Working Paper Series No. 39

**FROM 'GLOBAL INFORMATION' TO 'INTERNATIONALIST COMMUNICATION': Reconceptualising the Democratisation of International Communication.**

Peter Waterman
May 1988

# FROM 'GLOBAL INFORMATION' TO 'INTERNATIONALIST COMMUNICATION':

## RECONCEPTUALISING THE DEMOCRATISATION OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Peter Waterman

**Synopsis:** During the last decade there have been increasing efforts at creating 'alternative' international communications, of which those dealing with labour are amongst the most recent. In so far as these have been analysed, it has not been within the framework of international communications theory. Yet a relevant theoretical framework is evidently necessary if such projects are to be critically examined and if a general project for the democratisation of international communication is to be advanced. A recent standard work on international communication is found to be useful in identifying certain problems facing the dominant model, but is considered to provide an insufficient base for examining/advancing an alternative. By synthesising theory or analysis of 'internationalism' and 'alternative communication', a new concept of 'internationalist communication' is tentatively presented. The relationship of the new concept to one recent experience – an alternative international radio news service for Latin America – is considered.

## Dedication

To the memory of my colleague David Baytelman, who died as I completed this paper. He was a person of many parts, a social scientist, planner, artist and polyglot. He would argue violently with me (but in which of his many languages?) even when he could no longer speak. He would also kiss me, coming and going. He was a sectarian socialist who nonetheless had an amazing political range of friends. He was a cosmopolitan who combined the wandering European Jew with the rooted Latin-American nationalist. He was feared and kept in exile even when he was paralysed, but nonetheless managed to die in Chile. He was an internationalist and communicator, whose brightly-coloured felt-tip doodles will continue to carry a distinctive Chilean vision worldwide. He was a mensch (Yiddish: a person with heart?). I would have liked to have discussed this paper with him - but in which language?

## Introduction:  a lacuna in international communications theory

There is a generally recognised problem of increasing relative com-
munication concentration amongst elite social categories and in the core
capitalist countries.  This concentration implies increasing relative com-
munication poverty amongst dominated social classes and categories –
particularly in the most-peripheralised countries.  Recognition of this
problem is a commonplace of critical research and comunications politics,
nationally and internationally.  It has been much discussed within the
context of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), mostly
with respect to the Third World.  The implicit or explicit solution offered
in both the academic and political critique has been that of increasing
national control.  A later recognition that national control means state or
elite control, and that this could imply a reproduction at nation-state
level of the problems recognised at the international one, has led to the
demand for democratisation as well as nationalisation.  This is, however,
implicitly a demand for democratisation within the nation state (e.g.
Halloran 1987, Media Development 1988, White 1988).  The nation-state
remains the crucial unit of analysis and arena of political action

In the meantime there has been taking place a dramatic growth in
'democratic' or 'alternative' communication globally.  This is a result of
the felt needs of social categories or interest groups which tend to
criticise both capitalism and statism.  The environmental, peace, women's,
consumer, third-world-aid, human-rights and new labour movements have been
increasingly building up their own means of communication.  Developing
identically or analogously in the West and the East as well as the South,
these new movements are customarily international and frequently
internationalist.  They have therefore been often actively involved in the
development of cheap, direct means of communication internationally.

Given the absence of either theory or strategy here, the alternative
international communication media have developed haphazardly, with much
replication and wastage, but also leaving major communications gaps.  One
such is international communication between groups within the Third World.

Development-aid and solidarity projects do not necessarily reverse the northward flow of information: they may even increase it. Another hole is - surprisingly - labour communication. Whilst many of the other mentioned interests and movements have over two or more decades set up extensive means of international communication, labour has been heavily dependent on trade unions or political parties that largely reproduce dominant communication structures and practices. Labour movements at factory, farm or community level lack the international information and communication facilities that exist for the womens', consumer or environmental movements.

Four years ago I wrote a first paper on the need for a new communication model for a new kind of labour internationalism (now available as Waterman 1988a). That paper was written without reference to the literature on international communication. Since then there have been significant new developments in the area of international labour communication, or democratic international communication more generally. This makes it necessary to examine some such new experiences - or writings on them - but now on the basis of international communication theory.

A relevant starting point here would seem to be found in Mowlana (1987: Chs. 10-12). However useful this might be, in identifying certain problems for the creation of a new kind of international communication and world community, it seems to me inadequate. Combining ideas from previous writings of my own, I offer instead a concept of 'internationalist communication' as one more relevant to the task. Finally, in order to suggest the relevance of the new model, I consider the case of an international radio news service for Latin America.

## 1. From 'global information' to 'world communication'

I am not taking the book of Hamid Mowlana (1986) as representative of contemporary literature on international communication. I am taking it as one recent example, the title of which neatly covers the terrain with which I am concerned. This title is <u>Global Information and World Communication: New Frontiers in International Relations</u>. Since Mowlana gives 'information'

a neutral or technical meaning (1986:4) and 'communication' a positive value (211-3), we can take it that his main title is also meant to suggest this distinction. The book, in any case, considers communication in both senses - or from both angles - and relates each to the third element in his title, the extension or transformation of what I prefer to call 'inter-state' relations. The work is also implicitly divided into these three elements. Chapters 2-9 analyse the literature on different types of transborder information flow, though two of these also deal with human communication in terms of tourism and cultural/scientic/educational exchanges. Chapter 10 deals with international relations. And Chapters 11-12 offer Mowlana's alternative views on international communication. These last three are the chapters that come closest to my interest so I will concentrate on them.

In his brief international relations chapter (Ch.10), Mowlana critically evaluates the approaches taken by other theorists and then advances two main points of his own. The first is to emphasise the extent to which informatisation is making information more and more a goal of international power struggles, as well as a vital means for their success. The second is to identify the increasing threat of 'Revolutionary Powers' to the existing 'Superpowers' (186. Original quotes). He then sets up his own model of a 'somewhat global intra-elite communication and information flow' (189), between domestic, superpower and transnational elites. Whilst allowing for competition between or amongst these elites, he argues that such elite domination of information globally implies a 'vertical and downward direction to the public' (ibid.) internationally. The argument so far is simple, if not without ambiguities and lacunae. It would seem to suggest the existence of, or necessity for, international action by 'the public' against elite control of information and/or for this public to create its own alternative international communication model. This is not a conclusion drawn by Mowlana. His only existing alternative is the 'revolutionary powers', earlier identified as Iran and Vietnam (188). Whatever interesting questions this odd couple may raise for inter-state relations or international communication, they seem to me equally unlikely bearers of any alternative to elite domination. Fundamentalist Islam and Fundamentalist Communism seem rather more likely to either reproduce 'elite' patterns or to be even more

hostile to democratic communication nationally and internationally than his existing superpowers.

In Chapters 11 and 12 Mowlana moves from 'an integrative view of information flow' (Ch.11) to his 'answer to the crisis of our age' (Ch.12). These chapters continue the argument from the previous one, with Mowlana first noting that

> 'the vessel of sovereignty' is leaking, and in some instances may
> even be sinking...Nations may act as though they are in control of
> their full national rights, but the erosion of sovereignty through
> communication technology and new transnational actors is paral-
> leled by the growing constraints on freedom of national action and
> the increasing responsibility seen for international
> organisations. As the locus of decision making is continuously
> transferred from national to international and transnational
> levels, the increasing number of issues will have to be settled in
> an international environment. (205)

Whilst this statement calls up a familiar image, there is no indication of what _sort_ of sovereignty _which_ nation states are losing to _which_ inter- or transnational instances, or with _what_ implications for _whose_ interests. There is, for example, no chapter devoted to transnational companies: in fact there is no index reference to them.

Mowlana moves on to ask whether we are going to 'handle the Information Revolution better than we handled the Industrial Revolution' (209). It is in considering his answer to this that he makes clear his distinction be- tween information and communication. The real revolution that is underway is a

> _communication_ revolution, explained in terms of a quest for satis-
> factory human interaction, rather than a _communications_ revolution
> viewed through the lens of technological and institutional spread
> and growth. (211)

Mowlana is dissatisified with both Marxist and liberal-democratic attempts to come to terms with this quest, considering that they share such incre- asingly questioned assumptions or values as industrialisation,

secularisation and cosmopolitanism. He asserts, in opposition to these, that

> contemporary movements around the world, whether in groups, communities, or nations, all share an alternative vision of human and societal development. This 'third way' eschews both Marxism and liberal democracy. It has its roots in more humane, ethical, traditionalist, anti-bloc, self-reliance theories of societal development...[T]he 'third way' seeks not to promote itself or its ideology; it seeks dignity through dialogue. It is the quest for dialogue that underlies the current revolutionary movements around the world. (212)

Once again, a familiar image is created. Once again there are problems with it. It is not so much that the image is rhetorical, but that it seems to be compounded of contradictory elements. Mowlana's construct would seem to articulate elements from social christianity, the fundamentalist Islam of Khomeini or Ghadafi, dependency theory and third-worldism, with the utopianism of the ecological movement. The sole common reference point is the increasingly widespread critique of industrial society or modernism, though in Mowlana's case this is hinged on the French Revolution (212) rather than on capitalism.

