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9. ABSTRACT

Poverty is a way of life for nearly two-thirds of the people in Egypt. Poverty means hunger and malnutrition. Malnutrition leads to sickness and general ill-health. Disease, in turn, debilitates and reduces human output, which then aggravates the tendency toward greater poverty. To break this vicious circle requires energy and knowledge and change, aspects of development that unfortunately are lacking in most of the rural villages of Egypt.

To remedy this situation requires a prodigious effort--for Egypt must tackle ill-health and ignorance, increase agricultural and industrial production, provide welfare services, and emancipate the rural communities from the habits and social structures of bygone centuries. The size of such a task is tremendous, for it requires the government to go into the villages, to awaken, inspire, and, in the early stages, to lead. The central government must enlist the enthusiastic support of the village communities to provide the labor for self-help projects and to participate in the introduction of services such as education and health.

Development is primarily a form of communication and persuasion. The fundamental purpose of community development in Egypt is to generate within the fellahin a clear desire for change, which, through progressive adaptation of modern techniques, will lead to their achieving a higher standard of living.

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Special Series on Rural Local Government

LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AND EGYPTIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

James B. Mayfield

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FOREWORD

This monograph was written as part of a comparative study of Rural Local Government organized by the Rural Development Committee of Cornell University. The study aimed at clarifying the role of rural local institutions in the rural development process, with special reference to agricultural productivity, income, local participation and rural welfare. An interdisciplinary working group set up under the Rural Development Committee established a comparative framework for research and analysis of these relationships.[1] A series of monographs, based in most cases on original field research, has been written by members of the working group and by scholars at other institutions and has been published by the Rural Development Committee. An analysis and summary of the study's findings has been written for the working group by Norman Uphoff and Milton Esman and has been published separately.

This study of Rural Local Government is part of the overall program of teaching and research by members of the Rural Development Committee, which functions under the auspices of the Center for International Studies at Cornell and is chaired by Norman Uphoff. The main focuses of Committee concern are alternative strategies and institutions for promoting rural development, especially with respect to the situation of small farmers, rural laborers and their families. This particular study was financed in large part by a grant from the Asia Bureau of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The views expressed by participating scholars in this study are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of USAID or Cornell University.

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[1] The members of the working group were Ron Aqua, Douglas Ashford, John Blackton, Harry Blair, Milton Esman, Mohinder Mudahar, Norman Nicholson, David Robinson, Benedict Stavis, and Norman Uphoff.

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INTRODUCTION

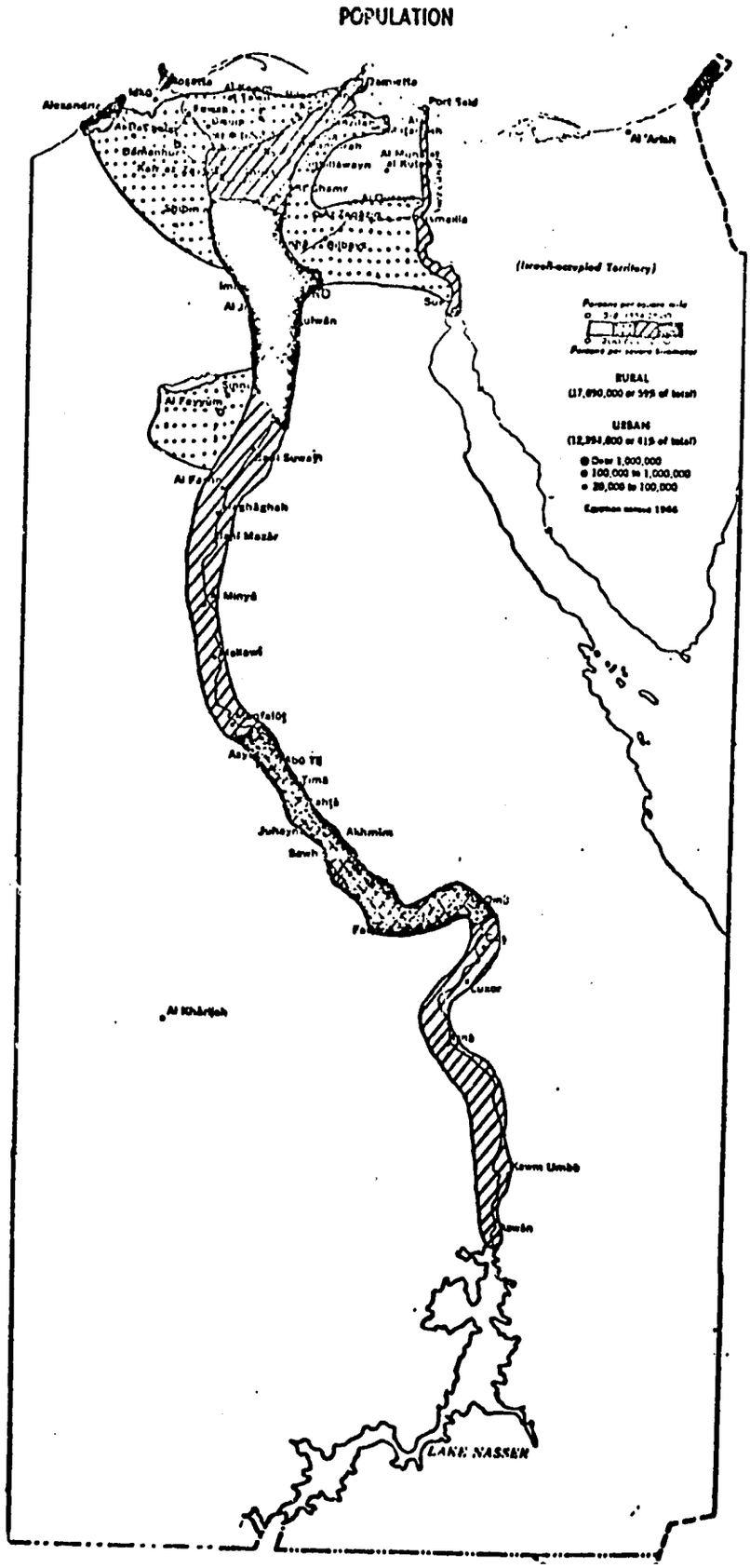
Civilization has existed in the Nile Valley since the dawn of recorded history. Blessed with rich soil, abundant water, and a long growing season, Egypt provided fertility from which a large population could live in relative comfort. The Nile proved to be a political and economic unifier, for no part of the pharaonic empire was more than a few miles from this mighty river. The river was also motive power for shipping; current carried vessels northward and the etesian winds of the Mediterranean brought them south again. Fecundity, a line of communication, manpower, and facilities for organization were the essential ingredients for a kingdom, and this mighty Egyptian civilization sowed the seeds of early human progress. The visitor who stands before the great pyramids of Giza or the temples and statues of Karnak and Alri Simbel cannot but wonder how these ancients attained such perfection in the arts and sciences.

Today Egypt, named the United Arab Republic (UAR) in 1958 and the Arab Republic of Egypt (ARE) in 1971, is caught between the glories of her past and the visions of her future. These glories and visions are blurred by the realities of a society that is torn between the old and the new, between the East and the West, and between clouded desires for peace and the disastrous imperative of war caused by the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict. The politics of Egypt can be perceived as a confluence of contradictory trends in a society faced with the herculean task of social, economic and political modernization. Egypt is experiencing revolutionary changes, the vast majority of which are spontaneous reactions to the culture diffusion resulting from the transportation and communications revolution penetrating the emerging nations of Asia and Africa.

Economic Reality in the Nile Valley

Egypt has an area of 386,000 square miles, of which only 2.5 percent is cultivable. In 1897 the total cropped area was 7 million feddans, and with a population of only 10 million, the per capita share of harvested land was seven-tenths of one feddan.[1] By 1970 the cropped area had reached 10 million feddans, yet because of a population increase of over 200 percent, the per capita share had dropped to less than three-tenths of one feddan.

Figure I: Map of Nile Valley



In early 1974 the population of the Arab Republic of Egypt was estimated at 35.9 million persons and, at the prevailing rate of increase averaging well over 2 percent annually, is expected to double shortly after 1990. With particularly heavy concentrations in the Cairo and Alexandria urban complexes, the inhabitants are compressed into little more than 3.5 percent of the land, resulting in a density of more than 835 persons per square kilometer, one of the world's highest.

Yet in comparing urban and rural areas the contrasts are truly significant. In Table I we see that the 5 urban provinces average over 5000 people per square kilometer, the Delta region has 723 people per square kilometer and Upper Egypt provinces have a somewhat larger density of 801 people per square kilometer.

The frightening spectre of a Malthusian outcome is graphically portrayed in the spectacular birth rate found in Egypt. The growth of population since the first country-wide census in 1897 up to 1970 is demonstrated in Table II.

This tremendous average increase in the last several decades can best be explained in terms of the contrasting birth, death, and natural increase rates of the past 25 years. Although birth rates have been relatively stable until the mid 1960's, the crude death rate dropped dramatically in the late 1940's and early 1950's due, no doubt, to improved sanitation, the availability of physicians and medical care, more education, and greater awareness of health practices.

The classical theory of Malthus has appeared to have validity in Egypt, at least until recently, as the gradual increase in per capita income for the poor classes has tended to increase fertility and decrease death rates. The slight reduction in birth rates since the mid-1960's is consistant with the counter-Malthusian explanation of Coale and Hoover, who argue that

> The high birth and death rates characteristics for an agrarian low-income society are affected by economic development. The changing structure of production with a declining importance of the family as a production unit, with the growth of an impersonal system for the allocation of jobs, and with the development of economic roles for women outside of home, tends to increase the possibility of economic mobility that can better be achieved with smaller

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[1]One feddan = 1.03 acres.

TABLE I

Population Density Figures in Egypt's Provinces (1966)

Governorate	Percentage of Area	Percentage of Population (1966)	Density per Square Kilometer
Cairo	.6 %	14.0 %	19094
Alexandria	.8	6.0	6221
Port Said	1.0	.9	712
Suez	.9	.9	860
Ismailia	2.1	1.2	416
Total for Urban Governorates	5.4 %	23.0 %	5460
Damietta	1.7 %	1.4 %	722
Dakahlia	9.8	7.6	658
Sharkia	13.3	7.1	452
Kalyubia	2.6	4.0	1283
Kafr al-Shaykh	9.9	3.7	321
Gharbia	5.6	6.3	949
Menufia	4.3	4.9	969
Buheira	12.9	6.5	431
Total for Delta Governorates	60.1 %	41.5 %	723
Giza	3.0 %	5.5 %	1026
Beni Suef	3.7	3.1	711
al-Fayyum	5.1	3.1	519
Minya	6.4	5.7	749
Asyut	4.4	4.7	912
Sohag	4.3	5.6	1094
Qena	5.1	4.9	812
Total for Upper Egypt Governorates	34.5 %	34.3 %	801
TOTAL FOR ALL OF EGYPT	100 %	100 %	835

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

TABLE II

Growth of Population in Egypt by Census 1897-1970

Year	Population	Rate of Increase
1882	6,804,000	
1897	9,715,000	2.9
1907	11,287,000	1.6
1917	12,751,000	1.3
1927	14,218,000	1.1
1937	15,933,000	1.2
1947	19,022,000	1.9
1960	26,059,000	2.7
1970	33,329,000	2.6

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, U.A.R. Statistical Pocket Year-Book, 1962 and 1970.

TABLE III

Birth, Death, and Natural Increase Rates 1927-1970

Year	Birth Rates	Death Rates	Natural Increase
1927-36	43.6	27.0	16.6
1934-36	42.6	27.7	14.9
1937-46	41.0	26.6	14.4
1947-51	43.5	20.2	23.5
1951-60	41.7	17.7	24.3
1960	43.1	16.9	26.2
1961	43.9	15.8	28.1
1962	41.3	17.9	23.4
1963	42.8	15.4	27.4
1964	42.0	15.7	26.3
1965	41.4	14.0	27.4
1966	41.0	15.8	25.2
1967	39.2	14.2	25.0
1968	38.1	16.1	22.0
1969	36.8	14.4	22.4
1970	35.6	15.0	20.6

Source: Donald C. Mead, Growth and Structural Change in the Egyptian Economy (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1967), p. 22; and Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Statistical Handbook (June, 1971), p. 15.

families, and tends to decrease the economic advantages of a larger family. [1]

The reported decline in the birth rate may also be attributed in part to a government sponsored family planning program. In 1962 President Nasser declared in his new Charter: "Population increases constitute the most dangerous obstacle that faces the Egyptian people in their drive towards raising the standard of population... Attempts at family planning deserve the most sincere efforts." However, the government did not take practical action to disseminate birth control information on a countrywide basis until 1965. By 1974 there were in Egypt some 3,323 family planning centers that coordinate all efforts related to birth control services, education, and research. The nationwide education program is far from being a complete success--but some progress has been registered. Although the present plan includes the establishment of a birth control clinic in every village in Egypt, officials agree that they face difficulty in modifying fertility patterns sanctioned by traditional values and social customs.

The tremendous increase in population from 9.7 million people in 1897 to over 35 million in 1974 takes on an even more dismal hue when these population figures are compared to the amount of cultivated area available for supporting this population. Professor El-Kammash describes the problem in these terms:

> The inhabited areas for the period 1937 rose by only about 3 percent. With the tremendous population increase from 16 to 25 million during the same period the density of population increased by almost 69 percent. The cultivated areas, which are the source of income for the majority of the population, increased (only) by about 10 percent in the same period.[2]

During the first half of the twentieth century, largely under the direction of British engineers, a system of perennial irrigation was widely extended to replace the traditional basin system of irrigation. A perennial system of irrigation ensured that two or more crops could be cultivated each year on the same plot of land. This significant improvement in irrigation technology makes it necessary to distinguish between area cultivated and area cropped in the Nile Valley. Thus if a faddan of land, which under basin irrigation produced only one

[1] A.J. Coale and E.M. Hoover, Population Growth and Economic Development in Low-Income Countries (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 11; and Brent Hanson and Girgas A. Marzouk, Development and Economic Policy in the UAR (Egypt) (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 31-32.

[2] Magdi M. El-Kammash, Economic Development and Planning in Egypt (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 14.

crop a year, later comes under a perennial irrigation system and can consequently produce three crops in a year--the cropped area can be said to have tripled. In Table IV it is clear that the cultivated land increased only 36 percent from the 1880's to the early 1970's while the cropped area increased by 88 percent.

TABLE IV

Cultivated and Cropped Areas in Egypt (1880-1974)

	Cultivated Land (million feddans)	Index	Cropped Area (million feddans)	Index
1880-84	4.7	100	5.7	100
1915-19	5.3	113	7.7	135
1950-54	5.7	121	9.4	165
1961-65	6.3	134	10.3	181
1970-74	6.4	136	10.7	188

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

Yet in spite of this increase in cropped area, the population engaged in agriculture increased by more than 2 million people thus causing the average share per farmer of cultivated land to drop from over 2 feddans at the beginning of the twentieth century to something near one feddan per farmer. The key economic problem facing Egypt is the limited amount of land available and the burgeoning population growth that quickly dissipates any increase in Gross National Product.

The Economy of Egypt Before 1952

Before the Revolution of 1952 and the fall of King Farouk, the Egyptian economy was a typical dual economy with traditional and modern sectors existing side by side in virtual isolation. The modern sector, based on a few export crops, especially cotton, experienced very considerable growth, but this growth had no substantial repercussions on the level of welfare in the rest of the economy outside Cairo or Alexandria.

The land available for cultivation has historically been tied to the irrigation possibilities of various regions in the Nile Valley. By the early 1930's the acreage under

major export crops ceased to expand and further increases in output were achieved by raising yields rather than by expanding acreage.

Most consumption goods for the modern sector were imported and profits were generally either reinvested in land or modern agricultural activities or were spent in conspicuous consumption rather than invested in non-agricultural production. The modern sector was naturally the principal supplier of government revenue, but since the monarchical government assumed a passive role in economic development, most of the tax revenues were used to improve transport and other public services to the estates of the larger land owners.

Growth of the modern sector depended entirely on world prices of the major export commodities, while the growth of the traditional sector took place entirely in isolation from the modern sector, and due to its semi-subsistence character, it grew more or less proportionally to the growth of population. Both World War I and the great depression deeply affected the modern sector, but left the traditional sector virtually untouched. The second world war, however, had more important spread effects on the economy of Egypt. Although Egypt's terms of trade deteriorated badly during World War II (export prices had been fixed while import prices were increasing sharply during the same period), the country had large foreign trade surpluses. This was mainly due to shortages of commodities traditionally imported. This made Egypt itself, for the first time, an attractive market for domestic industrial production. One difficulty existed; not only were final goods in short supply but raw materials, machinery and construction materials were as well. Nevertheless, both the government and private investors succeeded in establishing a number of industrial enterprises, and although prices were high and quality relatively low, most industries made profits during the war years. After the war, when normal imports flows were restored, many Egyptian industries curtailed their operations or collapsed--leaving a built-in bias among Egyptian investors against industrial investments.

With the Revolution of 1952, Nasser's regime chose to play a more active role in promoting economic development. On the whole, the development efforts of the 1950's were not as successful as were hoped for, although a number of traditional indicators of economic performance, such as GDP and output per head, recorded a moderate success. Real national income increased by an annual average of 4.0 percent and since population grew by some 2.5 percent, a small but substantial improvement in per capita incomes was experienced. Moreover, as the labor force increased by only 2.2 percent per annum compared to real national income by 4.0 percent, a considerable

increase in output per unit of labor occurred during this period. It is particularly with respect to the mobilization and utilization of resources that the pre-revolutionary period and the 1950's period set the stage for the government's shift to a socialistic approach to development. Although the private sector's profits in the modern agricultural sector were increasingly heavily taxed, and export duties were levied, the revenue thus acquired by the government was used mostly to raise standards of living (e.g. via food subsidies) and for investment in social services and education rather than for any planned modernization and diversification of the economy.

In addition to the increase in the consumption of foodstuffs, consumption of other items also rose sharply during the period between 1945-1960. This transitional period was thus characterized by a considerable rise in real output, and a certain increase in income per head, but at the same time, an extremely high propensity to consume, in combination with an increased inflow of imports, nearly led to the exhaustion of Egypt's foreign exchange reserves.

CHAPTER II

THE ORGANIZATION OF EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURE

The Importance of the Agricultural Sector

The relative share of the agricultural sector is an important indicator of an economy's state of development: a high weight (in employment, national product, and exports) is characteristic of many third world nations. The historical experience of many countries shows that economic development and rising levels of income go hand in hand with diversification of production and the more rapid development of activities other than agriculture compared with agriculture itself. Consequently, the weight of other sectors in the national economy rises at the expense of the weight of agriculture.

In the late 1930's agriculture was clearly the dominant sector in the Egyptian economy--nearly 70 percent of all employment opportunities and over 50 percent of the national income. In recent years, even though agricultural income and the total number of farm workers have continued to grow in real terms, the share of the Egyptian economy in industry, manufacturing and general tertiary services has registered an increase. Today Egypt is still an agricultural nation--with nearly one-third of its income in 1969/1970 being generated from agricultural production and still nearly 50 percent of her employment remains in the agricultural sector. Equally significant is the fact that roughly 60 percent of Egypt's industrial output and also a significant portion of Egypt's infrastructure are all closely related to the processing and handling of agricultural produce.

The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics published a series of estimates covering national income derived from agriculture during the period 1952-1970. The estimates give details of agricultural production which permit a study of developments in this sector which still ranks first among the various sectors of national economy.

The weight of agriculture in gross domestic income in the Egyptian economy has varied only slightly in the decade of the 1960's. When less than one-third of the domestic income is generated by a sector that includes nearly two-thirds of the population this means that the level of income of the rural population does not exceed 50-60 percent of the average national income, which is, in itself, very low in Egypt, no more than $200 per annum.

TABLE V

Number and Percentage of Labor Force in Agriculture

	Total Number (1000s)	Percentage
1937	2975.8	66.7
1947	3139.0	59.8
1959/60	3560.0	54.0
1960/61	3600.0	55.2
1961/62	3600.0	54.0
1962/63	3632.0	52.8
1963/64	3673.0	51.8
1964/65	3751.0	50.8
1965/66	3877.2	50.9
1966/67	3864.6	50.6
1967/68	3867.4	49.7
1968/69	3964.9	49.2
1969/70	4048.3	48.9

Source: D.C. Mead, Growth and Structural Change in the Egyptian Economy (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1967), Table 11-B-2, p. 304; Statistical Handbook--United Arab Republic, Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, June 1971, p. 232.

The importance of agriculture is most evident in the prominent share of agricultural produce in exported goods, averaging well over 80 percent in recent years. The percentage figure in Table VII includes living animals and their products, vegetable products, prepared foodstuffs, beverages, and tobacco, and textiles and textile articles. The crucial significance of agriculture to Egypt is clear when such a large percent of all foreign currency sources are tied to agriculture production.

The dependence upon agriculture in the Egyptian economy is even greater than it appears in these figures, since a large part of the services provided--transport, commerce, finance, etc.--are connected with agriculture; moreover, a significant portion of local industry (textiles and food processing) is based upon processing locally-produced agricultural raw materials.

TABLE VI

The Role of Agriculture in National Income
(LE millions)

	Agriculture	%	Industry	%	Total
1952/53	252	27.8	127	14.0	905
1953/54	262	27.2	140	14.5	963
1954/55	301	29.6	155	15.2	1014
1955/56	312	29.1	170	15.8	1072
1956/57	374	33.2	192	17.0	1125
1957/58	381	31.8	218	18.2	1195
1958/59	364	28.9	240	19.1	1256
1959/60	405	31.5	256	19.9	1285
1960/61	403	29.5	285	20.9	1363
1961/62	373	25.4	309	21.8	1411
1962/63	425	27.2	350	22.4	1562
1963/64	475	27.3	392	22.5	1739
1964/65	582	29.4	423	21.4	1975
1965/66	608	28.6	461	21.7	2124
1966/67	612	27.8	477	21.7	2194
1967/68	644	29.4	460	21.0	2187
1968/69	688	29.4	503	21.5	2339
1969/70	771	30.1	542	21.2	2553

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

TABLE VII

Percentages of Egyptian Exports
Attributable to the Agricultural Sector

1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
91.3	87.1	83.8	85.3	85.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	89.1	88.1	86.4

Source: Statistical Handbook--United Arab Republic, pp. 236-37.

The weight of agriculture in the Egyptian economy is lower today than it was before the Revolution of 1952, but we lack consistent data to give us an accurate reflection of the decrease. Comprehensive estimates on the development of agricultural output and national product are available only for the years since 1952. They show that at least through 1965 while GNP in Egypt rose at an annual rate of about 5.6 percent there was only a 3.7 percent annual growth of agricultural output.

Agrarian Reform

Among the most important developments in Egyptian agriculture in recent years are the agrarian reforms initiated in the early 1950's. These involve many effects that go beyond the narrow field of agriculture. The vital need for agrarian reforms in Egypt has been voiced many times in the past, but their realization was postponed until after the overthrow of the old ruling classes. Past efforts to effect improvements in this field were limited to the distribution of small areas usually belonging to the government. Landowners were literally left untouched until the 1952 Revolution in Egypt.

The agrarian reform laws of 1952 and 1961 sought to restructure the agricultural system to achieve the following goals: (1) Compensated requisition of excessive land holdings from families who owned more than 200 feddans in 1953, 100 feddans in 1961, and 50 feddans in 1970; (2) Distribution of nearly 800,000 acres of this requisitioned land to over 300,000 peasant farmers between 1954 and 1970; (3) Government control to prevent excessive rents and to ensure adequate wages for Egypt's nearly 5 million tenant farmers; (4) Establishment of multipurpose cooperatives; and (5) The prevention of land fragmentation.

On the day the law was enacted, some 660,000 feddans were encompassed to become available for distribution, in addition to 180,000 feddans belonging to King Farouk and the 200 members of the royal family, which were simply confiscated. The administration was flexible enough to go about the purchase and distribution of land above the legal limits gradually so as not to upset the entire farming system at once and so as to avoid any significant drop in agricultural production. The law allowed for up to 5 years in making the transfers to landless peasants. For about 6 weeks after the promulgation of the law, owners had power to sell the requisitionable surplus at prices fixed by the government (70 times the land-tax), in plots of at least two and not more than five feddans to farmers who were already working the said land and lived on it or in a nearby village. In this way 145,000

feddans were sold privately, and the landowners were able to realize considerable capital.

Yet initially the reform was limited in its impact. The transfer of estates involved only 15 percent of the arable land and probably less than one peasant in 20 was to become a beneficiary of Egyptian agrarian reform. One of the early hopes of the regime was that the large landowners would begin to transfer their capital from agriculture into industry. Unfortunately--the land owners of Egypt, at least in the mid-1950's had no faith in industry--this unwillingness to redirect investment capital into industrial production eventually forced Nasser to turn to government planning and investment as a means of stimulating the industrialization of Egypt.

The real tragedy of the early 1950's affected the agricultural laborers who make up nearly 40 percent of Egypt's agricultural population. Initially it was hoped to legislate a minimum wage of 18 piastres a day (less than 50 cents) and also to allow the formation of agricultural trade unions to protect their rights. But the labor unions eventually became instruments of the regime and declared all strikes to be illegal. The swelling population and restriction on land ownership led in fact in the mid-1950's to significant unemployment and even to a drop in wages, often amounting to less than 15-20 cents a day.

Any attempt at evaluating the Egyptian experience in land reform must first contrast what existed prior to the reform and then analyze the trends of the past two decades since land reform was announced. In the highly structured feudal society of pre-revolutionary Egypt, wealth was concentrated in the hands of a few powerful families. Less than 6 percent of landowners controlled nearly 65 percent of the land; some 280 families possessed one-tenth of the total cultivable land. The distribution of property before agrarian reform was extremely unequal, as Table VIII shows.

These figures clearly demonstrate the challenge that faced the young officers who sought a fair distribution of land. Less than 0.2 percent of all landowners owned 27.1 percent of the land with each owner averaging nearly 350 feddans, while nearly 2.7 million landed peasants (94 percent of all landowners) owned less than 35 percent of the land and individually owned on the average less than one feddan. Even these figures do not reflect the full extent of the inequality since at least another 2 million peasants owned no land at all and had to struggle for their livelihood as sharecroppers on small plots of land or by casual labor. Figures published in 1950 showed that only 25 percent of all landowners actually tilled their own land. Many farmers, even those with less than

5 feddans, were often willing to sublease their land to other peasants in their villages thus reinforcing the problem of fragmentation. Seldom were the incentives for investment and improved practices generally associated with owner-cultivation operative.

TABLE VIII

Egypt: Agriculture Land by Size of Holding 1952

Size	Owners		Area		
	1000 People	Percent	1000 Feddans	Percent	Average Area of Holding
Less than 1 feddan	2018.1	72.0	778	13.0	.4
1-5 feddans	623.8	22.0	1344	22.5	2.1
5-10	79.3	2.8	526	8.8	6.6
10-20	46.8	1.8	638	10.7	13.6
20-30	13.1	.5	309	5.0	23.6
30-50	9.2	.3	344	5.7	37.4
50-100	6.4	.2	429	7.2	67.3
100-200	3.2	.1	437	7.3	137.2
200 and over	2.1	.1	1177	19.8	550.9
TOTAL	2802.0	100.0	5982	100.0	2.1

Source: Doreen Warriner, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 24.

The last complete agricultural area census conducted in Egypt was in 1960. This nationwide study provides detailed information on the land tenure system at that date. Some of the results are outlined in Table X and on the following page.

First it is clear that practically all land holdings (95.6%) in Egypt at that time were classified in terms of individual holdings. The area classified under land reform and government consisted of less than 3-4 percent of the total area of land holdings. Although 83.8 percent

of all holdings were in plots of less than 5 feddans the amount of land included was only 37.7 percent of the total area. In projecting the emergence of a significant middle class farmer community in Egypt, the land holdings of 5 to 50 feddans offer the most prospect for this. Here we see that only about 15 percent of the holdings fell in this category but included nearly 30 percent of the total area.

Of much greater significance for the eventual growth of Egyptian agriculture is the problem of fragmentation. Egypt has an area of 386,000 square miles, of which only 2.5 percent is cultivable. In 1897 the total cropped area was 7 million feddans, and with a population of only 10 million, the per capita share of harvested land was 0.7 feddan. By 1970 the cropped area had reached 10 million feddans, yet because of a population increase of over 200 percent, the per capita share had dropped to less than 0.3 feddan. From Table XI it is clear that 45 percent of the total area are in 3 or 4 separate parcels. This fragmentation of land holdings greatly reduces the opportunity for economies of scale in agricultural production. The fact that over 22 percent of all agricultural holdings in Egypt are fragmented into 4 or more separate parcels dramatizes the need for some type of consolidation program.

TABLE IX

Distribution of All Agricultural Land and Owner-Operated Land by Size of Ownership in 1950

	All Agricultural Land		Owner Operated Land		
	1000 Owners	1000 Feddans	1000 Operators	%	1000 Feddans
Less than 1 Feddan	1875	719	179	9.5	95
1-5 "	599	1263	362	60.4	835
5-10 "	83	592	67	80.7	463
10-20 "	42	582	28	70.0	392
20-50 "	21	667	14	66.6	441
50 & over	12	2219	8	66.6	1635
TOTAL	2632	6042	658	25.0	3861

Source: Magdi M. El-Kammash, Economic Development and Planning in Egypt (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 254.

TABLE X

Number and Area Holdings in Each Governorate
by Legal Status of the Holder and by Size of Holding

Size Class	Total Holdings				Holding by legal status of holder: Individual		Corporation	
	Number		Area		Number	Area	Number	Area
General Total :								
Less than 1 feddan	434219	26.4	211155	3.3	434180	211147	14	3
from 1 to less than 2 feddans	385901	23.4	505325	8.1	385839	505252	21	27
" 2 " " " 3 "	286804	17.4	647912	10.4	286734	647757	27	61
" 3 " " " 4 "	174595	10.6	566407	9.1	174561	566299	20	64
" 4 " " " 5 "	99722	6.0	423622	6.8	99690	423482	21	96
" 5 " " " 10 "	170019	10.3	1100669	17.6	169945	1100155	37	258
" 10 " " " 20 "	56705	3.4	742619	11.9	56629	741667	32	411
" 20 " " " 50 "	23811	1.4	689267	11.0	23728	686772	19	552
" 50 " " " 100 "	6424	.3	429952	6.9	6348	424431	10	683
100 feddans and more	3960	.1	905911	14.5	3614	641621	84	63909
TOTAL	1642160		6222839		1641268	5948583	285	66064
	(100%)		(100%)		(99.9%)	(95.6%)	(-)	(1.1%)

TABLE X (cont.)

