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SUBJECT - End-of-Tour Report by Kenneth B. Platt,  
Agricultural Economics Advisor, RDD/Suwon

REFERENCE -  
AID/W Report Control No. U-513

The subject employee has performed very well on his first tour, now abbreviated for reasons explained in prior messages to AID/W (TOAID A-741; AIDTO 1298).

His description of how he has proceeded to grapple with his part of agricultural economics development in Korea is accurate and complete. Mr. Platt has a way of coming to the point without redundancy, a trait that commands high respect in USOM/K.

Economic intelligence and its urgent present use in Korea are documented in too many messages to the Agency in Washington to require re-detailing here. Mr. Platt understands this fact as well as any member of the RDD staff. He has furnished us with a model of concise, informative reporting.

This Mission will welcome Mr. and Mrs. Platt back to Korea next August for a second and, undoubtedly, another productive tour of duty.

BROWN

Attachment: End-of-Tour Report  
Kenneth B. Platt

I.I.D.  
Reference Center  
Room 1686 NS

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Joel Bernstein, Director

AID AND OTHER CLEARANCES

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END-OF-TOUR REPORT

Name: Kenneth B. Platt Job Title: Agricultural Economics Advisor  
 Country of Assignment: Korea Prior Country Assignment: USAID/IRAN  
6 years 3 months  
 Tour of Duty Began: November 5, 1965  
 Tour of Duty Ended: June 5, 1967  
 Project Activity (Name and No.): 439-11-110-594 Rural Development  
Policy Planning and Survey

\*\*\*\*\*

When the present tour ends June 5, 1967, the writer will have spent 19 months as an agricultural economics advisor in USOM/Korea. With headquarters at Suwon, major work has been with the Office of Rural Development, ROKG. Substantial work has been done also with Seoul National University College of Agriculture, and with the Rural Development Division staff of the USOM both in Seoul and in the Provinces.

I. Objectives And Goals

A. General

In collaboration with counterpart offices and other responsible Koreans, provide leadership and assistance in:

1. Planning and bringing about needed functional expansion, administrative and structural reorganization and more effective use of agricultural economics research in ORD.

2. Developing a balanced program of agricultural economics research focused primarily on solving problems of agricultural production and providing basic information for planning and directing national agricultural programs.

3. Establishing and/or strengthening effective lines of program coordination relating agricultural economics research in ORD to the production and technology research of ORD and to agricultural economics research programs of the agricultural colleges, the MAF, MACF and other agencies working in this field.

4. Improving working knowledge, methods and techniques used in agricultural economics research in ORD and the agricultural colleges.

5. Providing assistance on specific economics problems within USOM as needed.

B. Specific

1. Establish an Agricultural Economics Research Institute in ORD.

2. Improve the publication standards for agricultural economics research, including reducing the time lag after completion of data gathering.

3. Develop in the Farm Management Section (and the AERI when established) a staff philosophy of selecting problem subjects for research attention, and install effective problem-solving approaches in research project planning and procedures.

4. Systematically list the agricultural economics research subjects needing attention.

5. Develop and install a system of priority ratings for agricultural economics research subjects.

6. Review all current ORD production and technology research projects, and incorporate economic measures in the data recording of all projects found economically significant.

7. Establish in the FM Section (or AERI) a project design and planning service to incorporate economic measures in future ORD production and technology research projects.

8. Strengthen the "how-to-do" knowledge of agricultural economics research staff.

9. Promote a regular in-service training program for AER staff.

10. Encourage preparation of promising AER staff members for eligibility to advanced training in the U.S. and third countries.

11. Assist provincial and other RDD staff in identifying and/or dealing with significant economic factors or problems encountered in their work.

12. Promptly perform specific special jobs as assigned.

## II. Activities

A. Developed an organizational outline for an Agricultural Economics Research Institute, showing structure, functions, staffing pattern, and duties of principal officers, with supporting justification.

B. Planned sample economic studies of farm mushroom production, dairy production, milk consumption, beef cattle production and winter barley cultural practices, to obtain specific desired information; assisted with field operations on the first three.

C. Performed an analysis of labor returns in barley transplanting as an illustration of a non-project economic study, to initiate a new series of special economics papers by agricultural economics research staff.

D. Prepared a systematic survey outline for agricultural economics research needs, gathering study titles from all known sources in Korea (ORD agencies, MAF, MACF, agricultural colleges, USOM, etc.).

E. Developed an Annual Project Plan for use of agricultural economics research staff in planning annual research programs.

