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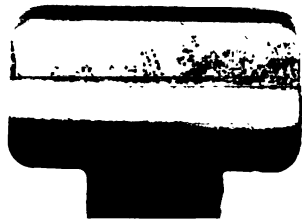
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DR. PERCY AITKEN-SOUX,

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INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE
IICA OFFICE SURINAME



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"The views expressed in signed articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture."

I. INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1 Suriname is between 2 - 6° N latitude and 54 - 59° W longitude. It is bordered by Guyana to the West, Brasil to the South, and French-Guyana to the East. The country stretches 300 - 400 km from East to West, and 400 - 500 km from North to South. The total land area is about 16.4 million hectares, with about 85% of the country covered by forest.
- 1.2 As the coastal area is ideal for a plantation-based production system, labour was brought in the 17th century from different parts of the world : slaves from Africa and, after the abolition of slavery in 1863, indentured labourers from the India, Indonesia, China and West Indies.
- Suriname's original inhabitants, the Amerindians, presently comprise only 2% of the population. The largest group are people originating from the Indian sub-continent (36%), mixed people of African descent (Creoles, 31%), from Java, Indonesia (15%), and descendants of slaves who escaped from the plantations (Bushnegroes, 10%). Smaller groups are people of Chinese, European and Lebanese origin. Suriname's official language is Dutch. Many Creole people use Sranang Tongo, which is also a colloquial language for other groups who may speak Hindi, Javanese, or Chinese at home.
- Bushnegroes and Amerindians also have their own languages.
- 1.3 The population is small, with 400 000 inhabitants, half of whom live in Paramaribo, the Capital, and another 100 000 in semi-urban areas close to the Capital. A smaller concentration is in the rice-growing district of Nickerie in the Northeast (some 40 000 people). The remainder is spread over villages in the coastal districts and in settlements along the rivers in the interior (Bushnegroes and Amerindians).



- 1.4 Prior to independence from the Netherlands in 1975, some 150 000 Surinamese of all ethnic groups migrated to the Netherlands. Since then, the outflow has continued, though at a slower pace, also to other countries. For many Surinamese, emigration to the Netherlands or elsewhere remains a real option. Last year (1989), 20 000 visas were given to visit the Netherlands. Only 2 000 returned. This year the embassy expects 50 000 applications. But the visas are more difficult to obtain.
- 1.5 Suriname developed as a plantation economy. Along the rivers of the coastal area several hundred plantations were established. Whereas a few new state-owned plantations have recently been set up, nearly all the old plantations have disappeared. Since World War II, the Surinamese economy is largely based on mining and transformation of bauxite; these activities are carried out by two Multinationals : Alcoa and Shell/Billiton. 75% of the foreign income comes from the bauxite and alumina exports. Last month the Bushnegro Guerilla under " Commandant" Brunswijk blew up the loading dock of bauxite and the center of electronic control, Alcoa due to this could not deliver foreign currency to the Suriname Government.
- 1.6 After 20 years of internal autonomy, Suriname became a fully independent Republic in 1975. A treaty was signed with the Netherlands which relocated Dfl. 3.5 billion in development assistance for 1975 - 1990.
In February 1980, the ruling coalition was overthrown in a coup by non-commissioned officers. The constitution was suspended. A period of instability culminated on December 8th, 1982, when 15 critics of the regime were killed. This incident led to the suspension of aid from the Netherlands and the U.S.A. The resulting deterioration in the economy (reinforced by a global slump in the aluminium market) as well as the activities of a Bushnegro resistance movement,



led eventually to a new constitution and to the organization of free elections in 1987. The elections brought a large (95% of the vote) to the "old" political parties, cooperating in the "Front for Democracy and Development". The Front comprise the predominantly Creole "Surinamese National Party (NPS), the large ly Hindustani "United Reform Party" (VHP), and the Javanese "United Indonesian Farmers Party" (KITPI). The Assembly elected Mr. Ramsewak Shankar of the VHP as President, with Mr. Henck Arron, leader of the NPS as Vice-President and Prime Minister. Yet, the Military have retained, directly and indirectly, a number of key positions in the political and economical fields.

- 1.7 Since 1986, a Jungle Commando, formed mainly by Bushnegroes, based on the border with French-Guyana, has been in rebellion against the former military regime; during 1986 and 1987 this largely paralyzed part of the bauxite and palm oil industries. A consequence of these fights was the massive displacement of Bush negroes and Amerindians. About 7 000 - 10 000 people moved to French-Guyana as refugees and about 8 000 - 10 000 as evacuees to Paramaribo. The new government reached a peace agreement with the Jungle Commando -The Kourou Accord- in the summer of 1989. However, a new paramilitary organization, mainly formed by Amerindians and supported by the army, has recently occupied parts of Western and Central Suriname and is also attacking the Jungle Commando in the East.
- 1.8 As a freely-elected new government was initiated in power, the Netherlands and the U.S.A. had resumed their aid. But by July 1990 the U.S.A. had paralyzed the potential assistance and the relations of Netherlands-Suriname have become cooler. The embassy of the Netherlands is diminishing its preserve. (The new Agricultural attache is now based in Caracas).