Holdings by legal status of holder

Size Class	Co-operation		Land-reform		Government		Others		Not reported	
	Number	Area	Number	Area	Number	Area	Number	Area	Number	Area
General Total:										
Less than 1 feddan	1	(--)	3	(--)	18	5	1	(--)	2	(--)
From 1 to less than 2 feddans	2	2	5	6	33	57	1	1	--	--
" 2 " " " 3 "	1	2	7	15	35	77	--	--	--	--
" 3 " " " 4 "	1	3	5	16	8	25	--	--	--	--
" 4 " " " 5 "	--	--	7	28	4	16	--	--	--	--
" 5 " " " 10 "	3	17	4	30	29	204	1	5	--	--
" 10 " " " 20	1	14	16	211	25	295	1	10	1	11
" 20 " " " 50 "	1	31	29	871	34	1041	--	--	--	--
" 50 " " " 100 "	1	51	48	3677	17	1110	--	--	--	--
100 feddans and more	5	1198	228	141528	27	54206	2	3629	--	--
TOTAL	16	1318	352	146382	230	56836	6	3645	3	11
	(--)	(--)	(--)	(2.3%)	(--)	(0.9)	(--)	(--)	(--)	(--)

Source: Republic of Egypt, 1960 Agricultural Survey (Cairo: Ministry of Agriculture), pp. 78-79.

TABLE XI

Fragmentation of Holdings

By Number of Parcels and by Size of Holdings

(Area in Feddans)

Size Class	Total number of Holdings	Total number of parcels	1 parcel		2 parcels		3 parcels		4 parcels and more	
			Number	Area	Number	Area	Number	Area	Number	Area
General Total:										
Less than 1 feddan	434219	651153	283157	119044	107568	62189	29771	20126	13723	9796
From 1-less than 2 feds.	385901	876513	123639	147709	132402	172717	74659	104010	55201	80889
" 2 " " 3 "	286804	802711	54140	117327	78631	174574	87572	198756	66461	157255
" 3 " " 4 "	174595	547820	28393	89430	38945	124706	51059	165279	56198	186992
" 4 " " 5 "	99722	343409	15166	63214	20355	85344	23528	100082	40673	174982
" 5 " " 10 "	170019	667744	24838	152584	30915	197299	31903	201035	82363	549751
" 10 " " 20 "	56705	275094	7612	93479	9122	117706	8494	111712	31477	419722
" 20 " " 50 "	23811	145461	3232	95385	2865	80756	3003	86821	14711	426305
" 50 " " 100 "	6424	45578	1219	81658	770	51696	676	45276	3759	251322
100 feddans and more	3960	39047	793	173016	521	99562	418	86675	2228	546658
TOTAL	1642160	4394530	542189	1132846	422094	1166549	311083	1119772	366794	2803672

Source: Republic of Egypt, 1960 Agricultural Survey (Cairo: Ministry of Agriculture), pp. 80-81.

Egypt in many ways was faced with a serious dilemma. On the one hand, land reform envisioned small plots (averaging 3-4 feddans) for each family given land to ensure a wide distribution of land to a large number of families. Yet fragmentation of land into smaller plots is inconsistent with the need for larger, more economical farm areas to generate effective farm production.

Results of the Land Reform

Up to 1961 the government permitted individuals and joint stock companies to own more than the maximum ownership limit set by the land reform law, provided the excess ownership was of barren land under reclamation. There was some abuse of the law with larger estates being formed again in the name of relatives of an original owner and with advantage being taken of the exception set by the law regarding the ownership of barren land under reclamation. Consequently, the land reform law was amended on several occasions first in 1961 with ownership limited to 100 feddans and then again in 1970 to 50 feddans.

There is a confusion as to the exact amount of land that has been distributed to Egyptian peasants since 1952. According to a report published by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics dated November 1, 1970, over one million feddans had been distributed "among farmers with limited income." Table XII below outlines the amount of distribution in each year between 1952 and 1970.

TABLE XII

Land Distributed Among Farmers with Limited Income

1953	16,426 feddans	1962	116,587 feddans
54	65,285 "	63	99,569 "
55	66,687 "	64	145,865 "
56	35,558 "	65	90,608 "
57	42,067 "	66	75,385 "
58	42,920 "	67	91,307 "
59	5,982 "	68	20,531 "
60	43,754 "	69	22,793 "
61	30,653 "	70	19,777 "
TOTAL	1,031,704 feddans		

By 1964 it is reported that 266,863 individual peasants had received over 800,000 feddans--with holdings averaging between 3 and 5 feddans per person. The impact of this land distribution shows up in a comparison of land holdings by size of ownership before and after the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, as seen in Table XIII.

It may be contended that the absolute scale of distribution was still not very great. Of Egypt's total agricultural land area of 6 million feddans in 1952, only about 20 percent was held in properties exceeding 200 feddans. About half of this was scheduled for expropriation and redistribution to peasant farmers, so the first efforts at land reform could affect only about one-tenth of Egypt's agricultural area. As the ceiling was lowered by steps to 50 feddans, of course, the scope of the reform was extended. It is generally assumed that the peasants who received the small plots of 3 to 5 feddans have gained considerably through land reform--in income, social status, and economic security.

To appreciate the total effect of the land reform program, however, one must know how the land tenure system operated at the time of the 1952 Revolution. Tenant farmers were generally at the mercy of landowners. Under the share-cropping system, each peasant was obligated to give all his cotton and half of his wheat as payment for the use of the land. The peasant was then able to sell half of his wheat crop, his maize and berseem in the village market. While this arrangement did allow the landless peasant to obtain a meagre living, the landowners merely by providing seed and fertilizer were able to obtain a sizeable cotton crop each year with practically no labor costs at all.

The regulation of the landlord-tenant relationship has probably benefited far more people than did the distribution of land itself, for 4 million tenants continued to rent an area of 3.6 million feddans, or over 60 percent of the total cultivated area. Under the agrarian reform law, no land can be rented except to a tenant who will farm the land himself. The rent must not exceed 7 times the basic tax assessed upon the land. In case of crop-sharing rent, the owner's share must not exceed one-half the crop after deduction of all expenses. Finally agricultural land may not be leased for fewer than 3 years and the contract must be in writing, regardless of the amount involved. Thus an improvement in income and legal status for the tenant farmer (the largest section of the farm population) is by far the most valuable achievement of the reform. While security of tenure has clearly improved, rents have seldom remained at 7 times the basic tax assessed. In a country where the cultivated area is extremely limited, where the demand for land is continually increasing, and where illiterate peasants are available to rent land, evasion of rent limitations appears even today to be common throughout the Nile Valley.

TABLE XIII

Distribution of Land Ownership in Egypt

	1900			1952 (Pre-Revolution)				1965		
	Owners	Area	Avg. Plot	Owners	Area	Avg. Plot		Owners	Area	Avg. Plot
Under 5 feddans	83.3	21.8%	1.5	94.3%	35.4%	.8	Under 5 feddans	94.5%	57.1%	1.2
5-10	8.7	10.9	7.0	2.8	8.8	6.6	5-10	2.4	9.5	7.9
10-20	4.4	10.8	13.8	1.7	10.7	13.6	10-20	1.9	8.2	8.6
20-50	2.2	12.2	32.0	0.8	10.9	29.1	20-50	0.9	12.6	28.1
over 50	0.9	43.8	187.0	0.4	34.1	174.6	over 50	0.3	12.6	84.5
TOTAL (000s)	914	5,114	5.6	2,802	5,982	2.1		3,211	6,462	2.0

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistic. See also Charles Issawi, Egyptian Revolution (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 156.

Professor Gadalla succinctly summarized the problem of Agrarian Reform in Egypt by arguing:

> Land reform must be considered a continuous process which should not be ended by the changes of tenure arrangements or the distribution of land . . . . Officials of the Higher Committee have always argued that their measures for improving the farmer's economic conditions will automatically improve his social conditions. But because most Egyptian peasants are illiterate and rural life is extremely backward, this argument is not valid . . . . The land-reform policy has consisted, so far, of technical and economic approaches to the land problem. Today, there is a great need to implement a social approach to the application of complementary measures in education, health, housing, and the utilization of leisure.[1]

Cooperative Societies

From the initial description of the Egyptian society, it should be clear that the standard of living in Egypt cannot be raised in any significant way unless productivity in the agricultural sector is increased. President Sadat has indicated his commitment to give agriculture a prominent place in the new 10-year plan (1973-82) and this includes a careful evaluation of the present agricultural system, its institutions, structure and production.

Cooperatives are not new to Egypt. As early as 1908, Omar Lofty, a private philanthropist, sought to introduce agricultural cooperatives committed to issuing credit to small farmers for seeds, machinery, and fertilizer. By 1923 the National Assembly had passed legislation covering the establishment and operation of agricultural cooperatives and the government actively sought to encourage the cooperative movement. Just prior to the revolution of 1952 there were over 1,700 cooperative societies specializing in agriculture with nearly 500,000 members. Yet their general impact on the smaller farmer was very insignificant. The larger landlords were able to maintain an economic and social dominance both in the local areas and in the National Assembly. The smaller farmer, the tenant farmer, and the farm workers were continually dependent upon

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[1] Saad M. Gadalla, Land Reform in Relation to Social Development in Egypt (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1962), pp. 93-94.

the good will of the larger farmers. Land was the chief source of credit and usually was extended only to these farmers with at least 25 acres. Gradually the major landlords secured the large share of the credit available and tended to dominate the agriculture cooperatives for their own benefit. Most smaller farmers were unwilling or unable to take advantage of the credit facilities available.

The declared purpose of the land reform of 1952 was to bring about an immediate redistribution of income in the countryside, but the measure also gave to the government a strong control over agricultural production on the expropriated estates. Because most of the land to be distributed to the new smallholders was to come from breaking up large estates that were viable agricultural units, the government considered it desirable to establish organizations that would carry on the management functions of the former owners in order to maintain efficient operations and to avoid the economic disadvantage the new owners would suffer from uncoordinated, small-scale farming and marketing. Therefore, the law required that new cooperative societies be formed among those farmers given land under the Land Reform Law.

These agrarian reform cooperatives were given wide powers not only to provide normal services, such as loans, supplies of seeds and fertilizers, and storage and transport to their members, but also to organize cultivation of the members' land, specify the crops, carry out pest control and irrigation works, and handle marketing and other financial transactions. Because of the inexperience of the average member, the cooperatives were officially controlled and put under supervision of state agents appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture. As a result of successful experiments in several large estates, where the distributed areas were reorganized under individual cooperatives, the government decided in the late 1960's that the entire Nile Valley would be organized on a cooperative basis. Today all recipients of land have been obligated to join a land reform cooperative. Professor Warriner describes the immediate impact of the reform by noting that each peasant was to

> deliver the whole of his cotton crop to the cooperative for sale, as they formerly delivered it to the estate manager, and the proceeds of the sale meet the cost of the installment payment, land tax, the cost of the fertilizers and seed, and administrative expenses. The farmers retain their maize and berseem as before. The chief difference in their position is that the whole income from the wheat crop is their property,

> instead of half. The gain in money income is equivalent to . . . E. L. 7 per feddan ($16.00), an increase of 50 percent on the former net income.[1]

The growth of agricultural cooperatives since 1940 is shown in Table XIV.

TABLE XIV

Number of Agricultural Cooperatives, Members and the Capital

Year	Number of Cooperatives	Members	Capital (1000 LE)
1940	757	70,517	192
1952	1727	498,652	661
1965	4839	2,368,984	2653
1966	4879	2,532,579	2682
1967	4921	2,750,876	2801
1968	4955	3,046,099	2996
1969	4998	2,921,369	3993

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

Although the Agrarian Reform lands were placed under obligatory cooperatives in the early 1950's, by 1961 the non-Agrarian Reform cooperatives far outnumbered the Agrarian Reform cooperatives. Table XV lists the two types of cooperatives by province.

To cope with the problem of fragmented holdings, at times running to half a feddan or less, in areas not covered by agrarian cooperatives, the government encouraged establishment of so-called unified rotation cooperatives beginning in 1955. These combined the small holdings around a given village to form economical plots of at least 50 feddans that are sown to single crops in accordance with a long range plan of rotation. This system proved to be successful in increasing yields and farm income and has gradually been expanded to include nearly every village in the Nile Valley.

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[1] Doreen Warriner, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 35.

TABLE XV

Agricultural Cooperatives in the
Egyptian Provinces 1961

Province	Agricultural Cooperatives		Land Reform Cooperatives		Total	
	No. of Cooperatives	No. of Members	No. of Cooperatives	No. of Members	No. of Cooperatives	No. of Members
Alexandria	3	1449	5	1584	8	3023
Damietta	55	7836	4	1750	19	9586
Dakahlia	290	96319	58	23874	448	120393
Sharkia	385	109391	45	27394	430	136685
Kalyubia	197	79655	9	1876	206	81531
Kafr al-Shaykh	174	32844	21	11025	195	43769
Gharbia	317	85502	14	428	331	101930
Menifia	297	12292	12	3872	309	128892
Buheira	329	50638	57	24652	386	75291
Giza	156	45839	9	3220	165	49059
Beni Suef	212	32519	11	4862	223	37381
al-Fayyum	155	30503	14	4315	169	34638
Minya	343	55841	32	14874	375	70715
Aswan	219	54280	7	1247	226	55627
Sohag	217	66565	5	1578	222	68143
Qena	189	34781	18	10416	207	45197
Aswan	71	6256	10	3453	81	9709
Total	3709	913138	331	46139	4040	1039267

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

The Egyptian cooperative system is a unique attempt to combine the benefits of communal farming and private individual farming. Thus the cooperative law stipulates that all farmers must join a local cooperative. The areas of land under the jurisdiction of a single cooperative branch are consolidated first and then divided into three large plots usually of 50-100 feddans each. Utilizing a two-year crop rotation program, two of these plots will be planted and one plot will remain fallow each year. These crop rotation programs are generally established on a zonal basis and the benefits of scale can be enjoyed for such services as ploughing, applying fertilizers and pesticides, harrowing, irrigation planning, and the harvesting of crops. However, it should be emphasized that the Egyptian cooperative system, while including the concept of integrating land areas into larger plots, still seeks to insure private land ownership for each individual peasant-farmer. Thus within each of the three larger plots of land in the cooperative, each individual peasant is given a land deed for a portion of each of the three plots.

Contrary to the typical communal system, each farmer in the Egyptian system is responsible for his own three pieces of land in terms of sowing, weeding, hoeing and general care. His financial reward will not be a function of the amount of effort he puts into the total cooperative farm, but upon the amount of output coming from his own individually owned pieces of land. This interesting new system has several problems, to be described later, but it permits the amalgamation of the fragmented holdings around every village into one productive unit, with a unified crop rotation system. Every farmer retains his individual property rights, has several problems--to be described later--yet it must be recognized that this combination of the communal and the private may prove to be especially appropriate to problems of rural Egypt.

These cooperatives, as provided by the law, perform the following:

1. Granting of different kinds of loans to members according to the needs of their lands;

2. Providing seeds, fertilizers, livestock, agricultural machinery and other requirements for land exploitation, together with all requisites for the storage and transport of crops;

3. Organizing cultivation and utilization of land in the most efficient way, including selection of seeds, pest control and the digging of canals and drains;

4. Marketing of crops on behalf of members, installments due in respect of land price and other commitments being deducted from the proceeds; and

5. Rendering all other agricultural and social services required by their members.

Since the early 1960's all credit transactions in rural areas must be carried by local agricultural cooperatives, and all credit services either in cash or in kind must be made available to peasant-farmers at their own village. As a means of expanding the cooperative concept in all villages--all holders of farm land whether by ownership or tenancy are refused credit facilities except through their respective village cooperative society.

Cooperative marketing is the final stage in the cooperative system of agricultural production. Medium and small producers can now pool their capital and their produce through cooperative marketing societies, to provide them with storage, processing and marketing facilities which they could not individually own.

Besides replacing competition by cooperation, marketing cooperatives enable their members to avoid paying unnecessary profits to intermediaries and to secure a larger share of the price paid by the final purchaser. This system of cooperative marketing has now been expanded to include cotton, wheat, vegetables, fruits and other cereals.

There is little question that agricultural cooperatives have greatly expanded their services especially since 1960, though progress since 1965 has been uneven. Table XVI outlines the amount of loans granted and the types of services offered in recent years.

The cooperatives are not just institutions which provide peasants with requirements for agricultural production. Today they are perceived as instruments for implementing much of the social and economic policies of the state in the rural areas of Egypt. Specific functions outlined for the agricultural cooperatives in the 1970's include: soil improvement, crop improvement, crop production, livestock protection, farm mechanization, storage and marketing improvement, irrigation and drainage improvement, rural industries and handicrafts, and financing facilities. A critique of these cooperatives will be presented in a later section of this paper.

The agricultural cooperative structure in Egypt is headed by the General Cooperative Organization, which is the body responsible for the establishment of the cooperative system through the promotion of a nationwide cooperative program and policy, the provision of the requisite technical and financial help to the local cooperative organizations, and the supervision of their activities.

The base of the cooperative structure in Egypt is the local cooperative branch which embraces all the cooperative members at the village level. Each village cooperative branch has a board (majlis al-Idara) of five people elected by the members of the cooperative through a secret ballot. If the cooperative branch includes more than one village (including nearby hamlets), this board must include at least one member from these outside areas. Each board member is elected for a three year term. The formal duties of these board members include: (1) directing the affairs and activities of the cooperative branch within the guidelines of the general plan, (2) appointing and supervising the staff of the cooperative upon approval of such personnel by the Director of the Cooperative at the governorate level, (3) organize and direct the necessary committees needed to implement the local agricultural program, (4) provide the supervision needed to implement the accounting and record keeping activities of the cooperative, and (5) prepare and submit an annual report on all activities,

profits and losses, the disposition of on-going projects and a general summary of the year's agricultural production for the cooperative branch.

Each cooperative branch is provided with a trained agricultural supervisor (mushrif), who is usually a graduate of a local agricultural college, an accountant for the disbursement and the collection of loans, and a clerk for administrative matters and storekeeping. Those cooperative branches visited by the author usually had a separate building which provided ample office, meeting and storage facilities as well as housing premises for the resident agricultural supervisors and other members of the staff. The supervisor is specifically responsible for the pattern of crop rotation in the village area, the field layout and organization of agricultural work scheduling, and the allocation of farm equipment. The members of each cooperative branch have both collective and individual responsibilities in areas assigned to the cooperative branch. Since the agricultural supervisor has final authority in all matters pertaining to agricultural production in the area of jurisdiction assigned to him by the Ministry of Agriculture through the Director (Mudir) of Agriculture in each governorate, the cooperative board tends to be an advisory group providing an institution through which the agricultural supervisor can present government policy to the local peasant leaders and through which the local leaders can communicate their problems, complaints, and suggestions. Although most communication has tended to be downward in the general cooperative system, there is evidence that the local boards are playing a more positive role in articulating their concerns to higher officials.

Immediately above the village level cooperative branch is the Combined Cooperative of the district (markaz) level. Each district (there are 122 in Egypt) has a cooperative organization that includes one representative from each cooperative branch. This combined cooperative at the district level, headed by an agricultural specialist selected by the Ministry of Agriculture provides a whole series of services to the local branches including: coordination and implementation of all national agricultural programs and policies, marketing of crops and livestock, management of cooperative training centers, and supervision of the smallholding consolidation program.

At the governorate level there then comes the governorate general cooperative organization, having under its aegis all the combined cooperatives and cooperative branches in the governorate. At this level the Director of the General Cooperative organization is responsible for the provision of large-scale supplies for the cooperatives, the establishment of cooperative agricultural mechanization stations, the super-

vision of pest-control programs, and the formation and implementation of general policy for cooperative marketing, plus specific administrative and personnel responsibilities for all employees of the cooperatives in the governorate. Although decentralization of function and responsibility is an announced goal of the Ministry of Agriculture, the cooperative system, as it now functions in rural Egypt, is still characterized by significant centralizing tendencies. The levels of agricultural production are still considered too important to the general economy of Egypt to be left to the decision of the local farmers and peasants.

TABLE XVI

Services Rendered by Agricultural Cooperatives

Loans/Grants by General Agricultural Cooperatives (LE 1000)	1952	1960	64/65	66/67	68/69
	15960	36548	65327	86273	68843

Services rendered by Agrarian Reform Cooperatives (LE 1000)	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
(1) Seeds	1202	1191	3348	4771	4661	3806
(2) Fertilizers	8993	9153	9845	11678	10966	8989
(3) Insecticides	1785	2442	2203	1623	1655	1757
(4) " Equipment	55	961	12	--	48	46
(5) Sacks	1174	1174	1174	--	1554	--
Total	13209	14921	16582	18072	18884	14598

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

CHAPTER III

EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURE

AN INPUT ANALYSIS

Institutional Framework of Input Supply

The pace of agricultural development depends upon a host of institutional and economic conditions affecting the ability and willingness of farmers to adopt new inputs, thus expanding production and increasing the productivity of land and labor. Increases in output can be either a result of changes in inputs or a result of changes in technology or both. Changes in output are considered a result of some change in labor, land, working capital, and fixed capital. Agriculture in Egypt is characterized by a high labor-to-capital ratio; labor is still by far the single most important input in agricultural production. A meaningful analysis of change in agricultural productivity, either in terms of a single input or in terms of aggregate inputs, requires a reasonably accurate estimation of labor input and its change over time.

Input is a flow concept. The measurement of labor input is, accordingly, the measurement of services rendered by agricultural workers during a given period of time. This necessarily calls for a clear definition of a working day in terms of a given length of time, a simple task in industrial production where a working day is clearly defined but not a feasible one in the case of agriculture. First, there is no such thing as a working day with the same length of time which is applicable to each individual worker in agriculture. Moreover, the length of a working day for an individual varies from one season to another, even from one day to another.

Another measure of labor input is the total gainfully occupied population in agriculture. This procedure required information on the size of the labor force in agriculture and the rate of participation of the labor force. The size of the agricultural labor force is not an observed magnitude

in Egypt, consequently, it has to be derived from the available agricultural population figure. How one defines the term agricultural population will then definitely affect the size of the agricultural labor force and therefore the size of gainfully occupied population in agriculture. According to a sample study of rural employment in Egypt published in 1966, the average annual working days for men was 286 days per year, for women was 188 days per year, and for children 159 days per year.[1] A majority of the men (89 percent) worked at least 6 months, while only 54 percent of the women and 38 percent of the childrem were gainfully employed for more than 6 months. The percentage of men indicating they had worked less than one month in the previous year was only 3 percent, but 25 percent of women and 34 percent of the children had worked less than one month. The average annual working hours registered in the survey show men averaging 3,312 hours per year (8.1 hours per day), women averaging 854 hours per year (4.6 hours per day), and children averaging 1,084 hours per year (7.5 hours per day). It should be noted that children work fewer hours per year than women, but longer hours per day primarily due to the type of work performed which includes mainly pest control and cotton harvest, both of which require children to work as long as the men in those peak seasons.

Over the last 25 years,the number of adult males actively engaged in agricultural production rose at the slow average rate of 0.7 percent per year, from roughly 3 million in the late 1930's to 3.8 million in the early 1970's. This percentage of growth is even smaller if all people employed in agriculture are considered. Note the comparison for agriculture, industry and services between 1937 and 1960. During this period, the total number of people employed in agriculture grew at the small rate of 0.4 percent at a time when population was growing at 2.7 percent and employment in industry was growing at 5.5 percent per annum. This is to say that labor inputs have increased relatively slowly.

In fact, studies show that there is considerable labor available for more employment in the rural sector. Table XVIII showed a distribution of employed persons by status of employment in the rural areas of Egypt. The 1960 data are from a census taken in the peak agricultural season, while the 1965 data come from a nationwide survey (entitled Interviews Survey) which was conducted during the slack season of that year. It is clear that just over 50 percent of the rural employed population are single farmers, tenant farmers or unpaid family workers during the peak period but their proportion increases to over 70 percent during the slack time of the growing season. Note how nearly 10 percent of the rural population become employers during the peak seasons. This

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[1] Institute of National Planning, Research Report on Employment Problems in Rural Area U.A.R. (Cairo, 1966).

becomes understandable for Egypt when it is understood that even among holders cultivating less than two feddans, nearly 25 percent were hiring one or two hired helpers--a common practice in the Nile Valley where you have over 2 million farm hands available. The data of the Interviews Survey graphically portray the large numbers of holdings in Egypt that have more labor than they can effectively use. Table XIX below distinguishes individual farming households in six categories of labor density: The "very low," and "low," both indicate that the household could use additional non-family farm laborers to cultivate their land more effectively Within the category of "medium" density, the man-land-ratio is well balanced. The "high," "very high" and "extremely high" categories of density of family labor are short of land or possess more labor than can be productively utilized on the family farm.

TABLE XVII

Population and Employment, 1937, 1947, and 1960

(in 1000s)

	1937	1947	1960	Increase 1937-1960
Total Population	15,933	19,022	26,085	2.7
Total Employed in:				
Agriculture	4,020	4,075	4,406	0.4
Industry	337	589	771	5.5
Total Male Adults Employed in:				
Agriculture	2,976	3,139	3,560	0.7
Industry	330	514	715	5.1
Service	1,151	1,593	2,318	4.4
Total Women and Children Employed in:				
Agriculture	1,044	936	846	-0.8
Industry	7	75	56	30.4
Service	235	334	338	0.2

Source: Donald C. Mead, Growth and Structural Change in the Egyptian Economy (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1967). p. 33.

The problem becomes apparent when you see that 47 percent of the households have no land to cultivate, that 34 percent of the households could use more land effectively without having additional labor and nearly 65 percent of the holdings are presently utilizing more labor than is needed to complete the farming operations of their farms.

TABLE XVIII

Rural Population by Employment Status and Sex

(6 years and over)

	1960 Peak Season						1965 Slack Season		
Status	Male (1000s)	%	Female (1000s)	%	Total	%	Male %	Female %	Total %
Employer	433	9	10	3	443	9	3	0	2
Single Farmer (Tenant)	1238	26	32	10	1270	25	32	4	23
Employee	1867	40	123	37	1990	40	37	14	29
Unpaid Family Workers	1156	25	166	50	1322	26	28	82	46
Total	4694	100	331	100	5025	100	100	100	100

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

One student of employment and underemployment has argued:

> The fact that 11 percent of the men, 46 percent of the women, and 62 percent of the children worked less than 6 months in the year of the survey (1965) is no doubt clear evidence that disguised unemployment constitutes a real problem for the Egyptian agricultural labor force.

> In the final analysis, the Institute of National Planning estimated the degree of underemployment in the agricultural labor force to be 12.5 for

men, 25.4 percent for women, and 64.7 percent for children. The resulting overall underemployment has been estimated at 31.2 percent for the year 1964-65.[1]

TABLE XIX

Distribution of Households According to Density of Family Laborers Available Per 100 Kirats of Cultivated Land

Density	Laborer Units Per 100 Kirats (24 Kirats=1 feddan)	Percentage of Households	Percentage of Holdings
Very low	0.1 -- 0.9	4	8
Low	1.0 -- 1.9	8	15
Medium	2.0 -- 2.9	7	13
High	3.0 -- 4.9	11	21
Very high	5.0 -- 9.9	12	23
Extremely high	10.0 and over	11	20
No cultivated land		47	

Source: United Arab Republic, Research Report on Employment Problems in Rural Areas U.A.R. (Institute of National Planning, 1966), p. 46.

The supply of labor is not just a function of the number of bodies available for work, however. It also depends upon the quality of the labor force. This is of particular importance in the process of agricultural development because the most efficient use of growing quantities of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and pesticides requires a corresponding increase in the skills of persons working on farms. Hence it is important to consider the institutional mechanisms governing the role of growth of skills relevant to the employment of these inputs. While literacy is not essential to the operation of a tractor or application of fertilizers and pesticides, it is surely very likely that knowledge of these skills can be more readily transmitted to a literate than to an illiterate population.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Egypt has made substantial progress in reducing its illiteracy rate,

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[1] Mostafa H. Nagi, Labor Force and Employment in Egypt (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 174.

especially among males, although in absolute terms the number of people who cannot read or write has continued to grow. Since 1952 the revolutionary regime has put great emphasis on the provision of educational facilities and staff to reach the target of providing education for all children in the age group 6-12 by the mid 1970's. From Table XX it can be seen that the rate of illiteracy among children under 15 has dropped much more significantly than in other age groupings

TABLE XX

Percentage of Illiteracy by Age Group

1947, 1960

Age Group	1947 Total	1960 Total	1960 Male	1960 Female
10-14	64.2	59.6	50.2	69.6
15-19	72.6	72.9	63.6	81.9
20-24	75.5	77.3	66.5	86.8
25-34	70.6	78.2	63.3	90.1
35-44	82.0	80.8	67.6	93.4
45-54	83.4	84.8	73.5	96.0
55-64	85.9	86.3	74.0	97.5
65 +	89.2	90.5	80.6	98.8

Source: Mostafa H. Nagi, Labor Force and Employment in Egypt (New York: Praeger, 1971), p. 59.

One further consideration on labor inputs is to determine how such labor is used in the rural sector. A survey of rural families in Egypt in 1965 provides a detailed breakdown as to how men, women, and children contribute to the agricultural system.[1] In Table XXI it is clear that

[1]The classification system used for analyzing the various occupational groupings in rural Egypt distinguished five subgroupings:

a. Field work (preparation of land, irrigation, fertilizing, pest control, harvesting and storing).

b. Animal husbandry (feeding, cleaning and tending cattle, donkeys and horses, poultry feeding, bee-keeping and silkworm breeding).

c. Processing farm products (threshing, sorting, grading, packing, transporting, grinding, and preserving farm products).

roughly three-fourths of all labor time spent by men, women and children is devoted to two types of activities listed as field work and animal husbandry. The process of rural development would presumably employ a large share of labor in processing, other, and non-agricultural activities.

