

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INPUT SHEET

FOR AID USE ONLY

Batch 55

1. SUBJECT
CLASSI-
FICATION

A. PRIMARY

TEMPORARY

B. SECONDARY

2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Panamanian district, a case study in the sociology of development

3. AUTHOR(S)

Green, J.W.

4. DOCUMENT DATE

1969

5. NUMBER OF PAGES

226p.

6. ARC NUMBER

ARC

7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS

AID/LA/USAID/Panama

8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (Sponsoring Organization, Publishers, Availability)

9. ABSTRACT

(Development R&D)

(Social Sciences R&D)

10. CONTROL NUMBER

PN-AAD-420

11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT

12. DESCRIPTORS

13. PROJECT NUMBER

14. CONTRACT NUMBER

AID/LA/USAID/Panama

15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

PN AAD-420

AID/LA/Panama



**PANAMANIAN
DISTRICT**

**A CASE STUDY
IN THE SOCIOLOGY
OF DEVELOPMENT**

JUNE 1971

Reprint of JULY 1969 Issue

PANAMANIAN DISTRICT:

A CASE STUDY IN THE

SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT

JAMES WYCHE GREEN

with the collaboration of

José Raúl García de Paredes

USAID Mission to Panama
Panama City, Republic of Panama
July, 1969

PREFACE

In the administration of public affairs, and especially in the aspect of administration concerned with development, the pressures are all too often in the direction of "getting on with it". Projects are sometimes initiated because of, or in the midst of, some crisis situation on the resolution of which the project, although of a long-term nature, is presumed to have a short-term effect; hence the pressure to take action. An atmosphere of this sort is most inhospitable to the notion that careful basic studies are essential and prerequisite to action or even to formulating plans of action. As a consequence, such studies, especially those of a sociological type, fall victim to expediency and are seldom done, while the programs that were generated without their benefit may either muddle through inefficiently or even fail to accomplish their objectives.

Background and Chronology:

For more than two years the Government of Panama with USAID assistance has promoted a program of community development in the *barriadas* of Panama City. When the Government as a part of its thrust to the grass roots decided to expand this program to the remainder of the country, a unique opportunity was provided to do the kind of study which should have preceded the urban program. The results are presented in this report. Although it has been done under forced draft and suffers somewhat from this fact, it is believed to provide some critical insights which could not have been obtained in other ways. These understandings can be of use not only in the establishment of a national CD program consistent with the major realities of rural-small-town Panamanian socio-economic-political structure and function, but also in providing guidance to programs in the fields of agriculture, health, and education, and even more in local government with which community development is so closely tied.

The original verbal proposal that such a study should be made was voiced in October 1968. By January a joint decision by the Government of Panama and USAID to make the study had been made and a draft of the study outline produced. The latter was subjected to criticism, redrafted and submitted for comment to the GOP Director General of Planning and Administration and to the directorate and chiefs of offices and divisions within USAID. Individual conferences were held with the head of the

Department of Planning of the General Directorate of Planning and Administration and with each of the division and office chiefs of USAID. Insofar as possible their ideas were incorporated into the plan of study.

Field data collection in the District of Macaracas began on 24 February and continued through 2 April. A subsequent trip to Macaracas was made by one member of the study team in early May. Meanwhile, the Macaracas data were supplemented by other data gathered at regional offices in Las Tablas and in national offices in Panama City. When the initial drafts of the first eleven chapters had been completed in early June, both members of the study team returned to Macaracas and Las Tablas for several days to gather the additional data which the analysis had indicated were essential. This visit also provided an opportunity for subjecting some of the analyses and comments to criticism by Macaracas residents.

Audiences:

The study results are directed primarily at the formulators of development policy and directors of development programs implemented in Panama at the district and community levels. Prominent in this group within the Government of Panama are the Director General and the department-chiefs in the Directorate General of Planning and Administration; the Ministers and department heads of the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education, Finance and Treasury, Public Works, Labor and Social Welfare, and Government and Justice; the Director General of Community Development, and the Director of the Office of Community Development and his staff; and the Director General of various other separate agencies such as IRHE, IDAAN, and IVU which carry out development within the districts and communities of Panama.

Second in importance to the development arms of the Government of Panama are the directors and division chiefs of the various international agencies which give development advice and assistance to the Government - USAID, IADB, IBRD, CARE, UNTAB, UNESCO and others.

Although all of these government ministries, separate agencies and international organizations have access to the statistical and other mass data on Panama, their leaders may never have had nor expect to have an opportunity for first-hand comprehensive study of a Panamanian community or district.

Since there is an increasing realization by development personnel of the inter-sectoral effects of development within any sector, such a holistic study as this one may reveal to them (1) at least part of the basis for these complex effects, (2) why planning for any part must take into account the whole socio-political economy, and (3) why it is imperative to plan with, not for, the people at the community and district levels.

The third audience are the technicians, the specialists within both the Government and USAID, who know far more about their own specialties than they will learn in this tome, but who, nevertheless, may gain an understanding of how their particular sector or project interrelates with the societal complex as a whole at the local impact level, where they all too frequently have had little opportunity to live and learn.

Fourth are those newcomers to the official ranks of the international development agencies who would like to grasp an idea of what organized life is like in small-town and rural Panama, as either a substitute for or an introduction and guide to their own first-hand study.

Another audience, of course, is composed of other researchers in the growing field of the sociology of development who hopefully will test these findings by doing similar but better studies in other districts of Panama and in the districts of other countries of the developing world.

It hardly needs saying that this study is not aimed at the general public, in part because of the frankness of certain of the discussions which bear upon recognizable personalities in Macaracas. It is expected that within Panama this study will be used exclusively within the government and the international development agencies. If a copy should come inadvertently into the hands of those personally acquainted with some of the "characters in our plot", it is hoped that they will not be offended as no offense is meant. To have been less than frank would have nullified the purposes of the study. To have made this a classified document would have restricted its intended readership and thereby greatly reduced such value as it may have.

Acknowledgments:

In the planning of the study design, the collection of the field data, its analysis and the writing of the results, the

study team has had the fullest support from all concerned. We are especially indebted to Dr. Nicolás Ardito Barletta, Director General of Planning and Administration in the Presidency of the Republic, for seeing the need for and utility of such a study and for making possible the collaboration of Professor García de Paredes; to Mr. Rafael Carrizo, Director of the Office of Urban Community Development who has undertaken the task of translating the study and publishing it in Spanish; to the Alcalde and the other officials in the district of Macaracas, the Governor and officials of the Province of Los Santos, and the people of Macaracas all of whom gave so freely of their time and thought.

Also to be thanked are the directorate of USAID and the chiefs and members of the various USAID divisions who participated in the planning of the study, reviewed certain chapters and participated in seminars focused on their method and content, and later arranged for production of the report in its present form; USIS-USAID Liaison Officer, Tabor Dunman, for participating in the editing of the final draft; Ramón Cerezo for the photography; and Mrs. Eleonor R. Jacobs and the staff of CUNA International for the layout and printing of the English version. Last, but by no means least, we wish to express our gratitude to Mrs. Mayra Young, Secretary of the Community Development Division of USAID, who typed all first drafts, supervised the typing of later drafts and the final copy, and managed the many details of producing the study from the initiation of field work to the final draft for the printer; to Miss Mariela Morais for meticulously typing and proof-reading; and to Mrs. Olga Shirley and Mrs. Rosa Him of the Community Development Division for helping Mrs. Young and Miss Morais when called upon, and for bearing a larger than usual share of the normal work load of the division.

And now for a word concerning the collaboration with Professor García de Paredes. Professor García de Paredes, an M.A. in history and member of the General Directorate of Planning and Administration, joined the study in mid-February and has given his full time and attention to it from then until its completion. He was particularly effective in the field work which depended for its quality upon eliciting free, uninhibited responses from those interviewed. To accomplish this result requires the phrasing of questions and a manner of putting them which is at once nondirective and empathetic, probing but not judgmental, persistent but not irritating. For most interviewers this type of questioning is very difficult to learn and some

never get the hang of it. For Professor Garcia de Paredes it came naturally, so that between us we were able to conduct the interviews quickly and efficiently, while our informants showed both in their manner and in their performance that they thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Furthermore, he read all drafts and contributed insights to both the analyses and their presentation. I can only say that it was most fortunate that Professor Garcia de Paredes chose to collaborate in this endeavor. It is hoped that with the experience gained from it he will be able to carry out similar studies in other districts of Panama.