The problems facing such a third way, moreover, seem grave indeed. Whilst Mowlana speaks positively of the 'emergence of a universal superculture' (215), he also sympathises with its rejection:

> We should...give further consideration to the implications of nationality, ethnicity, and group differences because in some cases loyalties toward one group mean to some extent antagonisms toward other groups. As a result, resistance to the process of international communication is frequently perceived as a positve act in promoting the coherence of the smaller group and its cultural identity. (217)

He even goes so far as to declare that

> Greater international understanding...is not a direct or automatic result of the rapid expansion of international communication...The proliferation of communication through the international media [may desensitise people, as it does] during wars and international crises. Even the increase in exchange of individuals fails substantially to promote...'knowledge by encounter', because most of

> this flow, like tourism, involves the movement of richer people to
> the poorer and more antiquated areas of other countries in order
> to confirm what the visitors already believe. (ibid)

These sobering thoughts lead Mowlana to argue that

> the way <u>people</u> relate to each other in a world of
> 'internationalised' culture and consciousness may be more impor-
> tant than how <u>nation-states</u> relate. (218. Original stress)

Having criticised states, Mowlana now asserts that only professional or-
ganisations can create the universal principles necessary to create the
conditions for international dialogue between different cultures. The
alternative principles that Mowlana - presumably as such a professional -
then offers are those that favour 1) peace, 2) respect for different cul-
tures and traditions, 3) human rights and dignity, 4) home, association,
family and community. His idea is that such an 'ethical framework, one that
hovers above all nations' (219), should be placed on the international
communications agenda

> as we normally do with political, military, technological,
> economic and business issues, with the hope that a social, ethical
> and moral ecological balance can be created and a genuine learning
> process take place in the international system. (221)

One can sympathise with Mowlana's prioritising of human over inter-state
relations, agree with the necessity of some humanistic principles for inter-
national communication and yet recognise major problems with the way in
which he formulates the issues, identifies the agents of transformation, and
determines the alternative principles. Let us deal with these in turn.

In identifying the contradictions within contemporary international
relations and communications, Mowlana refers indiscriminately to 'groups' or
'individuals' without even relating them to the previously identified con-
tradictions between elites/peoples or established superpowers/new nation-
states. Such an identification would seem to be essential if one is to be
able to differentiate between group loyalties that are compatible with or
hostile to a humanised form of international communication. One would, for

example, need to be able to evaluate the possible compatability of Islamic fundamentalism and socialist feminism with such a project.

Secondly, on the agents of transformation. Even assuming that Mowlana means academics rather than such professionals as soldiers, lawyers and administrators, it might be asked whether certain academic organisations did not collaborate in creating the crisis of our age. If, as the work of Mowlana itself seems to suggest, the crisis of communication and culture is as much one of understanding as it is of policy, then we cannot assume that academics (professional creators of formalised understanding) are the van-guard of the necessary revolution.

Thirdly, the alternative principles. There are a number of problems here. We may start at the lowest level, that of the principles themselves. Mowlana does offer objectives radically different from those predominating in international communication today: 'Put peacemakers on opposite sides in touch with one another', 'Promote respect and tolerance for the world's manifold cultures'; 'Promote the democratisation of communication...'; '[F]acilitate self-reliance and interdependence by publicising local, decentralised solutions to common problems' (220-21). Such principles, however, are liable to remain homilies unless they identify the primary sources and agents of exploitation, alienation and oppression. They are liable to remain ineffective unless they also identify the possible agents of liberation. There is here also a problem of compatibility. Defence of 'tradition', 'home' and 'family' are not <u>necessarily</u> compatible with fur-therance of 'tolerance', 'human rights' and 'community'. Mowlana has himself suggested this (see the quote from his page 217 on p.5 above). At the highest level, we must consider the nature of his ethical principles and their relationship to the rest of the work. His principles appear to com-bine classical liberal idealism with contemporary liberal-democratic pluralism, and some kind of cultural relativism. In an increasingly il-liberal, undemocratic and culturally homogenised world, these are not values to be sneezed at. But, given the extent to which - as he himself suggests - liberalism is a source of the contemporary problem, it would seem to provide a poor foundation for a solution. There is also the question of the

relationship of the ethical to the other elements in his work. Mowlana offers his ethical considerations as if these were of the same order ('agenda items') as the 'political, military, technological, economic and business issues' dealt with elsewhere in his book. Ethical principles, however, are surely of <u>another</u> order, and presumably of a <u>higher</u> order than the others. For the management of the existing pattern of global communication, ethics is, indeed, simply another agenda item – the analysis and settling of conflicting public moral attitudes toward dominant structures and processes. But for someone concerned with transforming that order, it is surely necessary to have an explicit and consistent set of values, to have an adequate set of analytical tools, and to have the two sets organically linked. For all his critical positions, liberal values and humanistic aspirations, it would seem that Mowlana lacks these. Furthermore, Mowlana's approach is not only inadequate for dealing with alternative international communication: it makes it invisible. Can we do any better?

I make below no pretence at presenting an alternative theory, simply at offering an alternative conceptualisation enabling us to address more effectively both the area indicated by Mowlana and the related-yet-different one in which I am interested. I will therefore attempt to present a position at a similar level of generalisation to his, as set out above. What I intend to do is to bring together conceptualisations of alternative communication and internationalism from earlier papers (Waterman 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988a,b) and thus to create the new concept of 'internationalist communication'. Where it seems necessary, useful and relevant to a counter-position, I may introduce new elements. I will attempt to show that this new machinery, however makeshift, is better able to open up 'new frontiers in international relations' than that of Mowlana.

## 1. Internationalisation and internationalism

Let me present an argument in summary form before explaining some of its most significant terms:

1. In the 19th-century, 'internationalisation' was understood primarily in terms of <u>capital</u>. Contradictions were, of course, seen not only between international capital and international labour but also between international capital and the nation state;

2. In the 19th-century, 'internationalism' was primarily identified with the labour movement and socialist ideology. These did create a certain international working-class community and culture. But the paradoxical achievement of 19th-century internationalism was also help to generalise the nation-state form (Italy, Poland), reinforce state power over society and to increase mass subordination to the state (the welfare state, the communist state, the populist state);

3. Internationalisation today must be understood as a <u>general</u> social phenomenon, implying the increasing spread and impact of the whole range of core-capitalist social practices and norms within states on both peripheries (Eastern as well as Southern), in addition to the creation of numerous transnational or supra-state instances that increasingly determine the action of nation-states and the behaviour of the world's population;

4. The old social movements (labour and ethnic/national) are still largely subordinate to, or oriented toward, the nation-state; the new social movements (NSMs, such as those of women, human-rights, peace, environment, etc.) implicitly or explicitly recognise the interpenetration of local, international and national forces and forms of exploitation, domination and alienation; they tend to struggle simultaneously at many levels; they are therefore also implicitly or explicitly internationalist in orientation;

5. Instead of a primary, single, class, bearer of internationalism, serving humanity by moving toward its own class-determined goal, we are now confronted with a multiplicity of often-overlapping collective interests, whose identities, forms of action and goals are

reshaped in the process of struggle against domination and in dialogue with each other; we must therefore speak of the <u>new</u> <u>internationalisms</u> in the plural;

6. The ethical principle underlying internationalism is that of <u>solidarity</u>, traditionally understood in terms of identity of status (proletarian), interest (working class) and ideology (socialism); the increasing variety of internationalist subjects, interests and demands implies a more complex understanding of solidarity that allows for the variety and articulates differing internationalist movements in mutually tolerating and supportive forms;

7. Whilst internationalist movements today express themselves at international level both through inter-state and state-based international non-governmental organisations, they increasingly eschew the nation-state-member base and favour the flexible, open, horizontal <u>network</u> of autonomous units, held together more by shared values than imposed discipline; where traditional national or international organisations are acting in an internationalist spirit, this is often where they are involved in international networking or penetrated by internationalist networks;

8. Whilst, in many of the new internationalisms, middle-class people are the main <u>subjects</u> (e.g. feminist and ecological movements), in other cases they play the crucial <u>agent</u> role (e.g. shopfloor labour internationalism, indigenous peoples); increasingly, however, the agent role is understood in terms not of leadership but as that of catalyst or service-provider;

9. It is precisely the centrality of labour to commoditisation and capitalist (or statist) industrialisation that makes <u>labour</u> <u>internationalism</u> so difficult of achievement; the centrality of transnational capital to internationalisation nonetheless gives labour internationalism a crucial role; whilst we witness signs of

a reviving labour internationalism, an explicit and dynamic articulation with the democratic internationalisms has yet to be achieved.