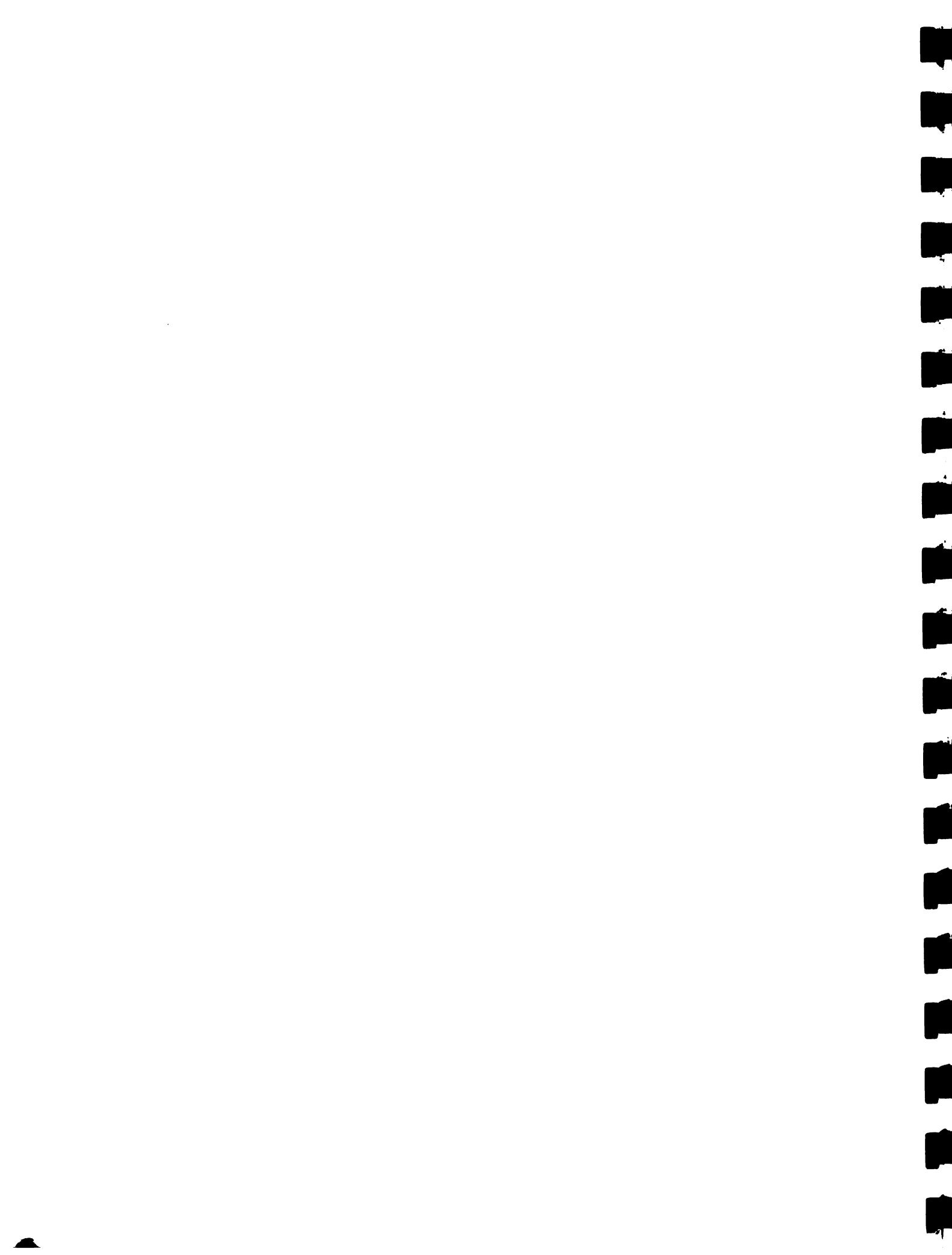


1.9 The Technical Assistance from Belgium is diminishing and his Representative is leaving the country. The hope for financing projects is now with EEC and IDB. But this assistance will be with loans and no grants.



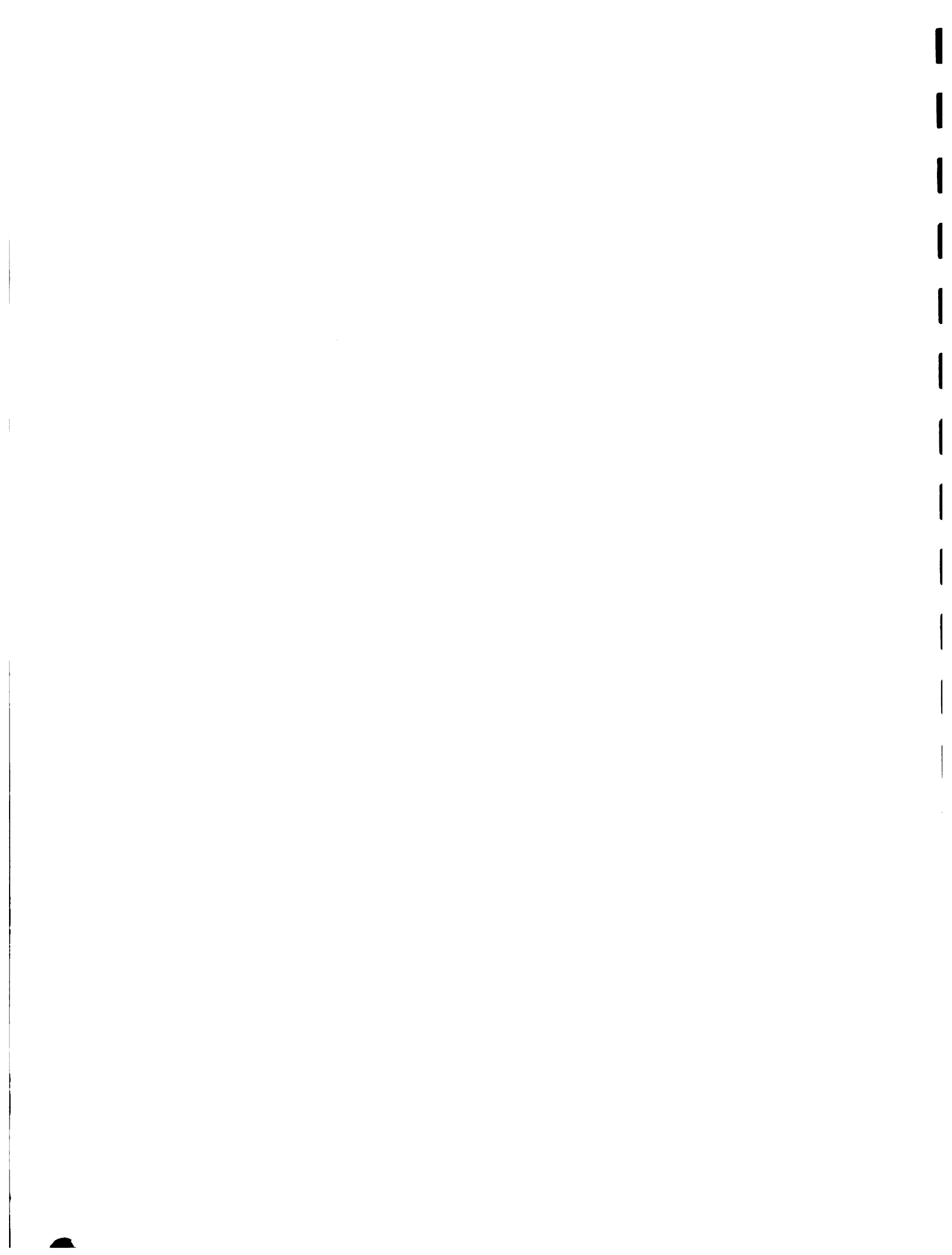
II. THE ECONOMY, AN OVERVIEW.

- 2.1 Until World War II, Suriname had a plantation economy. Since then the mainstay of the economy was the mining and transformation of bauxite : since the 1960s, exports of bauxite, alumina, and aluminium have accounted for 70 - 80% of total exports, and, directly and indirectly, for the bulk of government revenue through a system of export levies and other taxes.
- 2.2 Whereas the bauxite sector never provided direct employment to more than 4 - 8% of the labour force, the ample government revenues allowed an extraordinary expansion of government employment. In fact, at the end of the 1960s, civil servants accounted for about 30% of the total labour force, and today the percentage is around 43%. This does not include employment in the 15-odd statal and parastatal agricultural enterprises. (The total number of parastatals is close to 100).
- 2.3 Despite its small contribution to direct employment, the bauxite sector has for many years set the trend for overall wage levels. Due to high world market prices for aluminium in the 1960s and early 1970s, and a strongly unionized labour force in all sectors wages rose to levels that hampered exports of most non-bauxite products, with the notable exception of rice. Today the real wages have decreased because of the loss of purchasing power.
- 2.4 During the period of internal autonomy (1954 -1975) and during the first seven years of independence, virtually all development activities were financed by grants from the Netherlands. In 1982 this was suspended for political reasons, but since the restoration of civilian rule in 1987 it has slowly resumed.