TABLE XXI

Distribution of Time Worked According to Type of Work Contribution of Men, Women, Children To Annual Labor Output

		(1) Field Work		(2) Animal Husbandry		(3) Processing		(4) Other		(5) Non-Agriculture		
	Hours Worked	% Time	% Process	% Time	% Process	% Time	% Process	% Time	% Process	% Time	% Process	Total
Farmers												
Men	871,682	53	81	21	52	3	52	13	89	10	86	100
Women	166,811	19	5	63	30	11	38	3	4	4	7	100
Children	164,511	49	14	39	18	3	10	5	7	4	7	100
Total		48	100	30	100	4	100	10	100	8	100	100
Farm Laborer												
Men	164,462	58	73	13	49	3	71	11	75	15	64	100
Women	36,617	31	9	35	28	4	18	8	12	22	21	100
Children	44,671	55	18	23	23	2	11	7	13	13	15	100
Total		53	100	18	100	3	100	10	100	16	100	100

Source: United Arab Republic, Final Report on Employment Problems in Rural Areas, U.A.R. (Institute of National Planning, 1966) pp. 36-37, and Labour Record Survey, I.N.P.C., 1964/1965

d. Other agricultural work (marketing, guarding, repairing farm equipment , and supervision of farms).

e. Non-agricultural work (management, commercial work, production of non-agricultural goods, clerical work, construction work, transport work, maintenance work and all other occupations related to non-agricultural work).

Changes in Egypt's Agricultural Inputs

A. Land

Land, one of the major inputs of agricultural production, refers not only to the physical surface of the earth, but to all the natural conditions pertaining to it, which include fertility, rainfall, soil moisture, and topographical conditions of the land. Although these natural conditions determine the quality of the land and consequently the contribution of the land as an input of agriculture to the total output, they cannot be quantified in any meaningful way. What is to be measured as land input here is only the surface of the land.

Almost all of Egypt's land area, 386,000 square miles, is desert and untillable; a mere 3 percent of the total is arable under present technical conditions-- limited to the Nile Valley and the Delta area where most of the agriculture and population are concentrated. The expansion of cultivated land area had virtually reached its limit by in the late 1960's although some new areas have been opened up with the completion of the Aswan High Dam in the early 1970's.

During the first six decades of the century, the cultivated area increased less than 20 percent while the cropped area increased more than 50 percent. This is largely due to improvements in the irrigation system as it shifted from a basin system that allowed only one crop a year to a perennial irrigation system developed with the establishment of barrages and their accompanying intricate system of canals which allowed multiple crops in the fertile soil of the Nile Valley. Since the Revolution of 1952, the cultivated area has continued to expand practically every year, mainly through a series of reclamation projects, transformation of large areas from the basin to the perennial system, and the areas opened up recently by the completion of the High Dam. By bringing over 1.3 million feddans of desert lands under cultivation, the dam will increase the agricultural cropped area to over 12 million feddans. It appears that further expansion of the cultivated area in Egypt cannot be increased much beyond 8 million feddans, however, given the storage capacity of the High Dam and the number of economically feasible desert reclamation projects that may be persued in the next decade. This limitation on the vertical expansion of cultivable land in Egypt does not mean, however that land can no longer be a contributing factor to an increase in agricultural production. As the horizontal expansion of the land area becomes infeasible, it is contemplated that an ever-growing agricultural output will still be possible through the vertical expansion of land, that is, through improvement in the quality of the land and through an increase in the degree of land utilization.

Improvement in the quality of land can take various forms, such as soil conservation, proper drainage, and the application of fertilizers, while changes in the cropped area clearly indicate improvement in the degree of land utilization. If the increase in crop area is greater than the increase in land expansion, as is apparent in the case of Egypt, the degree of intensity of land use has increased. However, when considering land as one of the conventional input components in agriculture, it is measured in terms of physical land area instead of cropped area, because to take the latter measure as land input is really to disregard the land contribution of technical progress to the increase output flow. Land inputs for the period from 1897 to the present are shown in Table XXII.

TABLE XXII

Area, Cultivated and Cropped

Year	Area Cultivated		Area Cropped	
	Million Feddans	Index 1897=100	Million Feddans	Index 1897=100
1897	5.0	100	6.7	100
1917	5.3	106	7.7	115
1937	5.3	106	8.4	125
1947	5.7	114	9.2	137
1957	5.8	116	10.3	154
1960	5.9	118	10.4	155
1970	6.7	134	10.8	158

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics; and Bent Hansen and Girgis A. Marzouk, Development and Economic Policy in the UAR (Egypt) (Amsterdam: North-Holland - Publishing Company, 1965), p. 52.

B. Fixed Capital

Farm fixed capital includes farm service buildings, farm implements and equipment, and draft animals. Official dates on farm houses, implements and equipment are usually out-of-date and so incomplete that they cannot be organized in any useful way. Because of the lack of consistent data the total animal horsepower in agriculture is to be regarded here as representing the fixed capital input with the

implicit assumption that changes in animal energy in agriculture are proportional to the changes in total fixed capital in agriculture. Water buffalo (gamoosa) represent by far the most important type of draft animal in Egypt, being employed mainly in plowing and preparing fields. Hardy, resistent to disease, tolerant of the climate and locale, the water buffalo works well at the plow or the water wheel. It has greater endurance than the cow and gives more and richer milk. About one-fith of the total crop area is annually used for the pricipal fodder, berseem. Government agronomists and progressive farmers have demonstrated that, if the small producer could be induced to shift from the two-year to the three-year rotation plan, thus allowing longer periods for fallow grazing, the prospects of increased livestock grazing would be good. In Table XXIII we see the number of water buffalo available for farm production in selected years since 1937.

TABLE XXIII

Estimated Buffalo Population, Egypt, for Selected Years in Thousands of Head

Year	Total	% Increase	Year	Total	% Increase
1937	958		1964	1588	1.8
1947	1240	29.4	1965	1617	1.8
1952	1212	- 2.2	1966	1646	1.7
1960	1472	21.4	1967	1675	1.8
1961	1501	1.9	1968	1943	16.0
1962	1530	1.9	1969	2015	3.7
1963	1559	1.9			

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

Admittedly, the fixed capital series as estimated here leaves much to be desired. The peculiar data in the series for 1968 and 1969 seem to be improbable; the coverage of the series should be regarded merely as a poor substitute used to overcome the problem of missing data on the true fixed capital input. Although this fixed capital series, as it stands, suffers from some defects, the consequence of missing data on the aggregate input (hence the computed residual) is small and tolerable because fixed capital probably accounts for less than 15 percent of the aggregate. Since World War II there has been a solid increase in the use of

farm machinery--mostly tractors, but we do not consider it instead because of its limited spread.[1]

TABLE XXIV

Licensed Farm Machinery

Year	Number	Horsepower in 1000s	% Increase Per Annum
1935	1026	28.6	
1939	1178	34.0	4.7
1944	2926	78.2	26.0
1949	6449	193.3	29.1
1952	7582	226.7	5.7
1957	10065	316.4	7.9
1960	10348	328.0	1.2
1967	17660	--	--

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

Although by the early 1970's it was common to see tractors ploughing fields on the large goverment farms, on the land reform cooperatives and on some of the larger farms, farm machinery is still not widely used on the vast majority of the land plots.

C. Working Capital

Working capital input is represented here by the amount of commercial fertilizers consumed. It is implicitly assumed that other current inputs vary in proportion with commercial fertilizers (see Table XXV). The most noticeable feature of the changes in Egypt's agricultural inputs is the sharp and remarkable increase in commercial fertilizer inputs during the period under study.

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[1] "Machinery is still the exception rather than the rule in Egyptian agriculture, the number of hp of licensed machinery per working person being 0.1, while the number of ph per cultivated feddan is as low as 0.05."
Hanson and Marzenk, Development and Economic Policy in the U.A.R. (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1965), p. 65.

TABLE XXV

Use of Chemical Fertilizers

Year	Total Annual Supply (1000s tons)	Annual Consumption Per Feddan Cropped
1921/24	110.7	14
1925/29	266.0	31
1930/35	306.4	37
1935/39	567.4	68
1940/44	202.5	22
1945/49	431.5	47
1950/54	779.5	79
1952/53	740.0	77
1955/59	825.7	85
1960	1125.8	108
1964/69	1553.0	146
1965/66	1643.0	155
1966/67	1390.0	131
1968	1227.0	114
1968/69	1334.0	123
1969/70	1173.0	108

Source: Hanson and Marzenk, p. 68; and Statistical Handbook, p. 43.

Already in the 1930's Egypt was one of the heaviest consumers of fertilizers in the world. World War II greatly reduced the amount of fertilizer available and consumption dropped to one-third of its pre-war level. Today Egypt is clearly one of the world's top consumers of fertilizer gradually reaching the levels of many developed countries including Holland, Denmark and Belgium. In the last few years, lack of foreign currency has definitely reduced Egypt's import levels of fertilizers. There is no question that Egypt could use more fertilizers--not only in quantity but in the way it is being used.

D. Cobb-Douglas Production Functions

The previous section described the inputs of the Egyptian agricultural economy during the past several decades, focusing particularly on the growth of production and attempting to indicate the returns to the various inputs primarily responsible for the increase. The analysis could not be

pushed very far, both because of serious limitations in the data and because the amounts of two major inputs, land and labor, have not increased to any great extent over the period. This made it impossible to estimate the marginal rates of return to these resources, given the measurement technique used. Yet such an analysis is essential for a satisfactory assessment of the performance of agriculture in Egypt.

One way to overcome the obstacles imposed by deficiencies in the overall statistics is by working with data from a sample of farms, selected so as to be representative of various provinces along the Nile Valley. During the period 1966-68 a random stratified sample of farms in Kafr al-Shaykh, Gharbia, Kalyubia, Beni Suef and Minya governorates generated a set of data which were then analyzed, fitting Cobb-Douglas production functions to the several groupings of the sample data.[1] The objective was to obtain estimates of the marginal contribution of each input to output. The contrasting marginal-return-to-opportunity-cost ratios are listed in Table XXVI for two of Egypt's key crops and provide some idea of the respective contribution of land, labor and capital inputs.

The analysis of returns to scale for cotton farm enterprises and rice enterprises indicates that constant returns to scale take place in cotton production in the Gharbia and Kalyubia provinces, and in rice production in Kafr al-Shaykh. These close figures to unity suggests the value of land consolidation in generating an efficient utilization of land, labor and capital in the areas identified. The sum of elasticites of 1.16 for rice in the province of Gharbia signify that increasing returns to scale exist in the process of rice production in that area--thus recommending an expansion of rice production in that area.

An analysis of marginal return to opportunity-cost ratios suggests for cotton production that the average farmer could have increased profits substantially by expanding the cotton area or by reducing the labor force or capital inputs in Kafr al-Shaykh, Gharbia and Beni-Suef. Kalyubia, on the other hand, tend to have farms using too much capital inputs and not enough labor and land. The ratios in Minya show that returns could probably be increased by substituting capital for labor inputs.

This type of analysis tends to

support the conclusion that crop production in Egypt may be increased by reallocating resources in

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[1]Mohamed Mahmoud Rizk and Mohamed A. Afr, "Economic Efficiency in Agriculture" (Institute of National Planning, July 1973).

TABLE XXVI

	Kafr al-Shaykh	Gharbia	Kalyubia	Beni Suef	Minya
Number of Farms	152	166	77	170	164
1. Cotton					
a) Elasticities					
Land	0.8180	0.7193	0.5981	0.7673	0.2480
Labor	-0.0619	0.1878	0.3272	0.0348	-0.1108
Capital	0.1285	0.1269	0.1683	0.1152	0.8531
b) Sum of Elasticities	0.8846	0.10340	1.0936	0.9173	0.9903
c) Marginal Return to Opportunity Cost Ratios					
Land	4.269	3.159	3.091	3.260	1.06
Labor	-0.192	0.855	2.336	0.155	-0.55
Capital	0.259	0.302	0.396	0.499	4.04
2. Rice					
a) Elasticities					
Land	0.6514	0.9241	0.8022		
Labor	0.0429	0.2267	0.1633		
Capital	0.3046	0.1048	-0.0260		
b) Sum of Elasticities	0.9983	1.1659	0.9395		
c) Marginal Return to Opportunity Cost Ratios					
Land	4.931	7.295	4.140		
Labor	0.010	0.760	0.776		
Capital	0.640	0.024	-0.147		

Source: Ibid.

> various farm enterprises. . . (and) if our limited resources are optimally allocated between various enterprises on farms and production regions according to the marginality principles, agricultural production efficiency can be attained.[1]

There are two fundamental problems inherent in this approach to agricultural production. One serious problem which affects all such estimates of production functions is the inability to include some inputs, either because they are not known or because no information is available concerning the quantities used. Of particular interest to the aims of this research are specific institutional inputs such as management skills and organizational procedures. Management expertise and cooperative leadership are important inputs usually left out of production functions, yet no one has devised a satisfactory index of the quality of management. All the labor inputs are measured in terms of man-days worked. Hence a day of unskilled labor counts just as heavily in the production function as a day worked by the most experienced manager in a functioning cooperative enterprise. It has been shown that ignoring quality differences in inputs is equivalent to the omission of a number of variables, and such omissions certainly reduce the utility of such an approach.

One crop extremely significant to Egypt's agriculture is cotton. Fairly complete data are available on cotton production and thus provide an in-depth look at the input costs as they relate to output.

Cotton Production in Egypt

Cotton is clearly the most important primary agricultural crop in Egypt. Although the Nile Valley only produces about 4 percent of the total world crop, Egypt is the second greatest cotton exporter, coming after the United States. Egypt's share in the world output of long-staple cotton was almost 40 percent and of extra-long-staple cotton, some 60 percent, both types being rated among the best in the world. During the past decade the Egyptian government has allocated a somewhat smaller acreage for cotton, seeking to shift production to other crops, such as fruits, vegetables, rice, and fodder, thus making the country less vulnerable to fluctuations in the world market price of cotton, its major cash crop. Thus from a high of nearly 2 million feddans in cotton during the late 1950's and mid-1960's the allocated acreage for cotton has consistently been restricted

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[1] Ibid., p. 18.

to less than 1.7 million feddans since 1967. In spite of all the uncertainties, cotton still remains the most profitable crop in Egypt and, although the government is strictly allocating the area of land for production, it has paid sufficient attention to improvement of quality in order to retain the competitive edge of the Egyptian product in the extra-long-staple world market. Nevertheless, yields are extremely vulnerable to insect pests, as in 1961, 1967, 1968, and 1969, mostly because of the lack of adequate pest control.

Since 1962, cotton prices in Egypt have been fixed by the State and the cotton organization adheres to these government fixed prices in purchasing cottons marketed through the cooperatives. Prior to 1952, prices were determined on the Cotton Exchange and therefore fluctuated widely from one year to another. During the first decade of the Revolution, especially after the closure of the Cotton Exchange and the take-over by the State of the cotton trade, prices began to fluctuate to a much smaller degree. Gradually since 1964 there has been a rising trend in cotton prices (see Table XXVII).

According to available statistics covering the period 1960/70, profitability per feddan of cotton has tended to decline on account of production costs rising at a higher rate than that for either prices or productivity per feddan. The fall in profitability per feddan is clearly shown by the fact that average net yield during 1960/64 was L.E. 24.8 while between 1965/70 the net yield has dropped to L.E. 17.5. The largest profits were earned in 1964 when the per feddan net yield reached L.E. 39.8, with profitability at an all time low in 1966 due to a sharp drop in average yield per feddan and a rise in production costs as shown in Table XXVII.

In view of the insufficiency of farmers' resources for financing production they consequently need a continual source of credit. During the nineteenth and twentieth century, the only source of finance available to the peasant farmers were the local money-lenders who consistently charged exorbitant rates of interest. When the farmers were often unable to repay either the loans or the interest, the inevitable consequence was dispossession of their lands.

With the establishment of the Credit Agricole et Cooperatif in the mid-1920's and its gradual incorporation into the government's cooperative system, especially since 1958, the farmers have been assured of an adequate source of credit at a reasonable rate of interest. Credit through the cooperative system is not restricted to cash loans but also includes loans in kind in the form of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other agricultural services. Table XXVIII shows the loans advanced for cotton cultivation during the period 1965/69.

TABLE XXVII

Profitability Per Feddan of Seed Cotton

Year	Price per cantar (L.E.)	Yield per feddan (Cantars)	Value of Production per Feddan			Production Costs per feddan * (L.E.)	Net Yield per feddan (L.E.)
			Value of Cotton (L.E.)	Value of Firewood (L.E.)	Total (L.E.)		
1960	15.0	5.2	78.2	1.4	79.6	45.2	34,3
1961	14.5	3.2	46.8	1.5	48.3	49.7	(-) 1.4
1962	14.8	5.1	75.9	1.5	77.4	51.8	25.6
1963	15.2	5.1	78.0	2.2	80.3	54.5	25.7
1964	16.8	5.6	95.3	2.2	97.5	57.6	39.8
1965	16.1	5.0	80.9	3.3	83.9	64.3	19.5
1966	16.0	4.4	70.6	3.0	73.7	71.2	2.4
1967	17.0	4.7	80.4	3.8	83.3	69.9	13.4
1968	17.4	5.2	91.6	3.6	95.3	70.5	24.7
1969	18.0	4.8	87.4	3.5	91.0	73.5	17.4
1970	18.1	5.4	99.6	3.2	102.8	75.6	27.2

(*) Inclusive of rent per feddan

Source: Price Planning Agency

Since early 1965, a cooperative marketing system for cotton has been established in all provinces of Egypt. Thus during the past eight or nine years the entire cotton crop has been marketed cooperatively. This total marketing system was initiated to reduce the following four problems.

1. The blatant abuse of earlier marketing agencies in which speculators focused on maximization of profits with little or no concern for the farmers;

2. The multiplicity of marketing stages and the numerous middlemen and commissions paid which presented an unjustifiable rise in marketing costs;

3. The low prices received by farmers for their cottons since the surpluses resultant from the ginning process (which usually took place after the settlement of producers' accounts) accrued to the middlemen and traders only; and

4. The instability of domestic and export prices.

According to the cooperative marketing systems currently applied, farmers deliver their cotton to collection centers, where it is registered, weighed and its grades determined. The cotton is then transported to the ginning mills where, after processing, it is pressed into bales. Insurance coverage is provided against all natural disasters and other risks from the moment the cotton is delivered to the collection centers and until it is passed on to the spinners or is exported. This broad marketing system ensures consistent prices to the farmers at a level that has helped increase farmer income in recent years.

TABLE XXVIII

Loans Advanced for Cotton Cultivation:
(1965-1969)

	1965		1966		1967		1968		1969	
	L.E. mn.	%	L.E. mn.	%	L.E. mn.	%	L.E. mn.	%	L.E. mn.	%
Loans in Kind	18.8	54.1	22.8	54.2	19.3	54.6	16.1	53.2	21.0	54.6
- Seeds	1.4	4.1	1.8	4.2	2.0	5.7	1.6	5.4	1.7	4.5
- Fertilizers	9.8	28.2	11.8	28.0	10.4	29.4	8.6	28.4	10.6	27.4
- Pesticides	7.6	21.8	9.2	22.0	6.9	19.5	5.9	19.4	8.7	22.7
Cash Loans	15.9	45.9	19.2	45.8	16.1	45.4	14.2	46.8	17.5	45.4
Total	34.7	100.0	42.0	100.0	34.4	100.0	30.3	100.0	38.5	100.0

Source: Price Planning Agency

CHAPTER IV

GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION: STRATEGIES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Since 1952, Egypt has undergone a basic transformation, involving the nationalization of industry, agrarian reform, a much higher level of taxation, a great expansion of industry, the expropriation of foreign interests, and a vast extension of social services and education. All these have profoundly altered the Egyptian economy and social order.

A careful analysis of the strategies pursued by Egyptian officials during the past two decades suggests three stages. Stage one began in 1952-53 in the initial formation of Nasser's regime. Ambivalence best characterizes the early attempts of the young officers to stimulate national development. Free of any specific ideological persuasion, President Nasser established a variety of political institutions, policies, and programs designed specifically to achieve the Free Officers' six basic goals: (1) the eradication of imperialism and its agents, (2) the extinction of feudalism, (3) the eradication of monopolies and control of capitalistic influence over the system of government, (4) the establishment of a strong national army, (5) the establishment of social justice, and (6) the establishment of a sound, democratic life. This first stage has been called the era of "guided capitalism"--an era in which state influence on the economy was generally insignificant, especially prior to 1957. Several trends of this period were, nevertheless, harbingers of future interventions. Government expropriation of large land estates, restrictions on the utilization of foreign exchange, limitations on imports, and the gradually increasing share of public investments in the infrastructure of the economy were all examples of initial attempts to direct the Egyptian society toward a broadly conceived social and economic revolution. This first stage appeared to be characterized by a tendency to articulate goals, identify aspirations and hopes without carefully delineating the procedures, priorities and institutional strategies needed to achieve these goals. This hesitancy may well have been a function of Nasser's divided interests between internal development and external realities, best epitomized by the British presence in the Suez Canal zone. In many ways this early period stressed experimentation and a general willingness for the private sector to share most of the burden for economic development. Nasser's policies

in this period rested more on his fear of the past than on his hope for the future.

Stage two in Egypt's groping for an appropriate strategy for national development began in the early 1960s. Until 1961, the government attempted to promote economic development without broadly altering the institutional framework of private ownership. Tax incentives and exhortations were used to ensure the cooperation of private business in building up the new economy. After the Suez War of 1956, the government took over all British and French interests which included many insurance companies, manufacturing concerns and banking institutions, as well as the Suez Canal Company. By 1960 the government was actively moving in the direction of increased state control over the economy. In February of that year, Bank Misr, the only Egyptian-owned and managed commercial bank in the country was nationalized, giving the state more power in the banking industry and extending at the same time considerable influence over the industrial companies affiliated with the bank. In June 1960 all newspapers, public transportation, and much of the import-export sector were put under state ownership. The major break away from the free-enterprise system was introduced in 1961 with several additional nationalization measures which placed the state in charge of practically all economic activity in Egypt except in the agricultural sector. President Nasser presented his Charter to the Egyptian people in 1962 which openly announced that socialism would be the path through which economic development would proceed. Stage two is best characterized as a strategy of socialism in which a series of national plans are rationally developed to generate priorities, to determine allocation of resources and to provide adequate structures of control for the implementation of the goals postulated by the Plan. The focus of this stage centered upon the assumption that obstacles to national development were largely financial and technical. Provided enough capital is invested and the appropriate technology required for modernization is introduced, economic development is presumed to be inevitable. While there were some concerns being voiced about human resource development and the dysfunctional impact of a socialized economy on human motivation, very few people during the latter Nasser period were willing to criticize the direction of the economy as defined in the Charter.

Egypt's first five year plan (1960-65) was aimed to raise national income by 40 percent, and it was intended that income would be doubled by 1970. The first plan came close to target with a 35 percent rise in GDP-- though only a 31 percent in civilian GDP. However, from 1965 to 1970 there appears to have been very little real growth, so that the annual GDP during the 1960s was probably less than 3.5 percent. Since population growth in this period was at least 2.5 percent per annum,

there was clearly little real rise in the level of living.[1] The slowdown in the latter 1960's is certainly partly attributed to the destruction and disruption resulting from the Six Day War in 1967, such as the loss of Suez Canal revenues which by then would probably have been running at between $100 and $200 million. Nevertheless, the 1960'a did demonstrate some spectacular changes. State ownership or control and central planning supplanted free enterprise in most branches of the economy. Private foreign participation was virtually eliminated. The country's industrial capacity was gradually expanded and diversified, and industry began to overtake agriculture as the chief contributor to the gross national

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[1]On average, income per capita have increased very little since 1952.

Per Capita Income of Egypt at Constant (1953) Prices for the Period 1952-1964

1952 E.L. 35.6	1959 E.L. 40.8
53 E.L. 37.3	60 E.L. 43.0
54 E.L. 40.4	61 E.L. 43.4
55 E.L. 41.3	62 E.L. 45.6
56 E.L. 38.6	63 E.L. 48.2
57 E.L. 37.8	64 E.L. 49.1
58 E.L. 39.1	

Source: Magdi M. El-Kammash, Economic Development and Planning in Egypt (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 159. One Egyptian Pound (E.L.) equals $2.30.

Much more significant is the contrast that exist between urban and rural areas in income per capita. Per capita income in the urban areas of Egypt are consistently double what they are in the rural areas.

Average Per Capita Income in Urban and Rural Areas

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Urban	90.8	17.9	100.0	103.5	102.2	110.1
Lower Egypt	46.7	49.5	51.4	52.5	52.2	55.3
Upper Egypt	46.5	49.2	51.1	52.2	51.9	54.8
Border Areas	35.1	37.5	39.7	32.3	32.5	36.2

Source: National Institute of Planning, Working Papers.

product. After the nationalization measures of 1960 and 1961, the government became the sole investor in industry and economic problems, with the aim of furthering the cause of its policy of creating a socialist, democratic, and cooperative society.

During the first national five year planning period, the Supreme Council for National Planning under the chairmanship of Nasser himself held ultimate power in outlining the long-range economic goals of Egypt. In practice, each ministry was encouraged to generate specific investment projects within the various areas of its concern. With the development of specific growth targets concerning the entire Egyptian economy the problems of coordination and harmonization of competing sectoral policies and targets became crucial. The annual budget was a key instrument in defining the role of each sector of the economy, in outlining the distribution of investments, and in establishing specific priorities of action within the various departments of the government. The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning attempted to coordinate the vast and extremely complicated system of economic development. Much of the coordination was facilitated by an enormous administrative system which had direct control of scarce resources, including a limited supply of foreign exchange, had the power to allocate materials on the basis of a set of priorities established in the National Plan, and had wide discretionary powers to determine specific changes in the general areas of taxation, subsidies and incentives.

The Permanent Council for the Development of National Production was established to define specific long-range goals and to determine general changes in the sectors of the economy to achieve these goals. Because of what was assumed to be disappointing results of economic growth in the 1950's, the Egyptian government committed itself to a national plan for growth and development that envisaged national income doubling between 1960 and 1970, with the agricultural sector amounting to less than 25 percent of the national income and the industrial sector increasing to nearly one-third of the national income. (See Table XXIX)

An even sharper differentiation of priorities for this period can be seen in Table XXX, with heavy industry production to quadruple in ten years' time.
The low priority given to agriculture in relationship to other sectors in the Egyptian economy is evident. This emphasis on industry projected in the early plans is borne out by the continued increase in investment capital allocated to industry and the relatively reduced set of investment priorities for the agricultural sector apart from the High Dam. (See Table XXXI)

TABLE XXIX

National Income by Sector in 1959-60 and Income Projections by Sector at the End of the Two Phases of the Ten-Year Plan, 1964-65 and 1969-70 (Value Added in L.E. Millions)

Sectors	1959/60	%	1964/65	%	1969/70	%
Agriculture	400	31.3	512	28.6	627	24.4
Industry/ Electricity	273	21.2	540	30.0	802	31.2
Construction	52	04.4	51	02.8	75	02.9
Non Commodity Sectors	557	43.5	692	38.6	1060	41.3
Total	1282		1795		2564	

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics

TABLE XXX

An Index of Production Targets by Industry at the End of the Two Phases of the Ten-Year Plan 1959-60 to 1969-70

Sector	1959/60	1964/65	1969/70
Heavy Industry	100	310	445
Light Industry	100	137	185
Services	100	128	213
Commerce	100	128	196
Supporting Economic Structure	100	122	160
Agriculture	100	128	159

Source: National Bank of Egypt, Economic Bulletin, Vol XIV, No. 1 (Cairo, 1961), p. 9.

TABLE XXXI

Investment by Economic Sectors*

Sector	60/61	%	61/62	%	62/63	%	63/64	%	64/65	%	65/66	%	66/67	%	67/68	%	68/69	%	69/70	%
	At Current Prices - L.E. Million																			
Agriculture	16.6		17.8		20.6		30.9		32.5		30.7		31.3		24.9		25.6		27.0	
Irrigation & Drainage	14.8	16.9	19.7	20.6	29.2	24.6	36.4	27.4	37.9	24.4	32.6	21.4	34.4	22.4	25.1	20.9	32.5	19.6	29.1	17.2
High Dam	6.8		14.4		24.0		34.8		18.6		19.0		16.5		12.5		9.5		5.2	
Industry	67.8		50.3		80.5		105.4		99.9		100.6		98.4		85.8		101.1		123.1	
Electricity	5.6	32.5	6.3	22.5	11.9	32.0	35.6	39.0	53.2	43.4	61.1	43.9	69.3	46.9	52.9	46.8	31.9	39.4	27.3	43.2
Construction	-		-		3.5		4.5		5.2		6.8		3.9		1.0		2.6		3.4	
Commodity Sectors	111.6		108.5		169.7		247.5		247.3		250.8		253.8		202.2		203.2		215.1	
Transportation	68.9		66.5		48.6		40.9		45.9		49.4		46.1		38.3		69.5		71.4	
Communications (Suez Canal)	5.9		4.7		5.2		4.2		3.4		3.7		-		-		-		-	
Finance/Trade	-		5.0		3.7		6.5		4.3		2.7		2.6		.7		2.7		3.6	
Housing	19.1		37.8		37.6		37.4		30.5		47.5		42.3		41.7		46.9		36.5	
Public Utilities	7.7		10.2		13.5		8.2		11.2		12.4		8.6		4.2		5.8		10.9	
Other Services	12.4		18.4		21.3		27.6		21.7		17.3		12.4		10.9		15.4		18.0	
Services Sectors	114.0		142.6		129.9		124.8		117.0		133.0		112.0		95.8		140.3		140.4	
Grand Total	225.6		251.1		299.6		372.4		364.3		383.8		365.8		298.0		343.5		355.5	

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Statistical Abstract of the United Arab Republic 1951/1952-1968/1969 (Cairo: June 1970), p. 168.

* Percentages refer to the percentage of total investments allocated to the agricultural sector which includes: Agriculture, Irrigation and Drainage, and the High Dam and investments allocated to industry which includes: Industry, Electricity and Construction.