The key terms in the above argument that I want to develop in a little more detail are the following:

1. Internationalisation: The global spread of modernisation in a capitalist-dominated world, in terms of the following: commoditisation, industrialisation, proletarianisation and capital concentration; bureaucratisation and statification (nationally and internationally); particular gender, sexual and family patterns; cultural centralisation and standardisation (compare Connell 1984). The most dynamic process is that of capital accumulation, with, as its most dynamic institutions, the transnational production, trading, servicing and financial concerns. Bureaucratisation means the centralisation of power first nationally then internationally. The bourgeois family model is propagated alongside competitive, commoditised and dehumanised sexuality. Cultural industrialisation means the global spread of North-Atlantic norms and forms. The increasing importance of inter-state agencies may be seen by liberals as expressing and extending the increasing 'interdependency' of humankind (Keohane and Nye 1977:Chapter 1), or by radicals as exercising a civilising influence on nation-states and TNCs (Brecher 1987:104). But these agencies tend to express the interests of dominant states, to reproduce the forms of capital and nation-state, and to remove control even further from ordinary people and daily life (Picciotto 1988).

2. Internationalism: Classically a critique of the nation-state and of capitalism. A recognition that the capitalist nation-state was too limited to deal with basic social problems and human needs. Positively, the urging of cross-national, global or non-territorial soidarities, communities and organisations of an egalitarian and democratic nature. Internationalism emerged out of the experience of capitalist industrialisation and the construction of centralised, modern but undemocratic states. These were destroying old loyalties and communities without providing the masses with

any satisfactory alternative. Internationalism developed particularly out of the relationship between the new artisan-based labour movement and cosmopolitan socialist intellectuals. The generalisation of internationalisation processes has meanwhile enabled numerous other social categories to recognise themselves as global subjects (teachers, women, and even ethnic and regional minorities). Internationalisation processes have also created increasing social problems of an increasingly global nature (indebtedness, threats to the ozone layer, AIDS, state-terrorism, Chernobyl). Increasingly, also, these problems are being dealt with in international fora, and the popular interests are expressing themselves in internationalist terms. Contemporary internationalism is highly complex and differentiated. Whilst the absence of mass internationalism (workers, women, peasants, ethnic minorities) remains a problem, the multiplicity and diversity of internationalism represents a considerable potential. It is necessary today to talk of internationalisms in the pural and to recognise this plurality as essential to the meaning of a contemporary internationalism. Internationalism is not opposed to nationalism or to any other identity of a non-dominant and non-exploitative nature. It is, on the contrary, increasingly a condition for the existence of national specificity and independence, and even for such 'sub-national' identities as those of ethnic and regional minorities.

3. Solidarity: This is the general ethical value and human relationship underlying internationalism, allying it with struggles for identity and liberation by the oppressed and exploited throughout history. Solidarity (see Vos 1976) has customarily been understood either in terms of identity or of substitution (taking the part of the other). These are part of its meaning, but identity can imply uniformity and exclusion of the other, substitution can imply the confirmation of material or moral inequality. Solidarity must therefore be also understood in terms of reciprocity (mutual advantage), affinity (shared feelings) and complementarity (differential contribution). If we take liberty, equality and solidarity as the democratic trinity, then we can see that the bourgeoisie and liberalism prioritised political liberty, the proletariat and socialism prioritised economic equality. In both cases solidarity was subordinated to the other

term and became exclusionary in practice, if not in doctrine. Concerned
with the preservation, rediscovery or invention of community, in terms free
of capitalism and statism, the new social movements tend to prioritise
solidarity as a social and human relationship, or at least to re-assert its
significance alongside the other two terms.

4. Labour internationalism: This concept needs to be deconstructed
and periodised. Labour internationalism as a general term includes that of
workers at shopfloor level, of working-class communities, of trade unions
and labour-oriented parties and of socialist intellectuals. Labour inter-
nationalism, even in its 19th century form, was related to what we would now
call the human-rights and national-independence movements. It also had a
relationship to bourgeois cosmopolitanism and religious universalism. It is
possible that, even during this period, labour internationalism was most
effective when it was least 'proletarian' (i.e. least to do with the worker
as labour power). Solidarity is imbedded in wage-worker existence and union
struggle to a greater degree than amongst many other mass social categories.
Given the extent to which daily self-defence and assertion requires
solidarity amongst workers, this provides a historical and even a possible
institutional base for a revival of internationalism amongst workers. Such
a revival takes place where and in so far as labour rejects subordination to
capital, statism and imperialism, and recognises the interpenetration of its
national and international interests (for an emerging US case, see Cantor
and Schor 1987).

Amongst the principles for a meaningful new labour internationalism
would seem to be the following ones. These principles are based on a
critique of the shortcomings of traditional internationalism as well as
reflection on new experiments either by new labour or other internationalist
groups (compare the principles drawn from their case by Cantor and Schor
1987:77-82). The new labour internationalism:

1. Implies direct face-to-face contacts between the concerned labour-
   ing people themselves, not simply between their representatives;

2.  Implies a two-way (or multi-directional) flow of information and support, not a one-way traffic from the 'rich', 'powerful', 'free' workers or unions to the rest;

3.  Requires some visible physical effort, activity or sacrifice by those involved, not simply the making of declarations or appeals;

4.  Combats political, religious, ideological and gender discrimination amongst working people locally so as to avoid reproducing these internationally;

5.  Is based on the expressed daily needs and capacities of ordinary working people, not on those of their representatives;

6.  Links up with other democratic internationalisms, so as to rein-force wage-labour struggles and surpass a workerist internationalism;

7.  Implies that organisations with internationalist pretensions finance their activities from worker or publicly-collected funds, ensure full membership and public discussion, and carry out their own independent policy formulation and research.

8.  Requires of involved intellectuals that they are open about their own interests, motives and roles, that they dialogue with workers and take on a primarily service and training role.

## 3. Dominant international communication and culture

We need to establish at least some significant features of the context within which attempts to create alternative international communication are being made. I am therefore concerned with the implications of two key processes: 1) that international capitalism is shifting into an 'informational mode of development' (Castells 1983:312); and 2) that inter-state relations are increasingly a matter of communication or culture.

We may begin with the processes identified by Mowlana (1986), even if my evaluation of them differs. Whether we take printed news, broadcasting, the cultural industries, transborder data flows or tourism, culture and communication, we cannot but become aware of the extent to which these are both growing in economic importance and being concentrated in the hands of both transnationals and dominant nation-states. This is true whether we take communication as the technical transportation of messages or as human flow across frontiers. We can identify numerous types of such flow: migrants and refugees; manual and professional workers; tourists; the military, spies and diplomats; students and academics; businesspeople; media and sportspeople; and members of voluntary organisations (Mowlana 1986:124). Analysis of these would reveal which are most directly controlled by TNCs (tourists, business and mediapeople?), or states (military, spies and diplomats?). It would also reveal which types of flow are the less-direct effects of capital and state activity (migrants and refugees?), and which are the most collectively self-determined (voluntary organisation members, including those engaged in sports, academia and tourism?). Analysis could also suggest interesting contradictions even within those practices controlled or dominated by capital and state - the self-organisation of migrant workers, social tourism, democratically-minded students, academics, mediapeople, etc.

The argument of this paper may not require a precise definition of culture, but it is worthwhile recognising the complexity of the term, even in fairly common usage. It can mean 1) the historical process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development; 2) the way of life of a people, place, period, or of humanity in general; 3) the activity of artists and intellectuals (Williams 1983:90-91). We need to recognise the extent to which these three meanings have a global reference. That culture has been also commoditised, industrialised, monopolised, transnationalised and/or statised is now a commonplace. But, again, it is worthwhile reflecting on what exactly is being spread and its precise implications.

Donald Horne (1986:76) refers to a series of 'myths' (beliefs giving transcendent meaning) and stresses that they dominate the 'public culture'

of industrialised and industrialising societies. These relate to industrialism and modernity (human power over the environment, inevitability of progress); gender and race chauvinism; national character, identity and strategic imagination (roughly, foreign policy), and the forms of economic and political control. Horne sees these universal myths as concealing significant interests and repressing those of both minorities and majorities, nationally and internationally. His argument on the universality of these myths across all three world areas helps us to understand how a previously-isolated communist world could so easily and rapidly adapt to and absorb cultural practices and artefacts previously considered quintessentially bourgeois or specifically North American. In a related argument, a group of Indian scholars states that the world of knowledge is today dominated by a monolithic, coercive discourse which is 'secular, scientific, managerial and nation-state based' (Ahmed et. al. 1988:65). They believe that the enlightenment idea of progress has lost much of its creative potential. They criticise nationalism for having hidden and suppressed other living realities, science for monopolising truth, secularism for both provoking religious fundamentalism and obstructing the fruitful dialogue of politics and religion.

