

# english section

EDITORIAL. Dr. Luis E. Proaño.

CIESPAL's Director, Dr. Proaño, reminds the reader of the constant advances of human communication that paralleled man's ascendance from the times of the cave-man to the information age.

But the all-time record of communication innovations, he stresses, belongs undoubtedly to the 20th Century. New technologies such as radio, television, audio and video cassettes and discs, video terminals, communication satellites and, above all, commercial computers have already deeply changed the texture of societies. Now adays, the explosion of satellite and cable TV using optic fibres with almost unlimited transmission capacities and the development of the personal computer, accesible to almost everybody because of drastic price reductions, open up totally new horizons for almost all spheres of life in the industrialized world. With robotics entering the assembly-lines and the service sector, unemployment is almost certain to rise, and with the personal computer invading the home, working-patterns and leisure-time habits are bound to suffer profound changes.

Proaño notes that in developing countries the benefits of these new communication technologies, especially of the microelectronics revolution, are still open to debate. The effects of their introduction may not only be to their advantage but also to their disadvantage.

He therefore calls attention to the urgent need to subjects the new technologies to a thorough but dispassionate appraisal. This appraisal may show that -regardless of pro and con arguments- the comunicacion revolution is here to stay and that the main question facing the developing countries may well be how to take advantage of it. Proaño feels sure of two breath-taking perspectives. The personal computer, the data-bank and the satellite linked via telephone and TV, will bring people much closer together on a scale that we can hardly imagine, fostering a real world community. On the other hand, the new means of communication will give the individual hitherto undreamt of possibilities of information and education and promote new family bonds and social participation.

## CHASQUI INTERVIEWS FAUSTO IZCARAY

In this special interview for CHASQUI, communication researcher Fausto Izcaray from Venezuela addresses crucial issues regarding impending changes fostered by the massive introduction of new technologies both in developed and less developed countries.

Izcaray sets forth his views on whether such technologies lead towards democratization or further control, and gives his opinions on what LDCs should do to counteract

further technological dependency. New technologies, he holds, may open promising avenues in education and other areas. Whether they fulfill real or artificial demands may be a question liable to receive the same answer as the invention of the wheel.

Furthermore, since is an irreversible trend towards development and application of new technologies, communication schools would be well advised to address the issues involved.

## Héctor Schmucler EDUCATION IN AN INFORMATICS SOCIETY

In April, 1982, in México, ILCE (Latinamerican Institute for Educational Communication) staged a seminar on Educational Technology Perspectives. Héctor Schmucler delivered the paper now published in CHASQUI.

In it, Schmucler first analyses the background for and the present developments on computers in education in several countries. A second section (How do Computers Teach?) includes four application areas for computers: education, research, education & research services, administration of education & research. Since technologies are also business, the author then discusses transnational invest-

ments in the field.

Finally, in the Informatics Illiteracy section, the author voices several concerns vis-à-vis the usually unmanageable computer field advances. He analyses what technology has meant in world development, particularly in the arms race, information concentration and unequal distribution of wealth.

Schmucler addresses himself to a paramount question, saying: "To use or not to use computers in education is not a purely instrumental decision. To what type of human life does one want to contribute? That should be the yardstick at the moment of decision".

## Neville Jayaweera. COMMUNICATION SATELLITES: A THIRD WORLD PERSPECTIVE

The author is worried about a revival of the old communication and modernization paradigm, with the only change being that the tools and the prophets are different. He reviews eleven advocated roles for development—support satellites. His critique is based on a theory of technol-

ogy and development. Technology is not neutral, it is inextricably linked to a given economic base. Third World concerns about satellites are examined in such light.

Jayaweera notes that there is a return to a cognitive communication strategy. A focus on information and knowledge implies an unwillingness to see poverty problems in structural terms. There is a defective understanding of Third World poverty, which is not caused primarily by lack of communication, for which satellites could be a solution.

Indeed, satellites will further integrate center and periphery, aggravate dependency, with willing acquiescence by Third World elites. Global cultural domination will resurge. Satellites may offer a technological alternative to the painful surgery called for by NIEO and NIIO.

On the other hand, no social organisation or power in history has yet thwarted, for any considerable length of time, the march of technology. And there has been no tech-

nology that has not had negative consequences. Nobody would suggest obliterating technology. Jayaweera thus argues against wrong assumptions, and for structural changes. Whenever in history a dramatic development in technology was not matched by rearrangements in power—relationships, it ceased to be a liberating force, and was transformed into an instrument of oppression, the author concludes.

