

# NOTES

---

## POPULATION, AGRICULTURE & FOOD SUPPLY IN LATIN AMERICA

Latin America is the fastest growing region on Earth and the consequences in the agricultural sector have great significance not only for the region itself but for the remainder of the underdeveloped world as its rate of growth gradually approaches that of Latin America. Nearly one-half of the population of Latin America's population remains agricultural, however, that sector has been contributing a declining share of the region's gross domestic product. During the post-World War II period it has been the slowest developing segment of the Latin American economy and, as a result, remains one of the major sectorial problems for the region's further economic development.

Latin America is the most advanced, in terms of most criteria of development, of the world's underdeveloped regions. The situation holds true with regard to agriculture as well, assuming that Japan is not included with the Orient. Latin America generally attains the underdeveloped world's highest yields, although admittedly the Orient is very close behind and currently may equal or surpass Latin America at present because of recent developments of the « green revolution » (Table 1). However, the pressure on arable land in Latin America (as in the Middle East), among the underdeveloped regions, is intermediate between the world's greatest pressure in the Orient and the least pressure (of the underdeveloped world) of Sub-Saharan Africa. The relatively higher yields of Latin America improves that region's position vis-a-vis the other underdeveloped areas if crop yields are taken into account in computing the actual pressure on cultivated land. Further alleviation of the relative pressure (again considering only the underdeveloped world) on arable land occurs because Latin America has the lowest proportion of its population in agriculture compared to any of the other regions.

### *Agriculture in the Economy*

#### *Gross Domestic Product*

During the course of the post-World War II period agriculture has contributed a declining share of the region's gross domestic product (GDP) (Table 2). In the immediate post-war period approximately one-third of the GDP was derived from agriculture whereas by 1963 the proportion had