3 Index of Acreage per Worker
All Island	3654	2140	1,189,075	555.64	1,955,193	913.64
Zone 1+5	758	423	185,668	438.93	563,282	1,331.64
2	488	485	298,251	614.95	428,017	882.51
3	265	264	261,739	991.44	714,285	1,705.63
4	2143	968	343,415	354.77	821,138	848.28

Source: Survey of Consumer Finances 1973 for Agricultural Workers in sample. Census of Agriculture 1973, Small Holdings Final Tables Stage 1 for data on Acreages.

are seen in certain changes in the educational policies that were introduced by the State during this period. The introduction of free education from the Kindergarten to the University and the adoption of Sinhala as the medium of instruction for all Sinhala children, firstly, in the primary school and then progressively in the Secondary School and the Universities, are two major educational reforms that were introduced in the mid 1940's. These reforms have contributed in no uncertain terms, to the ushering in of an egalitarian and a democratic society, thus bringing a revival of a long neglected language and the indigenous cultural milieu. The enactment of the Official Language Act in 1956, making Sinhala the official language of the country, further enhanced the position of the language. The social mobility generated by these changes has gradually diminished the social cleavages between the English educated and the Sinhala educated classes. It has also removed to a large extent the contempt in which the Sinhala language and Sinhala literature were held by the anglicised upper and middle classes and has placed a new economic and social value on the knowledge of Sinhala. Since children of the more privileged classes, if Sinhalese by birth, are now educated through the medium of Sinhala, most of their parents have become conscious of the need to provide them with reading material in this language. Since free education has enormously increased the number of school-going children and has brought literacy to nearly 80% of the population, the demand for books in Sinhala has also increased considerably.

The writing and production of children's books in Sinhala began as a by-product of the text-book publishing industry in order to meet the growing demand created by the social and educational changes referred to above. However, it appears that during the early phase of book development for children there has not been a clear realisation of the distinction between class text-books and creative literature for children, among most writers and publishers. Some of the early story books for children were produced in the stereotype format of text-books, some containing even questions and exercises for class-room use. In fact, these books were termed "supplementary readers", and probably, the intention of the producers of these books would have been to provide a Sinhala equivalent for the *A. L. Bright Story Readers* and similar supplementary readers that were widely read by the upper and middle class children at the time when the medium of instruction was English.

Referring to the talent and expertise that was available for writing children's books at the beginnings of the growth of a children's literature in Sinhala, a well-known educationist and himself an author of a number of children's books, has the following comments to make:

"Most of the writers who came forward or whose services were secured by publishers for this purpose had no special talent in the writing of creative literature for children or understanding of the qualities needed in a good children's book. Many of them were text-book writers or professional writers of adult literature who lent their hand to the production of children's literature merely to enhance their earnings. Such authorship naturally resulted in the production of books unrelated in their content to children's interests and needs or unsuitable in the range and level of their language as children's reading material. Since there was a corresponding lack of appreciation among publishers of the manner in which children's books should be illustrated, laid out and printed, the pictorial material and design of these books were also unsatisfactory.... In spite of its serious limitations and imperfections, however, this development had certain positive aspects. It did bring into the school and secondarily into the home, a certain body of reading material outside the basal reader, and to this extent fostered the habit of reading among children."¹

Though some of these comments may hold true even today, it should be noted that by and large, there is a greater degree of realisation, especially during the last two decades, among educationists, writers, teachers and parents in Sri Lanka of the need for discrimination in the matter of children's reading. Such discrimination has become imperative on the basis of world wide research done on the needs and interests of children and their reading habits. It is now generally accepted that a children's book must be related to the outlook, the interests and needs of children at the particular age-level to which it is addressed, that its vocabulary and sentence-patterns must be within their range of comprehension, and that its typography, lay-out and illustrations must encourage and assist the act of reading. These ideas have begun to make themselves felt in the writing and production of children's books, though the volume of literature conforming to these criteria is still small.

Certain noteworthy features in respect of the production of children's books during the present decade are discernible.

Firstly despite the stimulus given to the production of children's literature, the actual output of children's books, title-wise, has not shown a considerable increase. Consequently, a child with a keen and active interest in reading may inevitably be faced with an insufficiency of books at every stage of his early reading life.

1. Sugathapala, H. D. "*Children's and Juvenile Literature in Ceylon*" UNESCO, 1966.

The limited choice available for a child of a particular age group is sometimes considered to be the inevitable result of the low purchasing power of the broad mass of the population. Though it could have acted as a handicap to some extent, it may not be reasonable to explain the present situation entirely in terms of this factor, because it will become evident in the subsequent discussion on other branches of children's literature, that we have to look for other causal factors. However, for the present, the output of children's literature in Sinhala should be considered as inadequate not only when compared with publishing in the same field in most other developing and developed countries, but also in comparison to the general growth of publishing in Sinhala during this decade. It is important to note that the growth of publishing for children has not kept pace with the expansion of adult literature.

Secondly, there is a dearth in the variety and range in the available children's books, in terms of both content and of reading levels. If compared to a child in any other country where children's literature is highly developed, the Sri Lankan child is certainly grossly disadvantaged and under-nourished, in this respect. In such countries, a child of any age should be able to find books related to many widely different fields of experience and reading ability. In Sri Lanka, there is a shocking scarcity of suitable reading materials in certain fields of experience such as science, environment, hobbies, arts, games and sport, etc., at any level. Though there is some activity with regard to the production of science books, particularly for the older age group, one cannot be very complacent about the present situation, because there is much scope for development and improvement. Generally, books only of limited kinds are available for children of the older age-groups, while children of the younger age-groups have hardly any books suited to their interests and reading abilities.

Thirdly, it is probably the *picture-story* book meant for children of about 6-8 years of age, that is now widely produced and read. Beyond the age of about 8, however, even the number of story-books available begins to dwindle sharply as the child grows older. However, the child under 11 years of age, has a fair collection of fairy tales and folktales addressed to his reading level. This collection includes stories written by some well-known contemporary writers, and also very attractively printed Sinhala translations and adaptations of Russian children's stories, published in Moscow. Children between ages 11 and 14 are severely starved of suitable story-books. There are however, a few translations of well-known English and European classics for young people.

If the present unbalanced development of children's books in Sinhala is to be corrected, and if the large areas in which there

are only a few titles available or none at all are to be filled, the publisher should assume a greater responsibility than at present; he should play a more dynamic role in working out and executing a planned programme of publishing in Sinhala for children of all age-groups.