Of the Dfl. 3.5 billion (equivalent at today's exchange rate to US\$. 1.7 billion, or US\$. 4 000 on a per capita basis) that were committed in 1975 for a period of 12 - 15 years, about 60% is still non-disbursed today; it is scheduled to be disbursed at a rate of Dfl. 200 million per year for activities that require both Surinamese and Dutch approval.

- 2.5 The recent political history of the country has left its traces on the economy. In particular, following the killing of a number of political opponents of the military government in December 1982, the Netherlands suspended its aid treaty. In 1986, a number of Bushnegro militaries started a rebellion in the Eastern part of the country, leading to reprisals by the army and the subsequent flight of large numbers of the Bushnegro population to French-Guyana and to Paramaribo, thereby causing a virtual halt to oil palm and forestry activities, and part of the bauxite industry.
- 2.6 Due to internal and external pressures, civilian rule was restored in 1987. Expected decisions on urgent economic issues have however taken second place to a stalemate :there is still a strong de facto military grip on key economic positions and decisions; and there are still sporadic skirmishes between the army (supporting small groups of Amerindians) and anti-army rebels which render large parts of the country inaccessible, thereby further reducing economic activities.
- 2.7 Of the many signs that the economy is in a state of rapid decline the following may be mentioned :
- 2.7.1 Government deficits are in order of 25% of GDP; these are financed by monetary expansion, resulting in rapid inflation ;



- 2.7.2 As a result, the official consumer price index rose from 100 (1984) to 273 (1988), whereas the national liquidity ratio rose to nearly 100% ;
- 2.7.3 Due to continued emigration (also of foreign labourers) unemployment is increasing; unemployment is estimated at 35% of the labour force ;
- 2.7.4 Many experienced professional staff in teaching, research and other government institutions are leaving the country they are being replaced by young graduates and undergraduates, if at all ;
- 2.7.5 A growing number of low level government employees have a second activity (some as part-time farmers, in farming or cattle raising) in order to maintain their purchasing power.
- 2.7.6 Most state enterprises are losing money which is made up by government subsidies ;
- 2.7.7 The government budget is virtually limited to personnel expenses; the maintenance of physical infrastructures is acutely deficient ;
- 2.7.8 By the maintaining the Surinamese Guilder pegged to the US.Dollar, a parallel market has developed for foreign exchange, leading to huge profits for some, but declining purchasing power for most; in November 1989 the ratio between the official and the parallel exchange rate had reached one to eight.



- 2.8 Apart from the problems caused by the lack of the internal peace and security, the country faces a number of critical issues on which a consensus must be found. These are as follows :
- 2.8.1 The overvaluation of the Surinamese Guilder which, in general has a negative effect on the level of economic activity as well as on the distribution of income ;
 - 2.8.2 The growing imbalance between government revenue and expenditure ;
 - 2.8.3 The large size of public sector staff (civilian and military) ;
 - 2.8.4 The poor performance of most statal and parastatal enterprises ;
 - 2.8.5 The prospect that the present commitment on development grants by the Netherlands will expire in a few more years. But the obtention of those funds may soon become more difficult .
 - 2.8.6 The expectation that in about 10 - 15 years the exploitable reserves of bauxite will be exhausted.
- 2.9 In November 1989, the government reached an agreement with the EEC on the terms of reference for the joint study of a structural adjustment programme that would address most of the issues listed above. Implementation of this programme would, at the earliest, take place in 1991. Various missions from EEC have arrived to Suriname since 1989, but no common ground have has reached.



2.10 EEC and IDB as well as the Dutch Assistance indicate that the government of Suriname does not use the full amount of financing made available to them. The reason is that the government does not know how to prepare projects for financing, and want to execute themselves any potential project which could be financed.



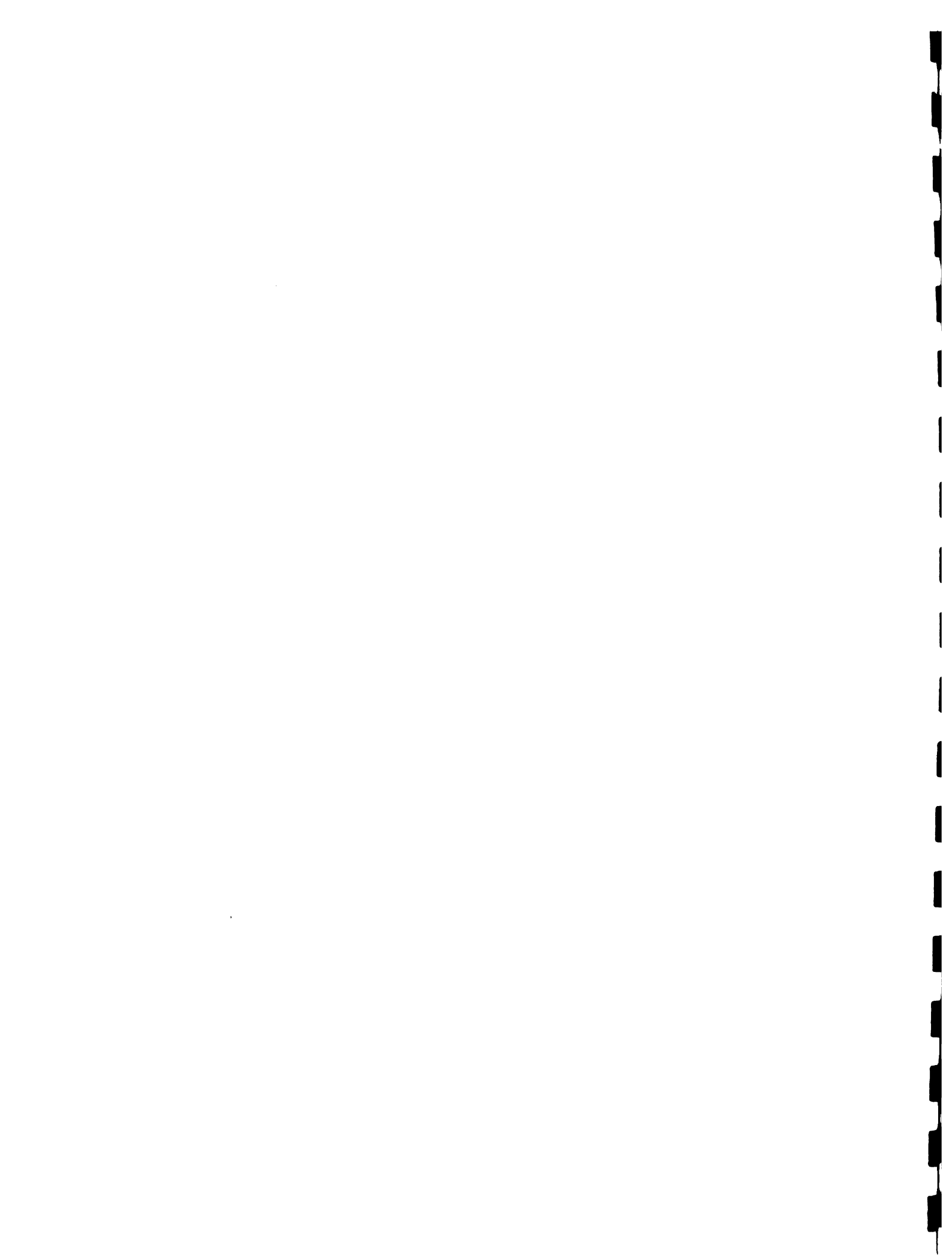
III POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