While all of those mentioned and many who have not been singled out for thanks contributed in their various ways, I alone am responsible for whatever shortcomings the study may have. Needless to say, the analyses, commentaries, and propositions are not necessarily shared in by either the Government of Panama or USAID/Panama.

J.W.G.
Panama City
Republic of Panama
July, 1969

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Title Page	iii
Dedication Page	v
Preface	vii
List of Annexes	xiv
List of Illustrations	xv
List of Spanish Terms Used	xvi
Chapter 1 <u>Introduction</u>	1
A. Study Objectives	1
B. Method of Study	2
C. General Description of Macaracas District	8
Chapter 2 <u>The Agriculture and Livestock Sector</u>	14
A. The Agrarian Economy	14
B. The MAG Agricultural Agent	24
C. The IFE Agency	32
D. A Chapter of the Cattlemen's Association	35
E. Small Farmers	36
F. The MAG Home Agency	40
Chapter 3 <u>Municipal Government: The Alcalde</u>	48
A. Composition and Appointments	48
B. Functions of the Alcalde	49
C. Problems of the Alcalde	57
D. Status of the Corregidores	58
E. General Functions of the Corregidor	59
F. Problems of the Corregidores	61
G. Regidores and Comisarios	62
H. Analysis and Comment	63
Chapter 4 <u>Municipal Government: The Municipal Council</u>	70
A. The Municipal Council	70
B. The Council Secretary	73
C. The Municipal Treasurer	74
D. Budget - 1968	77
E. Associations	80
F. Analysis and Comment	81
Chapter 5 <u>Municipal Government: Justice</u>	87
A. The Personero	87
B. The Municipal Judge	90
C. Analysis and Comment	93

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter 6 <u>Public Education</u>	96
A. Schools, Teachers and Students	96
B. The Macaracas School: "Rudecinda Rodríguez"	98
C. A One-Teacher School: Chupafto	102
D. A One-Teacher School: El Tallo	104
E. The Municipal Board of Education	106
F. Teachers' Associations	109
G. School Inspection and Adult Education	111
H. Padres de Familia Clubs	115
I. Analysis and Commentary	118
Chapter 7 <u>Public Health</u>	124
A. Integrated Health Center	124
B. The Health and Welfare Committee	127
C. The Inspector of Sanitation	130
D. Municipal Board of Health	132
E. Folk Medicine	133
F. Analysis and Comment	133
Chapter 8 <u>Other Government Offices</u>	136
A. Collector of Revenue	136
B. Identity Card and Elections Registry Office	139
C. Analysis and Comment	139
Chapter 9 <u>Voluntary Agencies</u>	141
A. The Lions Club	141
B. The Firemen's Brigade	143
C. The Municipal Sports Board	146
D. Betterment Societies	148
E. Analysis and Comment	149
Chapter 10 <u>Religion and Morals</u>	152
A. The Priest and the Church	152
B. Morals and Social Problems	159
C. Analysis and Comment	161
Chapter 11 <u>Community Development</u>	163
A. What is the Community?	163
B. Public Development Efforts	166
C. Perceived Needs	173
D. Approaches to CD	176
E. Analysis and Comment	178
F. A Proposal	180
Chapter 12 <u>Summary and Projection</u>	189
A. To Understand Organized Life	189
B. To Formulate Propositions	190
C. Towards a Sociology of Development	199

<u>Annexes</u>	<u>Page</u>
A. List of Interviewees	200
B. List of Documents Consulted	202
C. Cases of Law Violations Adjudicated by the Alcalde	204
D. Cases Arbitrated by the Alcalde	207
E. Municipal Land Titling Procedures	210

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<u>Photo</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Farmer carrying motete for transporting produce	18
2	Typical farm house in Macaracas district	18
3	Slashed-and-burn field planted with rice and corn	21
4	La Villa river valley used to grow tomatoes under irrigation	23
5	Typical Brahma beef cattle	23
6	Milk oxcart on Chupá-Macaracas road	25
7	Milk collecting station, Macaracas	25
8	Juzgado Municipal	91
9	Peace Corps Volunteer teaching English, Macaracas	101
10	Self-help-built school at Chupaíto	101
11	The first Alianza-aided school in area, Los Leales	101
12	Centro de Salud Integrado, Macaracas	128
13	Doctor and patient, Centro de Salud Integrado, Macaracas	128
14	Artesian well	128
15	Macaracas church undergoing major repairs	155
16	La Mesa Health Sub Center	155
17	Self-help-constructed bridge over La Villa river at Macaracas	168
	Map of Macaracas district	213

LIST OF SPANISH TERMS USED

abarrotería - small store
Acción Cívica - the Civic Action Agency of the National Guard
acueducto - aqueduct
acuerdos - municipal laws
agente agrícola - agricultural agent
agente del hogar - home extension agent
agentes vendedores de club - installment "club" salesmen
alcalde - mayor
alfabetización - literacy education
alumbrado - street lighting
APCI - Asociación Panameña de Cooperación Inter-Municipal
Panamanian Association of Inter-Municipal Cooperation
arena - tax on each load of sand taken from a river
arrendamiento de tierras nacionales - lease of government lands
banda de guerra - war band (buglers and drums)
billar - billiard hall
boleta de citación - citation slip
boletas timbres - certificate stamp
bombas de gasolina - gasoline stations
botellas - "bottles", i.e. office-holders who do not work,
sinecures
Brigada de Bomberos - Firemen's Brigade
brujo - witch doctor
cabecera - capital, the town of Macaracas
caciques - bosses
cajas de música - jukeboxes
capilla - chapel
Capítulo de Ganaderos - chapter of the cattlemen's association
carretas - oxcarts
Casa Comunal - community building
caserío - populated place, hamlet
caso de alimento - support of a dependent child
catastro distritorial - municipal cadaster
cédula - identity card
Centro de Salud Integrado - Integrated Health Center, "hospital"
Club de Amas de Casa - Homemakers Club
Club de Leones - Lions Club
Club de Padres de Familia - Parent-Teachers Association
comedor pre-escolar - nutrition program for pre-school children
Comité Consejero de la Agencia - Advisory Committee
Comité de Salud Pública - Public Health Committee
Comité de Salud y Bienestar - Health and Welfare Committee
compadre - godfather

matrícula - license for stores
multas - fines
municipio - municipality
nutrición aplicada - applied nutrition
oficial de estadística - official in charge of vital statistics
Oficina de Cedulación y Registro Civil - Office of Identity Cards and Elections Registry
papel sellado - government stamped paper
parque - park
paz y salvo - certificate of taxes paid
peones - hired hands
permiso para rozas y quemas - permit to slash and/or burn
personero - prosecutor
pesas y medidas - weights and measures
piladoras - rice or coffee mills
portera - porter
procurador - attorney general
quema - to burn a field, plot, pasture
quincha - mud plastered
recaudador de ingresos - collector of revenue
refresquería - refreshment stand or soda fountain
regidor - municipal government official under the corregidor
Registro Civil - civil register
renovación de patente comercial - commercial patent renewal
resolución - resolution
restaurante - restaurant
roza - slash and burn
sacrificio de ganado - permit to kill an animal
secretario de la alcaldía - secretary of the mayor's office
Sociedad Pro Mejoras de Macaracas - Society for the Betterment of Macaracas
timbres ganaderos - national tax per animal sold out of the district
tinterillos - unlicensed advocate, counsellor
tosca - disintegrated stone
turismo - tourism
ventas de licores al por menor - retail sales of whiskies
ventas de tierras nacionales - sales of government lands
viáticos - per diem
yerberos - herb doctor

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In Panama, the municipality (municipio) is the basic territorial unit of government. The Constitution states that the State itself rests upon a community of autonomous municipalities. Each municipality is defined as a political organization established over an area - a district - in which there are neighborly relations, and which has an economic capacity sufficient to support a proper local government (Art. 186). The sixty-three districts and their municipalities presently in Panama have been grouped into nine provinces. Each district is subdivided into corregimientos, the number and boundaries of which are the responsibility of the district government, the Municipal Council (Concejo Municipal). Although the municipalities have never had the full autonomy claimed for them by the Constitution, they remain primary units of local government, and constitute the entities, either singly or in combination, for central government administration.