(ii) Newspapers

Considering the size, structure, the high rate of literacy and the heterogeneity of the population of Sri Lanka, the number of daily newspapers published, may not be adequate to cater to the wide range of interests prevalent in the different strata in society. It is apparent that while the few major newspapers attempt to cater to a variety of interests (within the confines of extremely limited space) a few others unequivocally confine their news-coverage and feature articles to their particular political beliefs and commitments. Under this situation, we find that children are the most adversely affected group in society, as far as this particular medium is concerned. It must be remembered that the newspaper is one of the first printed materials to come into contact with children (pre-primary and school-going) through their parents and other adults, and hence could have a far-reaching impact on their concept formation, language development, attitudes and interests. It so appears that newspaper publishers may have to pay some attention to the special needs in particular of the children of school-going age. From this point of view, perhaps, the editors of at least a few of the major newspapers (e.g. the *Daily News*, *Dinamina*) have thought it appropriate to include a "Children's Page" (very often, half a page or a few columns) once a week exclusively devoted for children ranging from about 6 to 16 years of age. This "page", generally contains feature articles on topics of interest to children stories and original short compositions, verses, poems, drawings, cartoons etc., done by children belonging to the same age group. Unfortunately, the general run of materials and the get-up of this page is rather unattractive, lacks imagination and grossly inadequate that it could hardly be expected to have any significant impact on the broad mass of children. Some newspapers which had been carrying a children's page until recently, appear to have abandoned it altogether.

(iii) Children's Weeklies, Periodicals and Magazines

Under these circumstances, the demand for and the need to have regular publications devoted exclusively for children, adolescents and the youth has been recognised rather belatedly by the major newspaper publishers, but they have failed to make a worthwhile contribution, especially with regard to the needs of children under 14 years of age. The only exception could be the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd., which publishes *Mihira*

The one and the only noteworthy weekly for children and adolescents. *Mihira* was started about 15 years ago, and it is popular among the various groups of school-going children studying in Grade 1 up to about G.C.E. Ordinary Level (current average net sales per week around 200,000). Since this Weekly attempts to cater to a variety of needs and interests of the wide spectrum of school-going children, a whole range of materials, including children's stories, original compositions, verses, poems, drawings and cartoons by children, feature articles on science, mathematics, social studies, literature, cartoon strips etc., are included in each issue. So much so that a child or adolescent reading any single issue of *Mihira* will confront a wide range of linguistic styles and levels, which, of course, is difficult to avoid in a publication of this nature. However, it is rather distressing to note that since of late, far too much emphasis is being given to the publication of public examination-oriented "lessons" (such as the Grade 5 scholarship and G.C.E. Ordinary Level Examinations) based on subject-syllabuses. Consequently, the space and attention devoted to creative literature and topics of general interest has fallen short of the actual requirements. This may be perhaps consequent on the fact that *Mihira* is more a commercial venture than an educational enterprise. However, it may not be impossible to reconcile the two while maintaining a high level of net sales, if the publishers are prepared to throw in a greater degree of effort, imagination and creativity, supported by research.

Children's magazines have been a rarity in this country. The few which appear sporadically, go out of circulation after a brief span of time. However, *Nuwana* a monthly published by the Department of Educational Publications has managed to remain in circulation for a reasonable length of time, though it does not make its appearance on the shelves regularly on schedule. This magazine, catering to the interests and needs of largely the lower and upper secondary level children, contains many attractive and educationally useful features which, of course, could be due to the fact that the editors are able to utilize the editorial expertise and facilities already available with the Educational Publications Department. This is a publication which should receive greater support from parents, teachers and educationists, if it is to receive an enduring place in the sphere of interests of children.

Ironically, in spite of the protests of many discerning parents and teachers, a large mass of the children, adolescents and the youth belonging to practically every strata in society, appear to have found a permanent place in their hearts for a particular group of publications which has made a tremendous breakthrough in the above mentioned readership during the past five years or more. These are the well-known *cartoon weeklies*,

such as *Sathuta* (Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd.), *Siththara* (Multipax Ltd., Ceylon), *Suhada* (Tropical Canned Foods Ltd.), *Swarna* (Grain-field Publishing Co.), *Sithuwama* etc. These publications do not by any means feign to cater to children exclusively; on the contrary, they have ingeniously included a variety of materials to attract as wide a readership as possible, ranging from children to middle-aged adults. But it can be safely surmised that the bulk of the readership comprise children, adolescents and the youth. For example, a few years ago, when the weekly net sales of *Siththara* had topped the 100,000 mark - market research done by the publishers of *Siththara* has revealed that even in remote rural areas (as in Minneriya) the cartoon weeklies enjoy the widest circulation among the weeklies. Informal surveys on reading habits of school-going children (both urban and rural) done by Education Officers, teachers, etc., have brought to light the fact that children accord the highest priority to cartoon weeklies in their choice of supplementary reading materials.

These publications are very attractively mounted with full colour, neat drawings, serialising a whole range of adventures suspense, thriller, detective and teenage love stories, which children of all ages relish to read. In fact, some of these cartoon characters have become household names and heroes of children (e.g. Unico and Toga—counterparts of the Superman and Tarzan of the West). Since the publications are not designed for children of a particular age-group, the younger children also inevitably do read the stories meant for the older groups and adults (such as the love and crime stories). Premature exposure of very young children to such material may have a detrimental effect on them, as far as their personality development is concerned. Undoubtedly, the picture-story is a very potent medium to motivate children to develop their reading habits, but unless the stories, language and the pictures are selected carefully, it can have adverse effects on them, the correction of which could be difficult in the years to come. It may be vain or inherently invalid to fight against the cartoon medium, under the circumstances. In fact more research should be done on the effect of this medium on the interests, attitudes, language growth and perceptual and conceptual development of children of our country. It is on the basis of such research that graded materials, using the cartoon technique, should be prepared for children belonging to the different age groups. The "Comics" of the West too, were at the butt-end of criticism for a long time mainly due to the misuses of the medium; but there are instances where this cartoon medium has been constructively used to illustrate Western Classics, such as plays of Shakespeare, stories of Mark Twain etc. Similar attempts must be made in our context too. (However, it must be noted that some

of the local cartoon weeklies have now started serialising the story of Guththila and Musila and the *Ummagga Jathakaya*—both of which happen to be prescribed texts for the G.C.E. examination. Some of these publications have also included a new feature—namely, a serialized, illustrated English—language “course”. Such features if carefully done, could contribute to the development of literary tastes and language abilities even of those children studying in lower secondary grades. Mention should be made of an interesting children’s monthly in Sinhala called *Ambili Mama* (printed and published in India by J. Vishwanathan Reddy, on behalf of the Chanda Mama Children’s Fund). It contains interesting stories from India, West Asian fables, mythology and folk lore, and is well illustrated. The publishers have also put out a cartoon series on Emperor Asoka, Lord Buddha, Shakuntala, Nala Damayanthi, Jataka Stories, Hithopadesa, King Kusa and Angulimala—stories which are well known to Sinhala Buddhist children. These are also available in Sinhala. These publications are far superior in quality (both in content and format) than most such publications that are found in the local market today.