3.1 Official figures put the present population at slightly over 400 000 people, versus some 365 000 in 1974, i.e. an average annual growth rate of 0.6%. The natural increase of 2.3% p.a. (birth rate 3.0%, mortality rate 0.7%), and a substantial inflow of migrant workers from Guyana and Haiti, was largely off-set by massive emigration mainly to the Netherlands, in 1974 - 75 and in 1980 - 1982. The emigrants to Holland were educated. The immigrants are not. The presence of some 200 000 people of Surinamese origin in the Netherlands, and a substantial number in the U.S.A. and the Dutch Antilles, is of economic significance; gift parcels of food and other commodities, remittance and, in the Netherlands a market for typical Surinamese vegetables.

3.2 The economically active population is estimated at about 40% of the total population, i.e. 160 000 people, of whom 105 000 are gainfully employed. According to some sources, the sectorial distribution in 1974 and 1987 was as follows :

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1987</u>
Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry	29%	25%
Mining	8%	4%
Industry, Construction	10%	10%
Services	21%	18%
Government	32%	43%

3.3 Other official sources put the labour force employed in Agriculture and forestry and some 15 000, i.e. about 14% of the total.



3.4 Language and communication is one of the major problems for the labour force.

It is estimated that there are 13 languages spoken in Suriname. The only common language (80% of the population use it) is the "Sranang Tongo" or "Taki Taki". The second is Dutch, the third is English followed by other smaller groups.

3.5 The role of women in Suriname labour, as well as the whole Caribbean area is very important especially in the agricultural sector. Women of the Amerindians and Bushnegroes in the interior are usually in charge of agricultural activities. With the increase in migrant labour opportunities for men, women are now principally responsible for most agriculture and household operations in these regions. In the coastal plains, however, agricultural activities are carried out by men and women alike. Men are generally considered to be the farm managers. Part-time farms are often also run by women, particularly as men generally work off the farm. No specific information is available on the proportion of female headed household.