A. Study Objectives

Since the district is the basic political unit in Panama, it follows that to understand the process of government, both local and national, it is essential to study the district. But the district is more than the political unit. It is also a social unit ("an area in which there are neighborly relations"), and an economic entity ("has an economic capacity sufficient to support a proper local government"). Therefore, if one would be informed about Panamanian society in its social and economic dimensions, as well as politically, it is imperative to study the units of these dimensions, the districts. By this statement we do not mean to exclude other units or aspects as proper objects of study, but merely to point out the primacy of the district.

More specifically, the two-fold purpose of this study is:

- (1) To understand the organized life of a district conceived of as an entity of interdependent communities. It has been assumed that each part or aspect of life within the community is functionally interrelated

with some or all other parts or aspects. Therefore, a way to understand the community and the district is to study them as wholes, especially the interrelationships between their respective parts.

(2) To formulate, on the basis of this understanding of a district, a series of propositions, or tentative courses of action, for testing through study in other districts, culminating in local, regional and national development policies and programs more nearly in accord with the real world of rural and small-town Panama where the majority of its people live.

B. Method of Study

Selection of a District:

With the likelihood that the present study team would be unable to study in detail more than one district, the selection of this district assumed greater importance than it would have had if it had been planned to study several in detail. Therefore, a great deal of care was devoted to finding a "representative" district. This task proved to be impossible, of course, as there is no district among the 63 in Panama which is not atypical in one or more ways when such factors as type and scale of farming or ranching, ethnic composition, income levels, degree of isolation from cities and from the major highways, presence of industry, and size of towns within the district are considered.

However, as is true in any country some districts are less representative than others. As an aid in eliminating the less representative, all districts were placed in one of three size categories, on the assumption that size as measured by population numbers is an index of social, economic and political complexity. This device proved useful in subsequent discussions with various people who had had long and varied work experience in rural and small-town Panama. As a result of these discussions, it was possible to eliminate rather easily a large proportion of the districts, because of their atypicality in size or in some other outstanding feature, leaving a group of some fifteen for further consideration. Each of these was discussed at length in comparison with the others until a group judgment could be made to keep it for further discussion or to eliminate it as less typical on some characteristic.

Finally, a total of sixty districts were eliminated leaving only three, Ocú, Pesé and Macaracas, all within a short distance of one other in the Azuero Peninsula. It was then decided to visit each of these districts in turn and map its sociographic units (communities, corregimientos, etc.) before making a final decision. The team began with Macaracas but never reached either Ocú or Pesé, for two reasons. First, the alcalde (mayor) and others in Macaracas who helped in the sociographic exercise were highly desirous that Macaracas should be selected for study. They persisted in this view even when repeatedly told that there would be no relationship between making the study and the level of development assistance which the district studied would receive. Second, the time required to make the sociographic study was much longer than had been anticipated, owing to the poor road system and the difficulties inherent in getting accurate data on many inaccessible places. It soon became apparent that much of the time allotted to field work would be consumed in this preliminary phase, if all three districts were mapped sociographically. This difficulty, plus the unexpected whole-hearted welcome by the Macaraqueños, made the choice of Macaracas inevitable.

Sociographic Description:

As stated above, the first task undertaken in Macaracas was the mapping and description of such entities within the district as had the most meaning to the people. On the basis of observations in other countries, it had been assumed that these would consist of naturally evolving territorial units which would be identified as "communities" by the people living within them and would not be determined by legal boundaries. It had been further assumed that the legal subdivisions of the district, i.e. the corregimientos, would not be major units of study. It is sufficient to say here that both assumptions were soon shown to be in large part erroneous. The meaningful entity below the district level was found to be the corregimiento, composed of small "caseros" or populated places. Fortunately, the populated places which existed in 1960 had been listed by corregimiento and by population in the National Census of 1960 (Censos Nacionales de 1960, Vol. 1 Lugares Poblados de la República). This simplified to a considerable extent the mapping and descriptions.

Nine of the ten corregimientos in Macaracas district were visited and data obtained from the corregidor (governor of a corregimiento) and from other residents on the following factors:

- (1) Boundaries of the corregimiento, why they were so placed, integrative forces such as trading centers, the chief crop and livestock products, migration, etc.
- (2) Descriptions of the caseríos, or populated places, by number and type of stores, markets, mills, bars, dance halls, schools, chapels, cemeteries, roads, and other institutions or services.
- (3) Interrelationships of the caseríos and their use of services and institutions outside of the corregimiento.
- (4) Voluntary organizations and government or municipal offices together with names of office-holders.
- (5) Problems and needs in order of primary concern to the people of the corregimiento.

Organizational Study:

All types of organizations found in Macaracas, both public and private, were studied more or less intensively using a modified role analysis procedure. It was assumed that what an organization is and how it actually works is best understood first, through the eyes of those who fill the positions in its structure, and second, from the perspectives of position-occupants in other organizations which interact with the focal organization. A brief outline of role analysis items (not procedure) used in Macaracas follows:

- (1) Structure of organization including organizational charts or other devices to identify positions and formal interrelationships, to whom and in what manner each position-occupant reports, who reports to the position-occupant and how, with whom he works laterally within his or other organizations, clients, etc.
- (2) Functions of the position including objectives, duties, responsibilities, and functions actually performed, why and in what manner, and with what result.
- (3) Problems preventing maximum performance including the nature of each problem (who, what, when, etc.), how it affects performance, and possible solutions.
- (4) Increasing role competence through training or otherwise.

(5) Changes in goals and objectives, in functions to achieve goals, in structures to serve functions, and in interrelationships with others.

The procedure of role analysis used was highly nondirective. After having given the respondent an explanation of the study and of what kinds of items on which his views were being sought, he was permitted to proceed with what he considered to be relevant and to tell his story in his own way. When appropriate, nondirective probing was used to extend both the depth and breadth of his discourse. Documents and other matter were examined when relevant to an understanding of the respondent's role and of his organization's structure and functioning. A nonjudgmental attitude was maintained by the study team by concentrating solely on understanding as the respondent understood whatever it was that he was explaining.

Although it is desirable in studying an organization to interview holders of positions at each level of the organization, this was not always done in Macaracas owing to time limitations. Where it was not done it, of course, constitutes a deficiency in the study. On the other hand, the occupants of all positions within the municipal government, except some of the concejales and the watchmen, and all occupants of central government positions were interviewed at length and in considerable depth. Where there were a number of organizations of one kind, such as the Padres de Familia Clubs (Parents Clubs) representatives of several clubs were interviewed. The same was true for the position of corregidor six of whose occupants gave data on this important role.

In a few cases interviews in Macaracas were not carried out with the degree of thoroughness which is indicated by the above description of procedure. In these cases time and circumstance made a full-length interview impossible, while in a few other cases the mid-nineties heat and long work days prevented the team from probing to the extent that its members would have done under less torrid conditions. Where these lapses caused deficiencies in the data needed to make proper analysis, attempts have been made to plug the gaps by returning to Macaracas for more interviews, or, when possible, by consulting other sources.

One strength of the interviewing procedure used should be mentioned, that of having both members of the study team present at practically every interview. This made it possible

to have two points of view focussed on the same matter. It often resulted in further probing and in following up leads which would not have been noticed had only one interviewer been present.

Analysis and Writing:

The data, consisting of some 275 pages of notes and a stack of 20 documents, was coded and cross-coded using a code prepared from an overview of the data itself. (See Annexes A and B for a list of interviewees and documents consulted.) During the course of the analysis and writing the need for several new topics became apparent and these were added to the code. Likewise, insufficient data to warrant analysis caused the elimination of parts of the code.

The first sections of each chapter have been devoted to as objective a presentation as possible of the findings of the study. An attempt was made "to tell it like it is". Analysis and commentary have been reserved for sections clearly marked as such towards the end of those chapters regarding the contents of which we had something to say. The various propositions, courses of action, proposals and the like which make up these sections are believed to have validity for Macaracas. When they are presented in such a way as to suggest broader applicability it is always with the proviso, stated or implied, that testing in other districts before application to policy and program is a major desideratum.