Children’s Library Services

It is pertinent at this stage to make a brief reference to the children’s library services available in this country. Since the vast majority of the parents and children in Sri Lanka cannot afford to buy supplementary reading materials regularly, it is the children’s library that is best suited to adequately cater to the reading needs of children. The two main agencies which cater to this need are, firstly, the schools and secondly, the local authorities. Only a small number of good schools in the island can claim to have well-equipped libraries that are designed to cater to all grades and age-levels of children in their schools. Many of the so-called school libraries are mere apologies for a library. They hardly meet the basic requirements of a good children’s library. This is mainly due to the inadequacy of funds available for the development of school libraries and to the lack of trained personnel to run such libraries. Only a few schools today have the benefits of the services of professionally qualified school librarians. The vast majority of school libraries are managed by ordinary teachers who have the least knowledge, experience and training (or even the interest) in running such a specialised service. So much so that, any one who perceives the display arrangements of such a library tends to get the impression that the main objective is to keep the books safely locked up in cupboards, out of reach from the “naughty lot”, rather than to find every book its potential reader. The excellent scheme of organising a central library for every educational circuit, started by the Ministry in the late 1960’s, has not kept pace during the 70s.

On the other hand, the local authorities too have not given sufficient thought or recognition to this important aspect of providing reading facilities for children. Most local authorities have organised libraries and reading rooms but they are essentially meant and patronised by adults and youth. However, the Colombo Public Library (run by the Colombo Municipal Council) opened a Children’s Library, housed in the same premises, in April 1972. Records show that by the end of 1972, 468 children had joined as members, and a total of 12,497 books had been issued. Children’s books are available in Sinhala, Tamil and English and there is a reference corner. “Weekly story hours are held alternately in Sinhala and Tamil. Other features such as exhibitions, discussions, musical programmes, essay competitions, lectures, art, handicrafts etc., have been introduced in order to encourage the children to make better use of the library, and to draw out their potential talents”.¹ It may be in the best interest of the children of our country, if the other local authorities too follow the example set by the Colombo Public Library.

Among the non-governmental agencies which run such parallel services, mention should be made of the British Council, which runs a children’s library service in Colombo and in their other branch libraries

The Radio

The radio is one of the marvels of the modern age, in the sense that it has presented us with the extraordinary phenomenon of so many millions of people hearing the same sounds at precisely the same time. Of this distributive aspect of radio, Max Beloff has said that “It might reasonably be held that only the invention of printing itself looks like remaining in history as an achievement of the same magnitude”. (The prospects of TV will be discussed later).

Thus, in modern Sri Lanka, it is evident that millions of children from their infancy onwards get exposed to the influence of the radio at least for a few hours every day—and extending perhaps to their whole life spans. Since the radio in Sri Lanka is State-controlled, it would be reasonable for one to expect that the children of Sri Lanka would get a better deal from the radio than from the local press and book publishers. Regrettably, the actual state of affairs leaves little room for such high hopes or expectations.

1- *Libraries and People* — Colombo Public Library 1925—1975: A Commemorative Volume, edited by Ishvari Corea, Colombo Public Library, 1975.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) organises its general broadcasts under two main transmissions, viz. Transmission I (general or national) and Transmission II (Commercial). As in the case of the other mass media, the radio too has to take into account the wide range of interests and needs of its heterogeneous and widely spread out clientele of listeners, in presenting a wide variety of programmes directed towards the various listener groups in the island. Children ranging from about 2 to 14 years of age can be considered an important and an enthusiastic listener group, but for them the SLBC allocates a meagre half hour to one hour daily in the evening. It is this half to one hour per day that the mass of children of the above age group has to share among themselves during the week. Thus short programmes for tiny tots and pre-school children do not occur more than once or twice a week, whereas primary and secondary level children seem to get a bigger share of the time allocation. The general run of programmes comprise children's songs, music, recital of verses and poems, stories, discussions on topics of interest and drama. Of the children's programmes, the 'Drama Hour' happens to be the most popular, since most of these programmes are produced with a professional finesse, using material appropriate for that particular age group. One serious short-coming is the inadequacy of suitable songs and poetry for children which could be popularised among children also through their formal school system. It is inevitable that under such circumstances, children get exposed to the onslaughts of the general and particularly the commercial broadcasts, which indiscriminately relay programmes consisting of cheap film songs and 'pop music', to which children of the younger age group may get attracted, but could in the long run, have an adverse and a crippling effect on the development of their aesthetic sensibilities and tastes.

The fact that this unwholesome tendency is allowed to grow unarrested is made obvious, when we survey some of the other programmes designed for general consumption, but to which younger children too have developed an irresistible attraction. Programmes such as "*Muvan Palessa*", "*Handiya Gedera*", "*Mahadana Muththa*", "*Kekille Rajjuruwo*" (all broadcast over the Commercial transmission) are highly popular among children of all age groups. But, of course, these programmes are meant to serve only a very limited purpose of providing cheap humour and entertainment for the youth and adults. Superficial and innocuous as they are, they are also useless and lack any lasting listening value. If children's listening is limited *only* to these programmes (which unfortunately is the case with many children), then the effect of the radio on children could be either nil or positively detrimental.

An important aspect of broadcasting for children in this country is the Educational Broadcasting Service of the SLBC. This service which had a history of over 25 years has been variously organised from time to time to serve the educational needs of the school-going children, particularly those studying in the primary, lower secondary and the upper secondary levels. The listening schools which were spread out mostly in the rural areas of the country and to which radio sets had been given by the Ministry of Education, were registered with the (then) Radio Ceylon, and the Ministry of Education for administrative purposes. The Educational Broadcasting Service compiled the programmes with the collaboration of teachers and time-tables and information sheets were sent out to the respective schools each term of the year. Most of the programmes were G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) examination-oriented, and priority was given to subjects such as science, mathematics, history, geography, civics and language. There was hardly any coordination between the Ministry of Education and the schools on the one hand and Radio Ceylon (later SLBC), on the other.

With the launching of the Education Reforms of 1972, the Ministry of Education decided to put the medium of the radio to its maximum use in order to achieve a number of purposes such as the more expeditious dissemination of information on the new education policies, the curriculum and syllabuses to the parents, teachers, educational administrators and the general public; the supplementing of in-service education of teachers; familiarising the teachers and pupils with the content areas introduced into the new syllabuses etc. With this end in view the SLBC reorganised its Educational Broadcasting Service with a permanent Coordinating Committee comprising senior officials from the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Development Centre and the SLBC (including the Education Service). This new set up facilitated the Educational Broadcasting Service to design and produce good quality education programmes for children on a more systematic basis. Initially emphasis was given to the new Primary Education Programmes and the NCGE Programmes (especially the languages, integrated science, mathematics, English and to some extent, the pre-vocational studies).

This broad set up continues under the latest curricular revision (1979) too, and educational programmes based on the revised syllabuses are broadcast to the listening schools regularly. The present programmes cater mostly to the primary level, middle-school and the GCE (Ordinary Level) pupils. Science, language, mathematics, English and GCE (OL) aesthetic studies (music, dancing and art) are the main subjects for which radio programmes are produced at present.