I do not take these two positions as necessarily implying a rejection of industry, science, progress, nationalism or secularism but as a critique of industrialism, scientism, progressivism, nation-statism and an anti-religious secularism. I note, further, the central position both give to nationalism. It remains to add something on the international culture that belongs to a world of nation states. I have elsewhere suggested that the 18th-century concept 'cosmopolitanism' fits this bill (Waterman 1988b). Cosmopolitanism implied the imposition on the world of European bourgeois liberal norms and practices. Cosmopolitanism has today its euro-socialist and Soviet versions, but its predominant expression is in the US doctrine of 'interdependence'. Recognition of the above requires us to add three crucial elements missing from the arguments of Horne and the Indians: domination of world culture and communications by 1) the US, 2) the TNCs and 3) US TNCs. In other words, a critique of the elements of the dominant

culture must be accompanied by recognition of their most dynamic and power-
ful sources (for which see Mattelart 1983:55-8). In establishing his point
on 'interdependence', Mattelart makes telling use of the words of the almost
20-year-old words of Zbigniew Brzezinski:

> It is the novelty of America's relationship with the world -
> complex, intimate, and porous - that the more orthodox, especially
> Marxist, analyses fail to encompass...The United States has
> emerged as the first global society in history. It is a society
> increasingly difficult to delineate in terms of its outer cultural
> and economic boundaries [...] Roughly 65 percent of all world
> communications originate in this country... (Brzezinski 1970)

One last important point before we turn to alternative communication.
This is the matter of contradictions within the dominant international
communication or culture. Notions of total domination or incorporation must
be understood as expressions of anger or frustration rather than guides to
reality: they are evidently not aids either to resistance or counter-
assertion. We can see such contradictions even in the most unlikely places.
'Low Intensity Warfare' (LIW) is the Pentagon's latest strategy for handling
both the rebellion of Third-World peoples and the Vietnam syndrome amongst
the US public. LIW is aimed not simply at the physical elimination of the
enemy but also at his/her delegitimation. The focus of warfare seems to be
shifting from the enemy's army (pre-industrial period), to the enemy's
economy (industrial capitalist period), and to the enemy's popular base (the
informational capitalist period?). Howard Frederick (1988a,b) shows how
communication is central to LIW and argues that such communication is ad-
dressed not only to the enemy society (Nicaragua in this case) but also to
the US itself. It occurs to me that this new form or front of battle repre-
sents less a powerful new strategy than a recognition of weakness.
Frederick cites Caspar Weinberger to the effect that LIW is 'directed to the
destruction of hope itself' (1988b:12). Now, whereas it has always been
difficult for popular forces to fight the earlier types of war without
taking on in large part the behaviour of the oppressor, the terrain of
morale and hope would seem to me appropriately theirs. De-legitimation is a
game in which subordinated people(s) have strong cards - as evidenced by the
continued legitimacy of the Sandinista regime and the continuing legitimacy
problem of that of Reagan. The point is given broader significance by Seth

Siegelaub (1983:15). Today, 'even ruling-class military dictatorships...are obliged to "explain" themselves, whether in the third, second or NATO world (Turkey)'. If this is so for the military and in the field of political communication, even more must it be so for the liberal-democratic producers of the culture whose products and processes continue to dominate the world. The ambiguities of the international mass media were never more clearly exhibited than with the world-spanning Band Aid TV campaign for African famine relief (Geldof 1987). Difficult as it may be for popular forces, nationally or internationally, to understand and use such contradictions, they evidently need to do so.

## 4. Alternative international communication and culture

I here have a problem in so far as I am unaware of any contemporary literature on the topic. Historically one could refer back to the ex-perience of international religious communities, or to the attempt to create an international worker or socialist culture during an earlier phase of capitalist development. In so far as the religious communities were (or are) independent of states, non-hierarchical and non-authoritarian, then they might provide us with relevant pointers. The Society of Friends (Quakers) might be such an example (Young 1986). As for the specifically cultural activity of the traditional labour and socialist movements, this evidently proves an ambiguous legacy (Bouvier 1985, Korff 1979, 1984, Steinberg 1985). On the one hand there were the common symbols and rituals (red flags, May Day) and even shared activities (international worker film, photo, sports and Esperanto movements). On the other hand, there was the problem that to be popular the movement had to also be nationalist, localist or - in the extreme case - racist (some white miners on the Rand in 1922 had as their slogan, 'Workers of the World Unite for a White South Africa'). To mention this is to leave on one side the problem of the international labour and socialist culture as it became state-dependent, hierarchical and authoritarian. The loss of internationalist content to the symbols and rituals is exemplified by the anniversary of May Day in Peru in 1986, where it was in practice celebrated as a Peruvian labour anniversary with only the most minimal reference to the outside world (Waterman and Arellano 1986:24).

A democratic international communication and culture would seem to be something still to be invented. There are a number of forces favouring this possibility. One is the creation of a transnational commercial mass culture itself. The globalisation of jeans is not (pace Haug 1987) to be solely understood in terms of commoditisation and US cultural domination. It simultaneously meets and creates a common world of experience and desire. If the archetypical symbol of US commercial and cultural domination is Coca-Cola (whence 'Coca-Colonisation'), its international slogan that Coke is the 'real thing' is also a recognition of the search of young people for an authenticity and autonomy that Coca-Cola itself can hardly provide. A second important factor has been indicated earlier: that nation-statism is decreasingly able to fulfil its previous liberatory promises and to demonstrate its traditional protective capacities. Popular protest in Western Europe at the time of Chernobyl was addressed to the distrusted local nation-state, not the demonstrably-incompetent Soviet one. The defence and advancement of local, linguistic and national cultures in the face of transnationalisation and state-centralism (Russification, Sanscritisation, Thatcherisation) is going to require a supportive international ethic of pluralism, exchange, dialogue and solidarity.

In the absence of more general theorisation on alternative international communication and culture we must make use of Michael Goldhaber (1987), who does address himself specifically to workers, internationalism, and a particular form of possible alternative communication internationally. Goldhaber naturally recognises the centralising and manipulatory consequences of computerisation, but argues that microcomputer networks are 'intrinsically interactive and egalitarian' (10) if set up without a control hierarchy. He notes, in the industrialised capitalist world: 1) the problematic shift from an industrial to an information society:

> [N]either the major corporate leaders nor politicains advocating such progress have any clear or coherent ideas as to how this next stage of economic life will work. (10)

2) that corporate managers are increasingly forced to concede use of personal computers, allowing creativity and networking, even where this

implies loss of control; and 3) that as cultural creation becomes the major activity in the West, the value of the corporation, as the typical organisation form of the industrial period, comes into question. As for the Third World, he argues that this often reveals an early-industrial type of workers' culture. Working-class autonomy here, however, is limited by the worldwide dispersion of industry, the rapidity of industrial movement and change. Therefore, he argues, a 'truly autonomous worker's culture would now have to be international' (10). Given Third-World worker subjection to a dominant culture (e.g. TV) that is not even locally produced, and over which they consequently have not even indirect influence, the kind of contacts and information that a limited microcomputer network could provide might be significant. Goldhaber considers that

> Because industrial workers everywhere have a store of common experiences and problems, workers in different countries could more easingly communicate than could, say, peasants, from the same set of countries.
>
> Once workers are able to form such links, they would be able to facilitate wider cultural interconnections, including peasants and others as well. A broad-based autonomous culture of this sort would enormously increase the scope for freedom of action and expression while allowing new flexibility in utilising and preserving scarce physical resources. (11)

Goldhaber recognises, and attempts to overcome, three obstacles: 1) cost, 2) the vested interests of both managers and local leaders, and 3) the danger of 'Babel, chaos or cacophony instead of agreed upon meanings'. He argues against these, 1) that costs are falling dramatically, 2) that existing elites can only resist the new technology at the cost of backwardness, 3) that commercialised mass culture has already created a 'commonality of consciousness' and that therefore a 'highly multicentric culture based on dialogic interaction' is a real possibility (ibid).

That this is a speculative or even utopian argument is no necessary disqualification. When our categories of thought and action are dominated by what is historically and presently dominant, such thought is a practical necessity. Goldhaber is to be valued for implicitly countering the electronic utopianism of the corporation men (Naisbitt 1984), revealing

their uncertainties, and for bringing workers back into the construction of a future from which other people on the left exclude them (e.g. Mies 1986). My criticism is concerned with more specific matters. Firstly with the absence of grounding in such experiences of alternative international labour communication as already exist. Secondly with the failure to place international computer networking within the context of other existing or possible forms of communication. Thirdly with the reproduction of a notion of proletarian pre-eminence that sits ill with a recognition of the gradual passing of the industrial era. Fourthly with the failure to consider the content or structuring of the information carried or exchanges performed and their implications for preserving or transforming traditional power relations. A brief comment on each of these four points: 1) the alternative international labour media experiences have been designed, and are being run, principally by university-educated intellectuals, not by workers; 2) computerised networking must, surely, be evaluated for its facilitating of face-to-face contact, common sensual activity and joint creativity by those involved; 3) given the particular interests, relative privileges, restricted or declining numbers, of industrial workers, we should not simply assume a mediating or articulating role for them; 4) it is necessary to develop humanistic and empowering forms of computerised information and dialogue, as has been proposed for 'news' (Hamelink 1976) and 'talk' (Thorne, Kramarae and Henley 1984). What would seem necessary is to note the specific needs, capacities and potentials of peasants, squatters and women, and to simultaneously advance their possibilities for unmediated international communication. A multicentric democratic culture based on dialogic interaction is necessary nationally as well as internationally.