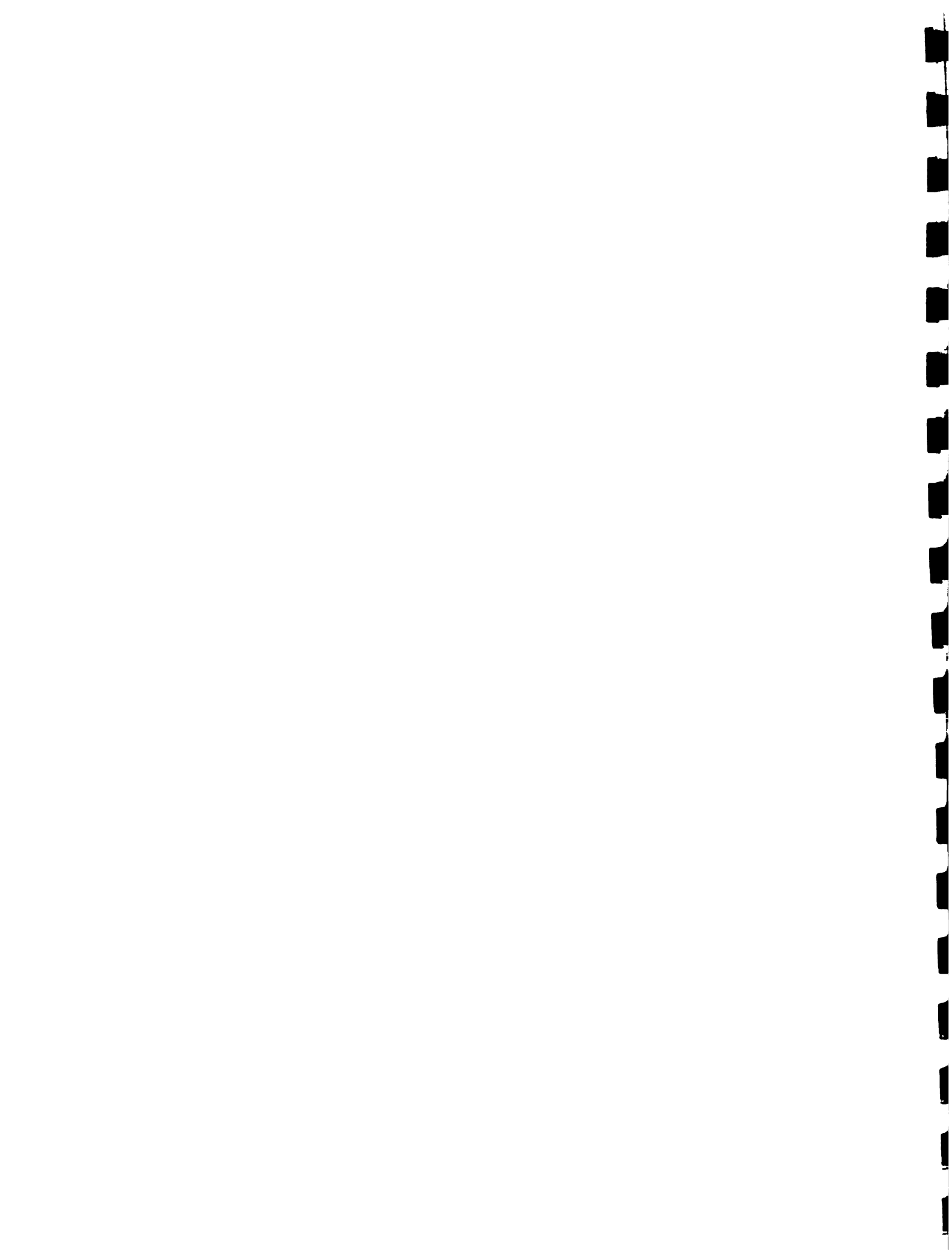


IV. EXCHANGE RATE.

- 4.1 An approach to estimate the present real per capita income is to apply an appropriate US.\$./Sf. exchange rate to per capita GDP. According to Statistical Bureau figures, the 1988 per capita GDP (at current prices and at factor costs) was Sf. 5 400. At the official exchange rate of US.\$. 1 = Sf. 1.80, this corresponds to US.\$. 3 000. At the parallel market rate of US.\$.1 = Sf. 15, the figure would be US.\$. 360. However, according to analyses that would take account of price developments of both the local and the foreign exchange component of GDP, the government (said by Vice-President H. Arron) indicates that the present equilibrium exchange rate would be US.\$.1 = Sf. 4.0 to 5.0 . This would put the 1988 per capita GDP between US.\$.600 and US.\$.750. The range in per capita GDP for 1990 would be lower due to further economic decline. The situation for local currency incomes is becoming very difficult.
- 4.2 The scarcity of most imported goods is such that many have to be bought at the parallel market saleprice.
- 4.3 The scarcity of foreign exchange and the rationing of foreign currency cause a more skewed curve of the distribution of wealth.
- 4.4 Exporters are refusing to export because they receive only US.1.80 per Dollar obtained, the rest is retained at the bank. At the same time their cost of the production is increasing.
- 4.5 To offset the economic crisis and the loss of purchasing power of the Guilder the OAS has been paying for the last three years, half of the salary of their 5 local employees in US.Dollars. This solution has been followed by most embassies and other multinational institutions.



- 4.6 The effect of the problem of the exchange rate for agriculture is that the needed inputs such as : fertilizer, insecticide, pesticide and others are scarce or not available.
- 4.7 The effect in some goods is linked to their availability or non-availability in the market. Among the non-availability we can quote sugar, coffe, milk, potatoes, onions, garlic, car tires, spare tires, batteries, and a long list of etceteras.



V. EXPORTS AND IMPORTS.

- 5.1 Due to its small size and the predominance of one sector (bauxite) the Surinamese economy is by necessity very dependent on the outside world ; the internal demand is very limited.
- 5.2 The increase of bauxite exports in 1988, due to a sharp rise in world market prices, must be feared temporary; moreover, the continued civil strife in the interior is causing renewed disruptions in the mining work, and an increase in fixed and variable costs. Bauxite exports are diminishing.
- 5.3 Rice exports, which expanded rapidly in the 1970s, became constrained in the last few years by insufficient and delayed availability of imported inputs and equipment, by the degradation of the physical infrastructure and the aging of the Genetic material.
- 5.4 Shrimp exports showed a strong expansion due to the high quality of Surinamese shrimps; however, this expansion is not likely to continue since the maximum sustainable catch is being approached;
- 5.5 Forestry activities came to a virtual halt due to the situation in the interior due to the armed confrontations.
- 5.6 Transfers from Holland in food and other consumption goods reach the value of US\$.35 million a year.



VI. RURAL POVERTY.

- 6.1 Due to the civil strife many rural people escaped. They went either out of the country or came to Paramaribo settling in the surrounding rural area. This immigration to the city has caused poverty in the area.
- 6.2 Poverty is more pervasive, however, in the rural areas. The poorest segments of the Surinamese population are found in the interior and per capita income is estimated to be at the poverty level, for most of the people living in these areas. In the coastal districts the areas of poverty are those where full-time smallholders and fishermen still prevail and job opportunities are absent, such as in Commewijne, Saramacca, Simonspolder areas. There are similar areas in the Nickerie district.
- 6.3 Most of the people of the interior are Bushnegroes and Amerindians. Both are organized in small tribes and speak their own languages.
- 6.4 In the peace treaties of the last century, Bushnegroes were allowed to make use of lands and forest in their territories in the interior. In practice, the same holds true for the Amerindians. The treaties stated domain. The land use rights are attributed according to tribe. Individual allotments are granted within the tribal context by the chiefs.
- 6.5 All possible work in the interior has to cooperate with the Missionaries (NGO, Non Government Organizations), who provide the only assistance to these areas. In the fields of education and nutrition the situation has improved a bit. In particular, the EBG (Moravian Bethren) and the Roman Catholic Missions are active in providing education and health services.



These NGOs are also providing economic support and technical assistance to the groups in the interior.



VII. THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

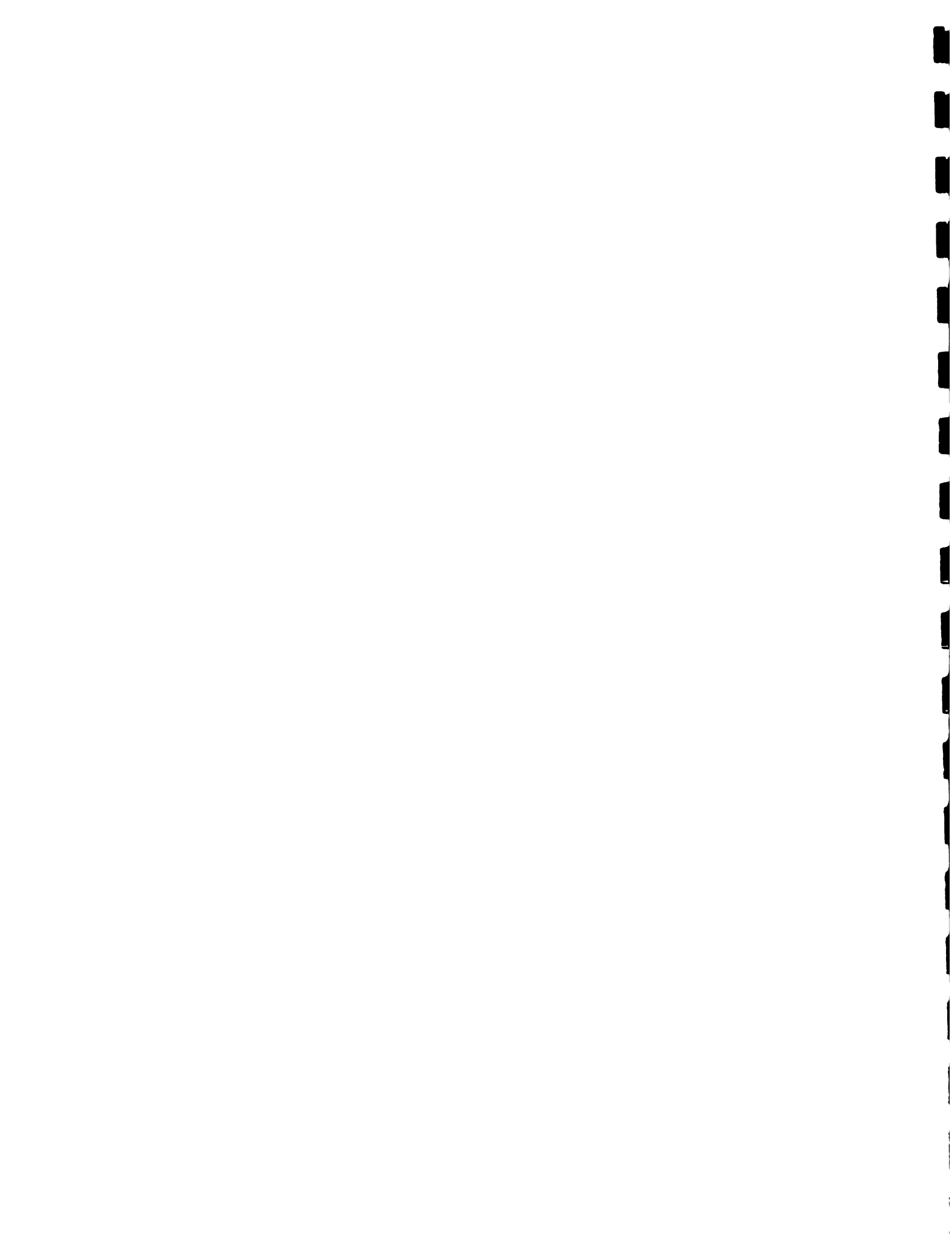
7.1 With respect to land use and water management, three agricultural production systems can be distinguished : (a) irrigated crop production, (b) rainfed crop production, (c) food plots.