It has been possible to achieve a fair degree of improvement in the quality of these educational programmes during the past few years, due to the fact that the SLBC is able to secure the services of experienced producers, programme writers (generally teachers) and other artistes who have an understanding of their particular subject and also of the special possibilities of the radio medium for instructional purposes. Nevertheless there is much room for further improvement.

On the whole it is obvious that the Educational Broadcasting Service has failed to make a significant impact upon the mass of the children, their parents or the teachers. This is mainly due to the fact that the SLBC and the Ministry of Education have still failed to set up a suitable machinery to achieve the type of co-ordination that is essential to run this service effectively. The total number of registered listening schools do not exceed 2000 today, which means that the *actual* number of listening schools could be far less. There are over 2500 small schools, spread far and wide in the country, which suffer from special disabilities, such as severe shortage of well-qualified teachers and instructional materials. At present the radio (TV in the future, perhaps) could be used most effectively to meet at least some of these disabilities. Programmes designed for the general educational enrichment of children also should be given greater emphasis. The SLBC hardly conducts any trial listening sessions with children, to test out suitability of the written programmes. It receives very little feedback from schools for the simple reason that listener research is thoroughly neglected. It is a pity that in this modern age, an important and a potent medium like the radio is not put to its maximum use, despite the aspirations of successive governments.

Drama and Theatre for Children

Throughout human history drama has persistently remained one of the most potent of the performing arts, in building and shaping the religious, aesthetic, cultural and national sensibilities of individuals and communities. Children of all ages have a special liking for drama on account of their innate tendency for group-play and role-playing. So much so that most cultures—whether highly sophisticated or very primitive are endowed with a store-house of children's play activities (often unique to that culture) where the elements of dramatisation are clearly visible. On the basis of worldwide research on this subject, there is now almost universal agreement among psychologists and educationists on the fact that drama could be used as a very effective pedagogical method in the education of children—due to the very special advantages it has in motivating children to participate in learning situations.

It is pertinent at this point to refer to the two main branches of drama for children. Firstly, *child-drama* (also known as Creative-dramatics) which is more a methodology than a discipline, and hence is concerned more with the younger groups of children, is more informal and permits improvisation practically in all aspects of the activities (such as acting, costuming etc.); to an extent which the formal theatre may not accept. Furthermore, "the actors-audience division" seen in the formal theatre is seldom adhered to when engaging in creative-dramatics with groups of children. Secondly, we have the formal *Children's Theatre*, which follows the normal principles of the Theatre, but with special consideration to the needs and interests of children. In this case, plays appropriate for particular age-groups of children may be performed by children themselves, or preferably by adult and professional artistes. In most countries the Children's Theatre is managed by very experienced professionals who are especially trained in the various aspects of the children's theatre. It is now universally accepted that both types of drama, if correctly used, would contribute immensely to the development of the total personality of the child. The following paragraphs are devoted to a brief survey of the scene in Sri Lanka with regard to the types of children's drama referred to above.

It is in the formal school system that child-drama could be most effectively incorporated either as a pedagogical method or as a curricular subject. The widest scope to use child-drama is, of course, found in the Primary School—and we see that a fair amount of effort and thinking have gone into the new aesthetic programme of Grades 1-5 to utilise child dramatic activities in the teaching of music and dance. The difficulty in not including creative-dramatics proper at this level could be due to the fact that the vast majority of teachers handling this programme are untrained in this particular branch of study. Drama as a method of teaching has been receiving only incidental mention in most Teacher Training Courses, and this may be one of the reasons why this method is not used by teachers in class-room teaching, to the extent that it should be done. Though the Ministry of Education has organised (during the past few years) a number of short in-service courses for teachers concerned with child-drama, with the support and collaboration of the British Council and the UNESCO, the vast majority of the teachers still remain untouched. An attempt was made in 1975 by the Curriculum Development Centre to design a creative-dramatics programme for the Junior Secondary level (Grades 6-9) leading to the NCGE examination. A pilot project was launched for this purpose with 10 schools participating and trial teaching of pilot materials was done for two years (1976-77) in respect of grades 6 and 7. Unfortunately,

this project has been abandoned under the latest curricular revision (1979). However, 'Drama and Theatre' has been recognised as an approved subject for the GCE (Advanced Level) Examination in 1979 and thereafter; but the benefits of this course will go to only that small minority of adolescents who manage to move into the Upper Secondary level of education. Thus we see that the *formal* curriculum of the Primary and the Secondary School System does not have very much to offer to children, in the provision of useful and interesting experiences in drama.

Nevertheless, drama and theatre activities in schools, generally organised as 'out-of-school' or 'Co-curricular' programmes enjoy much popularity among children and teachers. Many schools have students' drama societies whose main function is to organise term-end or inter-house drama competitions or festivals within the school. These activities are handled and guided by teachers who (though enthusiastic) are generally amateurish and untrained in this field; and since this does not come under the formal curriculum, many of them fail to receive the attention of the education authorities to obtain adequate educational and administrative support, through their normal course of duties. Moreover in the examination grades (including grade 5), these co-curricular activities have got eroded owing to the ever-increasing pressure on public-examinations. Hence, we see that, generally, much of the dramatic activities in most schools are concentrated in the non-examination grades of the Primary and lower Secondary levels. The annual Drama Competition sponsored by the Ministry of Education under the auspices of the UNESCO need also be mentioned here. Though this competition succeeds in generating a lot of enthusiasm and activity among children, it generally ends up by causing much frustration and disappointment to the majority due to the total lack of or insufficient, administrative and financial support expert technical and educational guidance and follow-up work. Yet thanks to the host of relatively unknown and unheard of enthusiastic teachers, it has been possible to provide for a very vital need of the school going population, even though the majority of the products may fall far short of expectations. However, it must be noted here, that some of the better known theatre artistes in the local scene today, happen to have had their initiation through their school drama clubs.

The need to organise a *Children's Theatre Movement* in this country has been long felt by many discerning educationists and practising dramatists, but it is still in its embryonic stage, struggling to be born. Neither the Education nor the Cultural Ministries have even given serious thought to this subject to warrant concrete action. Almost a decade ago, a voluntary group in Kandy, put up an ambitious proposal with the support of a few senior

lecturers of the Education Faculty of the University of Ceylon (Peradeniya Campus), Principals of some leading schools in Kandy and a few leading educationists and dramatists to set up an organisation to promote a children's theatre movement, in direct collaboration with the school-going children of the Kandy Education Region, but unfortunately it ended up in a fiasco, due to the indifference and lack of support of the Education Department. Thereafter, a number of voluntary and independent groups have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to organise theatre for children. The Children and Youth Theatre Group of Sri Lanka (affiliated to the ASITEJ) may be mentioned here, in this respect, which is committed to this idea, but unfortunately, they too lack sufficient support of educationists, teachers and dramatists (backed by financial and other resources) which is imperative in order to achieve a degree of success adequate to create an impression among the mass of children, parents and teachers of this country.