Given the limitations of Goldhaber's nonetheless thought-provoking argument, I am required to turn to Fred Stangelaar (1986), whose argument I have used in previous papers. Stangelaar's piece is addressed neither to workers, nor to the international level, nor to any particular form of communication. But, in considering alternative communication on the basis of Latin-American experience with video, he comes up with criteria useful for alternative international communication generally. Stangelaar sees the major source for alternative communication in the practical resistance to

international capitalism, this implying struggle also against racism, sexism, the state and war. He wishes to distinguish four different types of non-dominant communication. These are: 1) <u>marginal communication</u> – not allied to the masses or social and political movements; 2) <u>horizontal communication</u> – exchange between dominated groups; 3) <u>anti-communication</u> – subverting the form or content of dominant communication whilst not connecting with mass struggles and 4) <u>alternative communication (AC)</u>. The four fundamental and interdependent characteristics of the last are: a) a content, language, imagery and symbolism that comes direct from the people and confronts those of the oppressor; b) an orientation toward a total social transformation; c) a mobilising and organising role, surpassing both vertical and horizontal information flows with a 'spiral' communication model; d) an active role in production and distribution by the relevant sector of the people and/or popular organisations. Such an active participation implies, amongst other things, i) interaction between sender and receiver; ii) messages that further interaction of both the population and the professional communicators; iii) accessibility of both form and content to the masses, at a minimal educational level, education being part of the communication; iv) public access to both production and distribution channels; v) participation in the communication education structures; vi) organisation of a public capable of criticising and eventually correcting the media.

Stangelaar's distinction of alternative from other forms of non-dominant communication is crucial for our subject. Most of the new international media that have sprung up all over the world during the last five or ten years should probably be characterised as <u>anti-</u> rather than <u>alternative</u>. This becomes even clearer when we consider the four characteristics of alternative communication. For even where such new media could claim to have a social-transformation orientation and a mobilising role, few would claim to have a popular content and form or to involve the masses or mass organisations. The existence of such a model enables us to judge present products or projects and to make explicit – where necessary – the reasons why the criteria are not met.

## 5. From 'world communication' to 'internationalist communication'

So far this paper has been of a rather discursive nature. It is now necessary to pull together its various stands. I propose to do so in the form of a series of propositions on 'internationalist communication'. The potential of these will, hopefully, be suggested in the Conclusion.

1. It is necessary to develop a concept of internationalist communication (IC) if we wish to construct a peaceful, solidary, egalitarian, democratic and pluralistic world culture. Such a concept must be explicitly value-loaded, future-oriented and prescriptive in nature if it is to allow for criticism of existing conditions and facilitate their transformation. Such a concept must be developed from an analysis of the current crisis of global information, from experiments at surpassing this and from identification of popular dissatisfactions and aspirations in the face of the dominant world culture.

2. As a preliminary definition we might consider the following. IC means the creation of transterritorial solidarity relations which enrich and empower popular and democratic communities or collectivities by exchanging, sharing, diversifying, exchanging and synthesising their ideas, skills and arts. This concept is constructed by the articulation of two others, 'internationalism' and 'alternative communication'. The basis for this procedure is provided, negatively, by a recognition of the increasing inter-relation and interpenetration of 'inter-state relations' and 'global information' – a conflation that itself implies an increasingly concentrated exploitation and domination of the world's resources, peoples and its territorial and non-territorial communities. The value of this procedure comes, positively, from a recognition of the extent to which alternative international communication is both the means to, and end of, internationalism. The strength of the dominant pattern of international relations and communications lies in finance, machinery, institutions, arms, territory, and their tendency to stratify, segment, oppose, oppress, destroy. Information is here a resource to be hoarded, sold, controlled and used to reinforce the concentration of wealth and influence. The strength

of the developing alternative pattern of internationalist relations ia asymetrical. It lies precisely in its capacity to use and further international communication and culture as a relationship between people. The difference between the two can be seen in the way that the new communications technology is understood and used internationally by capital and state on the one hand and in the first early communications experiments of internationalist social movements and democratic communicators on the other.

3. The political force for the development of internationalist communication is provided by the new social movements (NSMs) and a movementist understanding of world social structure and transformation. Developing under conditions of mature capitalism, nation-statism and state-socialism, the NSMs are faced by the necessity of confronting their constraints. Required to seek alternatives to each and all of these partial, one-sided and failing solutions to human problems, we have for the first time the possibility of considering their commonalities and of surpassing them. Where Marx had to predict the global effects of capitalist development and assert the existence of a single liberating and internationalist class, the new social subjects experience these effects and act out the role. In so far as the NSMs (and movementist ethnic and labour organisations) reject capitalist, statist, bloc, racist, etc., solutions, they are open to international dialogue and cooperation in a way that the old ones could not consistently be.

4. The most favourable terrain for the new internationalist social movements is precisely that of communication. Movements such as those of women, human-rights, Third-World solidarity – and the new labour ones - are increasingly recognising this, even whilst they are active in traditional political, lobbying, organising and financing activities.

5. So far, international communication activities tend to fall into the three non-dominant categories (marginal, horizontal and anti-) rather than into that of AC as more strictly defined. The three first categories (pp.24-25 above) are, however, to be neither condemned nor ignored, nor is the difficulty of creating alternative international communication to be

under-estimated. Marginal international communication, for example amongst
academic feminists, might develop channels, styles, contents and ideas, as
well as a potentially valuable resource base for mass-oriented activity.
Horizontal international communication, for example between trade unions
ideologically subordinated to the existing order, provides a terrain more
easily contestable than that of the dominant media. Anti-communication, for
example the academic or popular writings of critical international com-
munications specialists themselves, can delegitimise the dominant pattern or
identify its internal contradictions.


6.   The specific difficulties of creating an alternative international
communication model are primarily those of motivation, resources and
language. We may assume the growing motivation. Resources must be sought
primarily amongst the interested categories themselves. Advantage can,
however, also be taken of the institutions (e.g. public-service or community
broadcasting) and finance (development-aid funds) of liberal states,
churches, foundations and international agenices that seek to demonstrate
their democratic or humanitarian credentials. Recognising the interpenetra-
tion or overlap between internationalism on the one hand and both religious
universalism and bourgeois cosmopolitanism (Waterman 1988b) on the other
should enable internationalists to make principled and purposive recourse to
such facilities. Language should be seen as a problem rather than a barrier
because we have not even begun to explore the possibilities of IC between
language groups of different nation-states (not only English and Spanish but
also Dutch, Armenian, Hausa, Quechua). Use can be made of the linguistic
skills and cultural knowledge of immigrants and re-migrants. Foreign-
language skills should be encouraged amongst both the masses and the
activists. The experience of the international worker Esperanto movement (a
forgotten chapter in the Comintern's cultural activity) should be carefully
reconsidered. New importance should be given to non-verbal communications
and culture, including symbol and ritual (remember the international appeal
of the Che Guevara posters and how these drew on images of Jesus). The
revival of May Day as a general 'International Solidarity Day', in which
class and democratic internationalism would be explicitly articulated,
nationally and internationally, could be an interesting experiment.

7.  The dominant international communication order is evidently capable of commercialising, de-radicalising and incorporating elements of popular or oppositional culture nationally and internationally (the Che Guevara teeshirt industry).  Conversely, <u>internationalist groups are already capable of using for their purposes the dominant international channels and symbols</u>. This is not simply a matter of the creation of <u>Superbarrio</u>, a neighbourhood-protecting Superman, in Mexico City (TOSM 1987:3-4).  It is also one of the 'sealed-train strategy' long used by East-European dissidents to get their messages back to their own populations by using the dominant Western media. This strategy is used implicitly by Greenpeace, adept at exploiting the mass media to get its minority message to a mass international public.  But one needs to be conscious of what one is doing if, instead of riding a sealed train, one is not to be taken for a ride (see, Kuczkiewicz 1986, Nunez 1986, Waterman 1987).

8.  <u>If a labour IC model exists, it is still largely hidden from public view</u>.  There may be cases or practices that embody a number of the four fundamental and interdependent characteristics of AC listed earlier.  But we can hardly expect such particular cases or practices to each confront the oppressor, be oriented toward a total social transformation and have the participatory, educational and critical characteristics required.  The development of such a model therefore requires the identification and analysis of the whole range of international labour communciation practices, whether of a non-dominant or a specifically alternative nature.  We therefore need to examine traditional international labour communication, as well as such mass or individual labour activities as migration, vacations, work and study trips, interpretation of dominant media images of labour abroad, amateur radio and computer communication, correspondence, etc.  We also need to be aware of significant wage-worker or labour-movement participation in the IC work of such 'middle-class' initiated or dominated internationalist activities, as those of the churches or human-rights movements.  We need to be sensitve to the communications work and skills of increasing numbers of skilled or semi-skilled workers, as well as those of increasing categories of 'proletarianised' education, cultural, communications and information professionals or technicians.  These, and their organisations, are not only

capable of acting internationally in their own right but also of acting as agents (educators, technical specialists) for others.