7.2 Irrigated production is restricted to wet rice cultivation in Nickerie and Coronie districts in the Northwest and in Saramacca district in the Central region. A distinction may be made between river irrigation, reservoir irrigation, and swamp irrigation.

7.3 Most of the left bank of the Nickerie River is dependent upon reservoir irrigation, with water derived from the Nanni River reservoir. This reservoir was created by the construction of a barrage in the Nanni River and dams for water control at the borders of the river estuary. The Nanni irrigation system was originally designed for "gravity-irrigation", but because of rapid expansion of rice areas, the Nanni reservoir hardly meets construction expectations to be operated in conjunction with the Nanni irrigation system. Water drawn from the Corantijn River by means of pumping station located at Wakay, about 90 km south of the river mouth.

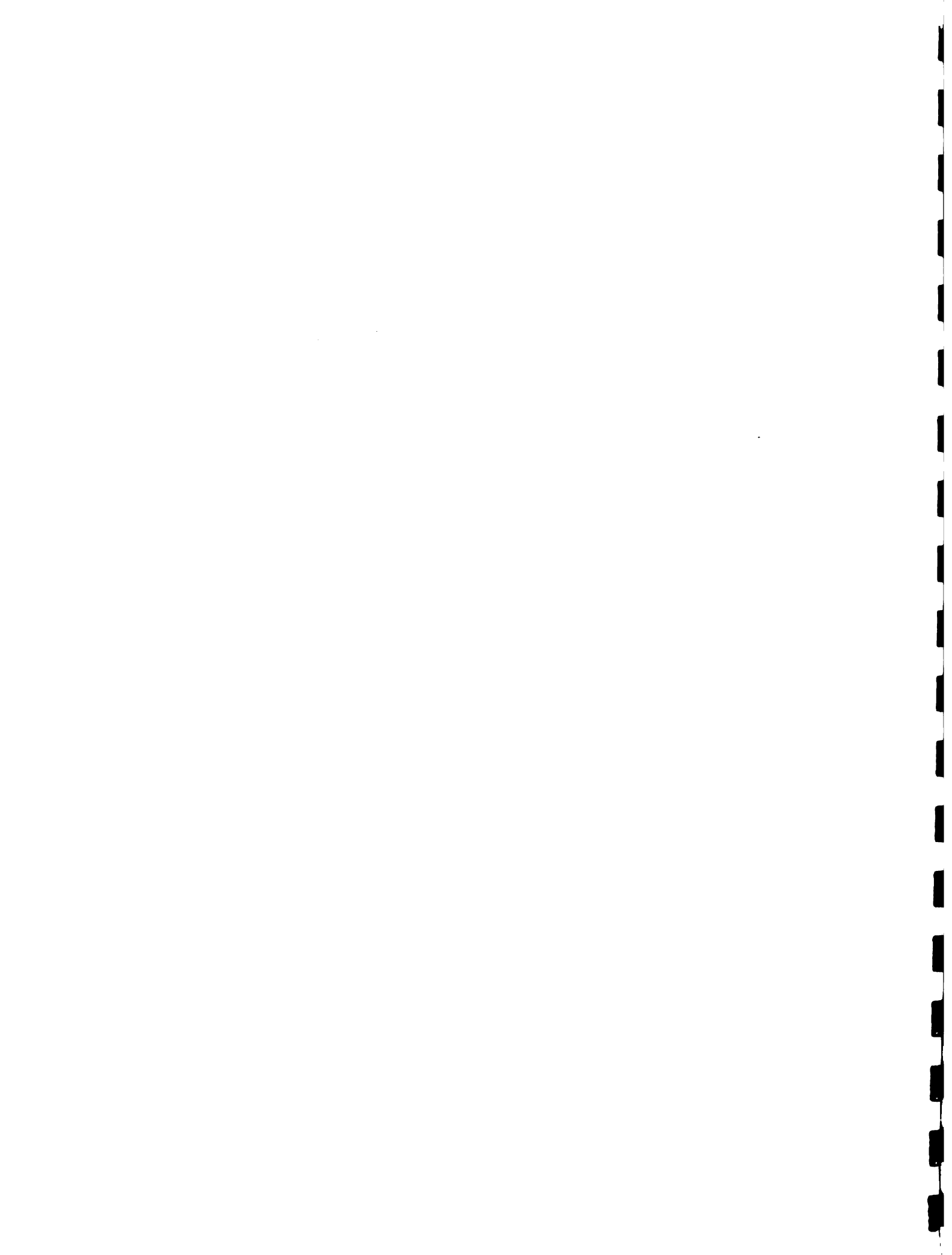
7.4 A canal about 70 km long, with capacity of 50m³/second, has been constructed to carry river water to the main distribution canals of the Nickerie Field irrigation system. When completed, this Multipurpose Corantijn Canal and the Nanni system will allow irrigated rice production on approximately 50 000 ha at two crops per annum.

7.5 The Wageningen rice estate, "Stichting voor Machinale Landbouw" SML (Foundation for Mechanized Agriculture, state owned), with a cultivable area of some 10 000 ha,



and the private estates east of the Nanni reservoir, make use of river irrigation systems, whereby water is pumped from the Nickerie River into the main supply canal of the estates, after which irrigation takes place by means of gravity. Wageningen the great pride of Suriname is now a National problem. IICA was informed that last year, 1989, Wageningen lost ten million US. Dollars and losses for 1990 may be bigger . The losses are blamed to the shortage of inputs.