However the picture is not totally bleak. There have been not one, but a number of silver linings in this dark cloud, which could dispel the gloom and infuse hope for the future, due mostly to the untiring efforts and sacrifice of individual teachers and voluntary groups. Most of the plays which could be identified as belonging to theatre for children (appropriate for the age groups 2-14 years of age) have originated as school-productions; and some of these plays, having reached commendable artistic and technical standards, have won the hearts of hundreds of children and adults, and thus have found a permanent niche in the history of the local Sinhala theatre. "*Nari-bena*", "*Kumbichchi*", "*Olu Bakko*", "*Tikiri Menike*", "*Saththunge Punchi Gedera*" and "*Muna Neti Yakka*" are a few which should be mentioned in this respect.

Another phenomenon, which may be mentioned here in passing, is the trend that increasing numbers of school-children mostly at the lower and upper secondary levels have now begun to patronise the adult theatre, rather indiscriminately. (It must be noted that unlike the cinema, the theatre organisers do not seem to be bound to adhere to a certificate of suitability for children, when organising public performances. The normal practice among theatre organisers today, whether it be in the metropolis or in the provincial towns, is to organise two shows per day—a 'matinee' show generally, for school-children and an evening show for adults). The general run of adult Sinhala plays today, deal with essentially adult themes which seek to probe into problems related to love, sex, marriage, group interactions, socio-political conflicts, class-relations etc. Even the language used is mostly full of innuendoes, unique to the adult world. So that, most

children (especially the younger ones) sitting through some of these plays, most probably could be getting quite a distorted view of not only the adult world but also of the Theatre as an art-form. Even in the case of classics such as *Maname* and *Sinhabahu* which are universally enjoyable and which could provide even the younger children with a richly rewarding aesthetic experience, the deeply philosophical sub-textual meanings and the psychological analyses of the human mind at work brought out, could well be beyond the level of comprehension of even the older children. Everybody grants that this is an impasse. The logical solution is, of course, the development of a theatre exclusively meant and designed for children.

The Arts for Children

The main agency through which children acquire knowledge, skills and experiences in the other forms of arts, such as art, music and dancing is the formal school system. The pre-primary or the Montessori schools too provide children under their charge, with experiences in creative art, music and dancing. The experiences thus acquired are very often carried further, broadened and deepened (or may be stultified, benumbed and destroyed) in their informal environments, depending on the kinds of stimuli, incentives and facilities that are made available to them by the other agencies such as the parents, peers and the community, for the practising and the enjoyment of these arts.

On the whole the teaching of art in our schools is better organised than the other aesthetic studies. Immense opportunities are provided to children in most primary schools for activities that allow them free and uninhibited expression of ideas and feelings through painting, drawing, modelling and sculpture. The present day primary teacher is more knowledgeable and enlightened on the function and objectives of child art, than her counterpart a few decades ago. So that, in the present Primary level integrated curriculum, child art and its related activities enjoy a prestigious place and serve a very useful function in developing creativity and aesthetic sensibilities while also contributing towards the teaching of language, mathematics, science, environmental studies etc. This trend continues, though not in the same measure, in the lower-secondary level, but the subject tends to get rather technique-biased, stereo-typed and compartmentalised as it reaches the examination grades.

Dancing and music (and to some extent, art too) though popular subjects in most schools, do not seem to be organised well-enough to serve all the purposes for which they are intended. This could be due to a number of factors, such as short-comings in the curricular policies and design, shortage of qualified and

trained teachers for aesthetic subjects, inadequate administrative and financial support for these programmes etc. In this respect too, the Primary level school, despite severe constraints, is doing its best to keep abreast with modern developments and trends, in the matter of teaching creative dancing and music. It is commendable that the Primary Education Unit of the Curriculum Development Centre has recently published a collection of children's songs (*Singithi Gee*) to be used in the Primary schools. Well-known musicians and lyricists have also contributed to this publication. The important thing is to use this material as widely as possible in our schools, and one indispensable medium through which these songs could be popularised is the radio, through its Educational Broadcasting Service.

Incidentally, (to cite another example) the Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) in Tokyo too has, during the past few years, published a series of LP records including a collection of folk songs of Asian countries (including Sri Lanka), especially meant for listening and/or singing by children at primary and secondary levels. Experts from member countries have participated and contributed to this programme. One of its main objectives is to popularise these songs in the schools of the member countries, by providing children with an opportunity of learning and appreciating children's folk songs of neighbouring countries, thereby opening up a window to get a glance of their rich cultures. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Education has so far failed to make the best use of this rich store of material already available in the country.

Probably this may be due (in addition to the widespread bureaucratic inertia) to the rigid type of curricula and time-tabling practices that are followed in, especially, the lower and upper secondary level schools. The aesthetic studies curriculum of the lower and upper secondary levels (open-access general education stage) would generally be expected to serve the broader objectives of developing aesthetic sensibilities and interests, skills of appreciation and enjoyment of good art etc., among the mass of children rather than to train performing artistes, from among a few selected children. Unfortunately, the dancing and music curricula, in particular, seemed to give an undue emphasis to this aspect of training of skills and techniques, throughout the past years. This probably was caused by certain local conditions, such as the prevalence of regional traditional dance forms (up-country, low-country and Sabaragamuwa dancing) in the case of dancing and in the case of music the greater tradition of the classical Hindustani Music (to which most of our trained musicians subscribe) and the minor tradition of the folk songs and music, which is an integrated aspect of our folk culture. The divisions cited above have their own theories, techni-

ques, traditions of teaching etc. Consequently, when it comes to the matter of curriculum development and teaching (for general education) the various sub-divisions and traditions cited above, tend to get over-emphasised or under-played, according to the particular educational background and training of the individuals who are discharging these particular tasks. This is also due to the fact, that the vast majority of the teachers of music and dancing, are tradition-trained, and therefore lack a broad general education. The ill-effects of this situation was that the majority of children who wished to study either dancing or music as a part of their general education, had to undergo rigorous and unrewarding drilling in techniques and skills, very often, only in one aspect of their study. For example, a child studying dancing may have received instruction mainly in either low-country dancing or up-country dancing; a student of music may have had to concentrate on Hindustani Classical music and neglect the study of local folk music or vice-versa. Obviously this type of curriculum and teaching tended to give a lop-sided education with glaring gaps in the realm of knowledge and the range of aesthetic experiences.

The policy-makers of the Education Reforms of 1972 were aware of these short-comings, when they advocated an integrated aesthetic studies programme for the Junior Secondary level (i.e grades 6-9). Under these reforms, aesthetic studies was made a compulsory subject for the NCGE Examination—a step taken in the correct direction. However, due to administrative short-comings and parochial differences and considerations among those engaged in art-education, this excellent idea of introducing an integrated course on aesthetic studies (art, music and dancing) as a compulsory component of a general education programme never materialised. The compartmentalised courses continued with minor revision and the situation is not very different even today, having gone through another phase of syllabus revision in 1979. However, comparatively speaking, the present syllabuses in dancing and music for the middle school and the GCE (Ordinary Level) have struck upon a better balance in the local traditions and other sub-divisions mentioned above.