As stated above, it became apparent during the drafting that more data would be required to adequately treat a number of the topics. These omissions and needs for clarifications were recorded and made the basis for further visits to the field. As second drafts of some of the chapters were completed, copies were distributed within USAID and seminars were held on the chapter topics. The agricultural sector, municipal government, education and community development were treated in this manner. These seminars were useful in clarifying a number of issues and in giving a feedback to the study team resulting in an improvement, it is hoped, in the quality of the presentation.

Limitations of the Study:

A major strength of this study, the "wholeness" of the entity (a district) dealt with, is at the same time its major weakness. That is, we have used all of our resources on only one district and, therefore, it is not possible to generalize from

this study to the region of which Macaracas is a part, nor to the entire country. The larger plan of which this study is the first segment envisages a replication of this investigation in two other districts of the country, or at least further investigation of those parts of the study considered to be most strategic for development. Although three out of sixty-three districts cannot be considered a scientific sample, it is believed that studies of the three "less nonrepresentative" districts (see "Selection of a District" above) will provide sufficient knowledge of the structural-functional regularities in the social systems through which social life is lived in rural-small-town Panama to make qualified generalizations possible. For example, a detailed study of the position-role of the alcalde or of the Padres de Familia clubs in three districts would provide, it is believed, something on the order of ninety to ninety-five percent of the structural-functional similarities and disjunctions to be found if a study were to be made of all the alcaldes and all the Padres de Familia clubs in Panama.

The study of only one district may be defended in a similar manner on the assumption that there is a great deal of structural-functional and cultural regularity in Panamanian rural-small-town society. This is especially true in those sectors of the society which are governed by the same laws and regulations, e.g. the position-role of alcalde, or which are organized around institutions which operate under the same laws and regulations, e.g. the Padres de Familia Clubs organized around the schools. To the extent then that this assumption is true, to that extent it may be safe to extrapolate with proper safeguards the findings of the study of Macaracas to other areas. From the point of view of government officials, a question may also be legitimately raised as to whether it is better to generalize from the bits and pieces of present knowledge, as is done every day in setting policies and making programs, or whether it is better to take into account the findings of a systematic study such as this one, even though it is only for one district, and to generalize from it if no better data are available.

A second limitation of this research has been alluded to above in the discussion of organizational study. There is little doubt that interviews of additional position-occupants within certain of the organizations analyzed, and in some instances, greater faithfulness to the role analysis procedure would have produced better quality data. The analysis has revealed in several cases that too little attention was given to the inter-relationships amongst positions and organizations. More

specific probing for these linkages would have produced better data. This probing, it is estimated, would have prolonged the field work phase by several days, but in retrospect it would have been worth the price.

C. General Description of Macaracas District

Macaracas town, the capital of Macaracas District in the Province of Los Santos, lies very close to the center of the Azuero Peninsula. It is located on the main paved road from Tonosí to El Cruce, a road junction half-way between Chitré and Las Tablas. Across the La Villa River from the town of Macaracas is the district of Los Pozos in the Province of Herrera. Thus, the town lies adjacent to the district and provincial line, with most of the district lying to the north-east, east, south, and southwest of the capital. (See map.) The district area comprises 488 square kilometers with a population in 1960 of 11,520, estimated at 14,000 in 1969.

The economy of the district is described in Chapter 2 "The Agriculture and Livestock Sector", in terms of land ownership, land use system, and products and markets. Politically the district is presently subdivided into ten corregimientos, each governed by a corregidor appointed by the alcalde of the municipality. The legislative function of the municipality, or local government, is discharged by a seven-member Municipal Council, while the judicial function is performed jointly by the alcalde and two employees of the central government, the prosecutor (personero) and the judge (juez).

The corregimientos are composed of contiguous caseríos, or populated places as they are called in the census. Some idea of their size distribution is shown in Table 1.1. It will be noted that about one-third of the caseríos are very tiny having less than 25 persons, while somewhat more than one-third have populations between 25 and 75. The mean population is 78.5 and the median is about 51. The caseríos are scattered over the landscape and generally have little relationship to one another except for the common use of schools and small stores (abarroterías).

The importance of the town of Macaracas is shown in its concentration of a variety of institutions and services (Table 1.2). Although in 1960 the cabecera (the town of Macaracas and its corregimiento) had only half the population of the

TABLE -- 1.1 CASERIOS IN THE CORREGIMIENTOS OF MACARACAS DISTRICT BY POPULATION CATEGORIES

CORREGIMIENTO	TOTAL Popula- tion	No. of Case- rios	Population Categories						
			25 or less	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-250	250-500 +	500 & over
Cabecera del Distrito	1,183	10	5	-	2	-	2	-	1
Bahfa Honda	845	8	1	2	1	1	2	1	-
Bajos de Güera 1/	1,052	22	8	4	7	2	1	-	-
Corozal	843	9	1	-	2	4	2	-	-
Chupá	1,181	11	4	1	2	1	1	2	-
Espino Amarillo	527	10	4	1	1	2	2	-	-
Llano de Piedra	2,339	21	6	5	1	2	6	-	1
La Mesa 1/	910	11	3	3	2	1	1	1	-
Mogollón	732	16	7	3	4	1	1	-	-
Las Palmas	830	15	3	5	2	4	1	-	-
TOTALS	10,442	133	42	24	24	18	19	4	2
		100%	31.6%	18.8%	18.8%	13.5%	14.3%	3.0%	1.5%

1/ Added La Higuera, pop. 92, to the Corregimiento of La Mesa, erroneously shown in Census as part of Bajos de Güera.

Source: Censos Nacionales de 1960, Vol. 1, Lugares Poblados de la República.

TABLE -- 1.2 INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES IN THE CORREGIMIENTOS OF MACARACAS DISTRICT, MARCH 1969

CORREGIMIENTOS	SCHOOLS			Parents Club	Small Store	Large Store	Coffee or Rice Mill	Bar and/or Dance Hall	Chapel	Other
	1- Teacher	2- Teacher	3+ Teachers							
Cabecera del Distrito		1	2	2	3	9	2	6	1*	e/
Bahfa Honda	1a/	2b/	-	1	4	-	1	1	-	1 cemetery
Bajos de Güera	6	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	4 cemeteries
Corozal	1	-	1	1	4	-	1	1	-	1 cemetery 1 restaurant
Chupá	1	1	1	2	3	-	1	-	1	1 cemetery
Espino Amarillo	1	1	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	2 cemeteries
Llano de Piedra	3	3	1	2	11	2	1	2	2**	1 cemetery
La Mesa	1	2	1	1	8	-	3	2	1	1 Health Sub-Center 3 Private electric plants 1 cemetery
Las Palmas	3	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	1 cemetery
Mogollón	2	-	-	2	8	-	-	-	-	
TOTALS	19	11	6	13c/	56d/	11	9	12	5	

10

a/ Reported by Min. Ed. as having 2 teachers
 b/ Reported by Min. Ed. as having 3 teachers
 c/ Believed to be underreported by 3 to 5 more or less active clubs
 d/ Underreported by 7 according to records of Municipal Treasurer
 e/ Other institutions and services in the Cabecera del Distrito:
 1 cemetery, 1 pharmacy, 1 slaughter house, 1 market
 4 restaurants, 1 library, 1 National Guard Post and jail, 1 Health Center, 1 electric plant, 1 telegraph office, 1 mobile bank (Banco Nacional) visit per week.

* at Los Higos
 ** one in Llano de Piedra town and one in Bombachito

corregimiento of Llano de Piedra, and the town of Macaracas itself (763) was slightly smaller than the town of Llano de Piedra (887), at the time of the study Macaracas town had far more of the larger stores, the bars and the specialty services (pharmacy, restaurants, library, health center, etc.), as well as the various local and national government offices used by the whole district. Macaracas town is believed to have a population of about 1,000 at present.

Relationships to Other Districts:

The cities of Las Tablas and Chitré are important shopping centers for the people of Macaracas District, but most of the produce of the district - cattle, pigs, chickens, rice, maize, and beans - are sold either directly, or for the smaller producers through commission buyers, in Panama City. Both Las Tablas and Chitré have banks which are patronized by the few in the district who have need of their services. Las Tablas, as capital of the Province, assumes a greater degree of importance in governmental matters. Under the present government the governor appoints the municipal government and oversees its operation. The central government for the most part maintains its regional offices in Las Tablas, the major exception being MACI with headquarters in Chitré. The hospital in Los Santos, supplemented by those at Las Tablas and Chitré, receives the overflow of ordinary cases from the Macaracas Health Center as well as those types which the Center cannot handle.