F. Planned a series of 16 articles on Farm Management Thoughts For Korean Farmers, wrote the first 8 of these, and collaborated with Korean staff in writing the other 8, to establish the style of and capacity for popular presentation of economic subject matter. The first 5 of these articles had been published in the ORD Research And Guidance monthly, and the balance were scheduled for publication in the remaining months of 1967, at the close of the tour period.

G. Assisted in planning and directing a Farm Management Section staff USOM-EPB Trust Fund project on Korean livestock feed production and use; assisted staff members of Seoul National University College of Agriculture, Chungbuk College and Chonnam College, in developing agricultural economics research project applications for Trust Fund support; served as USOM representative on supervisory committees for four Trust Fund projects.

H. Helped to plan and provide instruction for two annual staff training workshops for agricultural economics research staff.

I. Assisted three agricultural economics staff members of SNU/COA in data analysis and preparing study manuscripts for English language publication.

J. Served as USOM representative with a 3-man Korean delegation to the Asian Region Agricultural Development Seminar, Taiwan, June 20-29, 1966.

K. Served as interim chairman of the Agri-business Committee of USOM during absence of the Suwon Team Leader on home leave; served as Committee secretary during last six months of tour.

L. Prepared the 1967 CAP statement for Suwon Team activities, during absence of the Team Leader on home leave.

M. Assisted in study and prepared report on a proposed multi-million dollar P.L. 480 Title IV feed grain import program for Korea.

N. Prepared preliminary feasibility appraisals of Cooley Loan applications for 1) cotton storage warehousing at Inchon, 2) farm tool, diesel engine and tractor manufacture at Chinju, and 3) P.L. 480 Title IV feed imports at Seoul (Ralston-Purina).

O. Served as work group chairman and prepared report for Adaptive and Applied Research as one of seven critical factors treated in the USOM evaluation of the RDD activity, 1956-1966.

### III. Favorable and Unfavorable Factors

#### A. Favorable

1. Excellent counterpart working relationships have contributed notably to the effectiveness of the advisor. Shared or adjoining office space has provided for continual working contact, facilitated exchange of information and views, and expedited progress toward common goals. Outstanding professional and leadership abilities of the counterpart officer have inspired high loyalty and productivity of subordinate staff, and established an enviable esprit de corps in the Farm Management Section. UNCLASSIFIED

2. Superior USOM working and support relationships have been another strong favorable factor. A broad but clear job assignment, wide latitude for individual work planning and execution, ready and capable cooperation of staff associates in all activities, easy communication with all staff levels, and firm administrative support of constructive action, all have encouraged and enhanced the advisor's work. An unusually capable Korean assistant has been an important part of this total.

3. Strong professional interest and cooperative spirit of SNU/COA agricultural economics staff have provided the advisor an avenue for acquaintance with and participation in agricultural economics research and teaching complementary to the research and extension programs of ORD. Similar interest and spirit have been found in other colleges of agriculture where contact was established.

4. Growing recognition in ORD, MAF, and other relevant ROKG agencies, of the indispensibility of economics information by which to plan, direct and motivate the desired modernization of Korean agriculture, has both encouraged the accelerated gathering of this information and increased the use of it by responsible persons and agencies.

#### B. Unfavorable

1. Low organizational status of agricultural economics research staff in the ORD structure has been an obstacle to effective coordination of related programs of research in agricultural economics and agricultural production fields. Comprising only a Section in the Research Bureau, the organization lacks rank equivalence with the various production and technology experiment stations whose

findings need economic evaluation. This virtually precludes the FM Section staff from exercising the initiative in getting economic measures into the study projects of these agencies. To date, few agencies have invited the Section to work with them in planning their projects so that reliable economic conclusions can be drawn from their results.

2. Lack of vehicles for field work sharply limits the productivity of Section staff in field data gathering. Men experienced in this work estimate they could accomplish up to three times as much with adequate vehicular field transportation as they can do under present conditions.

3. Shortage of calculating machines for doing the analytical work of the Section seriously slows this work. A large number of temporary employees do most routine work with abacuses, but this method is very tedious and time consuming on the more complex calculations of curve fitting and other statistical analysis.

4. A heavy load of special assignments on administrative studies requested by MAF has taken much time of Section staff, and has reduced original information gathering and analysis work proportionately. In some months up to 30% of total staff time has been spent on such assignments, and over the past 12 months it has averaged around 10%. This load, coming on top of an already full work schedule, caused delays in completion of scheduled 1966 projects as much as three months into 1967.