#### CONTROVERSY: De Sola Pool/Schiller.

A new scenario, brought about by communication technologies, is emerging, one that reverses centralizing tendencies, contends Ithiel de Sola Pool.

Fragmentation, decentralization, pluralism are the new keywords. There is a clear shift towards a more adaptive, individual technology. The author illustrates his points citing several examples. He states that it is true that, initially, new communication technologies offer advantages to those who are already privileged. In the long-term, however, such technologies are equalitarian and democratic, pro-distributive. The author illustrates measures that should and can be taken to accelerate the transition period regarding wider distribution. There is intense resistance to the pluralistic and two way media because of political fear

of their democratic effects.

Herbert Schiller states that every new technology comes along with extravagant claims and expectations of cultural upsurge and human benefit. The historical record contradicts utopian claims. The issue is the specific development of science under capitalism. In the U.S., the cycle of research, discovery, construction, and application of new communication technologies has been considerably determined by the linked power centers of the military, corporations, and Government. While that arrangement is not surprising, there are less obvious implications, upon which Schiller expands. He concludes that as they presently exist and are being utilized, new information technologies mostly control and limit, rather than expand, human potential.

Juan F. Rada

#### THE MICROELECTRONICS REVOLUTION: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE THIRD WORLD

Addressing himself mainly to the effects the microelectronic revolution may have for Third World countries, Juan F. Rada, who is a staff member of the International Management Institute in Geneva, comes out with, a timely warning. The developing world may be condemned definitely to a second class status, if it fails to adapt itself to the manifold challenges posed by this revolution.

Rada stresses the fact that too little attention has been paid so far to the damaging effects which the progressive informatization and computerization of the economies of the industrialized nations will entail for the international division of labor. Massive introduction of the microchip and microcomputer in production and services in the North he argues, is likely to make it even more difficult for developing nations to catch up with productivity and price levels in the advanced countries. Low-cost labor advantages of the countries in the South are bound to get eroded, and labor demand, a critical issue in most of these countries, is likely to suffer further reductions.

Though he is aware of the fact that the irreversibility and speed of the microelectronic revolution makes it extra-

ordinarily difficult for Third World countries to compete with the scientific and technological centers in the North, the author refuses to take a pessimistic view. He urges these countries to make thorough appraisals of the probable implications which the transfer of the new technologies from the North will engender and to formulate realistic policies permitting an advantageous usage of these technologies not only in strategic economic fields but also in government administration, education and health, while at the same time impeding effects that might seriously harm proper development efforts.

Rada holds that with the aid of the R&D leaders in microelectronics—in reality only a handful of enterprises in the U.S.A., Japan and Western Europe—the industrialized North may intensify its control over developing countries by means of the rapidly mushrooming Transborder Data Flow systems, Data Bank monopolies and the parallel growth of technological and cultural dependencies. But by defining their positions on such vital issues as development of indigenous scientific and technological R&D, reclamation of technology transfer and rational utilization of informatics at an early stage, Third World countries may yet pull off the trick and turn the microelectronic revolution to their advantage.

Sarath Amunugama

#### BROADCASTING IN ASIA: A SLEEPING GIANT?

The author focuses on radio broadcasting for rural sectors. Two comparative Unesco-based tables are provided. There has been a dramatic change in the last two decades (e. g., a tripling of radio receivers) Radio is now a personal medium of the listener. In the past it was, in Asia, a public