Stage three in Egypt's attempt to identify and develop appropriate strategies for national development gradually began to emerge in the early 1970's when President Sadat solidified his position after the unexpected death of Nasser. In some ways stage three is the outgrowth of Egypt's experience in 1950's and 1960's. Nasser's early strategies for change were haphazard and uncoordinated attempts to generate reform and stimulate growth through a combination of private and public investment with the major responsibility left to the private sector. Much of Nasser's leadership and direction were founded upon a set of goals and policy aspirations largely defined in idealistic terms. Little attempt was made to delineate the factors crucial for the implementation of the goals postulated. The second half of Nasser's regime embarked upon a far-reaching program of government-initiated planning and investment. Gradual nationalization of the private sector accompanied the general assumption that the central government bureaucracy, working through a carefully developed plan of priorities, would most effectively ensure national development. Although progress was made in stage one when the economy was fairly autonomous and in stage two when the economy was carefully supervised within the framework of a series of five-year plans, Sadat has embarked upon a new approach to development--in some ways a sharp departure from the Nasser era. Sadat's new strategy involves significant attempts to"open up" the Egyptian economy more to private enterprise, both foreign and domestic. This new commitment should not be perceived as a rejection of state planning or the continued role of the national administration in identifying national goals and priorities. To the contrary, this new stage appears to rest upon a growing awareness in Egypt that the identification of national goals is not enough, that even planning and investment allocations through an all-encompassing national bureaucracy are not enough. Goals must be articulated, plans must be devised, and organizational structures must be created--but these activities alone will not bring change. New institutions must be created that stimulate and channel the creative and productive energies of the general public. Plagued with nearly 20 years of a continual "brain drain" among Egypt's brightest and best educated, painfully aware of the low productivity found in most government controlled idustries and business, and recognizing the need for large amounts of capital investment, Sadat appears to have embarked upon a new strategy of national development, including an end to Nasser's commitment to authoritarian controls--restrictions upon the press are now being lifted, travel visas are no longer required, and Egyptian nationals abroad are being encouraged to visit "the New Egypt." An immediate example for the visitor to Egypt is the quick mail service--now apparently free of the cumbersome censorship system that plagued communication between Egypt and the outside world.

In spite of Sadat's new awareness of the role the private sector might play in national development, the public sector is still scheduled to allocate roughly 90 percent of the total projected investment. The plan structures an annual growth rate of 7.2 percent in contrast with a target of 5 percent under the old annual investment plans initiated after the June War of 1967.

The serious dilemma of the new plan is the reality of a high birth rate and an ever expanding pressure of inflation. The cost of living in Egypt, according to official figures, increased by almost 45 percent between 1963 and 1970--an average of about 5 percent a year. With the population also increasing at the rate of 2.4 percent, the projected growth rate of 7.2 percent would hardly keep pace with these pressures. Clearly some radical solutions must be found if a significant rise in per capita income in real terms is to be achieved.

Agricultural Output: An Evaluation of Egypt's Development Priorities

In evaluating Egypt's investment priorities over the past two decades, several points need to be made. First one cannot divorce agricultural development from the overall problem of general economic development--after all, agriculture competes with other sectors for limited resources of capital and labor. However, we should also note that--for various reasons--there has been a strong tendency to prefer industrial development. This is continued in the current ten-year plan. (see Table XXXII.) Yet during the early 1970's there have been some clear indications that a strong agricultural sector may be the key to efficient industrialization and that it is indeed sometimes cheaper to obtain industrial goods by encouraging agricultural exports than by direct--but inefficient--production. The second problem in connection with priorities is the choice between horizontal and vertical increases in agricultural production. In the late 1950's and early 1960's, huge amounts of investment capital were poured into desert reclamation projects. Recently the Ministry of Agriculture is having second thoughts on the utility of such horizontal expansion. Cost-benefit analyses have suggested that the money could have been invested in more profitable areas where the focus should have been in improving the technical and human resources already available in the Nile Valley.[1]

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[1]Private interviews with various economists in the Egyptian Institute of National Planning and the Ministry of Agriculture in May 1974.

TABLE XXXII

The 10-Year Plan 1973/82 Investments
(E.L. millions)

Sector	1973/82	% of Projected Total	1973/77	% of Projected Total
Industrial & Petroleum	2700	32.1	1000	31.2
Agriculture & Irrigation	1000	11.9	400	12.5
Transport & Communication	1700	20.2	700	21.9
Electric Power	600	7.1	200	3.6
Housing	1000	11.9	325	10.2
Public Utilities	350	4.2	130	4.1
Social Services	500	6.0	225	7.0
Total	7850		2980	

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics.

The Egyptian government's activities have not been limited only to the planning and execution of development projects, but also include increasing intervention in the channeling of current agricultural production. By means of minimum-price policies and subsidies, Egypt has made an effort to influence the scope of production of various products. In April 1974 the government announced increased farm subsidies reaching L.E. 350 million. According to the new measures, the government will buy wheat for L.E. 7 per ardeb instead of L.E. 5.5, rice at L.E. 31 instead of the previous L.E. 27 per ton, and sugar cane at L.E. 5 instead of L.E. 3.5 per ton. Also all grades of cotton will receive a rise of L.E. 3 per qantar. This commitment to buy various products from farmers at fixed prices is a manifestation of Sadat's recent attempts to increase production in the agricultural sector. This is viewed as extremely crucial given the almost stagnant growth of agricultural production during several of the years since 1967. The government's efforts to influence the composition of agricultural production also includes the distribution of selected seeds and chemical fertilizers, preferences in credit, employment of instructors in the cooperatives, and even fixing minimum and maximum production quotas on certain crops such as wheat and cotton. Such direction of agricultural production is aimed mainly at improving the balance of payments, preventing surpluses from accumulating in various products, and introducing scientific crop rotation for more efficient exploitation of the land.

Aside from 1961/62, the agricultural sector experienced rather steady expansion during the first 5 year plan, with the index number for agricultural output reaching 117 and the ration of plan implementation for the agricultural sector, by the end of the first 5 year plan, stood at a favorable 92 percent.

During the plan years, the agricultural sector received an aggregate of investment resources amounting to L.E. 355 million of which a sum of near L.E. 100 million was allocated for financing the construction of the High Dam. Total investments for the huge dam amounted to L.E. 161.3 million during the two five-year plans (1960-1970). The government projects an annual increase in national income from this High Dam to exceed L.E. 230 million. The major benefits of the project are the addition of a total of 1.3 million feddans of agricultural lands, the conversion of 700,000 feddans from basin to perennial irrigation, and the generation of electrical power to the amount of 10 billion kw/hr annually.

Large investment resources in the amount of L.E. 138 million were also allocated to irrigation and drainage projects (total disbursement for irrigation and drainage during 1960-1970 exceeded L.E. 290 million). A total of some 500,000 feddans were reclaimed during the 1960-65 period but the economic benefits from these lands will not be felt in Egypt as they will mostly be considered marginal for at least a decade. Output of the major agricultural crops also increased substantially during these years and improvements in productivity (average yield per feddan) were recorded especially for maize, onions, cotton, wheat and fruits.

The close interrelationship between agriculture and industry can quickly be seen from the output figures listed in Table XXXIII. Thus in spite of sustained investments in the industrial sector, as a whole during the 1965-1970 period, there was a slowdown in its rate of growth. A major factor contributing to this outcome was the unfavorable weather conditions in 1966/67 which led to a fall in the output of major agricultural crops; consequently, industries using these products as inputs were adversely affected. By the end of 1968 the earlier high priorities for defense expenditures were reduced, and the Egyptian economy was generally characterized by expansionary policies and marked economic progress. In spite of some decline of productivity in the agricultural sector in 1968/69 which led to only a minor increase in the output of the sector for the year, the favorable expansion in other sectors resulted in a growth rate of 6 percent for the economy as a whole. This pick up in economic performance was basically attributable to the expansionary policies followed by the government and to a rise in fixed investments to L.E. 344 million in 1968/69 and L.E. 356 million in 1969/70.

TABLE XXXIII

Index Numbers of Output 1959/60-1969-70
(valued at constant 1959/60 prices)

Sector	59/60 Base Year	60/61	61/62	62/63	63/64	64/65	65/66	66/67	67/68	68/69	69/70
Agriculture	100	99.5	92.1	105.3	111.8	117.8	119.0	116.7	120.4	121.7	129.7
Mfg. & mining	100	111.4	120.9	128.4	144.2	150.2	153.9	155.0	147.3	163.8	172.7
Construction	100	93.8	156.3	177.3	203.8	196.6	201.5	187.9	163.3	222.9	242.3
Electricity	100	124.5	166.3	187.8	189.8	228.5	239.8	248.0	349.0	360.2	436.7
Total Commodity Sectors	100	103.7	107.7	119.4	130.5	136.0	138.5	136.8	136.0	146.6	156.6
Transport, Communications and Storage	100	110.0	125.3	136.8	155.0	169.6	187.7	194.1	109.3	111.1	123.1
Finance and Commerce	100	112.3	117.3	119.2	114.8	117.6	126.1	133.4	134.0	139.2	146.7
Total Distributive Sector	100	111.3	120.9	126.6	131.6	139.4	151.9	158.8	123.6	127.4	136.8
Housing	100	101.1	104.4	106.3	107.8	109.7	111.5	115.5	165.5	168.9	172.9
Public Util.	100	106.3	109.4	115.6	118.8	120.3	132.8	137.5	146.9	157.8	171.9
Other Serv.	100	109.6	107.9	117.9	133.3	146.1	157.9	163.1	175.4	184.3	197.2
Total Services Sector	100	107.7	107.2	115.4	127.7	137.9	147.7	152.5	172.7	180.5	191.6
Total non-commodity Sectors	100	109.1	112.6	119.8	129.2	138.5	149.3	155.0	153.5	159.7	170.1
Grand Total	100	106.1	109.8	119.6	129.9	137.1	143.3	144.8	143.7	152.4	162.6

Agricultural output in Egypt rose by nearly 4 percent annually between the early 1950's and mid-1960's. This is a fairly high growth rate compared with that in other regions of the world, and some attempt must be made to examine the factors causing it. As was mentioned before, we do not have complete data on the various inputs and therefore must draw inferential conclusions as to whether such inputs explain a rise in production, or whether this rise stems from technological or institutional changes and an increased productivity of factors of production. Whatever productivity indexes can be computed are limited to the development of output of certain agricultural crops per unit of area. As we shall demonstrate, such estimates can--at best--be regarded as crude indicators of technological changes, institutional innovations and improvements in production methods.

Generally speaking, technological changes have been few; their contribution to raising agricultural output in Egypt in the past 20 years was probably minute. Agricultural output increased by only a little more than did cultivated area and the farming population, so that the productivity of each of these two factors rose very slightly. There has been hardly any increase in average output per unit of land for some of the major field crops since the 1930's, and there has sometimes even been a decline (see Table XXXIV).

TABLE XXXIV

Average Yields Per Feddan
(in tons per feddan)

	Avg. 1935-39	1940-44	1945-49	1950-54	1955-59	1960-64	1965-69
Wheat	.89	.73	.72	.84	.98	1.08	1.07
Maize	1.04	.81	.88	.90	.88	1.06	1.50
Millet	1.27	1.11	1.06	1.18	1.27	1.43	1.68
Barley	.88	.80	.74	.86	.97	1.11	1.02
Rice	1.53	1.27	1.58	1.60	2.12	2.23	2.11
Cotton	.23	.24	.24	.21	.22	.25	.28
Berssem	--	--	.18	.17	.16	.18	.19
Beans	.75	.77	.75	.69	.67	.77	.85
Lentils	.70	.72	.66	.65	.60	.62	.62
Onions	7.03	6.87	6.89	7.16	6.66	--	--
Sugar Cane	33.9	28.6	27.5	24.4	37.7	38.7	38.8

Source: Central Bank of Egypt, Economic Review, Vol. XII No. 2 (1973) pp. 200-201.

On the other hand, an appreciable increase in average yields per unit of land occurred in some crops. This increase was achieved by using chemical fertilizers, insecticides, selected seeds, and other improved methods of cultivation. This is where it appears the greatest advances were achieved in raising the level of productivity.

Changes in the Composition of Agricultural Output

The composition of agricultural output in Egypt is very different from that of developed countries. In developed countries, livestock and horticulture tend to constitute the major part of agricultural output, the weight of livestock produce coming to 40 percent or more of the total and that of horticulture to one-fith or more. The share of field crops in the total agricultural output of developed nations is thus relatively low. In Egypt at the beginning of the 1960's, as in most underdeveloped countries, however, field crops constituted more than one-half of total agricultural output, whereas livestock produce came to only 23 percent (see Table XXXV) and the weight of fruit, vegetables and wood was 10 percent.

TABLE XXXV

Agricultural Production 1959/60

	Gross Value of Production		Value Added	
	Million E.L.	%	Million E.L.	%
Fibres (cotton)	135.5	24	114.7	29
Cereals and other field crops	160.3	28	102.6	26
Vegetables, fruit and wood	58.4	10	49.7	12
Fodder (clover)	65.9	12	56.0	14
Animal products	134.1	23	58.6	15
Others, incl. fishing & hunting	19.6	3	18.3	4
Total	573.8	100	399.9	100

Source: B. Hansen and G. A. Marzouk, Development and Economic Policy in the U.A.R. (Egypt) (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1965), p. 69.

These great differences in specialization are not accidental; they are closely linked to the level of economic development and income of the population. The diet in wealthy countries is essentially different from that in poor countries, and agricultural production tends to be an adaptation of demand. In affluent countries large quantities of meat, dairy products, eggs, fruits, and vegetables are in great demand. These branches of production have consequently developed and their share in total agricultural output has increased. In other words, in Egypt limited consumer demand, largely a function of the disposable income available, restricts the expansion of production of non-field crops. Especially noteworthy is the low consumption of livestock-produce, but expensive fruit and vegetables are also consumed on only a small scale. Per capita consumption figures in Egypt are listed in Table XXXVI.

Thus in Egypt the per capita food supply for 1970 in meat was 31 grams per day; eggs 4 grams per day; milk 135 grams. In developed countries the average daily consumption of these products is several times higher: meat--200-250 grams; eggs--30-40 grams; milk--550-650 grams. Note also that roughly 42 percent of the net food supply for Egyptians comes from cereals and less than 13 percent comes from meat, eggs, and milk.

Furthermore, these are limitations on the supply side. The intensive development of livestock and horticulture requires large capital investments as well as a high level of knowlege and experience, all of which have in the past been beyond the reach of most Egyptian peasants. Of great significance for agricultural development in Egypt is the fact that since early 1960's and especially during President Sadat's regime, changes in the composition of agriculture output have been encouraged by the central government and accepted by large numbers of peasant farmers. This encouragement is reflected in the wider variety of produce and in the decreasing reliance on grain crops. The gradual rise in average income and the rapid growth of the urban population have increased the demand for fruit, vegetables, and livestock produce, and encouraged the development of these branches. The output of fruit and vegetables have consistently grown at a faster rate than that of grain grops, except rice which has been expanded as an export commodity.

A most significant change in Egyptian agriculture over the past half century is clearly apparent in the composition of field crop outputs, namely, the shift from grains to more

TABLE XXXVI

Net Food Supply Per Capita in Egypt

(grams per day)

	Cereals	Potatoes/ Starches	Sugar/ Sweets	Nuts Seeds	Veg.	Fruit	Meat	Eggs	Fish	Milk	Total
1948-50	474	29	39	32	125	138	28	2	9	163	1039
1951-53	470	24	44	28	137	184	30	2	7	124	1050
54-56	493	25	43	28	173	210	34	3	7	128	1144
57-59	504	26	44	29	214	190	35	3	7	[illegible]	1168
60-62	545	32	44	29	242	227	32	3	7	125	1286
63-65	578	38	47	32	282	230	35	3	7	124	1376
66-68	595	27	50	26	284	221	32	4	4	130	1373
69-70	565	28	44	24	288	199	31	4	4	135	1322

Source: FAO, Production Year-1971, p. 438

valuable income crops. A characteristic feature of these latter crops is that they are entirely marketed; on the other hand, grain crops are grown mainly for the farmers' own consumption and only surpluses are marketed. This is a shift from subsistance agriculture to a more commercial and productive one. This process is most strikingly apparent in the rapid growth of cotton output in Egypt, but also in the output of sugar cane, oil seeds, fruit and vegetables.

The growing specialization in income crops at the expense of the grain crops is a desirable process since Egypt does not offer any particular advantages for the cultivation of grain crops in comparison with the major grain centers such as Canada, Australia, and the United States. On the other hand, Egypt does have certain advantages in such crops as cotton, fruit and vegetables, and hence raising their weight in total agricultural production is highly desirable. Specialization in these more intensive field crops suits the Egyptian supply of production factors since it encourages a more efficient exploitation of the abundant labor force and water resources of the Nile Valley, and contributes towards more efficient land utilization--a scarce resource in Egypt.

TABLE XXXVII

Increases in Agricultural Production by Category

Item	Unit (1000s)	1952	1964	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	Increase % 52-70
Wheat	Ardeb	7206	8480	9767	8605	10120	8457	10109	40.2
Maize (corn)	Ardeb	10757	15291	16974	15447	16410	16898	17096	58.9
Barley	Ardeb	981	1083	849	830	1010	873	694	-29.2
Beans	Ardeb	1610	2219	2457	1216	1824	1917	1790	11.1
Rice	Dariba	547	1893	1776	2411	2736	2705	2756	403.8
Vegetables	Tons	1810	4556	4810	4429	5068	5214	5107	182.1
Fruits	Tons	894	1220	1334	1388	1265	1522	--	70.2
Raw cotton	Qantar	8232	9533	8185	7670	7684	9394	8914	8.2
Sugar cane	Qantar	72561	105480	115557	117091	135188	152850	--	110.6

Source: Statistical Handbook--United Arab Republic (1971), pp. 32-33, 38.

TABLE XXXVIII

Agricultural Production by Categories
(Composition in Percentages)

Agri-cultural Years	Field crops	Vegeta-ble crops	Fruit crops	Livestock	Fisheries	Other
1959/60	66.0	5.3	3.2	22.3	2.6	1.5
1960/61	61.2	7.2	4.2	25.2	2.5	1.6
1961/62	63.9	6.4	3.4	23.7	1.9	1.5
1962/63	56.3	8.3	3.1	29.0	2.6	1.6
1963/64	56.0	7.1	4.0	29.5	2.6	1.6
1964/65	56.7	9.0	3.7	27.6	2.3	1.6
1965/66	55.9	11.2	4.3	25.9	2.0	1.6
1966/67	58.3	10.9	4.1	24.1	2.0	1.4
1967/68	55.6	10.9	4.3	26.9	1.7	1.5
1968/69	55.7	10.4	4.7	26.7	2.0	1.5

Source: Middle East News--Economic Weekly, Vol. XIII, Issue No.8 (February 23, 1974), pp. 22-24.

CHAPTER V

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN RURAL EGYPT

The rural areas of Egypt are experiencing revolutionary changes. The vast majority of these changes are unplanned and spontaneous reactions to the world-wide cultural diffusion inherent in the transportion and communication revolution penetrating the emerging nations of Asia and Africa. After the Revolution of 1952, Nasser's regime voiced a strong commitment to reform and develpment. Nasser sought to introduce new processes and institutions through which this reform and development might be encouraged and advanced.

Starting in 1961 Nasser embarked upon a determined policy to weaken the traditional political structure of the rural provinces in Upper and Lower Egypt. This policy was an attempt to create new political and social relationships in the villages, which would then be more conducive to the changes necessary for modernization. Thousands of university-trained civil servants (doctors, agronomists, social workers, and schoolteachers) were sent to the villages; the Arab Socialist Union (Nasser's single political party) established Institutes of Socialist Studies in many of the provincial capitals for the purpose of training the active elements in each village; community development projects were springing up everywhere, and nearly a fourth of the villages were given their own local council.

These various programs and institutions were generally interpreted as a rational extension of Egypt's present nationalist ideology. The many programs of the central ministries, the political party activities, and the local government institutions now developing in the rural provinces of Egypt were heralded as positive proof of Nasser's concern for the peasantry, the fellahin. The actual impact of these central government activities, now that Nasser is gone, will depend upon the extent to which Nasser's rural campaign reflected the real needs and desires of the fellahin.

Historical Perspective

A system of local councils was first introduced into Egypt in July 1798, during the French conquest, when Napoleon

decreed that each of Egypt's fourteen provinces (mudirīyah) was to have a "bureau" of seven members whose duty was to look after the interests of security and administration.

Under the British rule in 1883, elective provincial councils were again established. Their functions were limited to listening and "consulting." Between 1893 and 1917 some 20 to 30 town councils were created. Primarily because of a lack of funds their functions were also limited. They were prohibited from imposing a local tax, and their resources were confined to a paltry sum granted by the Central Treasury. With their restricted funds and powers, these councils' functions were limited to garbage collection, street cleaning, enforcing sanitation and building laws, and ensuring a gas and water supply. Even in these small functions, they were required to seek final approval from the central authorities prior to their acting as a council.[1]

Starting in 1910, the British sought to establish local councils in various villages that had a police station. The chief of police in the village acted as chairman of the council. These village councils had even fewer financial resources and administrative functions than the town councils. Dr. El-Araby, a leading scholar on local administration in Egypt, declared that village councils were foreign to village life and were never readily understood nor accepted. "The Chief of the Police Station acted as chairman of the Council. The bureaucratic attitude of the chair dampened the interest of the villagers, and this was aggravated by the scanty value they obtained and the financial burdens they had to shoulder. The result was that the villagers always loudly protested against any attempt to create a Council in their village. By 1952, only 70 villages had such councils out of more than 4000."[2]

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[1] Jacob Landau, Parliaments and Parties in Egypt, Chapter V.

[2] Mohamed Abdullah El-Araby, An Outline of Local Government in the United Arab Republic, p. 7. Nearly all research on Egyptian local government that I have seen tends merely to describe the law of local administration and how the system will function in the future or how the system is supposed to function now. For examples of this approach, see Muhammed 'Abd Allāh al-'Arabī, Nizam al-'idarah al-mahalliyah: falsafatuha wa 'ahkamuha [The system of Local Administration: Its Philosophy and Procedures]; Harold F. Alderfer, M. Fathalla al-Khatib, and Moustafa Ahmed Fahmy, Local Government in the United Arab Republic 1964; Mohamed Gamal el-Din Nassouhy, "Local Autonomy under National Planning: The Egyptian Experience," and Mohamed Ali el-Shinnawy, "Community Development and Local Government in the Developing Nations: The United Arab Republic, India, and

The constitution of 1923 outlined the general framework for a new system of local administration. Egypt was divided into local administrative units--provinces, towns, and villages. Article 133 declares that all provincial and municipal councils will function in terms of the following principles:

1. Councils should be elected.

2. Councils should formulate and execute local policies subject to prior sanctions of higher authorities.

3. Budgets and final accounts should be published.

4. Sessions should be open to the public.

5. Legislative and executive authorities of the National Government could veto council decisions and actions if they would endanger the public welfare of the Nation.[1]

During the 1930s and the 1940s, a number of legislative decrees were enacted further clarifying the duties, functions, financial resources, methods of election, and relationship of the local administrative units to the central government.[2] During the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, the local administrative units of most countries served merely as agencies of the central government. Although this pattern of local organization was systematized in France under Napoleon, it gradually spread over most of Asia, Africa, and South America. W. H. Wickar even suggests that "one reason for introducing this administrative pattern was, in fact, an effort to put an end to semi-autonomous provincial governors and substitute for them salaried agents of the central authorities. Another reason was that the creation of regular armies . . . removed the need for a feudal system under which land

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Pakistan." Unfortunately, none of these studies attempts to analyse how, in fact, the local administration system is actually functioning. It is to this question that I have directed my attention.

[1]H. F. Alderfer, et al., Local Government in the United Arab Republic 1964, p. 3.

[2]For a detailed description of the Local Administrative Law No. 34 of the 1934 and Law No. 145 of 1944, see Mohamed Gamal el-Din Nassouhy, "Local Autonomy under National Planning: The Egyptian Experience."

was held in return for the performance of military and administrative duties."[1]

Since World War II most of the developing nations have declared their intentions to seek two major goals. First they sought to build up a strong central government to form the foundation for economic development, modernization, and, in some cases, national unity (integration). The second proclaimed goal was the development of popularly elected bodies to manage local affairs, not only in the interests of political democracy, but also in order to obtain administrative efficiency. This second goal, unfortunately, has been either postponed or ignored as these nations find themselves in a "vicious circle."

In the first place, these new governments were hesitant to delegate autonomy to local units because they feared that the local leaders did not have the skill and the experience to implement the policies and reforms necessary for national development. At the same time, these local leaders did lack the necessary administrative and political skills because they had previously been confined to a very narrow area of activity. But perhaps even more crucial for the deprecation of the avowed second goal of decentralization and democratization were the ever expanding forces for centralization. It was widely argued that only a centralized government could deal effectively with the social, economic, and political problems facing the nation.

A further centralizing force has been the shortage of government administrators and experts skilled in the newer techniques and programs of government. These officials tend to work for the central government and generally feel that local government officials require close supervision. The effort to satisfy mass expectations and to control the influences of mass communication has also intensified this centralizing tendency. But these centralizing forces have not all been blessings. Modern systems of transportation and communication have brought all parts of the world so much closer together that even the most isolated communities have discovered that a better life prevails in the more favored areas of the world. Improperly clothed, poorly housed, undernourished, diseased, and illiterate, these people in the rural areas and the urban slums are becoming increasingly restless. Faced with the demands for reform and a better standard of living, caught in the cross fire of rural poverty and extreme urbanization, many new nations have sought relief through a planned program of decentralization and community development in an

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[1] W. Hardy Wickwar, "Notes on Local Government Administrative Areas and Local Government Units in the Middle East," Revue internationale des sciences 24 (1958): 148.

attempt to help the rural areas become more attractive places in which to live.

Dr. V. K. Menon, director of the Indian Institute of Public Administration in New Delhi, argues that the relationship between the local and central governments in new nations is one of increasing interdependence. Among the new leaders is an "increasing recognition of the importance of local government and a growing belief that no central government can supply all the services needed by the people at the local level."[1] While central governments often must perform local services because of a lack of resources at the local level "it is now being more fully recognized that human resources at the local level are also important, for ultimately they determine how effectively the centrally supplied resources will be used; it is generally recognized that effectiveness increases with the development of local self-governing institutions."[2]

Meeting the ever-increasing demands of the masses, which involves raising the economic, health, and education standards of these people, is not an easy matter. The task becomes difficult when undertaken among those whose society has been more or less static for hundreds of years. Traditional ways, especially among rural peoples, cannot be changed in a day. The Egyptian experience is a vivid example of this problem. How does one develop understanding, loyalty, sympathy, and a desire to cooperate between the vast majority of illiterate fellahin and their central government? What compromises must be made, what institutions would best be conducive to community development?

In late 1960 a completely new system of local government was introduced in the United Arab Republic. Dr. al-Sayyid Mahmoud Zaki of the Ministry of Local Government has declared:

1. In view of the needs of the rapidly increasing population, the provision of various services to local communities has become beyond the capacity of the Central Government. Local communities can deal better with their own problems, introduce suitable measures and secure the full participation of the people.

2. Projects executed by the Central Government are usually of a prototype nature. Projects corresponding to the varied needs of local communities

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[1] International Union of Local Authorities, Local Government in the Twentieth Century, no. 76, p. 113.

[2] Ibid.

could best be developed by local authorities.

3. The participation of the people in the development of their communities can be well achieved through local administration. They become more cooperative and more receptive to new ideas when they take an active part in the betterment of their own communities.

4. Rendering local services through elected councils is an effective way of training the people in practicing real democracy. Efficient local councils can play an important role in the welfare of the community they serve as well as in the development of the country at large.

5. Local administration ensures a fairer and better distribution of financial resources.[1]

From these conclusions enumerated by Dr. Zaki, one could argue strongly that the Egyptian government is committed to a program of decentralization. This vocal commitment is a sharp departure from a form of government that has prevailed in Egyptian history for over three thousand years. However, an announcement of a policy is not the same as its implementation.

A critical appraisal of the progress made by the Egyptian government in its program of decentralization follows. As has been suggested, the Egyptian government, in seeking the effective support and acceptance of its citizenry, must legitimize its programs and policies in the rural areas. The key individual in this process is the local administrator. Upon his shoulders rests the impressive task of gaining the confidence and loyalty of the rural masses.

The Egyptian government's plan reveals emphasis on certain methods of promoting local autonomy and rural development. First, there is an emphasis on strengthening the "democratic process" of problem solving through the development of local village, town, and governorate councils. These councils are by law to be the responsible local organizations for planning and promoting self-help projects. They are also the coordinating vehicle for integrating the services of government with the efforts of the rural citizens.

Second, there is an emphasis on the aided self-help method of obtaining rural improvement--the local people furnish the labor, and the government supplements their efforts with

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[1] A. M. Zaki, An Outline of the Local Government System in the United Arab Republic, pp. 5-6.

equipment and material. This self-help method implies that the local fellahin should act in their own self-interest rather than depend solely on the government.

Third, there is emphasis on the economic and social problems of the whole community rather than on those of select individuals or institutions. This approach would require that project proirities be determined at the local level instead of in Cairo, that government agents be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the local population, and that government specialists coordinate their activities sufficiently to serve the whole community.

The Egyptian programs emphasize the local unit of government--the village, town, and governorate--as the major vehicle for implementing a wide-ranging program of community development. This development plan takes into consideration the numerous governmental agencies with established programs and seeks to coordinate their activities in the way best suited to ensure a balanced development program. This new approach to local government is highly commendable.

Theoretically, this local administration system will simultaneously reform the poverty conditions of rural areas, foster "democratic" participation in the towns and villages of Egypt, discourage migration to cities, encourage savings (a necessary condition for any significant industrialization), and generate within local political units an esprit de corps based upon the people's pride in cooperative accomplishments and upon their confidence in their capacity for self-help.

Students of cultural change universally recognize the usual disparity between intentions and consequences when a dominant group seeks to introduce innovation. All aspects of a culture are interrelated, and a change in any part of it has repercussions throughout the rest. Even in a situation where change and innovation appear to have been accepted, one can be sure that what has seemingly been transferred has actually become something different in the process.

The rural development programs envisioned by the Egyptian government are neither longed for by the vast majority of its supposed beneficiaries, nor, at least under the Nasser regime, did the Egyptian government forcefully impose these cultural and structural innovations. Furthermore, these programs require changes of immense scope--changes in values, in institutional forms, and in economic techniques. Changes in rural Egypt are occurring as we have already noted, but there is still a great difference between changes resulting from disintegration and changes that depend upon planned reorganization along predetermined lines. It has been suggested by many Egyptian officials that this latter type of guided change may

occur within the ideological framework of Arab Socialism, but it is painfully obvious that the mere existence of an acceptable ideological framework is no guarantee that such results will be forthcoming.

While the programs and projects advocated by the Egyptian government are very commendable, still one should not forget the serious problem that rural officials must face as they seek to transform the scope and substance of community action. Furthermore, those who are responsible for long-range planning in rural Egypt must consider the possible contradictions in their programs and policies, which, even if they could be effectively administered, might still fail to realize the goals projected. The myth of spontaneous or government initiated rural development needs to be seen for what it is.