The present aesthetic curriculum for grades 6-8 and GCE (Ordinary Level) includes, art, music (Sinhala); carnatic music western music, dancing (Sinhala) and Bharata Natyam.

Children's Cinema

A children's cinema is almost non-existent in this country, since apparently neither the state nor the private sector has thought it necessary or worthwhile to produce cinemafare for children, in spite of the tremendous resources that are at the disposal of both sectors and the immense potential audience

which remains untapped. A few years ago children's cinema was organised at the BMICH and also in a few local cinema halls, with the main purpose of screening popular children's films produced in other countries (especially in the English medium) but even this is now no more.

The inevitable result of this situation is that children of all ages are attracted to the adult cinema, which is undoubtedly, the main source of entertainment for the broad masses. Despite the checks and controls exerted by the Censor Board on the screening of the feature films in general, the comments made above in relation to the present trend of school children patronising the adult theatre, may hold true to a large extent, with regard to the film also.

T V for Children

Television, the most heralded and the most potent of the new media, has finally made its entry into the communication scene in Sri Lanka. Even though the introduction of TV to this country began as a private-sector sponsored venture, with organizational and programming limitations, it is very apparent that the State will step in, in a big way to exploit the potentialities of this powerful medium in order to make its uses and benefits available to the majority of the people. The government has already taken steps in this direction, and it is expected that an islandwide TV network will be instituted within the next few years. Undoubtedly, the children of this country will form a most interested and enthusiastic clientele group coming under the direct influence of this medium. Therefore the progress and developments of this venture during these formative years will be looked upon with great keenness by discerning educationists and parents alike. However, it may be too early to make any evaluative comments on the type of children's programmes offered just now, and on their impact on the particular target groups. Nevertheless, one or two observations arising from the current situation, could be made here, in the hope that these would create a large awareness of some of the problems involved.

It is well-known that many authorities here and abroad, while highlighting the immense possibilities and potentialities of TV, have also expressed deep concern about the dangers and the negative effects of the medium, especially with regard to the aspect of informal and non-formal mass education, not only of the children but also of the adult population. It may be safely assumed that a State-sponsored TV set-up would give priority, to the educational functions rather than to the entertainment and the commercial roles, during the initial stages of its development. Thus, if the non-formal educational functions in respect of

children of all age-groups and social strata are to be given weight age under such a policy, it is imperative that adequate research and planning should be carried out from the very out-set.

It may be useful here to briefly refer to a major problem that formal education in this country is faced with, so that it may help planners to guide the course of TV avoiding the pit-falls. The formal education system today is caught up in a dilemma in attempting to pursue concurrently two compatible objectives which are not readily compatible-on the one hand the promoting of social justice and social mobility by performing equitably its selective function, and on the other teaching a curriculum which would be relevant and useful to the large majority that would not proceed to higher education. A consequence of these internal contradictions in the system is that the more rewarding, challenging and worthwhile aspects of education, such as creative drama, arts and crafts, productive work etc. have got eroded out of the school curriculum. Television is, undoubtedly, best suited to work out a solution to this seemingly insurmountable problem, by providing enrichment programmes covering the above mentioned fields and many more. On the other hand, if it ventures to provide only examination-oriented tutorial help to collegiate students, it is very likely that TV itself would get entangled in the very dilemma as the formal education system from which it is now struggling to extricate itself. In such an eventuality, and also if the government fails to provide TV facilities to all schools alike, it is bound to aggravate the present problem by widening the disparities that already exist in our urban and rural schools.

Conclusion

The preceding paragraphs would have provided a general overview of the main services that are provided for the promotion of intellectual, emotional and aesthetic development of children of this country. Some areas in which the broad mass of children have been neglected and deprived in respect of these developmental needs have also been indicated in the discussion. Since these needs and interests of children are wide and varied, and their satisfaction basic to the growth and development of their personalities, it becomes incumbent on the adult community to pay greater attention to the improvement and development of these services so that these could play a more constructive and a larger role in the lives of the majority of our children. A few suggestions are presented here with this end in view.

- (i) What is needed today are not ad hoc, piece-meal and limited solutions to this major problem area. An all-out and a concerted effort should be made, supported by sufficient funds and other resources, to plan and implement a long term, well designed programme of action whose objective

is the satisfaction of needs related to the cognitive, affective and aesthetic development in the large mass of children in this country. In this respect, the Authorities may consider setting up either a University based or an autonomous central body that will be concerned with the major problems related to the use of Media in the promotion of intellectual and aesthetic development in children. Ideally, this body should form a wing of a broader organisation, such as a "National Council for Children's Affairs", that would be directly concerned with the larger problem of meeting the whole range of basic needs of children, including primary health care, housing, food and nutrition etc., as the objectives for which such a central body is set up could be best achieved only if adequate measures are taken to meet children's other needs as well.

The suggested central body would concern itself with those vital aspects of non-formal education of young children, wherein the enlightened and the sound manipulation of the media could bring about far-reaching results in the educational levels of our children. Therefore it is essential that it develops a viable organisational structure in order to carry out the following main functions:

- (a) **Conducting of action-research:** Intensive and systematic research should be done on the origin and nature of a wide variety of needs, pertaining to the intellectual and aesthetic development of children belonging to the various social strata in our country, particularly in respect of their perceptual and conceptual development, the acquisition of language skills, attitudes, aptitudes and interests. Such an on-going research programme should pay special attention to the impact and influence that the media, in the form of literature, radio, TV and cinema fare, drama and arts for children have on their cognitive, affective and aesthetic development. Since the different State and private agencies that are presently engaged in the above mentioned activities may not find it feasible to duplicate such research programmes, a central body as the one suggested above, could serve a very vital function in disseminating the research findings among those actively engaged agencies and individuals who could consequently bring about substantial improvements in the quality of their products.
- (b) **Co-ordination of services:** Since a large number of agencies, both in the State and private sectors and also individuals are engaged in the different services

referred to in this paper, it may be useful if some meaningful co-ordination of these services is achieved. In this respect, one necessary function that would have to be performed is the systematic and the meticulous documentation of the wide variety of programmes for children that are presented year after year by the different media. The proper documentation of the material already available and the development-oriented co-ordination of services would immensely help the authorities in the formulation of guidelines for future development plans in this sphere of activity, including the deployment of scarce resources. Thus, the suggested central body could also serve as a useful *Information-cum-Resource Centre* to the various agencies and individuals who would need such information and guidance in planning their own future programmes for children. For example, producers of children's books and other publications, teachers and parents are in dire need of a comprehensive, annotated bibliography of children's publications currently available in Sinhala. If such a bibliography was available it would, inter alia, spotlight the gross unevenness in the development of children's literature, such as the over-emphasis on creative writing and the lack of adequate attention on such subject areas as science, sports, arts, hobbies, recreations etc. Also, very few of the children's plays produced year after year, by schools and outside organisations have been comprehensively documented so far, so that teachers and dramatists who wish to seek basic information and expert guidance on this particular sphere of activity would find tasks too difficult to cope with. If such and other information relevant and vital to this total sphere of activity could be systematically collected, collated and published, while at the same time achieving adequate and meaningful co-ordination of these services, it would certainly serve a number of useful purposes, including the planning and conducting of training programmes for personnel engaged in these services, the conducting of effective evaluation and feed-back procedures, and the development of innovative and effective programmes for children through the efficient use of the media—thus bringing about an overall qualitative and quantitative improvement of the relevant services. Thus the dual functions of co-ordination and documentation cannot be over-emphasised. In the present context, a State-sponsored central body is best suited for this purpose.