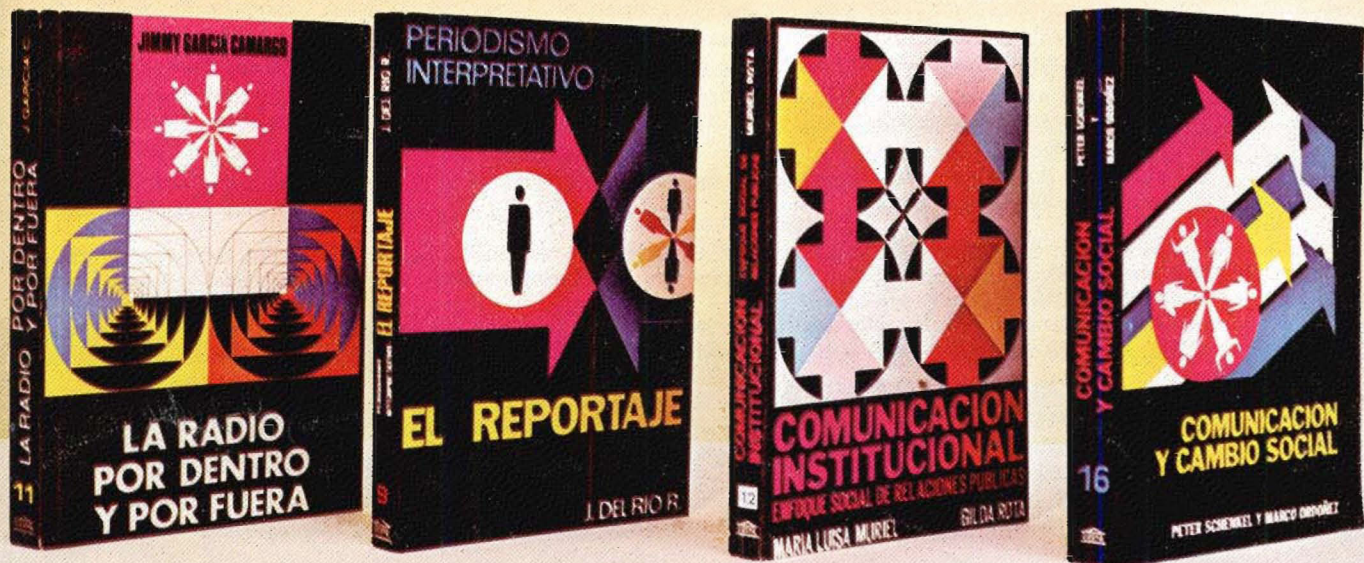
medium. This mass 'transistor owner market' is creating a new communication environment whose implications Amunugama outlines. The rural poor audience is a sleeping giant, while most broadcasting authorities still think in terms of a more limited, elitist audience.

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# Colección INTIYAN



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**LA RADIO POR DENTRO Y POR FUERA.**— Jimmy García Camargo.- 450 páginas.- Offset Ecuador-Quito.- Manual práctico para el manejo de este medio de comunicación que está desempeñando un papel de trascendental importancia. Es aprovechado no solamente por docentes y educandos de las escuelas y facultades de comunicación, sino también por los profesionales que sienten la necesidad de ampliar sus conocimientos y aplicar nuevas técnicas. "Una de las características más importantes de este manual se basa en la revisión que el autor hace del complejo sistema de la radiodifusión, paso a paso, comenzando por los más simples enunciados hasta introducirse en materia técnica".

**PERIODISMO INTERPRETATIVO: EL REPORTAJE.**— Julio del Río Reinaga.- 347 páginas. Editorial Epoca.- Quito-Ecuador. El reportaje se ha transformado en el género periodístico más utilizado, especialmente por los medios de comunicación impresos, que se vieron preocupados por la competencia de los medios audiovisuales, capaces de dar una información más rápida. Por lo tanto, este libro tuvo gran demanda desde su apareamiento. Ofrece, dividido en ocho unidades, los diversos aspectos teóricos, prácticos y de autoevaluación que se refieren a este género periodístico, el más completo porque incluye a otros, como la crónica, la entrevista, la encuesta.

**COMUNICACION SOCIAL: ENFOQUE SOCIAL DE RELACIONES PUBLICAS.**— María Luisa Muriel y Gilda Rota.- 358 páginas.- Editora Andina.- Quito-Ecuador.- Este libro estudia "detenidamente cuáles son las circunstancias y condiciones en que la comunicación se puede utilizar óptimamente para mejorar los resultados de la gestión institucional". Tiene gran importancia y actualidad en esta época en la que hay demanda por profesionales de las relaciones públicas. Más aún, el libro presenta a la comunicación institucional como un sistema de comunicación con un propósito ulterior y más importante que el de relacionar únicamente a la institución con sus públicos.

**COMUNICACION Y CAMBIO SOCIAL.**— Marco Ordóñez y Peter Schenkel.- 502 páginas, Editora Andina.- Quito-Ecuador.- "Los trabajos incluidos en esta publicación, además de aportar diagnósticos concretos sobre el estado de los medios de comunicación social en algunos países, contienen un instrumental metodológico novedoso para los análisis de las situaciones de comunicación". Son quinientos profesionales de la comunicación los que abordaron, desde distintos ángulos, "El papel sociopolítico de los medios de comunicación para la sociedad de cambio en América Latina", tema con el que se realizó un seminario.