Egyptian government publications often visualize the "new rural Egypt" as an idyllic, sanitary, and progressive countryside, where the masses of fellahin, by their industry, are able to solve simultaneously their own economic problems and those of the nation. The habit of mutual cooperation would develop within the fellahin an unselfishness and sense of the "common good." In this ideal world, there would be no need for a peasant to yield to any feelings of self-interest or desires for improving his own position. His first concern must be for the common good, a nebulous goal that abhors the practical questions of "who gets what, when, and how?"

These introductory comments on the Egyptian approach to rural development must not be interpreted as a vilification of the "Egyptian government" or as a suggestion that Egypt must remain stagnant and underdeveloped. On the contrary, the questions here raised must be considered if development is to be achieved. If enthusiasm among the masses is to be generated and harnessed for economic, political, and social development then serious concern must be directed to the system of local administration, which includes an interrelationship among the fellahin, the ASU local leadership, and the rural administrators. The structures and institutions created by Nasser's regime may well develop legitimacy in the eyes of the peasant--the actualization of his hope rests not only upon the attitude and behavior of the present regime's party workers and local bureaucrats, but even more important, upon the peasants' perception and understanding of the purposes of these structures and institutions.

The two major structures being introduced into the villages for rural development are the combined units and the village councils. The probability of the fellahin shifting their loyalties and symbols of legitimacy to those governmental structures depends on their ability to reflect and utilize the psychological needs and economic aspirations of the Fellahin.

Combined Units

In early 1953, the new revolutionary regime announced its commitment to a general program of rural reform and development. Finally, on October 17, 1953, a Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services was established. In 1954 Nasser named one of his leading administrators, Abdul Latif Baghdadi, former minister of war, as the new minister of municipal and rural affairs. By the middle of 1955 the Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services issued the results of their study. The recommendations were summarized as follows:

1. Those ministries entrusted with national services should follow the system of administrative decentralization so that there should be set up in the capitol of each province or district an administration whose head supervises the work of the ministry and its staff in the district concerned and is vested with the authority of head of administration.

2. There should be set up in each province and district a coordinating council--a social services district council--in which the heads of regional districts and representatives of the citizens participate. Its competence lies in the proposal of service programs and the supervision of their execution and coordination in the district. Thus we advance a step forward towards local government. When provincial councils are formed, they will have to shoulder that responsibility.[1]

The committee thus concluded that these recommendations would be realized primarily by stimulating local government, by the adoption of a system of decentralization, and by the close cooperation of central and local administrative units. The early pronouncements of Nasser's regime are replete with sanguine prognostications concerning rural develomment and the eventual establishment of local government structures. The major emphasis focused upon a team project for rural development that was to be known as a Combined Unit.[2] Each of these

[1]The Republic of Egypt, The Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services, pp. 32-33.

[2]For information on the prerevolutionary government's attempt at rural development, see Mohammed Shalaby, Rural Reconstruction in Egypt; Beatrice Mattison, "Rural Social Centres in Egypt," Middle East Journal 4 (Autumn 1951); and Ahmed Hussein, Rural Social Welfare Centers in Egypt.

units, designed to serve communities of fifteen thousand, was to include:

1. A complete Health-Center containing 10 beds for in-patients, an operating room, an out-patients' section, one for general diagnosis, one for indigenous diseases, a child-welfare center, a center for expectant mothers, a dispensary and two waiting rooms, one for men and the other for women.

2. A social service-center comprising an assembly-hall to seat 150 persons, a library, a museum for health and agricultural extension, as well as a room for the social expert.

3. A school containing 12 classrooms, a headmaster's room and a teachers' room.

4. A nursery for 100 children.

5. Five villas, each consisting of four rooms, for married officials.

6. Dwellings for 24 bachelor officials.[1]

In 1954 each markaz (district) within each muhāfazah (governorate) was demarcated into administrative units comprising approximately 15 thousand inhabitants. With a rural population of nearly 13 million people, some 868 areas were thus identified. In each area, one village was to be selected for the establishment of a combined unit. In selecting the sites for these centers the following considerations were taken into account: (1) the net of roads and communications that render the combined unit accessible; (2) the population of the selected village as compared with other villages; (3) the central position of the village; (4) the supply of potable water; (5) fairness in distributing combined units among the population; and (6) local conditions and existing services.[2] According to the rather optimistic estimates of the Permanent Council in 1955, not only were all 868 combined units to be completed by 1960, but also the facilities were to be constructed for less than 50 percent of the construction costs estimated prior to the revolution.[3]

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[1] The Republic of Egypt, The Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services, p. 96.

[2] Ibid., p. 100.

[3] Ibid., p. 13.

This new program was started with great fanfare and optimism. On July 13, 1955, President Nasser inaugurated the first combined unit in the village of Barnasht in the Giza Province,[1] followed by an announcement that over 200 units were being built throughout the provinces, to be completed by October 1955. The government announced that based upon past progress, "within 5 years all the 868 combined units needed for the whole country will be completed."[2]

Within three years these estimates were abandoned completely. In May 1958 only 210 of these combined units were reported to be in full operation,[3] and even as late as 1960 their number had reached only 250. The first five-year plan indicated that 350 units would be in operation by 1966, and that by 1970 over 500 combined units would be functioning, but by the spring of 1967, I could only verify that 301 combined units had been constructed.[4] Government figures published for 1970 suggest that there are now 323 combined units. The major reasons offered for the inability of the government to fulfill its earlier plans for combined units center around lack of funds and lack of qualified personnel. Keith Wheeler has described the inconsistency noted among government cost estimates for these units: "The cost of the 250 combined units has been obscured by a welter of conflicting figures . . . (between L.E. 10-16 million). Even assuming the figure of 13 million pounds to be correct, this would mean a per unit cost almost double that estimated in 1954."[5]

In 1965 Kamal Mahmud al-Husni, general director of planning in the Ministry of Social Affairs, admitted that, while the first five-year plan included a proposal for the construction of 253 rural social units, 196 health units, and 100 new combined units, "it was possible to secure the funds for only eighty-five rural social units, only twenty-one health units

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[1]United Arabic Republic, The Combined Units, p. 1.

[2]The Republic of Egypt, The Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services, p. 100.

[3]Keith Wheelock, Nasser's New Egypt, p. 119.

[4]This figure was substantiated by cross-checking the number of combined units claimed by each governorate as listed in the Government's Statistical Handbook with governorate officials. I would ask them to indicate on the map where each unit was located in their governorate. Then an effort was made to visit as many of these units as possible. In this way, 301 combined units were located.

[5]Keith Wheelock, Nasser's New Egypt, p. 120.

and only eighty combined units throughout the years of the plan."[1] Yet lack of funds is not the only problem nor even the most crucial problem in the government's attempt to introduce a new institution for rural development. Most commentaries on the rural development programs are seldom critical or evaluative in their descriptive analysis and usually accept at face value the government's optimistic reports on these rural programs.[2]

Charles Issawi acknowledges that "the combined units have their weaknesses, but their achievement has been impressive. To a large extent, the future of the Egyptian villages,

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[1] Kamāl Mahmūd al-Husnī, "Community Development in Rural Local Communities in the United Arab Republic," Majallat Tannmīyat al-Mujtama' [Journal of Community Development] 12, nos. 1 & 2 (1965): 44-45.

[2] Patrick O'Brien concludes a brief paragraph on these combined units with the words, "apparently they are in general effective and popular."[a] Doreen Warriner appears to accept the government's figures without question and announces: "The most striking sign of social change in the country-side since 1955, however, are the Combined Centres, set up in 1955-8 to provide health, educational, social, and agricultural services to the villages. In 1960 there were 250 such centres, each serving on an average 15,000 people. . . . The total of 350 centres in 1964, together with the expanded old rural health centres, will then serve about three-quarters of the rural population."[b] Perhaps the most optimistic description is offered by Georgiana Stevens. "The fellahin, despised and despaired of for centuries as incapable of improvement, could be persuaded to accept change and improve their lot under the right circumstances. The Combined Rural Centers have proved this and are therefore still being extended. By 1961 there were 528 of them serving four million people in 1,026 villages. . . . The Combined Centers are still in the process of growth. As laboratories for rural industry and for local self-government, they seem one of the most hopeful developments to come from the general welfare program."[c]

[a] Patrick O'Brien, The Revolution in Egypt's Economic System, p. 299.

[b] Doreen Warriner, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East, pp. 197-198.

[c] Georgiana Stevens, Egypt: Yesterday and Today, pp. 169-171.

and therefore, of the nation as a whole, is bound up with their fate."[1] Dr. Issawi, like so many writers, tends to see the solution merely in terms of more buildings constructed and more technically trained village workers. Thus, the weaknesses of the combined units are described as structural and financial deficiencies, rather than in terms of attitudes, values, and behavioral norms of the administrators or of the villagers. Issawi argues that "throughout the history of the units the limiting factor has been not the willingness of the villagers, who have put in hundreds of requests, but the lack of funds and, still more, of trained personnel."[2]

Following this approach to rural development, O'Brien suggests that "the shortage of experts willing to work in villages is the major impediment to their rapid extension, but the government should be prepared to offer high salaries or if necessary to use its coercive power to direct young graduates, as it does already for doctors and engineers."[3] Wheelock, after having interviewed several individuals actively engaged in the implementation of these combined units, comes close to putting his finger on the crucial aspects of this program.

> The problem of personnel was not peculiar to this program, for it always has been difficult to obtain qualified persons to serve in rural provinces. Perhaps more valid criticism could be leveled at the manner in which these units were imposed on various communities. Mohamed Shalaby, widely recognized as one of Egypt's few authorities on the establishment of social centers, expressed this criticism as follows: 'Before the Revolution, the government and the individual social worker sought to give confidence, then funds, to local communities, but now they build a unit, then try to obtain the people's confidence.' His observation that 'the fellaheen as a rule cannot be hurried into adopting new ways of doing things' seems to be correct.[4]

The confidence and optimism characteristic of much of what has been written on development programs in rural Egypt appears incongruous and even ironic when compared with comments

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[1] Charles Issawi, Egypt in Revolution, p. 108.

[2] Ibid., p. 107.

[3] Patrick O'Brien, The Revolution in Egypt's Economic System, p. 299; emphasis added.

[4] Keith Wheelock, Nasser's New Egypt, pp. 119-120.

and remarks from individuals presently working in the combined units. In theory the combined unit as an approach to rural development is a good idea. When one visits the combined units located in the governorates just outside of Cairo such as Giza or Menufia, which appear to operate primarily as model centers for visiting foreigners, one gains a completely different picture from these combined units than from a visit to those in Kafr al-Shaykh, Dakahlia, Sohag, or Qena.

A combined unit in theory aims at providing social, hygienic, and cultural services for rural populations. It also aims at raising economic standards through increasing agricultural and industrial production, so as to increase the income of the fellah while these services are rendered to him. Thus, it is hoped that hygienic, cultural, social and cooperative consciousness will be raised, the general conditions in rural areas considerably developed, and progress achieved in all aspects of life. This approach to rural development is to be based upon three principles:

1. Local community is an integrated entity: Community development should be recognized as a comprehensive and indivisible process. It aims at stimulating life in rural communities and releasing the vitality that is latent in land and people so they may improve their living conditions and provide for their own well being.

2. Public welfare services are not charities or misplaced sentiments: Public welfare services are essential for community life in order to achieve stability, progress, and fruitful living.

3. Services and productivity are interrelated: The higher the productivity level and consequently the economic level of a community, the more it is able to offer efficient and variegated services to its citizens. The close relationship between the public services and productivity should be realized, for one is a means to the other, and a consequence at the same time. Equilibrium in community life depends on the proper perception and application of the concept that increased production leads to a better standard of living.[1]

The first and fundamental goal of each combined unit is to pursue programs and projects most conducive to an improvement

[1] United Arab Republic, The Combined Units, p. 4.

in the standards of living of the rural communities. In a memorandum prepared by the Permanent Council's secretary-general, it is argued that each unit should perform a survey of the economic potential of its area and devise a program that would double the area's income within ten years. The survey would include an estimation of the average output of the area and the average income from all the potential forms of economic activity, and "then to develop these forms of activity to the extent of achieving a double income within the prescribed period."[1]

Some activities mentioned as possible means of increasing income included increased cultivation of field crops, vegetables, fruits, and timber-trees; cattle raising, poultry breeding, and dairying; keeping of bees and silk worms; canning of honey, vegetables, jams, and fruits; spinning and weaving industry, rug and carpet industry, sewing, cutting and embroidery; building, carpentry, fitting, turnery, and plumbing.

In each combined unit, the agricultural extension services are directed by an "agricultural social worker." He is usually a graduate of a faculty of agriculture and is required to complete a three-month pre-service training program. Assisting him is an "assistant agronomist" who is usually a graduate of a secondary school of agriculture. Also, there are three or four agricultural laborers. This agricultural section in the combined unit is supposed to introduce modern methods of cultivation, irrigation, and harvesting. Special efforts are to be made to replace the native low-producing breeds of animals, poultry, vegetables, and other crops with newer strains characterized by high productivity and increased resistance to diseases. Each agricultural section is to distribute high-protein nutrients that will enable animals and plants to yield their maximum inherent capacity. Also the agricultural experts are supposed to provide training and instruction for the fellahin in farm management, techniques of marketing, and efficient production of farm products.

The health center in each combined unit is composed of:

1. A medical doctor--a graduate of a faculty of medicine--who has completed a three-month prescience training program.

2. A chief nurse--a graduate of a four-year training program.

3. An assistant nurse--a graduate of a two-year training program.

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[1]The Republic of Egypt, The Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services, p. 146.

4. Two midwives--graduates of a one-year training program.

5. A laboratory technician--a graduate of a six-month training program.

6. A public health officer--a graduate of a two-year training program.

7. A clerk.

8. Six medical workers (tumargi).[1]

The secretary-general, in his memorandum to the Permanent Council, states that the health center is not to be conceived as merely a place for the treatment of diseases or the distribution of medicines, but rather as:

> . . . a centre of radiation and diffusion of health consciousness in the locality. The planning of medical treatment is easy enough, but the main point is to use the contact existing between the doctor and the patient and his family during treatment as a means to winning their confidence. . . . In order to facilitate guidance, the unit should be a centre for the demonstration of sanitation methods. . . . The relationship between doctor and community has a far reaching influence on the life of the people. The feeling that the doctor is full of sympathy and the spirit of service touches their hearts, makes their lives bright and cures them of their sense of frustration and their haunting pessimism.[2]

The educational section of the combined unit includes a headmaster and 12 teachers who must be graduates of the rural schools for teachers or other similar institutes. This section includes a rural primary school large enough to handle 500 children, a kindergarten, and an adult education center. The combined unit executive regulations state that the school curriculum in these rural areas must be adjusted to the real needs of their pupils and their rural environmental conditions. Special hours are to be allocated weekly in the school program in an attempt to develop adequate practical skills in farming, rural handicrafts, agricultural industries, home economics and needlework. Again the memorandum noted above declared that these schools will assume "a new function, for it will be a sort of beehive throbbing with energy day and night all the

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[1] Ibid., p. 6.

[2] Ibid., pp. 154-155.

year round. The pupil will be an educated farmer or worker, and his academic education will in no way be inferior to that of his equals in other schools. The curriculum of the rural school aims at preparing the pupil for a happy and productive rural life, and at tightening the ties between him and the rural community which is the backbone of our national life."[1]

The final section of each combined unit is the social center. The object of this section, according to its executive regulations, is to create better social interaction and self-help in the rural areas. This section is to select and train rural community leaders and to encourage community development projects that seek to improve the village planning, recreation, cooperation, and reformation. This section is in charge of the following facilities: a public meeting hall, a movie theater, public library, local museum, public playground, and a number of handicraft workshops.

After careful analysis of some 250 interviews with officials, fellahin, and private citizens, I have come to the conclusion that the vast majority of the combined units, health units, social centers, and other government-sponsored rural development programs--in terms of effectiveness, ability to stimulate change, and success in generating enthusiasm and commitment to the goals of development--have largely failed to reach their projected aims. This rather harsh statement is substantiated by several Egyptian sources who have objectively analyzed the rural programs presently functioning in Egypt. Thus, most of the evaluation teams sent out to various governorates generally reached the same conclusion as Ahmad Tawfiq, who laments over the fact that the "combined unit, which is the center of all government services for the villagers, rarely has any peasants in it for they never go there unless it is absolutely necessary."[2]

One of the most comprehensive research endeavors ever attempted in rural Egypt was conducted by the Institute of National Planning in cooperation with and under the sponsorship of the International Labor Office in Geneva, Switzerland. The avowed purpose of this research program was to analyze the "employment problem in rural areas of the UAR." Staff members of the Institute of National Planning conducted in-depth interviews from a random sample of 994 households chosen from "forty-eight typical villages" located in six different governorates: Buheira, Gharbia, Menufia, Asyut, Qena, and al-Fayyum.

The head of each household was asked whether he or his

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[1] Ibid., pp. 155-156.

[2] Ahmad Tawfiq, "Bisindilla," al-Talī'ah, September 1966, p. 19.

family had received any benefits from administrative services available in their village. The following indicates the percentage of positive responses in each of the various types of services:[1]

Type of Service	Male %	Female %	Total %
Health	76	61	74
Education	29	12	27
Agricultural	26	13	24
Veterinary	20	6	18
Agricultural extension	18	9	17
Recreation	11	9	10
Vocational training	2	--	2
Industrial extension	1	1	1
Other services	2	5	3
No services used	18	34	20

Aside from medical help and schools, over 75 percent of the families interviewed claimed they had not received any benefits from the other categories of government service available in the village. Even more dramatic is the fact that 34 percent of the women and 18 percent of the men claimed that their families had not even received medical or educational benefits from government-sponsored programs. The tragedy of these figures becomes even more pronounced when one realizes that all the villages in this research project had government services available. It is apparent that out of more than 5,000 villages in Egypt, less than 2,000 have some form of medical service available within their borders--the one service that is the most easily accepted by the fellahin (see Table XLIII).

During the early 1970s some significant changes in the combined units can be observed although most of the observations made above still apply to rural Egypt. Of great importance is the present introduction of women doctors into the combined unit's staffs, partly due to the large number of male physicians inducted into the Army during the October 1973 war, but also due to the general awareness that much of the unwillingness on the part of the peasants, especially women, to visit their village doctor was largely a function of the cultural taboo against male physicians treating female patients. Many husbands strictly forbade their wives from seeing a male physician. From a brief tour of rural combined units in April and May 1974, it appeared that significantly larger numbers of

[1] The United Arab Republic, Research on Employment Problems in Rural Areas UAR, p. 21.

women were visiting rural health services units than in the pre-1967 period, especially in areas where women physicians were available.

Table XXXIX

Health Services in Rural Areas

		1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Health Centers	No.	264	264	261	258	260	260
	Beds	3,726	3,726	3,655	3,708	3,741	3,763
Combined Units	No.	304	311	312	316	321	323
	Beds	4,275	4,332	4,383	4,429	4,486	4,579
Social Centers	No.	104	98	93	82	54	44
	Beds	--	--	--	--	--	--
Comprehensive Treatment Units	No.	71	33	23	10	3	--
	Beds	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rural Health Units	No.	782	942	1,018	1,078	1,135	1,192
	Beds	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	No.	1,525	1,648	1,707	1,744	1,773	1,819
	Beds	8,001	8,050	8,038	8,137	8,227	8,342

Source: Central Agency for Planning Mobilization and Statistics.

Village Councils

During the past few years the number of village councils has been reduced from 973 in 1970 to some 750 councils in 1974. This process of consolidation is part of an overall program of increased efficiency and consistency in the village councils. Village councils eliminated during the past two or three years usually encompassed areas too small to be economically viable, often lacked adequate staff personnel, generally were incapable of generating sufficient funds for local projects, and finally could be consolidated with nearby village councils in a way to provide broader and more complete services for the consolidated area. The average population serviced by each village council is roughly 27,000 people.

Table XL

Number of Village Councils Before and After 1970

	Rural Population (1970)	Before 1970	1974	Difference	Population per Council (1974)
Ismailia	180,500	4	5	+ 1	36,100
Kalyubia	892,000	50	38	- 12	23,473
Menufia	1,263,000	78	62	- 16	20,370
Gharbia	1,407,000	70	50	- 10	28,140
Kafr al-Shaykh	973,500	38	38	--	25,618
Sharkia	1,856,000	82	65	- 17	28,553
Dakahlia	1,964,000	98	65	- 33	30,223
Damietta	338,000	22	19	- 3	17,789
Buheira	1,804,000	76	61	- 15	29,573
Giza	1,096,500	40	39	- 1	28,115
al-Fayyum	780,500	42	34	- 8	22,955
Beni Suef	754,000	41	38	- 3	19,842
Minya	1,434,500	100	57	- 53	25,166
Asyut	1,114,500	66	44	- 22	25,329
Sohag	1,403,500	70	49	- 21	28,642
Qena	1,248,000	64	45	- 9	27,733
Aswan	386,000	25	22	- 3	17,545
New Valley	60,306* (1966)	--	10	+ 10	6,030
Metrah	1,253,758* (1966)	7	9	+ 2	139,306
Total	20,210,064	973	750	-223	26,946

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics.

In Table XLV it is clear that the vast majority of village councils provide services for more than one "natural" village, a pattern similar to that of village panchayats in India. Over 54 percent of all the village councils service between three and seven villages. Village councils are usually located in the largest village of the area, and they are organized in all the villages which are the center for a combined unit, though since there are 750 village councils and only 323 combined units, not every village council center has a combined unit. Where the two intitutions coincide, there are usually close connections. As a rule, the heads of combined unit services--the head of the clinic, the principal of the school, the social worker and other officials--are all members, either elected, selected or ex-officio, of the village council having jurisdiction over the area served by the combined unit. The combined

TABLE XLI

Distribution of Villages Serviced by Each Village Council

Governorate	Avg. Villages Per Council	Number of Villages Serviced																Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	21	
Ismailia	2.8	1	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Kalyubia	4.9	3	7	3	6	6	5	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
Minufe	3.2	-	3	11	16	12	10	6	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
Gharbia	4.3	-	-	5	5	10	4	11	9	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	50
Kafr al Shaykh	5.0	2	3	4	9	5	7	2	2	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	38
Sharkia	7.1	-	6	3	4	16	5	14	3	3	2	5	2	1	-	-	1	65
Dakahlia	6.5	3	3	3	9	1	4	3	10	7	4	5	2	-	1	-	-	65
Damietta	2.5	4	9	1	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Buheira	6.6	-	4	9	6	8	5	6	7	5	4	1	1	1	2	2	-	61
Giza	3.9	2	5	7	12	7	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
al-Fayyum	4.6	1	1	12	9	2	2	-	5	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
Beni Suef	5.5	-	-	7	5	5	11	7	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	38
Minya	4.0	0	2	4	11	6	12	11	6	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
Asyut	5.1	-	7	5	7	6	6	7	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	44
Sohag	5.4	1	-	7	11	7	9	6	5	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
Qena	4.1	2	7	12	7	4	6	4	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	45
Aswan	3.6	2	3	8	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	22
New Valley	1.9	4	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Matruh	2.8	-	1	6	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Total		25	66	110	126	111	93	82	58	26	22	16	7	2	3	2	1	750
Percentage of Total		3.3	8.8	14.6	16.8	14.8	12.4	10.9	7.7	3.4	2.9	2.1	.9	.2	.3	.2	.1	

Source:

unit is legally under the aegis of the village council, but administratively, each official in the combined unit reports directly to his or her own ministry--doctors in the clinic are under the Ministry of Health, teachers are under the Ministry of Education, etc.

There may be some confusion over the designation of these councils as "village councils," since they have jurisdiction over a number of "villages." The Arabic word is majlis qarya. The term majlis is a word connotating a council of representatives. Historically this implied representatives of families, clans and tribes. Today it is very appropriate to consider the majlis qarya as reflecting a council of representatives from several villages in a given area, as the term conveys the notion that more than one village would have representatives in the council. Recently a law has been passed providing for "markaz councils," but the functions and responsibilities of such district councils are still not spelled out in any detail. They would presumably provide a higher level of representative local government building from the village council level upwards.

A. Membership

There are three kinds of members in each council--elected, selected, and ex officio members. In each village council there are usually twelve elected members chosen from among the members of the ASU Committee for the village area, although some village councils have less than 12 members elected. Table XLVI outlines the distribution of membership in the Village Councils. The vast majority of the councils have 12 elected members, usually representing the ASU leadership in each of the respective villages serviced by the Village Council.

The term "elected" is somewhat misleading since there is no opportunity for the villager directly to elect their representatives to a village council. In fact the "elected" members of the village council are first nominated by the secretaries of ASU governorate committees--following a predetermined order of hierarchical selection process: (1) secretaries of all the respective village ASU executive committees, then assistant secretaries and then those members of the village ASU organization who obtained the most votes in the ASU elections. The final selection of these "elected" members for membership in the village council is determined by the Ministry of Local Administration.

Thus, one usually found at least one elected member from each of the villages in the village council's areas of

TABLE XLII

Distribution of Membership Categories in the Village Councils

Number of Members:	Number Elected					Number Selected			Number Ex Officio		
	8	9	10	11	12	0	1	2	4	5	6
Governorate											
Ismailia	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	5	-	-	5
Kalyubia	1	-	1	1	35	11	16	11	-	-	38
Menufia	-	2	2	-	58	-	10	52	-	-	62
Gharbia	-	-	-	2	48	-	-	50	-	-	50
Kafr al-Shaykh	-	-	1	-	37	-	1	37	-	-	38
Sharkia	-	1	-	2	62	-	-	65	-	-	65
Dakahlia	-	-	1	1	63	1	17	47	-	-	65
Damietta	-	-	3	-	16	-	1	18	-	-	19
Buheira	-	-	-	5	56	-	-	61	-	-	61
Giza	-	-	1	2	36	9	14	16	-	-	39
al-Faiyyum	-	-	5	4	25	-	-	34	-	-	34
Beni Suez	-	-	-	1	37	-	29	9	-	-	38
Minya	-	-	5	4	48	-	2	55	-	-	57
Asyut	-	-	-	1	43	-	11	33	-	-	44
Sohag	-	1	-	2	46	-	5	44	-	-	49
Qena	-	2	-	-	43	-	-	45	-	-	45
Aswan	-	-	1	-	21	-	1	21	-	-	22
New Valley	-	1	2	3	4	-	-	10	-	-	10
Matruh	-	-	-	-	9	-	9	-	-	-	9

Source:

jurisdiction. However, the largest village does not necessarily obtain a majority of seats in the council, since the selection is a function of ASU acceptance rather than electoral votes received. The early councils and ASU committee were established with little regard to the kinds of individuals chosen and elected by their villagers. Not until the middle of 1965 did the ASU play a serious role in screening and determining the fitness of the village council members. One source in the Ministry of Local Administration stated that all council members were now closely screened to determine suitability and that periodic evaluation reports were to be submitted by the local ASU organization.

Type of Council	Elected	Selected	Ex Officio
Governorates	798	198	350
Towns	2,290	434	765
Villages	11,334	1,115	5,724
Total	14,422	1,747	6,839

The second category of membership in the village council is the selected members. In each village council area, the local administration has the discretionary power of "selecting" two local individuals to be members of the village council. The statute requires that these two selected members be active members of the ASU. Usually they are selected for their loyalty and effectiveness as ASU workers.

The third category of membership is the ex officio members. These are government administrators working in the village area, usually six individuals per village: the village school master representing the Ministry of Education, the village doctor representing the Ministry of Health, the village agronomist or the mushrif (overseer)[1] in the village agricultural cooperative representing the Ministry of Agriculture, the village engineer representing the Ministry of Housing and Public Utilities and the village police officer of the 'umdah representing the Ministry of Interior. These ex officio members may by law serve on more than one council. Thus, many ex officio members are often absent from council meetings, and too often they attend village council meetings when they are totally unfamiliar with the problems and projects being discussed in the council.[2] From the seven villages visited in May 1974 I noticed that the overwhelming majority of the ex officio members did not live in the village but preferred to live in the nearby town or city. Table XLVII (extracted from an unfinished statistical study conducted by the Ministry of Local Administration) indicates the distribution of council members for 563 of the 997 village councils in terms of their education and age. These statistics clearly show that the

[1] Gabriel S. Saab, The Egyptian Agrarian Reform 1952-62, pp. 52-56.

[2] About one-third of the doctors, agronomists, and social workers who were interviewed held memberships in a village council. Most of them claimed complete ignorance about the rules of procedure, distinction between the "three types" of members, or even the general purpose of the council. As one doctor noted: "I was notified of my membership in the village council by mail. I have been to two council meetings in the past year, but both of them were a complete waste of time. I have too many things to do in my own village without wasting time attending an ineffective council meeting in some other village."

TABLE XLII

Education	
College degree:	2,213
Secondary certificate:	3,134
Primary certificate or less:	6,625
Age	
25-30 years:	1,148
31-40:	2,453
41-50:	3,253
51-60:	2,960
61- :	1,483

vast majority of the village council members have had very little education and tend to be above the age of 40. The council chairmen, however, are largely college graduates and although during the 1960s many were in their 20s, today all village council chairmen must be at least 30 and not over 50. This change in policy no doubt reflects an awareness that in a social setting where age is equated with leadership, the younger village council chairman often found himself at a strong disadvantage.

B. Leadership

The various educational backgrounds of the different village council chairmen are described in Table XLVIII. The overwhelming majority of all village council chairmen are graduates of the Faculty of General Arts and Sciences which includes literature, history, political economy, sociology, philosophy, languages, journalism, etc. Most of these graduates have a general liberal arts education and during the 1960s many of them were recruited as secretaries to the village councils. Thus today a substantial number of the village council chairmen have had experience as secretaries or at least as members of a village council before they are appointed

Table XLIV

Educational Background for Village Council Chairmen (1972)

	Number	Percentage
M.A. Degree	1	--
Arts and Science	241	32.1
Law	99	13.2
Arabic Language	30	4.0
Teacher	1	--
Commerce	42	5.6
Agriculture	188	25.0
Social Services	36	4.8
Medicine	1	--
Veterinarian	2	--
Engineer	1	--
Science	3	--
Athletics	4	--
Cotton Expert	4	--
Al-Azhar (traditional university)	77	10.2
Non College	20	2.6
Total	750	100.0

Source: Ministry of Local Administration, Working Papers.

as chairmen. In fact the present law on local government requires that all council chairmen have had at least eight years of professional experience in a rural area. Also from Table XLVIII one can see that the second most common educational background for chairmen is a degree in agriculture. Roughly 70 percent of all chairmen are from either the faculties of Arts and Sciences, Law, or Agriculture.