(c) **Development of action-oriented programmes:** It is not intended that the suggested central body should replace any existing agency engaged in the services under review. On the contrary, it should attempt to play a *supportive* and a *supplementary* role with regard to the development of programmes for children. For example, it could commission a state or private agency or a recognised expert on a particular field to write a series of children's books on a particular subject; it could also plan and carry out a programme for the production of a series of children's dramas and/or films; it could also in collaboration with the SLBC write and produce a series of children's radio programmes. Whatever it accomplishes should be of exemplary standard, so that these would serve as pace-setters for the others engaged in these services. However, it is obvious, that activities pertaining to this particular function should be carried out within the framework of a well-coordinated operational plan designed for the development of the total services.

(ii) Even if it is possible to achieve a fair degree of quantitative and qualitative improvements in the various services discussed in this paper, their total impact will be felt only to the extent of how far they have managed to reach the broad mass of children at grass-roots level. The setting up of an adequate and efficient infrastructure to achieve this objective has always been a vexed problem. Perhaps a practical solution to this problem may lie in the more efficient and better coordinated use of the Media (Press, Radio, Drama, TV, Cinema etc.), supported by the Departments of Education, Information and Culture and the local administrations.

CASTE AND FAMILY IN SRI LANKA POLITICS

M. P. Moore

The topic of Sri Lankan politics is not unfamiliar to the academic presses of the Western world. The book by Janice Jiggins¹ reviewed here is the fourth general study to be published during the 1970s,² apart from a few more specialised scholarly volumes³ and a stream of articles in academic and current affairs journals. As a small country on the very periphery of Great Power conflict one might not expect Sri Lanka to excite such interest. A major reason why it does so is the unusual resilience of its democratic political system. Not only has democracy persisted—in itself a rare enough phenomenon among developing countries—but it has permitted a regular alternation of governmental power between coalitions with relatively distinct policies. A closely-related but more recent reason for interest in Sri Lanka is its relatively good record on Quality of Life and civil rights.

There is a further reason for the academic interest in Sri Lanka politics, one that operates at the level of the individual scholar. Quite simply, research on politics is easy and pleasant. Apart from newspapers and other printed sources, the flow of verbal information is especially copious. Arriving in Colombo, the foreign scholar quickly finds in the xenophilic, gossip-loving and highly inter-married Colombo elite an inexhaustible source of information on politics past and present: what S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike said about Phillip Gunawardena over dinner; which two Ministers are at loggerheads over a family dispute; or how X was given a promotion because he comes from the same caste as the Director of his department. Overwhelmed by kindness and not a little flattered by being on first-name terms with so many of the powerful and famous or their close relatives, the researcher is likely to find his 'field research' rewarding in many senses. The Ceylonese scholar, provided that he comes from the right social stratum, has the same kind of access to information. What better way of discovering what makes a country tick than to find oneself in the very heart of its politics? Well, hearts are both important and

1. J. Jiggins, *Caste and Family in the Politics of the Sinhalese, 1947-1976*, Cambridge University Press, 1969.

2. The others are: J. Jupp, *Sri Lanka: Third World Democracy*, Cass, London, 1978; R. N. Kearney, *The Politics of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)*, Cornell University Press, 1973; and A. J. Wilson, *Politics in Sri Lanka, 1947-1973*, Macmillan, London, 1974.

3. For example, M. Robinson, *Political Structure in a Changing Sinhalese Village*, Cambridge University Press, 1975.

exciting—they certainly pulsate with life far more than any other part of the anatomy. But they are only a part of the anatomy, and not necessarily the best point from which to obtain an accurate picture of the whole. The Colombo-based elite have indeed played a very major role in Sri Lanka politics, but they are only a part of the political scene. What about the local level political organisers? Who are they, and how do they operate? Even more importantly, what about the voters? What determines their allegiance? How far is the pattern of voting a reflection of socio-economic stratification, as the pattern of left (Marxist)—centre (S.L.F.P.)—right (U.N.P.) party alignment would suggest? Or how far are parties agglomerations of local factional groups? Surveying the academic literature one not only finds no answer to these kinds of questions, but very little attempt even to raise them. It is description rather than analysis which predominates. Such analysis as there is is oriented, often implicitly more than explicitly, to the question of why democracy has survived and whether it will continue to do so. Little attention is actually focused on the question of what kind of democracy it is. Colombo-bias is clearly in part responsible. Political scientists have not generally been able to tear themselves away from the Ministers and MPs, and their relatives, in Colombo and go out into the provincial towns and villages among the local political activists and the voters. Were they to do so their interests would be directed to questions of costs and benefits. What kind of person supports the different parties, and for what reasons?

Janice Jiggins, to her credit, has broken with this established tradition. Many of her months in Sri Lanka (between 1969 and 1973) were spent travelling around in the country talking to all kinds of people in a relatively open-ended fashion. The reader is entitled to expect the kinds of insight into the workings of the political system which elude the Colombo-biased. Jiggins herself certainly believes she has made a contribution of this kind by achieving empathy with the viewpoint of the ordinary Sinhalese (pp. 3-4). Whether or not she has achieved that empathy Ceylonese readers may judge. She has certainly mistaken empathy for science, and produced a book which is misleading for the uncritical reader and a goldmine of methodological errors for the university teacher seeking a text on which to try out students.

In order to understand this book the reader requires a little background history, not all of which Jiggins provides. Her original project was to study the political involvements of Buddhist priests. At this stage she appears, on her own admission, to have held an extremely formalist view of politics: because Sri Lankan politics was formally dressed-up in a 'Westminster-style' constitution, Jiggins expected to find a close replica of her model of British politics (pp. 2-4). A central part of this model was 'ideologically-based' political parties. One is entitled to ask what this

really means and question the accuracy of the implication that considerations of class dominate in British politics to the exclusion of ties of, for example, family or locality. Regionalism appears as a major factor in British politics, at least in recent years. Be that as it may, the point is that Jiggins was deeply affected by her perception that ordinary Ceylonese appeared to conceive of politics largely in terms of the concept of caste and family—her 'traditional loyalties' (p. 4)—where she had expected something very different. It is at this point that the main research began to take shape. She launched into three extremely painstaking research projects. The first was a very detailed study of the caste composition of the population of a sample of electorates. The second, closely related, was a study of the electoral history of a sample of electorates. The third, more on the lines established by other political scientists, if more thoroughly pursued, was a detailed study of the kinship links of the big political families, especially the Ratwattes-Bandaranaiques and the Senanayakes-Kotelawalas-Wijewardenes-Wickremesinghes.