As mentioned earlier, the town of Macaracas lies across the river from the district of Los Pozos. A good part of this district is much closer to Macaracas than to its own capital, and the road to Macaracas is better although not open in the winter months to other than bullock carts and horses. As a result, a number of the people of Los Pozos come to Macaracas to shop and to use the Health Center. This relationship is made possible by the construction of the bridge across the La Villa River built by the aided self-help efforts of the people of Los Pozos in 1959. Several of the larger landowners in Macaracas are reported to have large holdings also in Los Pozos.

The people of the district of Tonosí use Macaracas to some extent for shopping and for visits to the Health Center, since Macaracas is about half-way between Tonosí and Chitré or Las Tablas on the paved road. This situation is likely to change in a year or two with the completion of a new road directly from Tonosí through Pedasí to Las Tablas. Even when this road is

completed, it is likely that some of those living in the northern part of Tonosí district will find it more convenient (and cheaper) to use the Health Center at Macaracas than to go more than twice as far to Las Tablas.

Migration:

There appear to be two types of migration from Macaracas. The first and most important is that of families moving out in search of land; the second concerns single girls seeking work.

The search for land is occasioned by the process of ecological succession. The amount of land available for slashing and burning and subsequent short-term cultivation has been decreasing each year in Macaracas (see the "Land Use System" in Chapter 2). For the most part those lands which have been slashed, burned and cultivated for a few years have been subsequently acquired by cattlemen who have converted them to pastures. This process has been hastened by a lack of roads for transporting produce to market, and the lack of experience in and liking by small farmers for plowing, fertilizing, etc., required in permanent agriculture.

Just as the lack of land in Macaracas for slash-and-burn agriculture is the push factor, so the supposed availability of such land further east "pulls" families to them. Lands in the general area of Chepo and Pacora and further east, and on the lake north of Chorrera (Bajo Grande) have been the destinations for most of those who have migrated from Macaracas within the last four or five years. A few others have gone into Tonosí, but this movement has been of minor importance. In only one corregimiento was it reported that a family had moved to Panama City. The explanation is that the people of Macaracas are first and last farmers and cattlemen and have no desire to settle in a city and try to adapt to other work.

When the poorer families have decided to leave they have usually sold their land and cattle. Thus, when those who have been unsuccessful in the new locations have returned, they have had to accept employment as peones or in a few cases as sharecroppers. Others of a higher level of income have usually been to the new areas to have a try before selling out in Macaracas. About one or two families out of five who go, it is estimated, return to Macaracas.

The amount of migration was difficult to determine as the method of study did not lend itself to the gathering of systematic data on this point. Based on the estimates solicited in the course of fourteen interviews covering all parts of the district, it appears that no more than 2 or 3 percent of the families have migrated in the last five years, perhaps 45-60 families in all. There has been considerable variation by corregimiento with Chupá, Corozal, Mogollón and Llano de Piedra leading in migrants. This is not surprising in view of the fact that it is in these areas that slash-and-burn lands either have become scarcest, or are unsuitable for crops because of their steepness (in parts of Mogollón). In the case of Bajos de Güera there was some movement several years ago into Tonosí by families which first sold their own lands to immigrants from around Chitré where land pressures were even greater than in Macaracas. The general opinion was that total migration from Macaracas was quite small when compared to that from the settled agricultural areas around Las Tablas and Chitré.

One of the regidores (assistant corregidor) in the cabecera told of moving his family to Chepo some years ago where he worked for four years on one farm along with thirteen other families. He finally decided to return to Macaracas and to his own small holding for two reasons. The immediate impetus was a dispute and fight among the families over the land. However, for some time he had already become increasingly restive because the landowner was permitting the farmers to cultivate for only one year each parcel of land which they had slashed and burned. At the end of the first harvest the farmer was required by the landowner to seed grass on the harvested fields and then move on to new wooded lands the following year, even though the lands were believed to be sufficiently fertile to be used for crops for five or six years. Having to slash and burn each year increased the labor involved to the point that it was no longer profitable to remain, and the regidor decided to return to his own small holding in Macaracas.

Aside from the movement of agricultural families, there is a constant drift of unmarried girls to the cabecera and other nearby towns where they work for a short time as housemaids before going on to Panama City for similar employment. Frequently, these girls become pregnant in the city, have one or more children there, and then return their offspring to their parents to be raised, while they continue working in the city to support their children.

CHAPTER 2

THE AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK SECTOR

The Agrarian Economy

Agricultural and livestock production provides the basis of the economy of Macaracas district. Some knowledge of this economy is, of course, very useful in understanding the social-cultural-political life of the people - the primary objective of the study. The facts presented below concerning land ownership, the land use system, and products and markets are not meant as definitive treatments of these subjects, but are only a brief compilation of such facts as emerged in investigations primarily oriented to other ends.

Land Ownership:

For the most part land is held in small farms which produce agricultural and livestock products principally for home consumption and a small surplus for sale. There are very few farmers who do not sell at least \$200 - \$300 of farm products in a year, but about half of them probably sell less than \$1,000 annually. Irrespective of the size of the farming operation most of those who farm for a living live in their own houses. Even those who are "landless" will usually own a small plot on which their very modest home is located, surrounded by plantains and containing a few chickens and pigs which usually have the run of the land (and often of the house as well).

As Table 2.1 shows, two-thirds of the land owners in Macaracas in 1969 owned less than 25 hectares. In the mixed grazing-crops economy characteristic of the area all of these would have to be classed as small farmers. But one-fifth of the total owned less than two hectares, barely enough for the house site described above. Slightly more than one-fourth could be classified as medium-sized, owning from 25 to 100 hectares, while the remainder (only 6.2%) with holdings of more than 100 hectares could be called large operators.

It is evident from the table that considerable change occurred in the pattern of holdings from 1960 to 1969. The total number of landowners decreased by 20%. There was no change in the numbers of house plot holders (less than 2 hectares), but a very great drop in the numbers having from 2 to 5 hectares (503 vs 166) and in the 5 to 10 hectare group

(348 vs 207). For each size grouping above 10 hectares, with the exception of one, there was an increase in the numbers of owners, probably reflecting the absorption of the smaller slash-and-burn operations by the medium and larger cattlemen.

TABLE 2.1

DISTRIBUTION OF OWNERS OF REAL ESTATE
LOCATED IN MACARACAS DISTRICT BY NUMBERS OF
HECTARES OWNED, 1960 AND 1969

Number of Hectares Owned	Number of Owners		Percentage of all Owners	
	1960	1969	1960	1969
TOTALS	2070	1649*	100.0	100.1
0 - 1.9	343	342	16.6	20.7
2.0 - 4.9	503	166	24.3	10.1
5.0 - 9.9	348	207	16.8	12.6
10.0 - 24.9	319	380	15.4	23.0
25.0 - 49.9	360	277	17.4	16.8
50.0 - 99.9	124	176	6.0	10.7
100.0 - 199.9	60	74	2.9	4.5
200.0 - 499.9	12	26	0.6	1.6
500 and over	1	1	-	.1

* Note discrepancy between this total and the total of 1677 shown in Table 2.2, accounted for through errors in hand tabulating of machine data.

Sources:

(1) Censos Nacionales de 1960, Segundo Censo Agropecuario Vol. III, Government of the Republic of Panama.

(2) Machine Tabulations provided by Catastro Fiscal.

There are a few large cattlemen, perhaps six or seven in the entire district. One man (from Macaracas town) is credited with owning about 1,000 head of cattle, a large part of them in another district; another with having about 2,000 head, part on land in corregimiento Mogollón and part in other districts. Two others are

reported to have 400-500 head each (Macaracas residents) and one other (in La Mesa corregimiento) is said to have 300 head. While there are some fair-sized blocks of land in a single ownership, the larger owners usually possess land in more than one block and in more than one community. For example, one of those mentioned above as having 500 hectares holds this land in four separate communities in this district and in the adjoining district of Los Pozos.