9.  Aware of its privileged economic and educational position – but without guilt-tripping – the progressive professional, technical, administrative and cultural 'middle class' is going to have to further the above process, just as its democratic and internationalist elements have initiated it. A leading role could be played by radical communications specialists bored with providing ideologies, theories and strategies to nationalist technocrats or counter-elites, seeking a new share of the Old Global Information Pie (OGIP?). Increasingly resentful of elitst technocrats and political manipulators, workers and others will respond positively even to foreign specialists if these help them rediscover their international history, develop the skills locked into alienated work, extend their own international knowledge and contacts – and are prepared to learn as well as teach.

10.  The appropriate media for IC must differ according to place, category and level and political conditions. Place: video might become increasingly central within the US, where there now exists the possibility of broadcasting via satellite to individuals and public-service cable channels nationwide (Deep Dish 1986); it is hardly yet relevant for tropical Africa. Category: printed materials can be both read and produced by most peace-movement members, not by most members of rural labour unions. Level: the cost and technical complexity of computers makes them initially relevant to organisers and communicators, not to most social movement members. Political conditions: there are media and modes of expression with a high and therefore provocative political profile (explaining why the classic Soviet film Battleship Potemkhin was banned in many liberal democracies between the wars) and there are those with low ones (information and education materials).

## Conclusion:   the case of the Chasquihuasi radio news service

It is time to try to cash our conceptual cheques. This can be done here for only one case. The case is that of _Informativo Tercer Mundo_ (Third World News), a fortnightly radio news bulletin produced by Chasquihuasi Communications in the unlikely place of Santiago, Chile. (Chasquihuasi is Quechua – an international but repressed language – and means the house of the messenger, these messengers being the relay-runners in the highly sophisticated communications system of the Andean empires). Whilst there are other special characteristics of ITM, the most important for us is that this is an _alternative international communications project_ rather than an _international social movement using or furthering communication._

The Chasquihuasi project is not only a special case but also possibly a unique one. This uniqueness resides in several characteristics. The first is in its provision of a continent-wide service to the _radios populares_ (for 'popular radio' in Latin America see White 1980, 1983). The second is in its systematic reflection on its own communications practice. The third is in its preparedness to either talk publicly about its achievements and problems, or to make material about these freely available. Such materials provide the base for my analysis. They consist of the following: 1) a published article (Salinas and Gomez 1987); 2) an unpublished conference paper (Salinas 1987); 3) a personal letter; 4) a copy of Chasquihuasi's printed _Informativo Internacional Tercer Mundo_ (IITM 1987), a printed bulletin circulated principally to the popular media and organisations in Chile; 5) a document collection, including a) a mailing list of ITM clients, b) sample letters from receiving stations, c) Chilean labour papers using the IITM, d) a complete set of ITM scripts, July-December 1987, Programmes 103-28, e) two ITM cassettes.

Now for a structured analysis and commentary, referring in turn to the base, object, medium, criteria and contents, coverage of topics and social categories, language and style, distribution, organisation and financing.

**Base:** The base on which ITM rests is the more than 4,200 radio stations that exist in Latin America, themselves serving as the sole or major source of media information for 90 percent of the population. Of the 4,200 stations, only five percent are 'major transmitters', able to pay for commercial press services. The rest are dependent on the big transmitters or on the daily press. As a result they are the least-informed media in Latin America. ITM grew out of a Catholic organisation of educational and development-oriented radio and TV stations in Latin America (Unda-AL), this being on of two such radio popular networks in the continent.

**Object:** The object of ITM is to provide international information, in particular to the many small, poor, provincial or rural radios populares. More specifically, it is concerned to: 1) provide information about Third-World development, particularly to the rural sector; 2) stimulate a Latin-American consciousness and identity; 3) provide a channel for information on and from national and international organisations, NGOs, religious bodies, etc., concerned with democratic and self-sustaining development.

**Medium:** Chasquihuasi decided on the medium of a fortnightly cassette, sent by registered mail, carrying a news programme of a special form and content. Each cassette contains two half-hour news programmes, each consisting of 7-8 items, mostly of 2-3 minutes, but one of which is a special feature of a more analytical type. Each cassette is accompanied by an index of titles and themes. They can thus be easily used by the client stations, either as complete programmes or as contributions to others.

**Criteria and content:** News selected is meant to be of three basic types: 1) about the international structures causing dependency and underdevelopment; 2) about national and international action favouring auto-centred development, particularly through South-South cooperation; 3) about activity taken by the people to achieve their own needs. ITM prioritises news about the majority of the population - women, peasants, Indians, workers, etc. Most of the material concerns the direct and basic needs of the popular sectors - nutrition, health, employment, culture, environment - and their own activity concerning such issues. Economic news

focuses on Third-World resources, their position in the international market, on the TNCs and state or popular action against them. ITM avoids conventional political news that separates the struggle for political power from the key forces influencing the distribution of resources. It also avoids personalisation of politics, as with 'the revelations concerning the nose of President Reagan' (Salinas and Gomez 1987:10). National and international politics are covered only when they concern matters affecting the general population. International cooperation is covered, as is news questioning its value. In a number of ways, the ITM formula accords with the 'alternative news' concept of Cees Hamelink (1976).

**Language and style:** Chasquihuasi has put considerable effort into developing a language and style appropriate to its intended audience:

> From a journalistic point of view, the production of Third World has been a real challenge. We have to give a news form to themes that the public is not accustomed to recognising as such, because the conventional media do not consider them news. And we have to broach, with a maximum of clarity and simplicity, complex subject that - considering their importance - have never been explained to the majority. (Salinas and Gomez 1987:11)

The difficulty has been compounded by the failure of schools of journalism to train journalists capable of producing relevant and comprehensible news for popular audiences. Chasquihuasi has found it necessary to abandon a conventional news style for a pedagogical one, to simplify figures without leaving out relevant facts, to translate technical jargon into terms appropriate to its audience. It has been able to improve its style here, in part thanks to critical comments from client stations. It is difficult for someone unfamiliar with both the language and the audience to give an opinion on ITM's success here. All that a learner of Spanish can say is that the vocabulary is simple. Furthermore, the voices on the sample tapes speak slowly and clearly, the presentation is lively, and the popular music introducing the items is locally relevant and appropriate.

**Coverage of topics and social categories:** According to its own analysis, ITM news items fall into the following - overlapping - categories: popular sectors (including workers and unions) 27 percent; basic needs 30

percent; <u>economy</u> 20 percent; <u>national, regional and international politics</u> 23 percent. A brief and limited sample of my own, however, revealed significant information that these categories conceal. Taking ten consecutive programmes (Nos. 103-12, starting July 1987), 31 percent of items mentioned workers <u>directly</u>, in terms of industry, employment, working conditions, organisation and protest. Many other items <u>concerned</u> workers, in the sense of dealing with TNC policies, housing, health, democracy, etc. Another feature revealed by my sample is that ITM is rather narrower in geographic coverage than its name suggests. Over 90 percent of items dealt solely with Latin America and the Caribbean, or the Northern impact on these. Of the other 10 percent, most dealt with the Third World in general (thus including Latin America). Only one item dealt with internal developments outside the Third World, by mentioning labour-rights abuses in communist countries alongside those elsewhere. This brief analysis cannot convey the full flavour of the ITM tapes. Nor can Chasquihuasi's own project materials. These might suggest that ITM has a Third-Worldist, developmentalist and populist orientation, possibly in keeping with the nature of its sponsors, clients and financial backers, as well as with the limited political freedom existing in Latin America today. My impression from the scripts, however, is that Chasquihuasi uses the space it occupies to enlarge or move it in a <u>movimientista</u> (movementist) direction.

**Sources:** The main source of information for ITM has been the UN- and Third-World-oriented news agency, Inter Press Service (see Hall 1983). Additionally it has made use of various 'alternative' Latin-American and Third-World news bulletins and magazines, as well as many specialised ones dealing with women, human rights, etc. Although ITM is not a network and 'participation itself is not an objective of the programme' (Salinas and Gomez 1987:11), it has tried to obtain taped materials from client stations. These, however, have no experience in international exchange and tend to consider - wrongly - that their materials could be of no interest to ITM. The service has, however, had occasional contributions from individual communicators or organisations.