The main conclusion of Jiggins' work was very clear: 'traditional loyalties' to caste and family are the very stuff of Sinhalese politics. This is the essence to which the Westminster-style constitution is only a garland. It is an argument which has a certain vicarious appeal, enshrines the wisdom of the common man, is apparently bolstered by a mass of scientific data-collection, and is, insofar as it is at all understandable, wrong. Because of its pseudo-scientific backing and because it will find some appeal within Sri Lanka the argument deserves proper refutation.

The basic flaws in Jiggins' work are methodological—but not in a particularly technical sense. In ways that are fairly obvious to many readers her work stands as an illustration of the dangers of attempting social science without any recognition of certain basic methodological prerequisites. Jiggins observed that people frequently talked of politics in terms of 'traditional loyalties' of caste and family. She then 'documented' this by collecting a great mass of facts on caste and family affiliations, ending up with a 'conclusion' the same as the presumption she had started out with. Lack of space prevents a very detailed critique of her method. We shall discuss briefly four major questions which she fails to ask.

Firstly, Jiggins nowhere even hints of having asked how far her respondents viewed factors other than caste and family as important bases of political support and loyalty. There is no doubt, even on the information which she presents, that patron-client relations, class consciousness and party loyalty are perceived as important by voters, and that these often conflict with 'traditional loyalties'. Which weighs the most?

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, Jiggins fails to ask explicitly how far divisions of caste and family overlap with other social, economic and political divisions. In the case of caste and class (or at least socio-economic strata) the overlap is substantial. The lower castes tend to be poor. In such cases there is no justification for taking one factor only as the essence. Like some other observers, Jiggins sometimes talks as if there were some intrinsic mutual antipathy between 'caste' and 'class'—as if a pattern of social polarisation must be based on one or the other. The interesting question is not whether it is caste or class which is at the heart of Ceylonese social stratification, but how far the two concepts penetrate, reinforce or conflict with one another. Not of course an easy issue to tackle, but good science, even social science, involves more than the application of effort and unvarnished 'commonsense'.

Thirdly, Jiggins accepts uncritically the 'reality' of the things to which she gives the labels 'caste' and 'family'. An entity does not become any more real because one chooses to label it. One must first ask whether the labels are useful. Jiggins herself provides strong hints that the big political 'families', the Ratwattes et al., and the Senanayakes et al., are in no sense the independent genealogically-based groups that they appear to be from the use of the term 'family'. They are all inter-related, as is the whole of the Sinhalese elite. Jiggins' representations of the family trees of the 'big families' precisely illustrate the point (Appendix). Her footnote says that 'Not all marriages, relationships, offspring shown' (p. 161). That is an understatement. Many of the relationships shown are those between 'cousins', a term which is not defined but which, in Ceylonese English, means 'relative'. But even if all such relationships were those of first cousins the basic point would remain: in a relatively small country where kinship relationships of marriage are just as powerful as relationships of blood, and where marriage implies social equality, any social elite which is relatively stable must be hopelessly intermarried and interrelated. Most of the so-called 'Senanayake clan' are not surnamed Senanayake. They are members of the 'clan' because they are in more or less close political alliance. They choose to recall and perhaps strengthen genealogical ties because they are in alliance, just as they ignore or even deny genealogical links with their political opponents. Few actually go as far as Felix Dias, who reassumed the 'family' name of Bandaranaike on entering into close political alliance with his uncle's widow, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Kinship sometimes does become more important: Mrs. Bandaranaike is widely quoted as one who brought a (selected) range of kin fully into the centre of politics from the periphery in order to bolster her own personal position.

But much of the time kinship must be viewed mainly as an idiom. The big political families are at least as much an ideological construct emanating from the pattern of political cleavage as they are the cause of that pattern of cleavage.

Fourthly, Jiggins does not relate her analysis of political loyalties to other aspects of politics. What for example about government policies? If politics is basically about caste and family interests, how does one explain the existence of a fairly stable left-centre-right political alignment, with leftist governments pursuing classical left policies and rightist governments pursuing rightist policies? Again, what about the question of the formal (extra-constitutional) political institutions? A book has been written tracing in scholarly detail the increasing importance of party organisation and allegiance in Sri Lanka since Independence.⁴ How does this relate to the primacy of 'caste and family'? As Jiggins' empirical evidence appears to confirm, the increasingly-organised parties probably tend to neutralise the effect of caste loyalties. As each party selects candidates from the largest or the majority caste, caste ceases to be a major issue at the level of the electorate.

The concepts of caste and family are important in the way that Ceylonese perceive their politics and therefore, if only for that reason, in the scholarly analysis of those politics. But one expects far more edification than that from a book. How important are caste and family and, even more centrally, how are they important? Jiggins scarcely asks and certainly does not answer these questions. Her language implies that caste or family membership operate as independent interests which generate 'loyalties': that everyone gets a family and caste number in some pre-natal lottery, and that this then mainly determines whom they will support in politics. Jiggins would of course deny, with suitable references, that she is making this kind of simplistic claim. But the problem is to know just what she is claiming, for nowhere are we presented with any conclusions. The reason for this appears to lie in the history of the book. The pure expression of the kinds of arguments expressed above is to be found not in the book but in her doctoral thesis,⁵ which is nowhere mentioned in the book. The book is a rather different animal to the thesis. In the interval between the two Jiggins appears to have become sensitive to criticisms of the kind made above, as well as to the apparent fragility of the pattern of politics prevailing while she did her research. No longer is the UNP plausibly characterised as a vehicle of the

4. C. A. Woodward, *The Growth of a Party System in Ceylon*, Brown University Press, 1969.

5. J. Jiggins, *Caste and Family in the Politics of the Sinhalese, 1947-1976* D.Phil thesis, University of Ceylon, Peradeniya, 1973.

Senanayake family. And this Jiggins realises, ending her chapter on 'Family' (Chapter 6) with a big but unanswered question about how far family really matters. And this is very much the tone of the book. A great deal is said about caste and family, but all the ringing claims of their importance have been dropped. There is, however, no re-appraisal. There are many facts about caste and family, a considerable amount of incidental empirical material which throws doubt on their importance (especially in Chapters 3 and 4 on electoral behaviour), and no conclusion. The reader can only be left with the implication that they are important without the benefit of any explicit claims or arguments to judge.

It will be a great pity if this book is taken seriously either within Sri Lanka or abroad. Unfortunately, and rather inexplicably, the Cambridge University Press have lent their considerable weight by publishing it. The weakness—stretching sometimes into vacuousness—of the main argument must be apparent to any academic referees, as must the shakiness of the grounding in both political science and in the academic literature on Sri Lanka. This book will not reflect at all well on the reputation of a press which has to its credit several noteworthy scholarly works on Sri Lanka.

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