7.6 Rainfed dryland crop production systems are found throughout the country. The main management concern is with drainage of excess water to the fields. The fertile heavy clay soils with low permeability require complicated drainage systems, which are expensive to construct and to maintain. Proper drainage of these clay soils requires the construction of large canals, spaced 200 metres apart. The field area in between is intersected by small drainage gullies spaced 6 to 9 metres apart. This lay-out hampers mechanization of production operations. For this reason, producers of rainfed crops give preference to the highly permeable but less fertile sandy soil of the ridges and to the unbleached sandy soils of the old coastal plains. In general, rainfed operations are for the production of various combinations of fruits, vegetables, beans, pulses and root crops, beef and dairy cattle. Mechanization of the operations requires the use of small light equipment rather than heavy machines as those used in irrigated rice production. The main concern of land management is to maintain and improve soil fertility. To this end, major emphasis is placed on maintenance of soil fertility by manure dressings and crop rotation systems, including controlled fallow periods of one to four or five years. The most important operation in rainfed agriculture is the National Banana plantation Co. "Surland". They have 1 000 has. in the "Jarikaba" plantation near Paramaribo

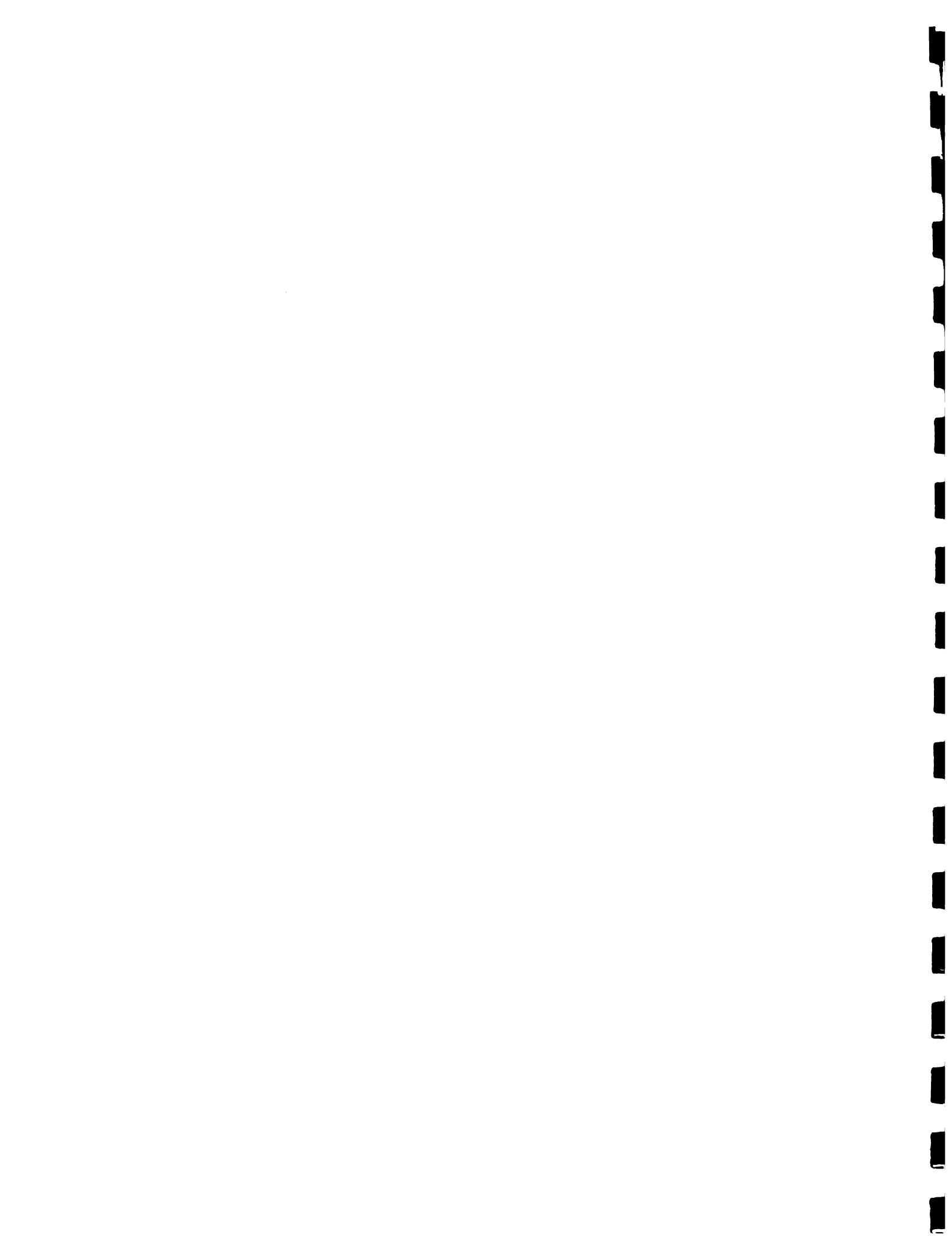


and 1 000 has. in the Nickerie plantation in the Western end of the country. They indicate that these are the only Banana plantations in heavy clay in the world.

- 7.7 Bushnegroes and Amerindians of the interior have food plots. The system is geared towards short-term rather than prolonged utilization of the land. Small tracts of rainforest of 0.5 ha. are cleared by slashing and burning the vegetation. Preference is given to the more fertile slopes close to the rivers. The food crops are raised in a multiple cropping system of cassave, yams tannians and some vegetables. There is little weeding of these plots, and little consideration of drainage and soil fertility maintenance. Chemical fertilizers may be used, but this is not a common practice. The cleared tracts are used for a succession of two or three food crop productions, after which they are abandoned for lack of fertility. Food plots exist also around Paramaribo for the production of vegetables and fruits. Some entrepreneurs are now buying from small farmers to export vegetables to Holland. But, the great marketing problem is the lack of Homogeneity and fixation of delivery dates to develop a market pipeline for export.
- 7.8 Part-time farming this is a new concept in Suriname. It is said that most of the public employees are part-time farmers. But given the economic crisis of the country the "part-time" farmers have increased in numbers and time dedicated to farming.
- 7.9 The Census defines as full time farmers those households, which spend the equivalent of three or more eight-hour working days per week on farm activities.



- 7.10 Finally, an additional category of farmers are "farmers without land", i.e. persons in rural residence of 15 - 60 year of age, who without owning or living on an agricultural parcel, spend the equivalent of three or more eight hour working days per week on self employed farm activities.
- 7.11 The agricultural production of Suriname is very free of pests and diseases. The main problems found are : Nematodes in the Banana plantations, small amounts of yellow sigatoka affecting banana if inputs for control are not available. The spear-rot of the oil palm which is under study and the "Carambola Fruit Fly" that does not seem to affect greatly other fruit crops. This is a variety of the "Dacus Dorselis" fruit fly.
- 7.12 Potentially the agricultural production of the country is very great, but now, crops that were traditionally export crops such as sugar and coffe are not being produced, "Au contraire" they are being imported.