As Table 2.2 indicates, two-thirds of all ownerships of land are in a single plot, while one out of five owners have two plots and one out of eight owns three or more.

TABLE-2.2

DISTRIBUTION OF OWNERS OF REAL ESTATE IN
MACARACAS DISTRICT BY NUMBERS OF
PLOTS OWNED, 1969

Number of Plots Owned	Number of Owners	Percentage of All Owners
1	1146	68.3
2	321	19.1
3	113	6.7
4	56	3.3
5	21	1.3
6 and over	20	1.2
TOTAL	1677*	99.9

Source: Machine tabulations provided by the Catastro Fiscal.

* Note discrepancy between this total and the total of 1649 shown in Table 2.1, accounted for through errors in hand tabulating of machine data.

The larger landowners employ some of the smaller farm owners or landless ("peones") during part of the year, usually at rates of \$1.00 to \$1.50 per day. The cattleman who is reported to have 2,000 head is credited with hiring more than a hundred peones, some for full-time and some for part-time work.

to cut brush, fence, brand livestock, take to market, etc. small but increasing number of others work in the commercial tomato fields during the summer months at \$1.50 per day.

Records of the Catastro Fiscal show that only 175 of the 2631 lots (predios), or 6.7% , are titled. In a technical sense, the remainder might be said to be occupied by squatters on state's property. However, this is definitely not the perspective of the people of Macaracas district. A person "owns" land in Macaracas either by virtue of original occupancy or by purchase from a previous owner, i.e. an occupant who had possessory rights. In either case ownership of a tract is further legitimized by fencing it. This system of ownership is recognized by everyone. In fact, titled land, it was reported by the alcalde, sells for no more per hectare than does untitled land of the same quality. The only advantage inhering in possession of a title is ability to use it as collateral for a bank loan. But banks will ordinarily lend only to the large well-established cattlemen, and it was their lands which were said to compose most of the lands with titles. Until the present time having a title made the owner liable for property taxes, a fact which has kept registrations low. The present government has decreed that beginning in 1970 all land will be taxed irrespective of nonpossession of a title.

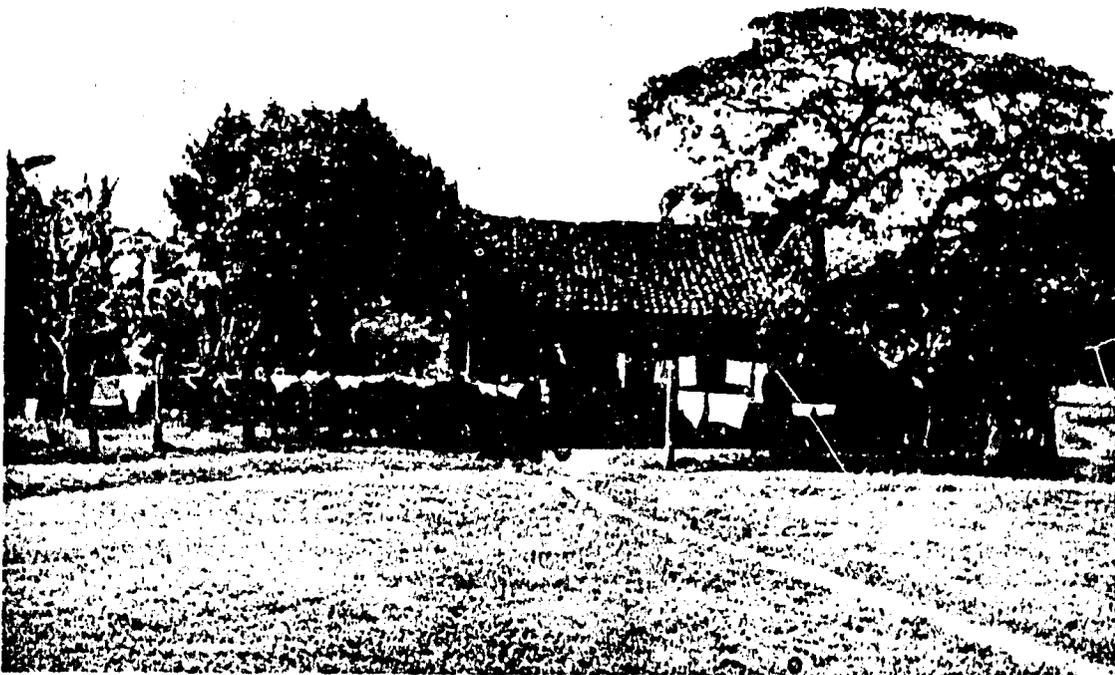
Land Use System:

The land of Macaracas district was originally covered with forests. Today, only a small proportion of the total area, perhaps as little as 10% , is woodland, little of which is original growth. This change has been brought about largely within the past one hundred years through the familiar system of slash and burn (roza). Under this system the trees and underbrush are felled on a plot large enough in which to produce a sufficient harvest to satisfy the cultivator's consumption needs, plus a small surplus for sale. During the latter part of the summer months when the felled trees and brush are dry enough (usually in March or April) permission is obtained from the alcalde's office to burn the plot (hold a quema). The rains which follow beginning in April provide sufficient moisture for planting among the stumps such crops as rice and maize. There is usually a sufficient quantity of natural nutrients in the soil to sustain crops at an acceptable level of productivity for about three years, although some good land (near Chepo) has been reported as usable for as much as five years. Then another plot of woodland is cut, burned and used in the same way, with the used plot reverting to brush or to pasture.



PHOTO 1 Farmer carrying motete for transporting produce

PHOTO 2 Typical farm house in Macaracas district



A generation or more ago before the present population pressure on the land the brush lands eventually produced trees again, but in recent years, owing to a shortage of forests, it has become increasingly necessary to return to these brushy plots after only two, three or four years for a second slashing and burning. However, since the accumulated soil nutrients are in much smaller quantity than after the first roza, the plot can be used for only one year or at most two without artificial fertilization. After the second usage, the plot either reverts again to brush, or more recently to pasturage for cattle. At this stage the small owner may sell out to a larger cattleman and migrate to other areas where he can continue his slash-and-burn system. Or, he may follow the same system on a share-cropping arrangement on the remaining timbered or brushy hillsides controlled by the larger cattlemen. A third variation permissible for those who own as much as 15 or 20 hectares is to rotate the land, one-third in crops each year and two-thirds in brush. In contrast to these variations of slash-and-burn is that of settled agriculture, barely beginning in Macaracas except along the river bottoms. Under this system such lands as are suitable are plowed and artificial fertilizers used to replace the lost natural fertility.

The process of ecological succession from forests to permanent pasture or stunted brush, plus small amounts suitable for plowing, has been completed on perhaps 85% of the lands of the district. Because of the hilly to mountainous nature of the topography most (perhaps 90%) of this cleared land is used for pasture. The pastures begin to produce good grazing by the latter part of May and continue to be productive until about a month after the rains stop in December. Except for those remote lands which lie near the summits of the mountains and which may receive small rains during the summer, pasturage is for the most part minimal from mid-January to mid-May.

Products and Markets:

Upland rice and maize are the leading crops produced both for consumption and for sale mostly in the towns of Macaracas, Sabana Grande and Las Tablas. Other crops grown primarily for home consumption but with small quantities marketed are beans, plantain, yuca and yams. The holdings in the more favored mountainous areas such as Mogollón produce coffee both for local consumption and for sale. However, the price has been so low recently, reportedly because of smuggling, as to make it a crop of declining value.

A considerable quantity of cane is produced on the lowlands especially on the larger farms, but the market for the molasses, to which the cane juice is reduced by boiling during the summer months, has declined owing to competition from the large sugar mills in other parts of the country. The last three or four years has seen a great increase in the production of tomatoes for sale to a plant at Natá with smaller quantities going to the plant of another company in David where, in both plants, they are processed into tomato paste, juice, etc. Tomatoes are produced on the more or less level lands beside rivers which have a sufficient quantity of water during the summer months to permit pump irrigation. It is estimated that the number of commercial producers has risen to more than thirty in the current year with a production of more than three million pounds. The farm price fixed by the Natá-based company for the current year is reported to be \$2.80 per hundred pounds. This appears to be sufficiently high to stimulate a further increase in production.