5. Shortage of capacity of one assistant to do the volume of translating needed to keep abreast of project plans and reports has forced

the advisor to work with only limited knowledge of research plans and findings even in the agricultural economics field. No information on production research project plans and findings has been available. Much more help could be given on project study content planning and evaluation of findings if full translation coverage were available.

#### IV. Evaluation of Results

A. Results in the expansion and reorganization of agricultural economics research work have been most encouraging. A plan for establishing an Agricultural Economics Research Institute comprising four research sections plus planning and administrative sections was prepared, and this plan was endorsed in principle by the Director, ORD, and the Minister of Agriculture. A budget allocation was requested by ORD to establish the Institute with two research sections in 1967. The continually mounting demand for agricultural economics studies is expected to bring about early future expansion of the Institute to at least the scale originally proposed. Meantime, special approval of a USOM-EPB Trust Fund research project to be carried out by the Section covering overall Korean production and use of livestock feed resources, had the effect of adding five research and three assistant positions to the Section's work force as of January 1, 1967.

B. Focusing of the agricultural economics research program of problem-solving studies was strongly supported by the Chief of the Section, and was fully accomplished so far as the Section's program was concerned. The limited research staff of the Section, however, (10 effective positions when training absences and administrative demands are considered) did not permit establishing a balanced research program. In terms of staff time, some 60% of the 1966 program dealt

with farm production and management, 25% with agricultural policy, and the other 15% with land use and marketing. Listing and analysis of total research needs was not carried far enough to judge what would constitute the best balance of work in the various sectors.

C. Work with AER staffs of agricultural colleges was limited, and no measure was obtained of the degree of problem focus in college research programs. Over the combined field of ORD and college research, only a small beginning was made toward developing a rational allocation of study areas to minimize duplication and establish a coordinated attack on the total field. No rationale was established by which to either confirm or readjust the existing division of agricultural economics research work among the MI Section and economics sections of the IAF and IACF.

D. The assistance given and examples set in design, planning and analysis of results in the specific studies noted under II-B, above, introduced new and more effective study methods in agricultural economics research. The mushroom study further served as an example of more effective publication form by following a logical problems-findings-recommendations sequence, and employing narrative headings to promote reader interest. The labor returns study noted under II-C provided an example of analytical exploitation of existing general data relating to Korean agricultural problems, which have been little used up to now.

Editorial review and English language assistance given on three major research manuscripts of SNU/COA agricultural economics research workers gave these men both new insights and new confidence in their work. An in-service training workshop on research tools and procedures for MI Section and provincial

farm management research workers has been established as an annual training input. Improved staff capabilities and working spirit, and more effective use of provincial workers' time, have resulted.

E. All specific requests of RDD staff associates for assistance on particular problems, and all special assignments made by superiors, have been given prompt response. Where such requests or assignments have been wholly within the advisor's capacity to perform, they have been carried to completion, and recipients have expressed satisfaction with the results. In the case of complementary dairy production and milk consumption surveys at Chongju begun in October, 1966, where part of the necessary performance lay with local Korean workers, completion has been delayed by travel fund shortages and by weak inter-office working relationships on the Korean side.

#### V. Recommendations For The Future

A. The USOM should give all appropriate support to the establishment of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute, to its placement in ORD, and to its early expansion to the full strength proposed in the original plan. This support should include priority use of training grants to upgrade the qualifications of key AERI staff men.

B. The USOM should encourage both ORD and IAF to regard and utilize the AERI as the principal agency of the ROKG for gathering and evaluating original agricultural economics data, and as the agency for designing economic measures to be included in agricultural production and technology research. In these functions, the AERI should be directed in a program to provide continuing measures of the economic soundness of national agricultural production plans

and the economic utility of production and technology research findings.

C. Both the USOM and the ROKG should give appropriate consideration to the fact that transportation of field personnel is as vital for productivity of an agricultural economics research program as land and laboratory equipment are for conducting production and technology research, and should allocate available transportation resources accordingly.

D. The USOM should encourage and support ORD in developing and following a systematic program of publication and extension of economic study results in the form and manner most useful for conveying them to farmers for reference in decision making on matters of agricultural improvement. USOM support in this area should consider the possibility of training grants for agricultural journalism.

E. USOM advisory assistance in agricultural economics research should be continued, but with increased attention to comprehensive planning for land and water resource development and use, and to market development, to provide Korea's farmers with maximum opportunity to utilize the new production information, and to provide national planners with the necessary information framework for reliable forward estimates of production potentials.

RDD:KBPlatt:psz  
May 19, 1967