**Distribution:**  Chasquihuasi has been sending ITM to over 100 stations in 19 Latin-American countries. It provides the only source of foreign news for most of these stations, most of which in turn serve poor urban, rural and Indian communities in isolated areas. Over 70 additional stations receive copy-tapes made by others. Some 20 stations and institutions use the tapes for training purposes, these including literacy programmes, the stimulation of discussion, and workshops for journalists of the popular media. Over 50 bodies use the written version of ITM, these including 11 trade-union publications. It should not be assumed that these stations or organisations are necessarily church-dominated or that, even if they are, they are of a 'good-doing' orientation. A letter to Chasquihuasi from Bolivia reported the violent destruction of one associated station. And another ITM client lost its contract with a private broadcasting company in Peru because of Presidential objections to its programmes (ADEC/ATC 1988). The response from recipients has been overwhelmingly positive, with appreciation expressed about the content, style and technical quality of the tapes. Whilst a number of users had constructive criticisms, 17 declared their disinterest. A small number, mostly from Chile itself, objected to the radical nature of the programme.

**Organisation and finance:**  Chasquihuasi has no studio of its own, using a church facility in Santiago. Its permanent staff consists of only four people, including one part-timer. Its two announcers are professionals, employed by the hour. Much of the reason for the originality of the project must lie with the fact that one of its four staff, Raquel Salinas, is or was a researcher on international communications. The organisation has tried to obtain contributions from its clients. Between May 1985 and June 1987 the number of subscribers, paying US$ 5-20 per month, rose from 24 to 67. Others have been excused payment on grounds of poverty. Within a period of just over two years, Chasquihuasi managed to collect a total of $ 9,310 from its clients. The total income from users of Chasquihuasi services, however, covers only some 10 percent of its costs. The other 90 percent has been contributed, at various times, by state- or church-funded development agencies in Sweden, the UK, Canada and the Netherlands. On the assumption (which might be misleading) that the 10 percent refers to the $ 9,310, it

would seem that this development-aid finance might amount to some $ 40-50,000 per year. This hypothetical annual sum seems reasonable when we compare it to information I have about the salary for one researcher on a foreign-funded 'alternative communications' research project in Latin America during this period. His annual salary was estimated at some $ 15,750. The budget for the whole 18-month project (for the equivalent of two fulltimers plus project expenses) was almost $ 70,000. As another point of comparison for the ITM project, I estimate the hypothetical $ 40-50,000 above to be roughly equivalent to the cost of putting three Third-World professionals through a 15-month Masters' Programme at my own Institute.

**Related activities:** It should not be forgotten that in addition to ITM Chasquihuasi carries out a range of other activities, mostly oriented to Chile itself. These include a communication and organisation training programme and the running of a popular documentation centre. The training programme has run 37 workshops for members of 89 organisations during an 18-month period, 10 of these organisations being unions:

> In this way...the Confederation Solidarity and Work, which gathers
> more than 30 unions in the whole country, all formed by unemployed
> and under-employed people, produced its own programme and dis-
> tributed [it] by means of cassettes to its affiliated member
> unions...[T]his was the first time that a Chilean union of workers
> produced its own radio programme, all by itself, after participat-
> ing in our training programme. (Salinas 1987:6)

The documentation centre includes printed and audio-visual teaching materials, collected through contact with over 100 Latin-American institutions. It has also produced its own teaching materials and was in 1987 preparing booklets on content analysis and evaluation methods, to be used by popular communicators for analysis of their own media. Pressure on its meagre staff resources was causing Chasquihuasi to reduce training courses in Chile. But it was also intending to develop a second radio programme of a cultural nature, to be fed with material by the participating stations themselves.

Having described this project as far as the available materials seem to allow, it is necessary to consider it in the light of the propositions on internationalist communication. We will take them, one by one, according to their numbers in Section 5 above (pp.25-31).

**1.   The necessity for conceptualising IC:**  The ITM project was conceived not in terms of internationalism but in those of Third-Worldism, auto-centred development, basic needs, cultural authenticity and the self-activity of the major mass social categories. Without necessarily detracting from these values or aims, it might be suggested that a concept of IC would raise the specific necessity of extending ITM coverage from a Latin-American one (as embodied in the materials) to a genuinely Third-World one (in the aims but barely demonstrated), and to an international one (in neither). Without such an explicit concept and norm, a Latin-American or Third-World identity could be understood as a closure rather than an opening, and as a rejection of the experience of other world areas rather than a specific local understanding of such.

**2.   IC as transterritorial solidarity, exchange and synthesis:**  The project seems to incorporate an understanding of IC but only implicitly and only within the region. Even at this level, of course, we do not know to what extent solidarity feelings or activities have been enhanced amongst listeners. (We only know that the banned ITM client in Lima, Radio Jornada, was in early 1988 being listed to by a respectable 40,000 people, and thus standing seventh out of 35 for Peruvian radio programmes broadcast between six and seven a.m.). Many of the problems identified by ITM in Latin America exist not only in other parts of the Third World but elsewhere also. Indebtedness seriously affects Poland and Rumania. Dependency and underdevelopment affect Scotland. Unemployment, hunger, racial and sexual discrimination, the denial of labour and human rights, affect the USA. It would be comparatively easy to extend the distribution and coverage of ITM to at least the Castillian-speaking areas of Spain and to the USA. Such coverage would, no doubt, be consciousness-raising for all listeners concerned.

**3. The force for IC lies in the NSMs:** Given the amount of time and emphasis ITM gives to the environment, women's issues, popular culture and autonomous grassroots organising around these and other matters, it would seem to be inspired by the specifically movimientista orientation that has been developing in Latin America over the last decade (see Slater 1986).

**4. Communication as a major activity of the NSMs:** One could suggest that ITM is an embodiment of this proposition. As a media project, however, it could also be considered a substitute for such activity in Latin America. With one or two notable exceptions (the feminist, and popular education and culture movements), the IC activities of the NSMs seem rather underdeveloped in Latin America. There is, thus, no independent Latin-American labour news service. Labour-oriented communicators in Peru, for example, have little or no access to labour information from either outside or inside Latin America (Waterman and Arellano 1986:13-21). This suggests the necessity or possibility for social movements in Latin America to use the ITM model for their own specific purposes.

**5. Most NSM communication internationally is 'non-dominant' rather than 'alternative':** Most, but not ITM, which can be more usefully discussed in terms of AC, as below.

**6. In addition to the other features of AC, appropriate language and financing are particular problems for IC:** Let us first consider ITM's solutions to the language and resourcing problems. Language: The continent-wide language community is a reason for the existence of ITM. However, the project does not accept this as a limit, making available scripts that can be translated into Indian languages. The two forms could also be used outside Latin America, to be directly broadcast to the Spanish-speaking community, or for translation and use in Third-World or international programmes of interested stations. Finance: Development-aid funding is another reason for the existence of ITM. The project itself wishes to become self-supporting but this must be a distant aim. It could, however, improve its independence by also seeking 'solidarity funding' from church communities, radical communicators, communications workers' unions

and by appeals via alternative radio stations. It could also sell services to interested stations in North America and Europe. Having dealt with these specific problems, let us consider the AC characteristics as listed in Section 4 of this paper (p.24-25 above): a) <u>content, language and imagery:</u> those of ITM appear appropriate; b) <u>total transformation orientation:</u> this is implicit in the ITM scripts; c) <u>spiral model:</u> there is as yet little contribution or feedback, far less the complex dialectic this model suggests; d) <u>participation in production and distribution:</u> ITM points out that it is not a network; the possibility of building up such participation is, however, present in its Chilean training work and the experience of <u>radio popular</u> more generally (White 1980:8-9); it is also part of the classical alternative radio model (Brecht 1983).

**7.  Dominant media can be used for IC:** So can the non-dominant media that the <u>radios populares</u> represent. Traditionally, the Latin American left appears to have considerd this as irrelevant, preferring either to temporarily attack or occupy dominant radio stations (guerilla radio?), or to use 'clandestine' or 'national liberation' strategies (for which see Mattelart and Siegelaub 1983: 190-220). ITM shows the possibility and value of alternative intervention in the area of non-dominant media.

**9.  The initiating role of radical communications specialists:** This possibility is demonstrated by the ITM experience. There can be little doubt that it is the presence of such a person within the project that has raised it above the pragmatism that hallmarks many other such worthy projects.

**10.  Media must differ by place, category, level:** The possibility for ITM was created by the existence in Latin America of the small, private, local radio station model (US influence?) and the development of a mass- and change-oriented church (a Latin-American innovation). Even should the model be copied by the blossoming community and public-service radios in the industrialised capitalist countries, or elsewhere in the Third World, it is unlikely to have the same potential distribution network and audience.

Moreover, even for its present audience, radio programmes have their limitations as a means of IC. Some of these can be overcome by use of circulated tapes, as in the Chilean training programme cited earlier. For agitational and organisational purposes, however, these media probably need to be supplemented by others which have a lower public profile but carry more information, are more interactive, or allow more concentrated attention.

Hopefully, this brief exercise will have suggested the value of even a first attempt at conceptualising IC. Would it be idealistic to end by proposing that internationalist communicators continue to work on the theory and practice of IC - if possible by using one of the alternative international computer networks but in any case practising the norms and techniques they would like to see furthered?