More important than the sale of crops are livestock, especially cattle, with chickens and pigs in sufficient quantity to be classed as important sources of income. Practically all of the cattle, chickens and pigs are trucked to Panama City. Poultry are often brought to collecting points on roads and carried in crates to Panama atop old buses called "chivas gallineras". One small farmer from an isolated caserío in the corregimiento of Llano de Piedra reported that he buys chickens in his area until he has collected at least 70 or 80. These are then transported to the town in baskets slung over his horses, 30 fowls per horse. He pays the bus driver ten cents per fowl for transport to Panama City but rides free himself. Now that there is a fixed price per pound in Panama City, he is quite happy with the reliability of the operation.

The principal uses to which land was put by landowners in 1960 are shown in Table 2.3. Although comparable data for 1969 are not available, it is believed that the land devoted to rice and maize has decreased moderately while coffee has dropped drastically in importance. Meanwhile, cattle-raising has increased sharply along with moderate gains for poultry, pigs and tomatoes.

PHOTO 3 Slashed-and-burn field planted with rice and corn



TABLE 2.3

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES ON LANDOWNER HOLDINGS

MACARACAS DISTRICT, 1960

Principal Use	Landowners	
	Number	Percentage
TOTAL	2070	100.1
Rice	844	40.8
Maize	306	14.8
Coffee	271	13.1
Cattle	230	11.1
Poultry	133	6.4
Plantain	77	3.7
Pigs	66	3.2
Sugar cane	49	2.4
Oranges	8	.4
Other products	86	4.2

Source: Censos Nacionales de 1960, Segundo Censo Agropecuario, Vol. III. Government of the Republic of Panama.

The Macaracas Milk Plant:

A recent development with great present and even greater potential impact on Macaracas was the location there in early 1968 of a milk collection plant. This plant receives milk from the producers in returnable ten gallon cans. It is tested to determine specific gravity (how much water has been added), weighed, cooled and pumped into a large tank truck for shipment to the manufacturing plant at Natá. At present there are 13 routes to the plant served by small privately-owned trucks and one oxcart under contract to the company. Four of these routes serve parts of the districts of Los Pozos, Los Santos and Tonosí. Three of the thirteen routes operate only in the summer time as the roads used are too bad for winter use. A large proportion of the milk is delivered by horseback or oxcart to collecting points on those routes which use the only hard-surfaced road in the district and the best of the remaining roads. Parts of some of the routes using the non-hard-surfaced roads become impassable in winter and milk must be taken farther along the road by cart or on horseback, or it is lost.

PHOTO 4 La Villa river valley used to grow tomatoes under irrigation

PHOTO 5 Typical Brahma beef cattle



During this last winter (i.e. wet season) of about seven to eight months duration, the plant received an average of approximately 23,000 liters per day, but only 3,000-4,000 per day in summer. The base price paid was \$0.09 per liter, plus a bonus of \$0.02 per liter during the months of January through May. A further bonus of \$0.02 per liter is promised at the end of the year for all the milk which is delivered by each producer in excess of his total production in 1968. Other methods used by the company to stimulate production include the offering of loans to producers to construct silos (only one such loan had been made), the giving of letters of recommendation to banks to enable producers to obtain credit to finance production inputs, the selling of bulls of milk type cattle to the producers, and the donating of funds to build new roads (\$1,000 was given for a new road from Macaracas district to Veraguas on the west coast being constructed by the Capitulo de Ganaderos and others).

According to the President of the Municipal Council, the previous Council gave the milk company a fourteen-year relief from local taxation as an incentive to locate at Macaracas. The former IFE agent has noted a big change and quickening of the local economy through the regular infusion of money from the sale of milk. Using the production figures given above we arrive at a gross annual production of 6 million liters which at the base rate of \$0.09 means a total disbursement of \$540,000 per year. Although production is increasing, it is limited by two primary factors, the poor roads in winter and the lack of pasturage or other feed in summer. The MAG agricultural agent has advocated a decrease in the acreage along rivers devoted to unprofitable cane molasses production and its use to produce summer forage crops. Although some cane is now being fed to cattle, irrigated pastures and hay fields would be more productive.

In addition to the Macaracas milk plant operations, another company is reported to have a route into the district.

B. The MAG Agricultural Agent

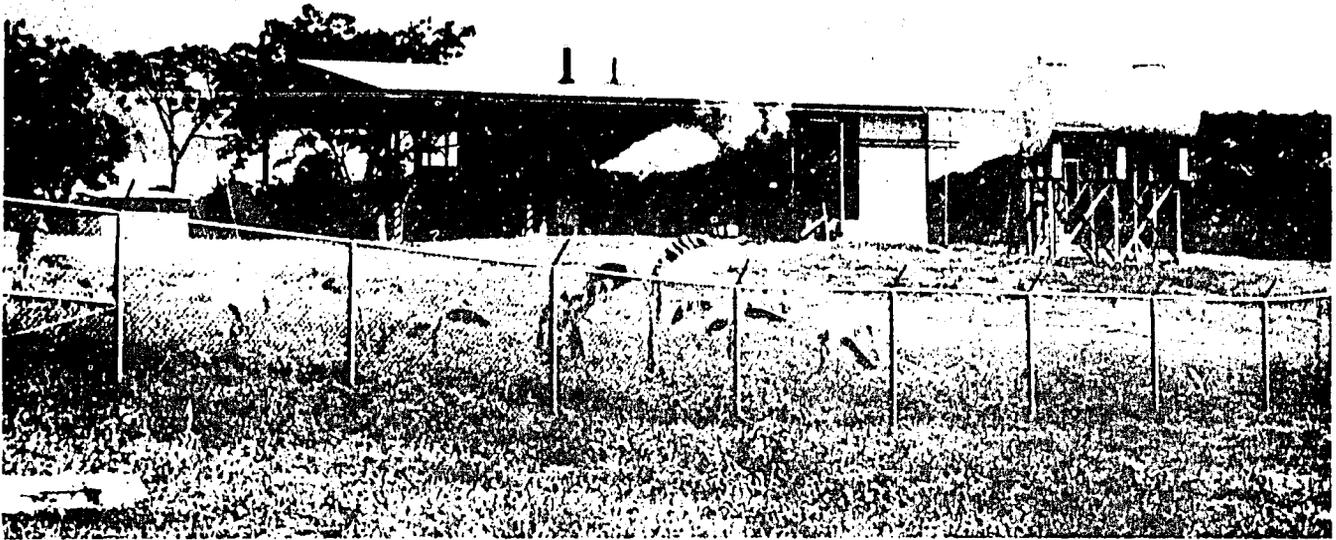
The MAG District Office: 1/

The office of the Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería (MAG) in Macaracas has consisted normally of one agricultural

1/ The MAG office was known as the MACI office (Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry) until a recent division of this ministry, creating two ministries, "MCI" and "MAG".

PHOTO 6 Milk oxcart on Chupá-Macaracas road

PHOTO 7 Milk collecting station, Macaracas



agent (agente agrícola) in charge, one 4-S Club agent for rural youth activities, one home agent (agente del hogar) for work among rural women and girls, one office secretary and one peon. Until his transfer to Chitré last November there was also a veterinarian. Although he may be used occasionally by cattlemen of the district, he must be paid for his services except those relating to T.B. testing and the control of certain other diseases. The services of the agents in the district office are free. This office serves the entire district of Macaracas, and parts of the districts of Los Santos and Guararé.

In early March the office consisted only of the home agent. The former 4-S agent had been promoted to agricultural agent in mid-'68 and assigned to another district. The former agricultural agent was reported as being dismissed in February '69. However, he returned in mid-March and stated that he had been restored to the Macaracas position. (When the study team returned for its final visit to Macaracas in mid-June, it was informed that the agent had resigned.)

In addition to the personnel assigned to the Macaracas office, the agricultural agent named seven specialists stationed at Chitré who were more or less available. These consisted of three in plant culture; one for animal husbandry, one veterinarian, one agricultural engineer and one for cooperatives. Various other specialists are stationed at the national level. The specialists were reported as visiting the districts on a schedule which they follow when they have transport, the lack of which is a severe problem. Some of these specialists work directly with farmers on special crops and not through the agents.