VIII. THE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION.

- 8.1 There is around 120 000 beef and dairy cattle in Suriname. A surprisingly low number for such a large country. Suriname is considered to be nearly self-sufficient in all livestock products except milk and other dairy products. From 1980 to 1986, for example, imports averaged 1 030 mt of milk powder, 240 mt of butter, and almost 600 mt of cheese annually. The milk powder went largely to the Central Milk Plant for reconstitution into fluid milk.
- 8.2 Cattle are raised mainly on small farms, with over 50% on farms smaller than 5 ha; herds of less than 5 cattle account for about 50% of the total cattle numbers. Nevertheless, there are large cattle farms, including government estate, which raise a large number of cattle.
- 8.3 The pasture area is estimated to be about 22 000 ha., with about 18 000 ha. fenced. However, much of the pasture consists of the variable mixtures of native unimproved grasses and other species (although some pasture have been planted to "Para grass" and "Brachiaria" species, and suffers from drainage problems as well as low productivity can be doubled.
- 8.4 No single disease can be considered to be seriously inhibiting production, but the increase of nutritional problems, ticks, screw worms, and internal parasites is reported. This is caused in part because of the shortage of imported concentrates and veterinary medicines. Brucellosis has been reported to be present on a government estate. There is at present no programme for the eradication of Brucellosis in the country.



8.5 Suriname and Guyana have the greatest potential for livestock development in the Caribbean. The absence of important diseases and the natural conditions could make the country a potential exporter of livestock, meat and/or livestock products.



IX. NON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION.

9.1. There are two principal NGOs in Suriname :

- a- Pater Ahlbrinck Stichting (Catholic) and
- b- Evangelische Broeder Gemeente (Moravian- Protestant).

9.2 There are many other missionary groups, but they are either small or too specialized, such as MAF (Missionary Airfreight Fellowship), which services the difficult groups by linking them with their airline.

This group transports missionary materials at a very low cost.

9.3 The NGOs are mainly concerned with rural expansion (Agricultural and non-agricultural) education, and Health. Some also have demonstration plots, clinics and small hospitals.

9.4 Most NGOs are extremely efficient in the use of their limited resources. Some groups have published "Taki Taki" dictionaries for their use.

All do their work in "Taki Taki".



X. INTERNATIONAL FINANCING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

- 10.1 The institutions providing Economic assistance to Suriname are ;
The embassy of Holland, the embassy of Belgium, the embassy of France, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Pan-American Health Organization and the OEA.
In a lower volume we have the Japanese embassy and the Korean embassy.
- 10.2 Other institutions present are FAO.
FAO had a technician with a small project. The technician is leaving the country in September.
- 10.3 At IICA's initiative the principal financing agencies present in Suriname entered into a loose non-official association named " The Tuesday Lunch Club", (De Dinsdag Lunch Club ". Starting August 1989 the organization meets every last tuesday of the month.
The IICA - Representative is the coordinator. The members of the association are : (1) EEC, (2) PAHO, (3) IDB, (4) OAS, (5) Embassy of Holland, (6) Embassy of France, (7) Embassy of Belgium and (8) IICA.
- 10.4 The advantages og the above mentioned organization are : greater integration, avoidance of duplication, sharing of experiences, common security, obtention of information etc.etc.



This report is based mostly on secondary sources.

Among them ;

Suriname "General Identification Mission"

February 1990 - IFAD - Rome.

" IICA Action Strategy 1990 - 1991 "

Mario Franca - IICA S/ 1989.

"Technology Generation & Transfer for the Caribbean Area"

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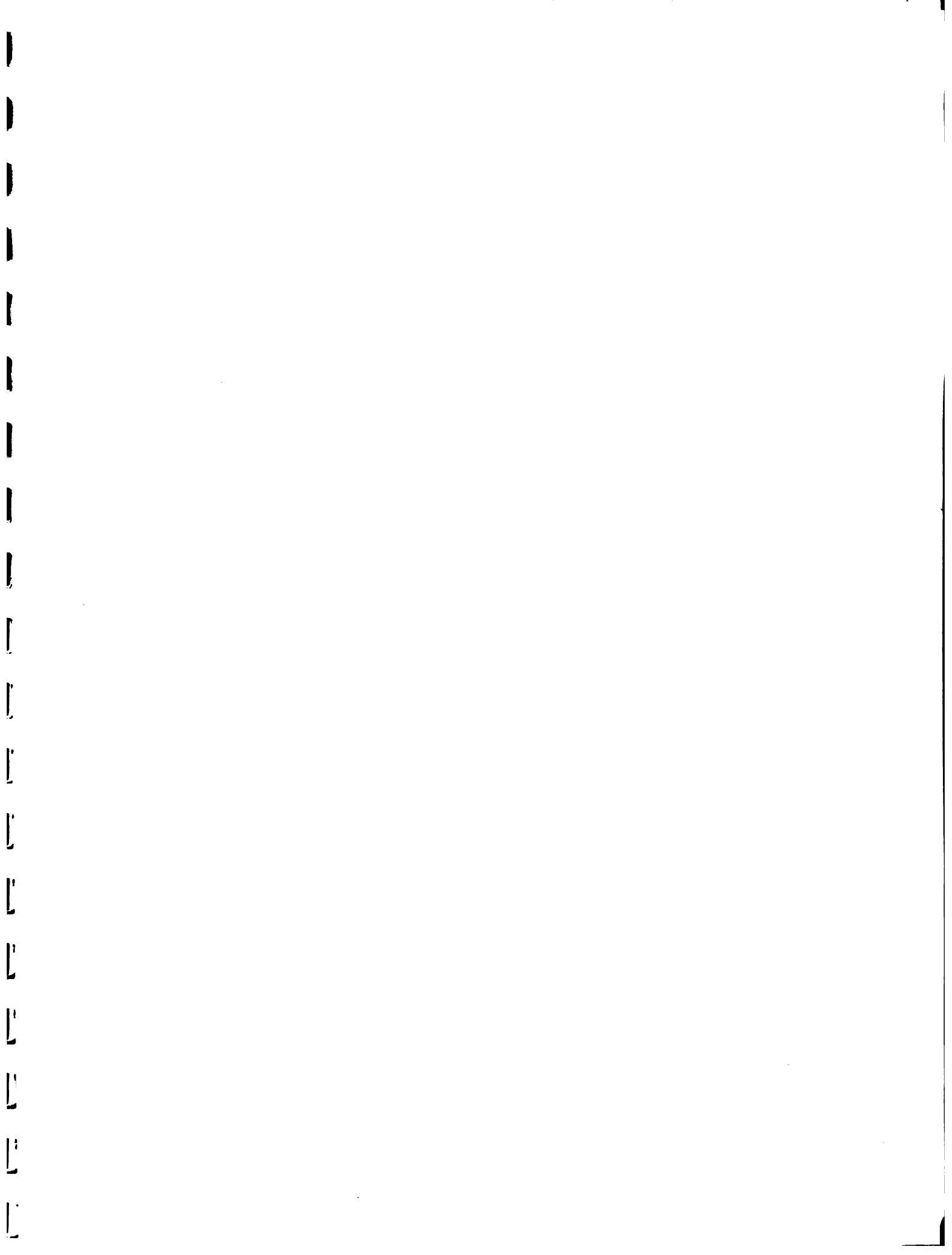
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