## Bibliography

ADEC/ATC. 1988. 'La Censura y Cierre de Nuestro Programa Radial Laboral "La Jornada"' (The Censure and Closure of Our Labour Radio Programme 'La Jornada'). Lima: Asociacion de Defensa y Capacitacion Legal/Asociacion Trabajo y Cultura. March 14.

Ahmed, Imtiaz et.al. 1988. 'India: Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures', IFDA Bulletin, No.64, pp.65-8.

Bouvier, Beatrix. 1985. 'Die Marseillaise in der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung vor 1914'. Paper to the Symposium on 'Internationalism in the Labour Movement before 1940', International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, 3-6 September, 1985. 40pp.

Brecher, Jeremy. 1987. 'The "National Question" Reconsidered', New Politics, Vol.1, No.3 (New Series), pp.95-111.

Brecht, Bertolt. 1983 (1930). 'Radio as a Means of Communication: A Talk on the Function of Radio', in A. Mattelart and S. Siegelaub (eds.), Communication and Class Struggle: 2. Liberation, Socialism. New York: International General. Pp.169-71.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew. 1970. Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Techtronic Era. New York: Viking.

Cantor, Daniel and Juliet Schor. 1987. Tunnel Vision: Labour, the World Economy and Central America. Boston: South End Press. 87pp.

Castels, Manuel. 1983. The City and The Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements. London: Edward Arnold.

Connell, R.W. 1984. 'Class Formation on a World Scale', Review, Vol.7, No.3, pp.407-40.

Foner, Philip. 1986. Mayday: A Short History of the International Workers' Holiday, 1886-1986. New York: International. 184pp.

Frederick, Howard. 1988a. '"Development Sabotage Communication" in Low Intensity Warfare: Media Strategies against Development in Central America', Paper to the Fifth Annual Intercultral Conference on Latin America and the Caribbean, University of Miami. Athens: School of Telecommunications, Ohio University. 16pp.

Frederick, Howard. 1988b. 'Media Strategies against Democracy in Central America: Development Sabotage Communication in Low Intensity Warfare', Democratic Journalist, Vol.35, No.1, pp.11-13.

Geldof, Bob. 1986. Is That It? Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Goldhaber, Michael. 1987. 'Creating a Worker's Culture in the Third World', Media Development, Vol.34, No.4, pp.9-11.

Hall, Peter. 1983. 'What's all the Fuss about Inter Press?', Columbia Journalism Review, Jan-Feb., pp.53-7.

Halloran, James. 1987. 'International Democratisation of Communication: The Challenge for Research', in Jorg Becker, G. Hedebro and L. Paldan (eds.), Communication and Domination: Essays to Honor Herbert I. Schiller. Norwood: Ablex. Pp.241-8.

Hamelink, Cees. 1976. 'An Alternative to News', Journal of Communication, Autumn, pp. 120-23.

Haug, Wolfgang. 1987. 'Ideological Values and Commodity Aesthetics: The Example of the "Jeans Culture", in Commodity Aesthetics, Ideology and Culture. New York: International General. Pp.144-63.

Horne, Donald. 1986. The Public Culture: The Triumph of Industrialism. London: Pluto.

IITM. 1987. Informativo Internacional Tercer Mundo, No. 32. Santiago de Chile: Chasquihuasi.

Keohane, R.O and Nye, J.S. 1977. Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition., Boston: Little Brown.

Korff, Gottfried. 1979. 'Volkskultur und Arbeiterkultur: Uberlegungen am Beispiel der Sozialistischen Maifesttradition', in Geschichte und Gesellschaft, 5, pp. 83-102.

Korff, Gottfried. 1984. 'Heraus zum 1 Mai: Maibrauch zwischen Volkskultur, Burgerlicher Folklore und Arbeiterbewegung', in Richard von Dulmen and Norbert Schindler (eds.), Volkskultur: Zur Widerendickung des Vergessenen Alltags (16-20 Jahrhundert). Frankfurt:?

Kuczkiewicz, Janek. 1986. 'Poland: 10 Years of Independent Press'. Paper to the ICFTU-ITS Consultation on Perception of Trade Unionism by the Media, Brussels, 17-19 November. 16pp.

Mattelart, Armand. 1983. 'For a Class and Group Analysis of Popular Communication Practices', in Armand Mattelart and Seth Siegelaub (eds.), Communication and Class Struggle. Vol.2: Liberation, Socialism. New York: International General, and Paris: International Mass Media Research Centre.

Mattelart, Armand and Seth Siegelaub (eds.). 1983. Communication and Class Struggle. Vol.2: Liberation, Socialism. New York: International General, and Paris: International Mass Media Research Centre.

Media Development. 1988. 'Communication - People's Power', Media Development (Special Issue), Vol.35, No.1, pp.1-37.

Mies, Maria. 1986. Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour. London: Zed.

Mowlana, Hamid. 1986. Global Information and World Communication: New Frontiers in International Relations. New York: Longman.

Naisbitt. John. 1984. Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming our Lives. New York: Warner.

Nunez, J. Jesus. 1986. 'Proposals'. Paper to the ICFTU-ITS Consultation on Perception of Trade Unionism by the Media, Brussels, 17-19 November. 16pp.

Paper Tiger. 1986. Deep Dish Directory: A Resource Guide for Grass Roots Television Producers, Programmers, Activists and Cultural Workers. New York: Paper Tiger Television. 98pp.

Picciotto, Sol. 1988. 'The Control of Transnational Capital and the Democratisation of the International State', Journal of Law and Society, Vol.15, No.1, pp.1-19.

Salinas, Raquel. 1987. 'Chasquihuasi on the Road of Communications for Self-Reliant Development'. Santiago de Chile: Chasquihuasi. 7pp.

Salinas, Raquel and Jorge Gomez. 1987. 'La Experiencia de Chasquihuasi: El Mundo Cabe en una Radio de Aldea' (The Experience of Chasquihuasi: The World Fits into a Village Radio), IFDA Dossier, No. 61, pp.3-14.

Siegelaub, Seth. 1983. 'Working Notes on Social Relations in Communication and Culture', in Armand Mattelart and Seth Siegelaub (eds.), Communication and Class Struggle. Vol.2: Liberation, Socialism. New York: International General.

Slater, David. 1986. New Social Movements and the State in Latin America. Dordrech: Foris.

Stangelaar, Fred. 1986. 'Outline of Basic Principles of Alternative Communication', in Peter Waterman (ed.), The Comintercomdoc Papers. The Hague: International Labour Education Research and Information Foundation. Pp.11-22.

Steinberg, Hans-Josef. 1985. 'Der Internationalismus in der Deutschen Sozialistischen Lyrik vor 1914'. Paper to the Symposium on 'Internationalism in the Labour Movement before 1940', International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, 3-6 September, 1985. 14pp.

Thorne, Barrie, C. Kramarae and N. Henley. 1984. 'Imagining a Different World of Talk', in Ruby Rohrlich and E.H. Baruch (eds.), Women in Search of Utopia. New York: Schoken. Pp.180-88.

TOSM. 1987. The Other Side of Mexico: Alternative News and Analysis for the International Community. No.3, October-December.

Vos, Henk. 1976. Solidariteit: Elementen, Complicaties, Perspectieven (Solidarity, Elements, Complications, Perspectives). Baarn: Amboboeken.

Waterman, Peter. 1985. 'Communicating Labour Internationalism: A Review of Relevant Literature and Resources', Working Paper, No. 23, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 23pp. **And:** European Journal of Communications (forthcoming).

Waterman, Peter. 1986. 'Some Reflections and Propositions on Labour Internationalism'. Newsletter of International Labour Studies, No. 30-31, pp. 13-26.

Waterman, Peter. 1988a. 'Needed: A New Communications Model for a New Working-Class Internationalism', in Roger Southall (ed.), Trade Unions and the New Industrialisation of the Third World. London: Zed Press. Pp.351-78.

Waterman, Peter. 1987. 'International History', The Other Side (New Delhi), No.67, pp.24-6.

Waterman, Peter. 1988b. 'The New Internationalisms: A More Real Thing than Big, Big Coke', Review (Binghampton), Vol.11, No.3.

Waterman, Peter and Nebiur Arellano. 1986. 'The Nervous System of Internationalism: Transmission and Reception of International Labour Information in Peru. Working Paper, No. 32, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague.

White, Robert. 1980. '"Communicacion Popular": Language of Liberation', Media Development. Vol.26, No.3, pp.3-9.

White, Robert. 1983. 'The Latin American Association for Radiophonic Education', Media in Education and Development, September, pp.122-8.

White, Robert. 1988. 'NWICO has Become a People's Movement', Media Development, Vol.31, No.1, pp.20-25.

Williams, Raymond. 1983. Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. London, Flamingo. 341pp.

Young, Nigel. 1986. 'The Peace Movement: A Comparative and Analytical Survey', Alternatives, Vol.11, pp.185-217.