Chairmen of village councils may be appointed by the central government from any of the three categories of members. Roughly 85 percent are from the selected category, 11 percent are appointed from the ex-officio category, and only 3 percent are appointed from the elected category. Central supervision and control is still the dominant administrative style between the central government and village councils. Chairmen are appointed from a variety of occupational backgrounds though almost all are formerly or presently government employees and nearly 50 percent are former employees of the Ministry of Local Administration (see Table XLIX).

Table XLV

Employment Background of Village Council Chairmen

	Number	Percentage
Ministry of Local Administration	369	49.2
Ministry of Social Services	140	18.6
Ministry of Education	89	11.8
Ministry of Agriculture	80	10.6
Ministry of Labor	11	1.4
Ministry of Reclamation	11	1.4
Ministry of Finance	8	1.1
Ministry of Supply	7	1.0
Ministry of Justice	6	.9
Ministry of Health	5	.8
Ministry of Waqf and Ahzar	5	.8
Ministry of Coops	2	--
Ministry of Culture	1	--
Ministry of Higher Education	1	--
Ministry of Interior	1	--
Other	14	1.8
Total	750	100.0

Law 124 declares that the village council chairman is the key position in the village council system of rural Egypt. His major functions center around his dual responsibility, first as chief representative of the central government in the village, and second as chief spokesman for the local village council, which represents the citizens of the participating villages of the area. In the vast majority of cases his influence and authority are not a function of his role as chairman of the council. Still, clearly visible is the fact that his authority, his influence, and his reputation rest on his personality and his association with the leading families and informal village leaders. The position of chairman will not, except in a few villages, develop any sense of legitimate power until the council matures and proves itself. Because of the general illiteracy and lack of experience in self-government among the villagers, the council chairman is appointed by the Minist y of Local Government for a two-year term.

Since 1961, when the first council chairmen were selected, the basis for their selection has gone through four phases. Between 1961 and 1963, the major emphasis was on technical

competence and educational achievement. No attempt was made to ensure local acceptance of the chairmen and, as one official commented, "Too many of these council chairmen tend to become little tyrants." Between 1963 and the summer of 1966, the government attempted to shift its basis of selection from technical competence to include local acceptance and approval. It was during this period that the government attempted to identify lawyers, doctors, and professional people who had moved from their villages and to "induce" them to return to their original villages to work as village council chairmen. During 1967 the Ministry of Local Administration, while still seeking to find local people to act as village council chairmen, began to establish a regular training program at the UNESCO Arab States Training Center for Education for Community Development (ASFEC) in Sirs al-Layyan, UAR. During the period 1961-1966, council chairmen were selected because of their technical skill as doctors, agronomists, or social workers, and these officials usually considered their positions as council chairmen to be a part-time duty. Today, although most chairmen are still selected from among village functionaries, the new chairmen are given a two-week formal training course on the duties and functions of a village council chairman, and their position is coming more and more to be viewed as a full-time job.[1]

Some indication of the government's attempt to upgrade the quality of village council leadership can be seen in the contrast between the educational background and years of experience of village council chairmen in the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s. In the 1960s, roughly 30 percent of all village council chairmen had only a high school education or less--today nearly 98 percent have college degrees. In the mid-1960s less than 25 percent of the village council chairmen had had more than four years experience in any type of village council; now it appears, at least since 1971, that the overwhelming majority of the chairmen have at least four years experience in a village council.

Some 30 or 40 village council chairmen and various

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[1]The director of village councils in the Ministry of Local Administration, on February 14, 1967, indicated that most village council chairmen were either agronomists, social workers, doctors, or headmasters, in that order. The director also noted that his motto in selecting a chairman was "no landowner is to be a council chairman--the fit man, not the rich man." I personally observed that the council chairman's former employment varied from governorate to governorate. Thus, in the governorate of Kafr al-Shaykh, the vast majority of chairmen were agronomists, while in the governorate of Giza, just outside of Cairo, it appeared that most of the chairmen were social workers.

officials in the Ministry of Local Administration were interviewed to determine why a person would accept the position of council chairman. The most common reasons given were as follows:

1. Many of these people have a professional background which requires that they work and live in the village. The "prestige" of the office of village council chairman is an obvious attraction for professional people who must work in the village anyway.

2. Each chairman is usually furnished with a two-story house. Rent for this house is 10 percent of his salary, regardless of how much he makes.

3. His salary, which is equal to what his government or professional salary would be, is supplemented by a monthly expense allowance (badal tamthil) of ten pounds.

4. The cost of living in rural Egypt is easily 20 percent less than in Cairo.

5. "The government selected me and I have no choice." Many village workers admitted that they were in the village only because they were forced to be there by the government. However, only a very few of the village workers who were also the council chairmen intimated they were unhappy in the village. On the whole, these chairmen seemed enthusiastic and motivated individuals.[1]

The training program now available for all prospective council chairmen suggests the kinds of skills and knowledge required to run a village council:

Lectures: A series of 90 minute lectures from the staff of ASFEC on:

1. Aims and organization of local administration in a socialist society,

2. Characteristic features of the local administrative system in the UAR,

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[1]Apparently, the chairmen admit being unhappy with village life only to close friends. During my first visit to a village, I seldom met a village worker who would openly admit his discontent. After my third or fourth visit, a few gave subtle hints that they would prefer to be living in Cairo, and if these same individuals were to visit me in Cairo, it was seldom that a village worker would not openly lament his misfortune at being assigned to a village.

3. Explanation of the important articles of Law 124,

4. Financial and administrative responsibilities,

5. Preparing the budget and balance sheet of the council,

6. Developing procedural skills in the council

   a) preparing an agenda
   b) methods of organizing a council session
   c) methods of discussion, debate, and decision
   d) techniques of follow-up and evaluation
   e) utilization of council committees

7. Methods of group dynamics,

8. Leadership and supervision,

9. Relationship between local administration and community development

   a) theory and principles of community development
   b) the role of a village council in planning and development at the local and national levels
   c) the role of a village council in increasing local participation in the financing and administration of government services
   d) the role of a village council in training local leaders and coordinating various institutions in the local community

Seminars: Seminars were organized in order to allow representatives of the Ministry of Local Administration, the ASU, and governorate officials to present their views on the role and potentiality of the village council in the development of rural Egypt.

Debates: All council chairmen were invited to give their comments and opinions on the information they had received through the lectures and seminars mentioned above. Also attending these "open discussions" were the governor of Menufia, the ASU general secretary, several town council chairmen, and technical experts from various ministries. Most questions raised centered around the relationship between village councils and the town and governorate councils in terms of supervision, guidance, control, and follow-up. Many questions were also raised concerning the relationship between the village council and the ASU organization in the village.

Field Visits: All council chairmen were given an opportunity to attend actual village council sessions in two nearby

communities--Munūf and 'Ashmūn. These chairmen were encouraged to observe the procedures and organizations of these operating councils, their methods of discussion and keeping minutes, and the projects presently being administered by the village council.

Group Discussions: During the last few days all the chairmen were divided into groups of 20. Each group was monitored by a staff member of the ASFEC and was given a particular problem to discuss. Each group was encouraged to analyze all aspects of their problem and then submit a written paper with their recommendations. During the last day of training, all papers were further discussed in a plenary session.[1]

C. Internal Structure

Potentially, a village council can play an important role in developing the sense of legitimacy and commitment suggested earlier. It can provide a sense of participation for the local inhabitants of a village or rural community. A council provides an institutional structure by which local requests, complaints, and proposals can be channeled to higher governmental authorities. The truly effective council may develop a series of projects or programs of such obvious local value as to be a strong inducement to the villagers to contribute a significant portion of the financing.

Yet, for a council to function in this manner, there must be a literate citizenry, a group of experienced and capable leaders, an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of a local government system, an appreciation of the need for the local community to shoulder a larger portion of the costs, and a willingness to participate with the central government in reforming and developing the social, economic, and political conditions in the rural areas.

The staff of the village council consists of those employees, excluding the three types of members mentioned above, who assist the council chairman in the preparation and implementation of his duties. The number of qualifications of these civil servants vary according to the amount of work a council can generate. However, the following employees were found in most of the larger villages: chairman of the council, secretary of the council, administrative assistant, clerk for

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[1] Barnāmij tadrīb sa'ādat ru'asā' majlis al-qaryah bimuhafazatay al-shargiyah wa-al-munufiyah [Training Program for the Village Council Chairmen in the Governorates of Shargiyah and Munufiyah], pp. 1-3.

stores and supplies, accounting clerk, tax collector, clerk for administrative affairs, administrative clerk, meter reader (water and electricity), surveyor, and chief janitor. In addition to these employees, it was not uncommon to find several workers, drivers, gardeners, janitors, and errand boys. The number of employees increases considerably in those villages that also have a combined unit.

The council chairman is required to call for a village council session at least once each month. By law they must meet in the designated council room and all sessions are to be open to the public unless the chairman or one-third of the members request a closed session.[1] The chairman is supposed to preside over all sessions of the council. If for some reason he is absent, the eldest member of the council presides during his absence. At least 50 percent of the total membership of the council must be present for a council session to be legal.[2] No member can be absent from a session of the council without permission from the council chairman. Any member who is absent more than one time will be reported to the governor.[3]

During the first session several items of business must be performed:

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[1] 'Umar 'Amr, ed., al-Mawsū'ah al-tashrī'īyah fī shu'ūn al-'idarah al-mahaliyah [Legislative Encyclopedia of Local Administration]; cited hereafter as Legislative Encyclopedia. This is a collection of all the laws pertaining to local administration in Egypt, including Law Number 124 (1960) (Law of Local Administration); all amendments and explanatory notes for Law 124 (1965); Executive Rules of Procedure for Law 124 (1960); and a Model of Internal Procedures for local councils (Order No. 1, 1960).

[2] Ibid., pp. 38-39. If the 50 percent are absent, the session will be postponed three to seven days. If 50 percent are absent for the second session, the Ministry of State of Local Administration must be informed. When the third session is called, at least ten days after the second session, two things are possible if the required 50 percent are not present; a presidential decree will be issued dissolving the council; or, if there is no presidential decree, the session will be considered legal, regardless of the number present.

[3] The model of Internal Procedures states that the governor must first notify the delinquent member. After proper notification, the governor may either reprimand him, prevent him from attending future sessions temporarily, or release him from the council permanently (ibid., p. 250).

1. Issue the oath of office: "I swear by God the almighty that I will faithfully protect the presidential system and the welfare of the people and the security of the nation. I will respect the law and I will perform my duties honestly and sincerely.[1]

2. Consider all cases where a member's right to sit in the council is challenged. All challenged members are prohibited from voting or attending the session until a decision has been made.[2]

3. Determine the council's internal rules of procedure. All deviations or special procedures not authorized in the Model of Internal Procedures require the approval of the governor.[3]

4. Establish the council's permanent committees. Each council is supposed to have four committees.

   a) Committee of Education, Youth, Welfare, and Culture
   b) Committee on Agriculture, Cooperatives, Irrigation, Rural Industries, and Supply
   c) Committee on Public Health and Utilities
   d) Committee on Social Services, Complaints, and Suggestions.[4]

Each of these committees must have at least three members The council may form "special committees for certain purposes when it is necessary."[5] Each member of the council nominates himself for one of the committees in which he feels he is best qualified or has the most interest. No member is allowed to be a member of more than one committee unless two-thirds of the council approve. The members in each permanent committee elect their own chairman and a secretary or reporter. The general custom appears to ensure that the village bureaucrat in charge of the items covered by each committee will be that committee's chairman. Thus, the chairman of the four committees are usually the schoolmaster, the agronomist, the doctor, and the social worker, respectively.

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[1] Ibid., p. 38.

[2] Ibid., pp. 244-245.

[3] Ibid., p. 130.

[4] Ibid., p. 40.

[5] Ibid., pp. 277-278.

In the village council, the agenda for each session is determined by the village chairman. The Model of Internal Procedures in the local councils indicates the following matters are to be included in an agenda:

1. Matters proposed by the governor and his staff and all items suggested by the various government ministries and agencies that are of interest to the village council.

2. Matters proposed by the chairman or members of the council concerning the internal activities and responsibilities of the village council.

3. Any question directed by a member to the chairman concerning the council's responsibility. The chairman may postpone an answer to these questions until the next session.[1]

All members submitting a proposal or question must submit their request in writing at least one week prior to the session. Any request already rejected cannot be considered again unless 45 days have elapsed or unless one-third of the members request it in a written statement. It is possible for a member to submit a request during the session. First, he must submit his item to the chairman in written form; second, three members have to agree that the item requires immediate discussion; and third, a majority of the council must accept the request.

The governor and his staff have the right to inform the council during its sessions of any urgent matter that requires immediate attention. According to Law 124, each item brought before the council should be preceded by a study through one of the committees. The function of the committee is to discuss and study all the implications of any proposal to be decided by the council.. The committee may request the assistance of experts and interested citizens, and all sessions of these committees are to be closed. The committee chairman or reporter will draw up a report for each item referred to his committee. This report must clarify and explain the discussions of the committee and should include the opinions of both the majority and minority groups of the committee.

During the discussion and debates of these items in the council itself, the council chairman plays a key role. He begins and ends all discussions. He directs the debates, gives permission to members to speak, and indicates when each

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[1] Ibid., p. 261.

member has spoken long enough. The Model of Internal Procedures suggests the following sequence for each proposal: one speaker in favor of the proposal, one speaker in opposition to the proposal, and one speaker who wishes to amend the proposal.[1] This sequence is to be repeated, each time choosing three new individuals--unless one of the members relinquishes his turn to someone who has already spoken--until all members have had an opportunity to express their opinions.

The village council secretary or his assistant must keep detailed minutes of each session to include:

1. The time, date, and place of the session.

2. The name of the presiding officer during the session.

3. The names of all individuals present, to include the elected, selected, and ex officio members, representatives of all government offices and agencies, and all special guests.

4. Names of all members absent with excuse, without excuse, and those who arrived late or left early.

5. Summary of all items given to the committees for discussion.

6. Summary of all items of the agenda discussed in the council, including the results of each vote.

7. Lists of results of all items discussed and voted upon which were not on the agenda. The council chairman may request the secretary or the clerk not to register any statement in the minutes which was made by members who had violated the internal rules of procedure.[2]

It is not my purpose to provide a definitive description of all internal rules of procedure in the Egyptian village councils, but merely to suggest the kinds of procedures that the central government is attempting to introduce among these rural councils. Merely outlining the many and varied rules of procedure listed in the formal law may lead some to assume that these rules describe how the councils are actually functioning. When analyzing rural structures, one is faced with the decision either to describe what the central government

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[1] Ibid., p. 261.

[2] Ibid., pp. 271-272.

official invites him to see or to reiterate what many members of these councils claim neither the central government official nor the researcher will ever see. For example, one member of the ASFEC Training Center at Sirs al-Liyyan stated that whenever he attends a certain village council it functions in a calm, deliberate manner, with the chairman displaying complete control over the members of the council. Yet, the chairman himself has submitted many reports indicating that the older members of the council generally ignore him, that there is constant bickering and shouting among members from different families, and that most discussions in these sessions unattended by "outsiders," completely fail to adhere to any of the rules of procedure dictated by the Ministry of Local Administration. Many doctors confided that their duties as chairman of the Committee of Public Health merely required that they check with their superior at the governorate office. Others, especially those who became personal friends, admitted that many village councils do not use committees, since most village members are either unqualified or uninterested in attending committee meetings. This tendency is strengthened and reinforced in councils where the relationship between the peasants and village bureaucrats is strained or nonexistent.

D. Functions

Law 124 delegates a wide range of functions to the village council, including activities in the field of education, public health, public utilities and housing, labor, agriculture, food supply, communication, security, and economic development. Within each of these activities the law specifically delineates the functions that, by their nature, can best be regulated at the village council level.

1. Education: Article 37[1] of the Executive Rules of Procedure indicates that each village council will establish, prepare and administer the primary schools within its village and all villages under its control and responsibility. Article 38[2] states that each local council is specifically responsible responsible for the following matters:

1. Select construction sites for all new school buildings.

2. Distribute and open new classrooms among the village schools as the demand requires.

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[1] Ibid., p. 186.

[2] Ibid.

3. Supervise the use of the syllabus set by the Ministry of Education, including its application, adoption, and modification whenever required by local differences.

4. Establish the days and times for all school vacations--to include both national holidays and special local holidays.

5. Organize and establish an adult education program.

6. Establish and prepare a village school library.

7. Establish and equip a youth sporting club.

8. Organize and provide a daily lunch program for each school.

9. Coordinate with the village health center to provide an adequate health program in each school.

Although a detailed description of each of these functions is outside the scope of this study, I will examine one of these functions (no. 3) in an attempt to show how detailed these responsibilities have been defined. Within each council there is to be a committee on education. This committee should hold a session at least two weeks before the school year to examine and discuss the application of the state school syllabus. This meeting should consist of the district school inspector and his assistant, the headmasters of all the village schools in the area, a few teachers from each school and members of the committee and other interested citizens from the various villages. Suggestions for any modifications in the syllabus will be discussed at this meeting. A final report will be drawn up by the committee on education and then submitted to the village council. The village council will discuss the report in a general session, amending and deleting as it sees fit. The council's final report is then forwarded to the governorate council. The committee of education at the governorate level will then collect all reports submitted by the village councils. After proper consultation, the governorate-level committee then submits a report to the governorate council designing a plan that will fit the unique circumstances of the village areas within the governorate. The governorate's final decision will be distributed to each village council, which will be responsible for the supervision and execution of the amended syllabus.

This detailed outline of one educational function assigned to all village councils suggests the profound role an effective village council might well play in encouraging a diversified first-rate educational program. Unfortunately, this is not the

case in a vast majority of the councils in rural Egypt. The primary schools in the villages are still closely supervised and controlled by the Ministry of Education. The headmasters still follow very closely the rules, regulations, and programs dictated by the ministry or governorate director of education. Most village schools and their teaching staffs are evaluated primarily on the basis of the extent to which they adhere to central instructions. The appointments, promotions and transfers are still made on the same basis and are still completely in the hands of the governorate authorities. One research group commissioned by the Egyptian government to evaluate the role of the village councils in implementing the national educational program summarized its report by noting:

> The main emphasis of the central authorities has centered around the administrative aspects of education with little attention being given to the other aspects of the educational process. The most obvious result of this approach can best be verified by the fact that students in the rural areas are generally far below the required educational level. This relationship and dependence of the villages on the central authorities has greatly delayed and hindered the implementation of the law of local administration. . . . The field research team noted that the local village councils have failed to fulfill their educational duties because of several obstacles. These include:
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> a) Lack of sufficient funds and credit.
> b) Lack of educational specialists as members of the village council.
> c) Lack of proper guidance and direction from the governorate authorities.
> d) The law which assigns so many responsibilities to the village councils fails to provide guidelines to facilitate the gradual development of these responsibilities.
> e) The law does not state the relationships that are to exist among the village council, the governorate and the central authorities.
> f) The villagers themselves do not have a mature awareness of their roles and responsibilities vis-a-vis the local council.[1]

2. Health: Article 40[2] of the Executive Rules of

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[1] al-Tāqarīr al-nihā'īyah lil-lijān al-far'īyal li-shu'un al-dirasat al-madaniya lil-majalis al-qarawiyah (Final Reports of the Subcommittees for Field Research on Village Councils], pp. 56-67; hereafter cited as Final Reports.

[2] 'Umar 'Amr, Legislative Encyclopedia, pp. 187-188.

Procedure indicates that the village councils are authorized to look after the health and medical requirements of their communities. They are required to establish, equip, and administer all medical units within their areas, except model and training centers maintained by the Ministry of Health. From the many doctors interviewed it appears the village council's functions in the field of health services may be divided into four areas:

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

a) Vaccination against contagious disaases.
b) Taking the necessary preventive actions to protect others in the case of death through an infectious disease.
c) Periodic fumigation of homes, clothing and individuals for ticks and lice.
d) Supervision and periodic inspections of all merchants and their employees who deal in food stuffs.
e) Supervision of all sources of drinking water.
f) Supervision of all food processing plants, market areas, and slaughterhouses.
g) Inspection of all private and public buildings and places of business to ensure that sanitary conditions are being maintained.
h) Establish a program of hygienic cultural guidance and education to increase the sanitation consciousness among the fellahin.
i) Coordinate governorate programs to control the spread of endemic diseases, such as snail eradication to reduce bilharziasis and filling in swamps to reduce malaria.
j) Encourage the improvement of sanitary conditions in the peasants' personal housing.
k) Control the disposal of garbage and refuse and the storage of natural fertilizers.

TREATMENT SERVICES: These include the establishment and administration of the village health center and the transportation of individuals who need special attention to the nearest hospital.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: Each council is to coordinate with the village doctor in developing contingency plans to handle widespread disasters, epidemics, flooding, wars, and immigrations.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES: These include providing transportation of patients from all surrounding villages to the health unit in the main village, providing ambulance service to the nearest hospital, and providing telephone service between the main village and all surrounding villages. Also,

the council is responsible for raising the level of medical services in the health unit, ensuring the general cleanliness of the health unit, and maintaining the proper provision of medicine and equipment not provided by the governorate medical offices.

Again, except for the few village councils where the doctor is genuinely motivated and has the active support of the leading elements in the village, the relationship between the council and the doctors is generally unsatisfactory. As one research group concluded about health services in the villages of rural Egypt:

> The village council chairman is considered responsible for the general operation of the village health unit, even though the village doctor is the direct supervisor both in the unit's technical and administrative affairs. Although the health committee of the village council is supposed to transfer villager's petitions and requests, it seldom takes an active role in the affairs of health. Excluding the previously mentioned responsibilities, it can be said that the village council has not performed fully the responsibilities assigned to it by the law for local administration . . . (therefore) the conditions of health have remained as they have always been, differing only according to the distribution, quantity, and quality of services available.[1]

3. Public Utilities:[2] Each village council is encouraged to plan, supervise, and implement the following projects and services to the extent that its resources may permit: gas and electricity, road construction and maintenance, fresh drinking water, sewage system and garbage disposal, public parks, cemeteries, marketplaces and slaughterhouses, organization of public transportation system, filling in dangerous ponds and swamps, repairs and maintenance of public buildings, enforcement of laws regulating industrial establishments, supporting theaters, places of amusement, and business firms, and executing housing schemes in accordance with plans drawn up by the Ministry of Housing and Public Utilities.

The research committee on housing and public utilities concluded, "The commitee found that the village council was not performing its responsibilities in the sector of housing

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[1] Final Reports, pp. 89-90.

[2] 'Umar 'Amr, Legislative Encyclopedia, pp. 192-197.

and public utilities . . . for the following reasons: (1) the law assigns many technical responsibilities, but because of the lack of qualified technicians the council is unable to perform these responsibilities. (2) The council does not have sufficient financial resources to implement these programs even if qualified personnel were available."[1]

4. Social Activities: Article 45 of the Executive Rules of Procedure[2] states that the village council shall have the power to supervise all benevolent organizations, social institutions, and private foundations; the power to dissolve, these various associations and institutions or appoint a new manager for them; the power to provide financial assistance and to authorize these associations to collect and dispense charitable donations; and the power to recommend the establishment of all new social projects in the village.

One village council chairman stated that he attempted to supervise the social service activities in his village by: (1) a periodic visitation to each organization, society, and private foundation in his area to determine whether they were adhering to all government regulations and to the purposes for which they were established; (2) encouraging those societies to engage in activities that will improve the social and economic conditions of the villagers; and (3) acting as coordinator for the various governmental and private programs in order to prevent duplication of service presently being rendered to the villages.

The vast majority of social workers interviewed argued that the village councils were not performing the responsibilities assigned to them by the law. Generally the social worker functions independently of the village council. Practically all problems, questions, and matters of policy and procedure are submitted directly to the governorate director of social affairs with no coordination either with the council chairman or the so-called committee of social affairs in the village council. In those village council minutes that were perused, it appeared that the village councils were not encouraging or even discussing the activities, programs, and projects sponsored by these various societies and organizations.

The research committee assigned to evaluate the social assistance programs operating in villages with councils concluded:

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[1] Final Reports, p. 105.

[2] 'Umar 'Amr, Legislative Encyclopedia, pp. 192-197.

The research committee, after an extensive study of the laws and ministerial orders organizing the pensions, social assistances, and responsibilities assigned to the heads of the social units and the head of the department of social affairs at the governorate level, has come to the conclusion that the local councils cannot perform the responsibilities assigned to them for the following reasons:

(1) There is no qualified person with audit accounting training at the local council level who can verify and evaluate, from a technical point of view, the applications and disbursements of assistance, and government pensions.

(2) The local councils have no allocations in their budget for assistance and pensions because this money is retained and directly disbursed from the department of social affairs at the governorate level.

(3) Various ministerial decrees and orders have been issued which effectively preclude the village council chairman from assuming any financial responsibility in these matters.[1]

5. Rural Economic Development: Article 49 of the Executive Rules of Procedure[2] declares that the village council should perform the following responsibilities:

1. Expand and develop rural industries.

2. Exploit the raw materials available in the village area.

3. Submit proposals to the governorate council describing projects and amounts of financing the village council is willing to provide.

4. Develop and organize the marketing facilities for all locally produced products.

5. Coordinate and implement all programs and policies generated by the central government in the field of rural industries.

The research committee for rural development noted that very little development in rural industries had occurred through the efforts of the village councils because of the

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[1] Final Reports, pp. 143-144.

[2] 'Umar 'Amr, Legislative Encyclopedia, pp. 201-202.

following problems:

1. Instruments and means of production in the villages are inadequate and primitive.

2. The general illiteracy of those employed in rural industries.

3. Rural industries are widely dispersed and uncoordinated because the industries develop mainly through private individuals.

4. The central government's efforts in rural development have not been concentrated in one consistent direction.

5. The difficulty of marketing rural products due to the lack of craftsmanship and artistic taste.[1]

This general outline of functions delegated to village councils is not complete. To this list one could add, among others, responsibilities in the areas of labor, agriculture, cooperatives, food supply, communication, and security. A detailed analysis of these functions as noted with the earlier functions, would reach much the same somber conclusion. The vast majority of village councils in Egypt have been unable to play a positive role in fulfilling these functions. One conclusion is apparent from this analysis: the village councils lack the trained personnel and the financial resources to handle adequately the numerous and complex responsibilities assigned to them. What is the proper balance of control for allocating functions to local units of authority in a way that will ensure a maximum efficiency in their implementation? If the central government fails to assign a sufficient amount of power and responsibility to the village councils, commitment and acceptance for these local institutions will never develop, and the functioning but impotent village councils will merely reinforce a traditional sense of futility and cynicism so characteristic of the Egyptian fellahin.

Yet, equally perilous is the tendency to allocate responsibilities freely to any institutions that, due to a lack of finances and personnel, are neither capable nor willing to assume them. The direct result of this course of action reinforces old images of government ineffectiveness, all too often interpreted by the fellahin as further proof of their government's unconcern. The implications of this dilemma for government legitimacy should be self-evident.

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[1] Final Report, pp. 347-348.

E. Performance

If we are to evaluate the role and position of the village councils, careful analysis requires that some simple classification of village councils be suggested. Most of the village councils observed appear to fall into one of four categories, depending upon which leadership group or combination of leadership groups seemed to predominate. One classification of councils according to dominante groups would differentiate those directed by: (1) "feudal" landowning families, generally uncooperative or apathetic towards the present regime, (2) "progressive" landowning families, generally considered as committed to the present regime, (3) "passive" village administrators, and (4) "active" village administrators, motivated by either ideological or professional considerations.

1. Reactionary Councils: In those villages where the "feudal" families and the "passive" bureaucrats were found working together in the same council, the chances that this council would be functioning effectively were very slim. Certainly prior to 1966, the vast majority of village councils would have fallen into this category. All of the field research studies conducted on village councils prior to 1966 come to the same conclusion: the village councils in general are not functioning as they should because of inadequate leadership or because of the active opposition of the leading families in the area. If the newspaper accounts can be taken as correct, many of the reactionary "feudal" families have been removed from the village areas in an attempt to weaken the hold of these families on various government institutions in the rural areas. In spite of this "antifeudalism campaign," it is estimated that perhaps 40 percent of all village councils can still be classified as "reactionary."[1] In this type of council the chairman plays a negative role, either following the orders of the dominant family or spending as much time outside the village as possible.

2. Passive Councils: In those villages where pro-Sadat families are working with "passive officials," the activities of the council must still be considered ineffective. This kind of council operates in two situations: (1) those villages where landowning families have been removed and no effective local leadership has yet appeared to take their place, or (2) the council is ignored by the local villagers who prefer to operate through families who have close connections either in the upper echelons of the ASU or the Governorate

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[1] The percentage figures offered for the four different types of councils are purely conjectural and are based on impressions gained from interviews and observations in rural Egypt.

hierarchy. It is estimated that 30 percent of all village councils fall in this category.[1]

3. Revolutionary Councils: A village council composed mostly of "feudal" family representatives and a new group of ideologically oriented bureaucrats or party workers is usually torn by conflict. It appears that many of the villages recently investigated by the Committee for the Liquidation of Feudalism fall within this category. The village council chairman on these villages, especially if he happens to be a native of the village, can play a major role in developing and strengthening the village council. The new emerging social groups, once the larger landowners have been removed, generally gravitate to the newer structures, such as the ASU committee and the village council. Nevertheless, these institutions, where "feudal" family power has been recently curtailed, generally fall under the influence of the government or ASU officials. In this situation where the council appears to be functioning properly, the villagers' acceptance and loyalty to these structures must still be considered fragile and highly susceptible to failure, since the motivating power behind the council is still primarily a group of individuals considered as "outsiders." Perhaps nearly one-fourth of all village councils might be classified as "revolutionary."

4. Progressive Councils: Last are those few councils where pro-regime landowners and "active" administrators are functioning harmoniously together. This kind of council is obviously rare in rural Egype--certainly less than 10 percent of the total. While it is admitted that very few of the functioning councils meet the standards required to be designated as "progressive," still several councils visited were on the threshold of becoming so. Legitimacy in this case rests on the firm foundation of competent village administrators and committed local leadership capable of making the council function properly. It will be in this type of council that the village chairman will eventually be elected locally by the villagers themselves. This is the long-range goal of the Egyptian government.

In one village council in Aswan the relationship between the villagers and the village officials quite adequately epitomizes one of the fundamental problems noted in rural Egypt.

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[1]The distinction between the "reactionary" and the "passive" councils is primarily one of emphasis and therefore difficult to distinguish in a concrete situation. Nevertheless, one can argue that 70 percent of the village councils are ineffective, primarily because the local government administrators are "passive" and fail to take an active part in developing the council as an effective village instituion.

The village council chairman was a young agronomist. All the officials in the village (doctor, social worker, agronomist) were under 30 years of age, all were from Cairo and thus spoke a dialect somewhat different from the villagers'. During one session the doctor recommended that the main street of the village be straightened out and widened in order to allow an ambulance to reach the various sections of the village in times of emergency. One of the shaykhs al-balad, a prominent member of the council, announced his complete opposition to such project. He indicated that their village had always taken care of their emergencies in the past and then argued that "the only reason the young doctor and the young agronomist want a new wide street is so they can ride their motor bikes through out village at a faster speed."

In a village in Menufia, a bright young engineer enthusiastically presented a simple proposal suggesting that the villagers work together to build a new village center and marketplace. The council chairman, an older government official who also happened to be from the village, explained to the young engineer that he would have to obtain a copy of the law on rural housing development before the council could intelligently discuss the matter. The engineer then waited six months for his headquarters to send him a copy of the law. During the next session, after having studied the law, the chairman apologized that the council's agenda was filled with more urgent matters. Finally, eight months after the engineer first suggested his project, the council, after hearing his proposal, voted to send a request to the governorate office for further information on the costs and amount of financial aid available. Four months later the governorate director of public housing sent an answer to the council's request, indicating that no exact amount of money could be allocated without a detailed study of the housing problems and needs of the village. Before the engineer was able to begin the requested study, he was transferred to another governorate.

Mohammed Hasan, describing the village of Abishna in the governorate of Beni Suef, points out that many village councils do not function properly because the traditional families still dominate:

> The popular powers in the villages have no strength within the ASU because the 'umdah and the shaykhs in the village dominate the village and the agricultural laborers. . . . They did not organize themselves together into an Agricultural Workers' Union because of the 'umdah and the large families and thus they continue to accept ten piastres [twenty-three cents] a day. . . . The 'umdah is the real head of the village's

> administrative machine. . . . [His] family controls over 800 feddans either by owning or leasing, and the members of the village council are all from his family with the exception of two members who are ex-officio members.[1]

An even more drastic indictment against the village councils, specifically that of Bisindilla, was voiced by Ahmad Tawfiq:

> The first person we met in the village was the chairman of the village council. He is also the headmaster of the school in the village Combined Unit. The council itself consists of the chairman, twelve members from the ASU lajnat al-'Ishrīn, two appointed members and several ex-officio members. These figures are merely paper figures since the council only meets because the law requires it and the legal number of members is rarely present. The council never meets more than once a month and even then the council fails to discuss the real problems of their village. It was quite clear that the village council had no influence in the village and it has never tried to find solutions for the problems of the villagers. It is obvious that it does not actually supervise or even appear to supervise the services of the village and this explains the low standard of services in the village and the mistreatment and exploitation so prevalent in the village. Thus, the villagers, although they knew the name of the council, had no knowledge about its formation, the members, its sessions, its functions. . . . All this should not be surprising if we know that the village council chairman does not have any close contact with the fellahin nor does he know their problems. We noted that he had not even wandered through the village streets to observe its conditions. The chairman stays in the Combined Unit and his acquaintances in the village are limited to members of the village council, leaders in the ASU, and some of the landowners. . . . This lack of activity and effectiveness in the village council forces the masses to lose all trust and confidence in these popular and executive institutions and isolates them from the educated administrators who work in the village.[2]

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[1] Lutfi Muhammad Hassan, "Abishna," al-Talī'ah, September 1966, p. 42.

[2] Ahmad Tawfiq, "Bisindilla," al-Talī'ah, September 1966, p. 19.

While it is easy to collect examples and stories from village officials who loathe their present life away from Cairo and continually speak of the fellahin as those "mental deficients," one should not be unaware of some very striking changes taking place among certain Egyptians active in their village councils. Thus, while I have collected a large number of personal exposes, anecdotes, and interesting second-hand observations, my impressions of rural councils achieved through personal observations still lead me to optimistic rather than pessimistic conclusions. Optimistic conclusions, not because great changes can be seen in the rural villages of Egypt, but because some change can be seen. There is something inherently incongruous, yet still inspiring, in observing a young woman doctor stand before a group of older men steeped in Islamic culture and effectively articulate her demands that the food given to the school children in their village be stored properly to preclude any further spoiled food from being served in the school lunches.

One of the most impressive scenes I observed in Egypt occurred during a debate in the village council of Kafr al-Marazka in the governorate of Kafr al-Shaykh. The question centered around the need for a school bus to carry the older children of the village to a nearby town where preparatory and secondary schools were available. From the beginning of the debate, it was apparent that two points of view were paramount. One group was hedded by a Sayyid Muntasir, a leading landowner inthe village. He wore an elegant brown galabiyah and walked and talked with great authority. When he spoke, which was quite often, people listened. He argued that the village cooperative, with government aid, should provide a school bus so that every child, even from the poorest families, would be able to ride free to school.

The other group in the village council had two spokesmen--the head schoolmaster and the elected head of the five-man governing committee in the local agricultural cooperative. They both argued that the cooperative could not afford to buy gasoline for a school bus and thus the villagers using the bus should pay something. The head of the cooperative was a tall, strong-looking fellah, dressed in a plain striped galabiyah. His father had been a landless itinerant worker. In 1950 this young fellah was offered a job as a cotton-worm observer by the provincial agricultural engineer. However, the 'umdah in his village objected and the job was given to a cousin of the 'umdah. From 1950 to 1960 this fellah worked as an ordinary laborer. Finally, in 1960, he was made a cotton-worm observer and in 1962 was given five feddans and a gamoosa through the Ministry of Land REform. In 1963 he joined the ASU, and in 1964 he was elected by the villagers to be the head of the cooperative in his village.

As the debate developed between these two groups, one could not help but be impressed with the fact that the question at hand was not the 30 piastres each student would be charged for using a school bus. The head of the cooperative was openly and enthusiastically championing an opposite view from that of the rich landowner. The uneducated fellah leader spoke with a rather primitive eloquence. He argued that "the fellahin are now for the first time free and can hold their heads up with pride. . . . We all remember the days before the Revolution. We remember when the king's cousin came to our village to hunt. We all know that he maliciously killed several of our animals and even accidentally killed a young girl. We know that by the king's order, the police never even came to investigate. . . . Things have changed and we must earn our own way. Each must be required to pay something." He was arguing for self-sufficiency and against hand-outs. At the same time, the landowner's position would lead to more egalitarian consequences.

The council chairman called for a vote. The result was close, but the wealthy landowner had won. The final vote was nine for and seven against. The council was divided as follows:

For	Against
the landowner	head of the cooperative
village doctor	schoolmaster
village shaykh	agricultural engineer
6 fellahin	village shaykh al-balad
	asst. council chairman (oldest fellah in the council)
	2 fellahin

This story may well strengthen the earlier observation that most village councils are dominated by traditional landowning families, and yet it should also be apparent that a new breed of fellah is emerging. This fellah is no fahlawi. He is proud of his position in the village council. He is free of cynicism and that dependence so common among the vast majority of the fellahin. It is with this emergence that we can observe and comment on changing patterns and practices with respect to local council performance for rural development.

Recent Changes in Village Councils

Although much of what has been said about local government institutions in Egypt remains true today as it was 10

years ago,[1] some new trends can be observed which will have a profound impact on the development of rural institutions. The observations made here are based upon the author's visit to a limited number of villages in the spring of 1974 and admittedly these villages may or may not be representative of the totality of Egypiian villages. Yet the contrast between the mid-1960s and this visit in 1974 was significant enough to warrant at least some tentative generalizations.

The first generalization one must make is that there are few generalizations that apply to all villages. In the smaller villages, with less than 10,000 people, the social structure is more likely to be shaped or influenced by a limited number of families. These family relationships are extremely crucial in local institutions. For example in one village of some 6,000 people, there were ten major families and nine of these families had at least one representative in the Arab Socialist Union committee of ten. Although brothers and cousins cannot be members of the ASU committee of ten at the same time, indicating the regimes' desire to restrict the possibility of one or two families dominating the local party organization, still upon careful interrogation, it was admitted that two men on the committee were from the same family. Those being interviewed were quick to point out, however, that the two men were separated by at least four generations and therefore did not violate the restrictions against a family monopoly. The fact that the villagers were sensitive to the regime's attempt to reduce the influence and power of the major families suggested a new norm of political recruitment certainly not held in the smaller villages ten years ago.

The process of introducing modern procedures into the local government structures of Egypt is slow but still making progress. In the smaller villages, again those of less than 10,000, the concept of competing candidates vying for the ten positions on the local ASU committee is still alien to a society where family structure still largely determines leadership positions. Thus when the villagers in the smaller communities were asked if there were more than one candidate seeking election to one of the seats on the ASU committee, the answer was invariably negative. The family elders informally met together and by consensus determined who the members of the committee should be. A deliberate attempt to introduce competing candidates into this social milieu would have been dysfunctional, generating a disruptive reaction against the regime's efforts to legitimize these new local institutions.

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[1] For a detailed description of local government in Egypt in the mid-1960s see the author's Rural Politics in Nasser's Egypt (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1971).

Yet in the larger villages, especially those with over 20,000 people, specific family influences are on the wane. In sharp contrast with the mid-1960s, when candidates for the positions on the ASU local committees were limited to a few party supporters, the ASU elections in 1973 in several of the larger villages were characterized by a large number of competing candidates. In the village of Drunka in the governorate of Asyut there were 40 candidates seeking election to the ten positions, a radical change from the Nasser era when the number of candidates allowed to run was limited to those approved from higher echelons in the ASU party structure. There is evidence that the ASU, as a mobilizing agency for political participation, is gradually being accepted as a legitimate structure in the village community. It will be argued here that this acceptance will only grow to the extent that the party leaders of the governorate level allow the local village leaders the autonomy and freedom to function independently and within a framework of political activity that is not inconsistent with the traditional values of village life.

President Sadat appears committed to this new system of local autonomy. Some would argue that he is not only fostering a greater sense of local independence in the rural areas but actually seeking to reduce the role and influence of the ASU in the broader processes of political participation. The new Egyptian Constitution of 1971 establishes a set of goals for local government that is in sharp contrast with the system initiated by President Nasser ten years earlier. Article 162 of this new constitution states, "The local popular councils will be formed gradually through direct elections as administrative units. . . . Chairman and deputy chairman of the councils will be elected from among the members." Up until the spring of 1974 this article had not been implemented. All local councils were still being <u>indirectly</u> elected through the formal structures of the ASU. The key word in Article 162 is the word "gradually" for direct elections will not be introduced simultaneously in all levels of local government. Direct elections to village and town councils are to be postponed to the mid or later 1970s. Of some significance is the fact that on April 8, 1974, the Cabinet Committee on Local Government announced that the Governorate People's Councils will now be formed by direct election without the intermediary of the ASU. This announcement is a significant new commitment on the part of the Egyptian government to separate the party organization from the electoral process in Egypt's local government system. One official in the Ministry of Local Government indicated to me in May 1974, that

> This is hopefully the beginning of true local government in Egypt. The ASU will continue to play an important role in the towns and villages

> until the people of these areas have developed politically enough to withstand the pressures of traditionalism and feudalism. As the power and influence of the older centers of political power are broken, there will be much greater opportunities for a truly independen local government system to emerge.

Although many people were suggesting that the ASU was on the verge of being disbanded, and that President Sadat was actively seeking to establish a two-party system, all of the evidence in the spring of 1974 suggests that the ASU in some form is here to stay, especially in the rural areas where government intervention and control are crucial for the whole process of modernization and national development. The gradual implementation of Article 162 of Sadat's new Constitution is a clear harbinger of new trends in Egyptian local government.

In addition to the changes already mentioned several other significant innovations in the village councils should be noted. The first and most obvious difference noted between the mid-1960s and 1974 was the much greater willingness on the part of the village council members to share their feelings and opinions. There appeared to be much greater rapport between the village council chairman and the peasant members of the council. I was impressed with the frankness and candor exhibited by the council members as I probed into the problems and procedures of their councils, something that was rarely seen in the Nasser era.

Many peasant council members criticized the arbitrary and inconsistent way in which the governorate council supervised and controlled the local councils. The requirement for approval and proper authorization of all local projects was mentioned by several members, even though it is not as bad as it used to be. Many villagers resent the unwillingness of town councils to support and help the villager in their area. There is little official contact between villages and towns--giving village leaders little alternative but to obtain services from the towns through "the awkward and unnatural channels" of the governorate policymakers.

Several complained that the relationship between the ASU and the village council was not clear. There is much confusion when individuals are members of both the ASU committee of Ten and the Village Council--especially in terms of defining their roles and functions in the two structures. One villager put it fairly bluntly when he said, "How do they expect me to be a watchdog and a representative at the same time?" A significant number of village council members were bold enough to suggest that their village was ready for direct elections and it was not uncommon to hear the sentiment

that the time had come for all village council chairmen to be elected instead of being selected by the government.

A crucial problem for local government in Egypt mentioned in every province I visited was the instability and the constant moving of government officials including governors, town council chairman, and village chairman. There are exceptions but the overwhelming message being articulated by both the administrators and the council members was their opposition to the constant changing and shifting of personnel. Too often the local administrative leadership is a stranger in the area where he must work. Realizing he will soon be transferred again, there is little incentive, no interest or desire to produce, to succeed or to initiate new programs. Often the administrators are from other parts of Egypt and tend to look down upon the local residents. I seldom meet a Town Council chairman whose family was with him in the town, and the chances that a village council chairman had his wife and family in the village was practically nil. A general survey of all the ex officio members of the several villages visited indicated that over 80 percent of these government employees live in nearby towns and cities rather among the villagers they were serving, In defense of these local administrators, it should be noted that the housing, sanitation, and educational opportunities for their families make living in the village impossible, yet without a closer relationship between official and peasant the same complaints of distance, misunderstanding, lack of commitment and interest will continue to be a part of the villagers' perception of the Egyptian government official.

One question that did generate some interesting data from the members of the village councils interviewed was for them to indicate that changes they had seen in the past ten years. The most common responses were centered upon new government services: "now we have pure water and electricity, before we did not." "Ten years ago we only had three primary schools, now we have six primary schools and one preparatory school." "When I was first in this council as a member from one of the smaller villages in our area, only the one big village had medical services available, now even my small village has a health clinic of its own," "now we have a dentist." There were also these kinds of responses: "We trust our village council chairman now, before we did not," "As the chairman of this council, I feel the peasants are much more willing to speak out, to make proposals, to argue for or against my suggestions to be active participants in the council."

The village council chairmen also outlined a series of important changes that they had observed in the functioning of the council. During the Nasser years no village council chairman could authorize an expenditure of more than 10 E.L.

Practically all monies spent had to have governorate-level approval. Today the chairman can spend anywhere from 100 E.L. to 200 E.L. depending upon the particular governor's restrictions. Before 1970 no council chairman had power to punish or discipline one of his employees without prior approval. Today these chairman have been given discretionary power over all lower employees up to the eighth degree in the civil service hierarchy--including the power to cut vacation time and to reduce salary one or two days for a disciplinary problem. This is an obvious attempt to upgrade the authority and credibility of the village council chairman.

Several council chairmen indicated their major problem was financial--just not enough money to do all they would like. One chairman in Bayadiya, a large village outside the city of Luxor indicated his annual budget consisted of some 53,000 E.L. allocated in the following manner:

(1) Salaries for all local government officials	32,000 E.L.
(2) Services (electricity, water, etc.)	16,000 E.L.
(3) Supplies and materials	3,000 E.L.
(4) Special projects	2,000 E.L.

Of great significance for local government development now the fact that a village council not only has a special projects fund that can be used for any project the council might decide upon, but now the prior approval required for such projects has been greatly simplified. In the 1960s if a council had wanted to build a new classroom it would have had to obtain approval of the governorate's director of education--often a slow and frustrating process; now the council may take such decisions without governorate approval providing the council has sufficient monies in its special projects funds. The limited amount of money available for special projects reduces the impact of these village-initiated decisions, but it still establishes a procedure, which with greater financial independence, will help to legitimize and strengthen the role and functioning of the village council.

Below is an example of the membership breakdown for the village council of Bayadiya which should provide some insights into the nature and background of the 20 members:

A. Elected Members

1. Primary School Principal
2. Post Office Employee
3. Fellah with less than 5 feddans
4. Fellah with less than 5 feddans

5. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
6. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
7. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
8. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
9. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
10. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
11. Fellah with between 5-10 feddans
12. Farmer with over 40 feddans

B. Selected Members

1. The Village Council Chairman (selected by the Ministry of Local Administration)
2. The Village Religious Leader--the Imam

C. Ex Officio Members

1. Principal of the Preparatory School
2. Medical Doctor in the Combined Unit
3. Omdah--Representing the Ministry of Interior
4. Civil Engineer
5. Social Worker
6. Chairman of the Agricultural Cooperative Committee

Since the village council services three separate villages (Bayaduja, Habil, and Baghdadi), the elected members came fairly equally divided from among the ASU Committees of ten in each village. In fact nearly all of the elected members were placed on the village council ranked according to the number of votes each received in the ASU elections of 1973. This, too, is a sharp departure from the Nasser era, when memberships in the Village Council had very little to do with the number of votes received in the ASU elections.

CHAPTER VI

EGYPTIAN BUREAUCRACY IN THE VILLAGE

Given the long tradition of centralized administration in Egypt, dating back to the time of the Pharaohs, we must weigh along with local government institutions in rural Egypt, the role played by the Egyptian bureaucracy in rural areas. To understand the effectiveness and functioning of these institutions in rural Egypt, we need to consider the perceptions of rural institutions both from the viewpoint of the bureaucrat and the peasants. In particular, we ought to look at: (1) historical and cultural influences on bureaucratic practices in rural Egypt; (2) attitudes and perceptions of the rural administrator toward the peasant; and (3) attitudes and perceptions of the village peasant toward the administrator.

Historical and Cultural Influences

Historically speaking, bureaucratic centralism is perhaps the most obvious and pervasive characteristic of Egyptian administration. From the ancient rule of the pharaohs to the Roman, Arab, and Ottoman governments, all administrative power was centralized in Cairo or Alexandria. Professor Issawi notes that "the result of all this has been greatly to weaken individualistic feeling and completely to suppress the spirit of municipal enterprise. Several millennia of centralized autocracy have accustomed Egyptians to look to the government to initiate any business whatsoever. At the same time the rapacity of the governors has led to a profound distrust of the government, the effects of which are still visible."[1]

The central government, even today, is a complicated system of controls, communication procedures, and continual reports and inspection schedules. The obvious aim of this system is control, and thus it effectively precludes any meaningful delegation of authority to the lower echelons of the administrative hierarchy. This obviously places a great burden on the senior official who is often completely swamped with so many trivial questions that he has neither the time nor the inclination to concern himself with long-range policy planning or any serious evaluation of the presently functioning programs and procedures.

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[1] Charles Issawi, Egypt in Revolution, p. 7.

This centralist tradition has had a profound impact on the functioning of government administrators in rural Egypt. In general, all decisions on local matters, of both major and minor significance, are made by officials who spend very little time outside Cairo, and most local field officials are subservient and passive in their relationships with their superiors. Initiative and unauthorized action is discouraged. Too many of the local village administrators interviewed exhibited the fahlawi trait of refusing to accept any responsibility which could be evaded. All decisions and questions were automatically verbalized in an "official memo" and passed up to the appropriate superior.

These general attitudes toward initiative and personal responsibility reflect a series of historical and cultural factors, which have already been discussed. In the following paragraphs an effort is made to portray the atmosphere in which the business of administration is conducted in rural Egypt. Many of the circumstances described below are undergoing major change. Certainly, procedures and programs are being reformed and reevaluated continually; hence, behavioral and attitudinal changes may be expected to follow. Nevertheless, the description given here is valid, at least for the rural areas I visited.

One fundamental determinant of the social environment in Egyptian bureaucracy is the great number of university graduates who must, by government decree, be hired by the various ministries. Most of these graduates are urban in background and the quality of their education is not uniformly high. Thus, unfortunately, the supply of poorly trained recruits, most of them unsuitable for employment in the rural areas, generally far exceeds the work that the government has been able to organize effectively for them.

Several directors of social affairs in governorates of both Upper and Lower Egypt candidly remarked that since 1960 the various ministries have been required to hire all graduates assigned to them. One serious problem stems from the fact that young people have little or no choice in the selection of their careers. Each student must make three or four choices from among 12 available faculties in the universities and is then admitted by one of these faculties in terms of the scores he achieved through the national examinations. As a result of this university selection process, large numbers of students are then drawn into government careers that they did not choose or that are forced upon them because of their lower grades.[1]

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[1]One director of social affairs in a Delta governorate stated that since the Ministry of Social Affairs must take large numbers of graduates each year, the ministry usually sends them

Government service is the principal form of employment for most college graduates. Since alternative means of employment at all levels are almost nonexistent, there is no beneficial competition between government and other activities for human services. Hence, the impact of competition--which would normally compel the public bureaucracy to improve its conditions of work to retain its employees--is totally absent. The vicious circle of this government monopoly over employment opportunities coupled with the general tendency of lower-level administrators to do only the bare minimum in the performance of their duties, interacts with an educational system that unfortunately has in many ways not changed much in 50 years. Since 1892, when Lord Cromer required all candidates for appointment into the Egyptian bureaucracy to obtain a secondary school certificate, the entire educational system has been organized with this one view in mind. The certificate became the entrance ticket into the civil service. One writer has criticized this tendency in Egyptian education by noting:

> It is obvious that a national system driving constantly toward such a goal, and producing successive generations of students trained for this goal must inevitably affect the national character. The nature of the training required for government posts clearly weakened Egyptian society in its total neglect of those features of education that make for personality, individuality, initiative, self-reliance, and independent thinking. Government posts offered a sheltered and secluded haven far removed from the activity and competition of ordinary life. The government employee had comparatively easy hours, a good salary, automatic promotions, periodic increases, annual leaves of absence, and a pension waiting for him at the end of the road. Once he could get his foot on the bureaucratic ladder he was ordinarily secure for the rest of his life. But preparation for such a life of security did not call for an education that

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out to the rural governorates. The governorate director has no choice but to assign these young graduates to a village social center. He pointed out that at least 50 percent of these "social workers" did not want to be social workers, have no desire to work in a village, and passively bide their time until they can get a reassignment to Cairo or Alexandria. One tragedy that often occurs is when a new social worker with a passive, often negative, attitude toward his village assignment is sent to a village where the previous social worker had spent two or three years seeking to gain the trust and respect of the villagers. In a matter of weeks, these "misfits" can destroy all the good work of the earlier village administrators.

> would develop the sturdier qualities of personality. Centralized civil machines tend to grind down such independent qualities and to put a premium upon mechanical ability to follow orders, obedience to authority, and subservience to the ascendancy ranks of the bureaucracy.[1]

While one may critize an educational system that seems solely concerned with preparation for government service, the educational process itself is stilted and stultifying. Many of the top educators in Egypt's Ministry of Education have painted glowing pictures of the progress and reform that have occurred in Egyptian education in the past ten years. From personal observations in village schools in rural Egypt, it appears that the process of education is best characterized in terms of formal and stereotyped curriculum in which rote memorization is still the chief method of instruction.

One village school in Kafr al-Shaykh is still vividly remembered. As we entered the school yard, three teachers were observed talking together while their students were in the classrooms shouting the daily recitations. When we entered the classrooms and asked for a demonstration of their reading skills, many of the students were able to read their primer without even looking at the pages. It is little wonder, as one official in the Ministry of Education admitted, that over half of those who complete primary school in rural Egypt are illiterate again within a year or two after graduation. Yet, this system is not unique to the rural areas. Most students, even at the American University in Cairo, for example, prefer "canned" lectures and specific readings. Many of the faculty at the American University admitted that Egyptian students in general have a very difficult time with examinations that require some reflective analysis of material covered or that require the student to utilize the material covered to explain or solve an unfamiliar problem.

One incident that brought home the tendency for even university courses to rely on memorization was when a third-year medical student showed the author the neatly typed notes that his brother had used five years previously when he too had been in medical school. This student had memorized these notes, word for word, and felt assured that he would successfully pass the examination.

While these observations may seem harsh and unfair, they nevertheless reflect a situation that obviously has a profound

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[1] Russell Galt, The Effects of Centralization of Education in Modern Egypt, pp. 53-54.

an opportunity to talk to someone from Cairo. While their problems are in many ways unique, still their attitudes and behavioral patterns are quite similar to those of most officials assigned to work in the rural areas. The following stories are typical of the circumstances and situations these young doctors must face.

One extremely difficult problem for all village officials is the lack of proper facilities and a stimulating environment. One health unit in Sohag had neither electricity nor pure water. The young doctor in the village was from Alexandria. He had never lived in a village before in his life. His family was fairly well-to-do, and he was accustomed to a European standard of living. Upon graduation from medical school, he was assigned to the governorate of Sohag. After three or four weeks orientation at the general hospital in Sohag, he was shown on a map the village where he was to work. With a large trunk and his little black bag, he set out for his village. The first leg of his trip required a three-hour bus ride. He was dropped from the bus at a deserted road junction near the river that he must cross. After dragging his trunk down to the river, he discovered that no felluka (river boat) was available. The temperature was 100 degrees in the shade, and finally, after waiting two hours, he wandered up the river where he met an old woman who guided him to a village with a boat--by now it was nearly 3:00 p.m. He crossed the river only to be told that the village was still three kilometers farther down the road. He hired a donkey to carry his trunk and finally arrived at his new assignment. No one was there to meet him; he found the health unit "a filthy mess--unfit for my dog to live in. The village itself was dirtier than I had ever dreamed." His orderly was asleep when he entered the health unit. The doctor was told that his room was in the back of the health unit. His first 48 hours in the village are best described in his own words: "My room was even dirtier than the reception portion of the health unit. There was no food in the health unit and I didn't dare eat the "baladi" food offered by the 'umdah. Being exhausted, I tried to sleep; yet when I turned back the covers, I discovered a scorpion. There was no electricity, so I spent the rest of the night pacing the floor. For the next three days it was like a nightmare--finally exhausted, nearly famished and completely defeated, I left the village." Although the director of health eventually assigned him to a village with a combined unit, any altruistic feelings that he may have had were obviously dissipated by his early introduction to village life. This doctor was completely discouraged and longed for the moment when he could return to Alexandria.

One woman doctor, who had been assigned to a village located 40 minutes by train from Cairo, generally visited her village only two or three times a week. When she did go, she never stayed more than a few hours. She argued that life in

the village would be impossible, and besides she had a good orderly who ran the clinic when she was not there. If an inspector should visit her clinic during her absence, her orderly would call her and she would then make it a point to be at the clinic every day for a week or two until the inspector returned. One doctor indicated that many of the village physicians make frequent trips to Cairo. When I asked him why the orderlies were willing to cover for these doctors, he laughingly pointed out that the orderlies were in charge of distributing the ma'una (U.S. aid supplies) and this evidently was a rather lucrative business. In many villages in both Lower and Upper Egypt, I noticed that local schoolteachers, agronomists, social workers, and doctors generally commuted each morning to their village from a nearby district or governorate capital.

These comments are not made to suggest that all village workers are discouraged and unwilling to help the villagers. Some officials are obviously dedicated, but they are the exceptions. One of the evaluation teams concluded its report on the government services offered in the village of Abishna with these words:

> The only organization that was universally praised in the village is the health unit. This is due primarily to the faithfulness and sincerity of the doctor who believes in his mission and responsibility. This is the prominent difference between this organization and the other government offices which have adopted bureaucratic and passive methods. . . . [Many of these officials] require or demand a price for their services even when they know the economic circumstances of the fellahin. The veterinarian, for example, would refuse to visit a sick gamoosa until he was paid some bakshish. . . . If we take this veterinarian as an example of a government official who does not perform his duties, we will find that the larger landowners in the village are even willing to offer him financial and material assistance so he will provide his services to them. These are the general conclusions:
>
> (1) Most of the employees in the government organizations feel no sense of responsibility or duty for the work for which they are paid by the State.
>
> (2) Government workers look down on the villagers and only associate with the wealthy and the educated individuals in the village. Their isolation from the fellahin has strengthened an inherited backwardness present in the village and thus has limited the positive influence of these

services in the village community.

(3) Although government services are available in this village, greater concern should be emphasized for the means and methods by which these services are being performed and on the kinds of people in the village who are benefiting from the services.[1]

An Egyptian reader may well interpret this general description of rural bureaucracy in Egypt as an unsympathetic attempt to criticize an administrative system different from the Western model. This is not the aim, for the author left Egypt with the warmest respect for the efforts being made by many government officials to improve and strengthen their administration. Effectiveness, efficiency, and competence are goals that all serious Egyptian administrators are seeking to achieve. The observations here submitted merely suggest a series of problems that must be confronted if bureaucracy in rural Egypt is to gain the acceptance and loyalty of the fellahin--a necessary step for any effective program of reform.

There is a tendency for many village officials to assume that the people with whom they are working and whom they hope to help are essentially rational, however uneducated they may seem to be. It should logically follow, given this assumption, that if the administrator or the party worker has difficulty in putting the programs across, either the fellahin are unusually stupid and cannot see the obvious advantages (to the administrator) of the change, or the official has not been as skillful as he should be in the presentation of his case.

In fact, however, these fellahin often do understand the message perfectly, but they are evaluating these new programs in terms of a hierarchy of values usually quite different from that of the official, whose training, experience, and values are primarily urban in orientation. Thus, the official may infer a stupidity on the part of the peasant or a lack of skill on his part, when in reality neither of these things has anything to do with the peasant's unwillingness to follow the village official.

Many doctors feel that their work in the village is a waste of time. "The peasants are never going to change" is an expression often heard. One doctor explained how, during his first month in a village, he tried to implement a program to clear up bilharziasis among the fellahin. The disease can now be cured through a series of twelve shots, two each week for six weeks. The life cycle of bilharziasis can be broken if

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[1] Lutfi Muhammad Hasan, "Abishna," al-Talī'ah, September 1966, p. 41.

the peasants will urinate on the ground away from the canals.[1] After the doctor spent many hours explaining the hazards of the disease, the fellahin readily agreed to take the shots. For weeks the doctor worked extra hours to ensure that all his patients were given their shots. Yet within three months the doctor was completely discouraged and privately admitted that all motivation he may have had in medical school was now dissipated. Nearly all of the fellahin once cured were again infected with bilharziasis.

Where had this young doctor failed? Here are some of the excuses given by the villagers. The youth complained it was too hot not to swim in the canals; others argued they had to drink the canal water because well water was "tasteless" and impotent. (Many believe that drinking the Nile River water ensures a man's virility.) Many farmers pleaded that the work of irrigation forced them to wade in the canals. The final blow came when the doctor saw a group of the villagers bathing and urinating in the canal. To his dismay, the villager elders explained that the Koran requires each man to wash and cleanse himself (this includes urinating) prior to saying his daily prayers. Therefore, these processes are inevitably carried out on the banks of a canal, where an uninfected person runs the risk of contacting the disease again. The doctor was obviously discouraged from continuing his efforts.

This sense of frustration and agony felt by so many village officials as they seek to help the fellahin is unfortunately usually interpreted by the fellahin as hostility or a feeling of superiority and a lack of understanding. These reinforcing perceptions of what the other person's motivations and thoughts are considered to be tend to result in a "self-fulfilling prophecy." The ability of the fellahin to interpret the village official's frustration as contempt and the tendency for the administrator to see the peasant's unwillingness to change as stubbornness or stupidity renders any attempt on the part of the villagers or bureaucrats to communicate nearly impossible.

Few would deny that maintaining enthusiasm and motivation among young village bureaucrats would, under these circumstances be extremely difficult. Yet many village administrators complain that these conditions would be bearable if their superiors would support them and place reasonable requirements upon them. Many local administrators bitterly criticized their superiors for being completely unsympathetic to their problems. As one young doctor stated: "the central government does not really care about my medical work--all they want is that I

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[1] Bilharziasis is a worm disease similar to hookworm. Many doctors estimate that 60 to 80 percent of all males in many of the rural areas have this disease; see Wendell Cleland, The Population Problem in Egypt, p. 86.

perform my administrative responsibilities. I have so many administrative duties that if I did them properly, I would have no time for my medical practice." Another young doctor pointed out that the governorate inspectors always side with the villagers in any argument: "these inspectors like to show off their influence by publicly castigating the doctor in front of the peasants. All the unsanitary conditions in the village are somehow attributed to the laxiness or ineffectiveness of the doctor."[1] This tendency is also prevalent among the ASU members who energetically seek to increase their influence by criticizing and embarrassing the local bureaucrats.

Peasant Orientations

The general attitude found among the fellahin toward the government structures and government employees presently found in the rural areas must also be taken into account. First, it must be said that only recently has the Egyptian government actively sought an amelioration of living conditions in the rural villages. The traditional fellahin's opinion that government must be avoided is still very prevalent. Throughout Egypt's history, the government has been associated with tax collection, police force, and army conscription. Most villagers are still suspicious and unconvinced that the new government has changed. These suspicions unfortunately have been reinforced by the government's failing to consider all the ramifications of the changes they have sought to introduce.

A student at the American University told me a story of his grandfather, who had been given five feddans of land through the land reform program. When the man measured his piece of land, he found that he had been given four and a half feddans. When the cooperative director explained to him that a certain amount of land had to be deducted for the roads, canals, and village areas, the old peasant was not convinced. In his mind, the government had cheated him and taken advantage of him. Thus, even a program implemented primarily for the benefit of the landless peasants comes to be interpreted as another example of the government's deceit and treachery. This kind of administrative blunder could easily have been avoided with proper planning and foresight. Yet, too often, actions of government officials are reinforcing the very attitudes and behavior they are trying to change.

One excellent analysis of the Egyptian bureaucracy comes to much the same conclusion:

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[1] These doctors were interviewed in January and February 1967.

> There is still plenty of evidence especially in the villages to the effect that officials are resented as such, and are endured merely because of the necessities of the case. One does not find the same happy relations which exist between a capable businessman and a satisfied customer. . . . [All government agencies] should begin to emphasize and work on the problem of their relations with the entire citizen body. . . . But one has to recognize that a change of attitude has to take place as well as the adoption of special measures to give effect to this new attitude. New steps must be taken to correct the present attitude of officials towards the public.[1]

An agricultural expert in Gharbia gives a good example of this problem. He explained that each peasant is given two bags of fertilizer for each feddan of land he owns. All too often the peasant will sell half of his fertilizer on the black market to a larger landowner in order to get some quick cash. At harvest time, when he takes his crops to the co-operative, he finds that his yield is so low that it does not even cover the expenses he has incurred through the cooperative for seeds, fertilizer, equipment, and marketing costs. The peasants blames the cooperative for trying to cheat him and the government agronomist thinks the farmer must either be lazy or stupid since he is unable to follow the instructions on how to increase his yield.

In al-Fayyum a doctor related a situation that obviously reinforces these old attitudes and animostities between government officials and villagers. During 1964 and 1965, the cotton crops were hit especially hard by the cotton-worm. As a result the cooperatives were forced to purchase large amounts of insecticides, which were then deducted from the peasants' profits. Many of the smaller farmers, attempting to increase their profits, would sell a quarter or a third of their crops to the larger owners for immediate cash, their reasoning being that the cooperative would probably give them nothing whether they turned in all or only a portion of their crop. After all the crops had been turned in, the agronomist would be strongly criticized by his superiors for the low yield in his section. He in turn took it out on the fellahin. The peasant, shedding "real fahlawi tears" would swear that he had given his entire crop to the cooperative and that the agronomist was being unfair.

These stories, which are not uncommon, suggest some

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[1] Luther Gullick and James K. Pollock, Government Reorganization in the United Arab Republic, p. 61; emphasis added.

interesting characteristics of the fellah and his relationship to the new government institutions in his village:

(1) The fellah still seeks to trick the "government man" whenever he can.

(2) He has a strong desire to maximize his profits.

(3) He is willing to fake poverty and lack of money to get sympathy.

(4) He is still willing to negotiate and work through the larger landowners.

(5) He has not come to visualize the cooperatives as a beneficial institution created for his interest.

These attitudes are being reinforced and strengthened through an administrative system chained to traditional methods of control and supervision. The problems of bureaucracy in rural Egypt are complex and will not be solved merely by changing administrative organization or bureaucratic procedures. Improvements in performance must be accompanied by corresponding changes in the attitudes and behavioral norms of the peasant and the bureaucrat.

CHAPTER VII

AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN RURAL EGYPT

The accelerated shift from subsistence production to production for market in Egyptian agriculture is taking place at a time when the Egyptian government is more sharply conscious than ever before of its responsibility for national economic welfare and progress. Even in the so-called capitalist countries, laissez-faire is a very old chapter in economic history and private enterprise is largely guided, conditioned and controlled, with the state as the arbiter and regulator.

Situations have thus arisen in which agricultural development is given priority in national development programs where rate of growth is regarded as a dominant factor. Under these circumstances if rapid increase in output is frustrated by the structure of the traditional agricultural sector, the planners are likely to seek short cuts to their objective of a sharp rise in agricultural production. And in a situation where Egypt has inherited an agricultural industry with a dual structure, in which the traditional farming pattern exists side by side with modern agricultural enterprise, this has resulted in strong pressure for the acceleration of structural change in the backward peasant sector. In their haste to swap the gamoosa for the tractor, neither peasant nor administrator-planner is likely to envisage fully the consequences this may have on the ancient concept of agriculture as a way of life.

Government efforts to introduce those conditions and systems under which new technologies can be adopted with both rapidity and efficiency may have strong repercussions on the social structure; structural changes that may or may not facilitate the new forms of agricultural production envisioned for modern Egypt.

Structural Change

The term "agricultural structure" is used here to indicate the manner in which the agents of production are associated to form the agriculture sector of an economy. Thus the main structural features of the traditional subsistence pattern are those of land holdings determined and operated under customary systems of tenure, family farming with its concomitant of small scale

production and lack of capital. Those of commercial farming are, legal control of the use of land, command of labor and of scale of operation, and access to adequate capital. The importance of agriculture structure in relation to development is readily apparent.

In the early twentieth century there was rarely any question of structural change on a large scale in Egypt. Progress was generally based on improvements within the existing pattern, with extension services built up to assist agriculture within the structural framework in which production was already taking place. This early form of development assistance, which had its roots in the modernization policies of Muhammad Ali during the early nineteenth century, was entirely suitable. It could be provided at relatively small unit cost and was capable of inducing comparatively rapid and rewarding returns on the resource invested, for the low subsistence crop yields offered ready scope for improvement. Moreover it was sufficiently general to be widely applicable without heavy dependence on highly trained or specialized professional staff.

It is doubtful if development of Egyptian agricultural production in methods and techniques within the traditional framework has anywhere approached the stage at which further substantial gain would be difficult to attain, as through the introduction or expansion of special crops, greater utilization of mechanization, and increasing intensity in land use; and few agricultural administrators are likely to claim that their extension services in rural Egypt are adequate. Nonetheless there was a widespread tendency in the mid-1950s and early 1960s to seek agricultural improvement through structural change. Several factors have clearly contributed strongly to their tendency: (1) There is little doubt that it has derived in part from the existence for many years of well developed forms of highly organized estate farms or commercial farming enterprises, alongside the indigenous farming patterns. For the most part these were well proven and highly productive concerns and there were obviously good grounds for emulation of their structure and methods as far as that is consistent with balanced development.

Another factor leading to the structural changes in Egyptian agricultural best characterized as state-directed cooperative enterprises was the changing definition of the purpose of peasant agriculture. For the old concept of traditional agriculture as primarily a means of feeding the people has gradually been giving way to the modern concept of agriculture as a producing industry, encouraged and serviced to take a major part in the accelerated development of the Egyptian economy. The need for a government-induced program of agricultural development was defended and legitimized as a

necessary step if advancement was to proceed beyond the limits of improvement possible within the traditional framework. The inability of the individual peasant to cope with the tasks that had to be faced, plus the importance of effective organization and command of capital for such items as land reclamation, irrigation, drainage, machinery, insecticides and fertilizers all suggested the logic of government direction.

There can be no question of the growing pressure in Egypt for radical changes from the structural pattern of traditional agriculture. For most of the planners and economists in Egypt, agricultural development dictated the rate of general progress and although many leaders in the 1950s and 1960s felt there was scope for a greatly enlarged contribution from the agriculture sector in its then present form, still the limitations of traditional farming structures were recognized as obstacles that had to be altered.

Efficient use of the land in the Nile River Valley is clearly a basic necessity for the progress of the Egyptian economy which is so dependent on agriculture for its survival. Unfortunately the family-oriented farming system under customary patterns of tenure is often incompatible with the use of modern techniques and equipment. To gain the benefits of such techniques and equipment, cooperative organization of production in at least some processes is needed. The problems in this field facing Egypt in the 1970s and 1980s pertain to the direction of structural change, the rate at which it is brought about, the methods by which it is to be undertaken, and the institutional manifestations of these changes.

In the pre-revolutionary period of Egypt the common pattern of development for peasant producers under general farming systems was through the expansion of family-owned farms. Progress from subsistence to commercial agriculture was largely a function of the gradual acquisition of additional land and was more a matter of transition than of change, retaining and building on the social structure with which traditional agriculture is so closely integrated. Additionally, development in terms of family units holds the strong subsistence base intact through the developmental period. It would be difficult to devise a safer course of development for the individual peasant-farmer than that in which production for market is grafted onto a system which provides food for the family, with marketed production increasing in importance as progress is made, but with the strong anchor of continued subsistence production as an offset to market risk.

The general weakness of the independent family farming pattern was usually identified in terms of the difficulty of reconciling that concept with the modern image of increasing mechanization and increasing labor efficiency in agricultural production, especially in a country where land fragmentation

and a finite area of cultivable land made increased production in agriculture very difficult. Nonetheless especially in the early years of the Egyptian revolutionary period, there was a general, rather amorphorous, commitment to creating and encouraging a class of farmers usually owning less than 5 feddans.

Governments, however, must plan in a perspective in which the welfare of all sectors of the national economy is taken into account, and the overall plans at this level must seek a balance of short and long term advantage under circumstances in which these aspects are not fully consistent with one another. If the economically more advanced nations are taken as a model, one sees there the family farm as a typical unit of agricultural production being ousted by amalgamation of holdings just as other family industries were so ousted in the past. The production unit in those nations today tends to be one in which the combination of capital, managerial ability, labor, and technological aids is determined by the nature of the enterprise, as distinct from the family farm in which the size of the enterprise is determined by the resources of the family. A general awareness of this pattern of development has encouraged Egyptian leadership to change the agricultural system in this direction. However, it is not clear that given the relative factor endowments in Egypt such a Western structure of agriculture is most efficient or desirable. In Egypt, land is the scarest factor and its productivity must be maximized. Most planners in Egypt, especially in the early 1960s, have believed that the best system involved cooperative farming, with private ownership recognized but with utilization and production decisions mostly determined by the government-directed cooperative institutions.

Rural Cooperatives

Probably most Egyptian leaders realized by 1957, if not earlier, that land reform alone, except as a means to gain political assets, could not solve the problem of agricultural production in Egypt.[1] Let us first mention briefly the three major features which are relevant to our evaluation of the cooperative system: the average size of operating unit, the system of ownership and income distribution, and management of the enterprise. On an average the village agricultural cooperative embraces some 250-300 members, fluctuating largely in terms of the size of the village and the number of cooperatives operating in the village. The key characteristic of the new cooperative system is the pooling of land under the unified

[1] See discussion of Egyptian land reform in thing-chao Tai, Politics and Land Reform (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

management of a cooperative supervisor. The peasant, however, still retains the title or ownership of his land which is regarded as his share of capital contribution to the cooperative. The treatment of capital assets other than land, such as farm implements, farm transport, and draft animals, varies widely from village to village. Concerning draft animals, for example, there existed the following arrangements: (1) individual peasants can keep and feed the animals but other peasants, through the cooperative, may use them on a rental basis; (2) peasants continue to own them but the cooperatives feed them, breed them, and provide medical care and then pay certain fees for using them; or (3) the cooperatives may purchase animals as cooperative property either from its members or from the outside.

At the end of each harvest, the cooperative authorities first deliver a part of its produce to the state to meet input costs, loan obligations, and other cooperative expenses. Certain funds are usually set aside for purchases of common properties, for welfare purposes, or as an investment fund. The percentage of gross that can be set aside for these public investments is carefully controlled by cooperative regulations. The residual is then distributed to the members according to the amount of land each member owns.

The evaluation of the cooperative system in Egypt still revolves around two fundamental concerns: the scale problem and the incentive consideration. However, these two problems are not entirely independent of each other. Furthermore, there are ramifications for each of these two problems.

One type of scale economy may be found in the better utilization of land and other capital goods on farms even before agricultural production was gradually being mechanized. After fragmentary plots were consolidated under a single cooperative system, a much more efficient system of insect control, fertilizing, culvivating, and harvesting was possible. There is also the advantage that instead of each farm household striving for self-sufficiency, the centralized cooperative can allocate each crop to the field best suited to it. Other capital goods can be utilized more fully, too. Another economy, often mentioned for the new agricultural cooperatives is the easier mobilization and better utilization of the labor force. Since the introduction of cooperatives did not alter the man-land ratio, overpopulation was and is a fact-of-life. Many proponents of the present cooperative system argue that this new institutional framework for agricultural production has certain inherent advantages. Cooperatives can now employ excess laborers not only for current production but also for large-scale capital construction and sideline activities in which individual peasants would never consider attempting alone. However, one serious drawback in the development of farm labor

for such a wide range of activities is that with current production remaining more or less unchanged, a great number of cooperative-initiated projects would greatly reduce the per-man share of the cooperative's profits. There is much discussion concerning the small returns many peasants are receiving from their share in the cooperatives and the obvious impact this can have on the commitment and motivation of the participating members.

Theoretically, there is another type of scale economy, often stressed by rural development experts. That is, an enlarged farm organization can hire specialized technicians and agricultural experts. Unfortunately, these benefits have not materialized in most Egyptian agricultural cooperatives largely because of the shortage of trained personnel willing to work closely with the Egyptian peasants.

Equally important in any evaluation of the Egyptian cooperative system is the functioning of the administrative personnel assigned to the cooperative. Unlike individualized farming practices, for cooperatives to function effectively a great deal of planning, organizing and bookkeeping work is required. For a number of reasons the administrative work in an agricultural cooperative is far more difficult than in an industrial enterprise with a comparable number of people to supervise. First, since many farming activities are sequential, it is impossible to adopt a strict scheme of division of labor and specialization among the workers, as is ordinarily done in modern industry. Moreover, farming operations are highly diversified and nonstandardized. There are numerous types of work: for one type, the required effort may vary substantially according to such factors as the quality of soil, the distances involved, weather conditions, and so on. Consequently, it is difficult for the supervisor of a cooperative to make perfect job classifications, to arrange work forces, and to evaluate performance. Second, the timing for various farm operations has a crucial effect on output. Yet a time schedule can hardly be made in advance by a central office. By its very nature, agricultural production entails decentralized, on-the-spot decision-making. People who do not know the growth situation of plants of each field and who do not participate in local production can hardly reach realistic day-to-day decisions. Third, peasants in a large cooperative system are spread out so that discipline and commitment to cooperative goals are difficult to enforce.

The degree of managerial difficulty in cooperative farming appears to be conditioned by two crucial factors. First, the ineffectiveness of management in these cooperatives is a function of the size of the organization--the larger, the more serious the problems. Second, the educational level of peasants matters decisively. Many of the administrative

problems, which clearly have been acute in many Egyptian co-operatives, are related to the fact that an absolute majority of Egyptian peasant-farmers are completely illiterate. They are incapable of handling even the simplest bookkeeping, are consistently suspicious of the government administrator, and lack even the basic educational background needed to integrate much of what the government is attempting to introduce in the rural areas.

The administrative problems of the cooperatives are intimately related to the state of incentives of the peasants. Poor management and supervision inevitably invite complaints and grievances, which in turn weaken farmers' incentives.

There is another important aspect of these cooperatives in Egypt that involves both the scale problem and the state of incentives, and hence is a mixed blessing from an economic standpoint. That is the effect of the new system on risk-taking among individual peasants, a vital ingredient in the introduction and diffusion of new technology. Conceivably, when the individual cooperative is enlarged, it tends to be more able to absorb losses stemming from risky innovations. The peasant alone cannot afford to risk his whole livelihood by adopting new farming techniques or new varieties of seeds when he is uncertain about the results. But a large cooperative can afford to assign experimental plots. On the other hand, there exists among the average Egyptian peasant a certain degree of risk-aversion that acts as a built-in safety-valve in the economy, since it helps avoid disastrous damages from the unscrupulous adoption of wrong or untested innovations or technological changes.

Also even though there has been a sincere effort to encourage the effective utilization of the cooperative system in all parts of rural Egypt, strong criticisms have been raised by members of these cooperatives themselves. Many of these criticisms have been described in the Egyptian press and debated in the National Assembly. The chief complaints mentioned by individuals interviewed during the spring of 1974 included the following:

(1) Many of the supervisors of cooperatives are not adequately trained to work effectively with the peasants and too often they show preferential treatment to the larger landowners.

(2) The boards of directors are often inefficient, unrepresentative, and unqualified in organizing and directing the activities of the cooperative.

(3) Many landowners are beginning to see the cooperative system as a subtle way of introducing collectivization of land and the gradual restriction of private ownership, hence they resist it, sometimes as subtly.

(4) Failure of the cooperatives to maintain an adequate set of records concerning the financial situation of each member. This leads to a general negative feeling that the cooperative keeps two sets of books and much of the profits are being used for the benefit of the government supervisor.

(5) Lack of understanding among the peasants that the cooperatives are required by law to deduct government taxes, bank loans, and all expenses for agricultural input costs before the profits of the cooperative can be distributed.

(6) Many farmers complain that they are forced to grow crops that do not necessarily bring in the most profits. This perception on their part has encouraged many to grow their own crops in isolated areas at the expense of their time commitment to the cooperative agricultural areas.

(7) Some agricultural copperatives were established in villages too small to bear the expenses and costs of a full-fledged cooperative organization. The ineffectiveness of these smaller village cooperatives has stimulated many villagers to turn to the larger landowners for leadership, protection and credit facilities.

Since the early 1970s specific efforts have been made to strengthen the agricultural cooperatives in Egypt. A requirement has been established to ensure that supervisors are graduates of an accredited agricultural college and/or the Institute of Cooperative in order to upgrade the quality of leadership and technical competency among the supervisors. Qualified persons are usually reluctant to live and work in the villages, and the government must pay them higher salaries and offer specific fringe benefits to make living in the countryside sufficiently attractive. Eighty percent of the board of directors of these cooperatives must be landowners of less than five feddan as a means of ensuring greater representation for the smaller farmers. Usually one member of the cooperative board of directors will be a member of the village council as a means of ensuring coordination and some continuity in the discussions and decisions of this village institution. A new system of accounting and auditing procedures has been introduced to discourage fraudulent practices in the cooperatives. Specific controls and a new system of supervision have been introduced in the past two years, but many sources throughout the rural areas continue to complain of incompetency, misunderstanding, and fraud. There is little chance for reform and development until this new institution receives greater attention by the central government. Much has been done, but there is still much more that must be done.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

Poverty is a way of life for nearly two-thirds of the people in Egypt. Poverty means hunger and malnutrition. Malnutrition leads to sickness and general ill-health. Disease, in turn, debilitates and reduces human output, which then aggravates the tendency toward greater poverty. To break this vicious circle requires energy and knowledge and change, aspects of development that unfortunately are lacking in most of the rural villages of Egypt.

To remedy this situation requires a prodigious effort--for Egypt must tackle ill-health and ignorance, increase agricultural and industrial production, provide welfare services, and emancipate the rural communities from the habits and social structures of bygone centuries. The size of such a task is tremendous, for it requires the government to go into the villages, to awaken, inspire, and, in the early stages, to lead. The central government must enlist the enthusiastic support of the village communities to provide the labor for self-help projects and to participate in the introduction of services such as education and health.

Development is primarily a form of communication and persuasion. The fundamental purpose of community development in Egypt is to generate within the fellahin a clear desire for change, which, through progressive adaptation of modern techniques, will lead to their achieving a higher standard of living. Of course, it must be emphasized that the problem is not simply one of the fellahin adopting modern ideas and techniques offered to them by the ministerial agencies of the central government. It is much more a question of adapting these ideas and techniques to suit the culture and values of the people. Somehow a communication bridge has to be constructed between Cairo and the villages to span not only the physical distance but also the centuries that often separate the rural areas from the capital in ideas, values, and patterns of living.

The traditional political structure of rural Egypt is under attack from the central government. Nasser's charismatic appeal and his new political ideology have challenged the peasant village structure of authority. Ancient patterns of power and control that centered in family relationships are

now being questioned by many fellahin and even rejected by a few. The inroads of modernization have weakened the foundation of rural traditionalism. Many peasants are shifting their loyalties from the 'umdah and the old landowning families. Legitimization as a consequence of traditional concepts of authority is gradually decreasing as the predominant political fact of rural Egypt. New structures, institutions, and organizations have been introduced. It is obvious that these new structures, such as the ASU committees, the combined units, agricultural cooperatives, and the village councils have as yet seldom succeeded in generating a strong commitment or sense of loyalty among the rural peasants. Acceptance of authority is still largely a matter of personal relationships. The popular village doctor, the influential ASU leader, or the respected council chairman wield power and authority because of personal, face-to-face relationships that they have developed. Put in a new doctor, a new ASU leader, a new cooperative supervisor, or a new council chairman, and he will have to start all over. Given the attitudes of a vast majority of the peasants and the village officials living in rural Egypt, it appears that the structures herein outlined, described, and analyzed have little chance of gaining wide legitimacy or acceptance in the near future. The solution to the problem must not be conceived as merely a question of administrative reorganization or the establishment of new procedures, laws or regulations. A long-range solution will require a gradual process. Innovation or change is not necessarily resisted by the Egyptian peasant. Opposition develops only when a traditional value is directly attacked or repudiated. It appears that new ideas, values, and behavioral traits will largely be accepted to the degree that the innovations are defined and identified in terms of traditional values or at least shown to hold a higher position in the value hierarchy claimed by the individual.

Nasser's planned program of resocialization through the institutional mechanism of a single political party has been defended by various scholars as the most effective means of introducing a new political culture. Ideology, so the argument runs, is a vital element necessary if the masses are to generate the enthusiasm and commitment necessary for rapid development. Yet, a careful analysis of the ASU and its impact upon the fellahin suggests that ideology usually appeals to but a small segment of the rural population. While many people are stimulated and motivated over the short run, it appears that long-term commitments from the vast majority of the people require more than mass rallies and impassioned speeches. Experience in rural Egypt forces me to go one step further. Not only is ideology ineffective in developing the kinds of attitudes and motivations necessary for growth and development, it may be actually a detriment to this development. Following Professor La Palombara's advice:

> [One should] be extremely wary about the dynamic potential of the so-called 'ideology of development,' attributed to many of the leaders of developing countries. Presumably, such strong, normative commitments to economic or political change offer strong reason to suppose that obstacles or resistence to change will be overcome. Yet, such ideologies themselves constitute obstacles to the successful resolution of several crises. For example, a genuine commitment to economic and social change at all cost may quickly lead to decisions to ride roughshod over traditional institutions, thus creating conditions that surely aggravate problems of integration and legitimacy.[1]

Rural affairs have until only very recently been largely controlled by local leaders. The Nasser regime sought to introduce several major socioeconomic reforms in the Egyptian society. In this effort, they uniformly met resistance from traditional leaders and groups at the local levels. When the modernizing goals were limited, the central government permitted traditional leaders to run village affairs in the age-old fashion. However, since 1960 the Egyptian government has sought to extend the domain and speed of development. The result of this increased effort is the paradoxical situation in which an earlier administrative system, largely left to the control of local leaders, is now attacked for being too centralized. The irony of this criticism rests on the fact that the government now appears to be establishing a local administrative system much more tightly controlled by central government officials than in any earlier period in Egyptian history, and this effective penetration of the rural areas is justified and defended in terms of the government's new commitment to local autonomy and decentralization.

Of course local government is the avowed aim of the present regime in Egypt. Interestingly enough, significant numbers of local leaders, especially in the larger, more populous rural communities, have come to not only accept but even to demand the fruits of modernization and progress. Many local leaders interviewed indicated a strong commitment to the goals and aspirations of the central government, such as extension of roads and bridges, increased literacy, improved sanitation and health measures, more efficient agricultural production, and a further expansion of rural industries. The more one talks with these local leaders, however, the more one realizes that they are not especially eager to raise the money

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[1] Joseph La Palombara, Alternative Strategies for Developing Administrative Capabilities in Emerging Nations, p. 20.

to finance them. They want the central government to pay for development programs, but not to staff and control them. This problem must be recognized by those who would criticize the central government for failure to accept the full implications of its call for decentralization and local government.

Although Sadat's government imposes some taxes on the rural population, most of the revenue has come from the more productive sectors located in the major urban areas and from customs imposed on international trade. Hence, the cost of local improvements had been largely financed from the center. Indeed, it is these urban sources of financial support that have allowed the central government to provide the limited services now available in the rural areas. If the central government has merely advocated change and reform, requiring local structures to finance their own development, it is doubtful if the modernization of the rural areas would have penetrated as deeply as it has.

The weakness of local self-government in rural Egypt means, of course, that the bulk of the citizenry is denied meaningful participation and thus lacks one of the most effective means of generating the acceptance and feelings of legitimacy necessary to institutionalize the new process of decision making and political control. Thus traditional forms of local decision-making appear to persist in the vast majority of village communities. Even where village councils are functioning and local elections are held, they too often tend to be of limited significance. They may, of course, become the focus of great local excitement, and certainly they have an impact on the local scene.[1] Obviously locally elected officials can play only a minor role in a decision-making process dominated, at least financially, by the central government.

One crucial problem facing the effective functioning of local government is the lack of qualified local people. As central government services are offered to the villagers, the more energetic and intelligent young people leave the villages to seek better education and employment opportunities in the urban centers. The frailty of local politics and employment opportunities precludes the rural areas from holding the more competent members of their communities. Instead of contributing to the vigorous growth of a locality, centrally based development deprives it of its best potential leadership, leaving a

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[1] Generally the function of a local election is ceremonial. Village elections in Egypt tend to reflect the relative prestige rating of different families and thus are seldom based on programs or public issues.

residue of partially educated men and women whose level of aspiration has risen more rapidly than their capabilities. Hence, the bitterness and frustration of such a system decreases the likelihood that the local citizen will accept or consider as legitimate the political process that controls his life.

One can strongly argue that a sense of commitment and identification will not gain long-term support until local self-government is strengthened and broadened--not only as a means of providing a truly significant political experience to large sectors of the rural population, but also as a means of controlling and challenging the local functionaries into improving and expanding their services in the village. This growth of locally independent bases of political power requires village institutions financially independent of the bureaucracy and composed of a body of local leaders, not only intellectually competent and reform minded, but more important, genuinely tied to the rural area through solid economic and political interests.

Such comments should not be construed as an argument for immediate completely autonomous self-government for rural communities. Quite the contrary, I believe such policy would lead to stagnation in most villages of rural Egypt. Obviously, the first stages of political, economic, and social development in these traditionally oriented villages require the infusion of external stimulus from the central government. Nevertheless Egypt's experiment in local savings banks suggests that various alternatives are available.

Nasser's regime was plagued with the difficult task of establishing a new set of symbols and a new foundation upon which a sense of legitimacy and commitment could rest. Whether the fellahin come to accept the ideology and institutions presently being introduced into rural Egypt depends in the long run on the extent to which the new regime's party workers and government officials are competent and dedicated to a solution of the peasant's own problems. Although the peasants may eventually perceive their government representatives in this light, the lasting impression of this study should suggest the difficulty of such a development.

Today the Egyptian leaders appear committed to pursuing those programs and policies for rural development initiated by President Nasser. Armed with the powerful memory of Nasser's goals and aspirations, the new regime must now seek to channel this memory into domestic programs that will stimulate development and reforms in the rural areas. Nasser's charisma was real and his influence will be felt long in Egypt. The extent to which Nasser's successors will now build upon his achievements and also learn from his mistakes will largely determine the degree to which the institutions and ideals espoused by Nasser will be institutionalized and legitimized by the Egyptian people.

Peasant and Bullock by Chuah Theah Teng
From the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.