The agricultural agent had worked for the previous five years in Macaracas and before that was an IFE agent for a similar length of time in another district.

Until this year the MACI office had an Advisory Committee (Comité Consejero de la Agencia) composed of four women and one man which was supposed to meet monthly. However, this year it was omitted from the annual plan of work and is no longer in being.

Functions^{*/}:

In addition to serving as administrative chief of the MAG office, the agent reported that his major function has been

^{*/} Note reservations as to the reliability of this data in the "Other Viewpoints" section below.

extension education of adults and youth in both agriculture and animal husbandry. From time to time he has engaged also in a number of special programs including the IFE-MACI-AII credit program for crops and livestock, improvement of pastures in cooperation with the Capítulo de Ganaderos (chapter of the cattlemen's association), fertilization programs undertaken by FAO, campaigns for the production of corn and other crops, an experimental forest and reforestation program carried out by the Forest Department of MACI and FAO, and the applied nutrition program for school children conducted by the Ministry of Education.

Agricultural (including animal husbandry) extension activities have been planned annually for each community served for each month in the year by the agent with the approval of the extension supervisor from Chitré. Although he has had responsibility for the entire area described above, he was actually working only in those communities which are on the only paved road, since the other roads are so bad in winter that he has had to abandon the communities located on them. Last year efforts were made to work in all nine communities along the paved road, but this year he and the home agent have decided to work in only five, two of which, the towns of Macaracas and Llano de Piedra, are located within Macaracas district.

The extension procedure followed, he stated, has been to make visits to the communities selected, administer questionnaires and set up small demonstrations of FAO fertilizers and insecticides, etc., to try to win the confidence of the farmers. The ultimate end is to organize a farmers' (or cattlemen's) club and to carry out the agent's monthly program through these clubs. A minimum of ten members is required for organization. He stated that the Ganaderos Club in Macaracas had thirteen members and the one in Llano de Piedra contained eleven. Two other clubs have been organized in the adjacent district where the land is better suited to crops. There he plans to have demonstrations to teach in one field all aspects of agriculture: soil analysis, soil preparation, good seed, planting techniques, controlling weeds, harvesting and conservation of harvests.

The Macaracas Ganaderos Club, he reported, has been meeting twice monthly at the corral of a member. The agent has tried to have present a specialist such as the regional veterinarian to vaccinate the cattle of the host member with the other members as helpers, or to treat cattle for the horn rot or other diseases. This Ganaderos Club, he explained, is different from the Capítulo de la Asociación Nacional de Ganaderos, but the members of the

club are for the most part members of the capitulo. The agent reported that the club was interested in technical practices while the capitulo was used for obtaining better markets, prizes at fairs, etc.

In discussing the possibility of a loan program for small farmers earning under \$1,000 per year, the agent stated that he did not work with any persons in this category. This was borne out by his inability to give us but one name in the district who might be so classified.

Problems:

The most important problem, the agent believed, has been the backwardness of the cattlemen, but he thinks they are beginning to use better practices as he has been working with them during the past two years. The greatest obstacle to his effectiveness has been the poor condition of the roads. Although they were worked on by tractors during the political campaign last year, they were still very poor. Adding to his immobility has been the absence of a vehicle. Last year the office had a car in operation for only five months as it was immobilized much of the time for the lack of tires and mechanical repair. This caused him to make only sporadic visits to the clubs thereby cutting down greatly on his effectiveness. What he needed most, he felt, was a car with double traction similar to the one sent to Macaracas for a short time by a former minister.

His third problem has been the short tenure of 4-S agents, four of whom have left Macaracas in the last five years, either for political reasons or to get better jobs. An even greater problem has been the difficulty of organizing clubs in some communities. Although people would come to demonstrations, they would not join a club. When asked why he did not concentrate on demonstrations since these were more successful, he replied that actually he had done this to some extent in the past, but he had been down-graded by his supervisor for not following the program which had been planned around clubs. Furthermore, if he programmed more demonstrations and less club work, he would receive a low rating as this would conflict with extension philosophy.

The final problem mentioned has been the inherent conflict between his duties as a credit agent (under the IFE-MACI-AID program) and his extension functions. Frequently farmers come to his office to make applications for loans. If he happens to

be absent on extension duties, they will not make their applications. If he stays in his office to serve them, he misses scheduled extension meetings. His solution is to have full-time extension and full-time loan staffs.

Other Viewpoints:

Following information given by the agent, attempts were made by the study team to find the leaders or other members of the cattlemen's clubs in Macaracas and Llano de Piedra. One of those named by the agent as active in the club denied any knowledge of the Macaracas club's existence, while the other stated that he had attended an organizational meeting in January but had heard nothing further of it. One of the leading cattlemen active in the capitulo (president of the Municipal Council) had not heard of the club, and doubted that it actually existed. In Llano de Piedra the story was much the same. It appears that such a club had been formed at one time but that it was no longer active, although there were twelve active members of the Capitulo de Ganaderos in the town.

Other respondents, with first-hand knowledge of the operations of the MAG office and believed to be reliable reporters, stated that little agricultural extension or other agricultural work was actually performed by this office. Last year the vehicle assigned to the office was used for political work, on behalf of the losing candidate as it turned out. Often appointments for meetings had not been kept in either La Mesa or in Tres Quebradas. As a result the agricultural work had failed in both places. A credibility gap had developed in the latter place because of the practice of inducing individuals who owned good pigs to exhibit the pigs at the fair as the product of MACI assistance, although in fact these people had received no assistance from MACI. Lately, people merely shake their heads when the agent is mentioned.

Analysis and Commentary:

The purpose of this study is not to evaluate persons. The only objective in recounting individual behavior is to get at the structure-function of the system in which the individual holds a significant position. In the present case, what is important is the outline of the role of the agricultural agent which emerges, and the performance of this role by the agent which appears to be far below the expectations of relevant others in the situation.

This in turn raises questions as to the agency's ability to supervise and to support its agents in the conduct of future programs which require a high level of performance.

But more important than the quality of personnel and its supervision are the apparent structural faults in the MAG system of agricultural education as presently exemplified in Macaracas. After five years of effort there is only one cattlemen's club in the district and it appears to have had a still-birth. It is obvious that putting the emphasis on forming clubs, a structural arrangement, has taken precedence over functional extension education, i.e. providing the particular kind of instruction in technical knowledge and skills to those who want them irrespective of the size of the group or their "clubiness". It is always possible to form a club later, if the group decides after functioning successfully that a club is needed. If the instruction does not meet the needs of the group, organizing a club only formalizes failure.

If this suggested approach is followed, one alternative might be to use the network of corregidores, regidores and other community "leaders" throughout the district who are in close contact with their communities, and who know to a large extent, or can easily find out, what their neighbors' agricultural needs-dispositions are. The evidence is that their want, insofar as agriculture is concerned, is not for a club but for production credit, farm-to-market roads and technical assistance of specific kinds, especially for means of controlling diseases of livestock. Moreover, this network is available through cooperation with the alcalde. Its members are able to find out what the people really want and to what they will respond, if anything (and there is no guarantee that anything an agent may offer will have any appeal). However, if there is a response - a request for assistance - the agent then must be willing to go where the people live and to provide the services and instruction they want. The provision of four-wheel drive vehicles is only a partial answer in getting there, as a very large part of the district is not reachable even by this type of car for five or six months of the year. But horses, which are used by most of the farmers, can reach almost any part of the district within two hours ride, except when afternoon rains make the rivers unfordable for several hours. Extension workers at a similar stage of development in some other countries found that they could be effective by giving service, and with it instruction to individual farmers and small groups of those interested in a particular skill or knowledge, until they had proven themselves to the people and could move on to a higher level of organization.

Another alternative might be to attempt to work with the existing organizations in the district. As the description of the Padres de Familia clubs in a later chapter indicates, several of them already engage in development activities in their respective communities. They provide ready-made avenues of approach to large groups of farmers over the entire district. This is not to suggest that the clubs can be taken over and used as such for agricultural extension activities. What is projected is the feasibility of requesting permission of school authorities and club officers to attend club meetings for presentation of the services and education in agriculture which the agent is prepared to offer, followed by a determination on the part of the farmers of what they need and want and what they will support. To the extent that there is a coincidence between his capacity and their needs, this initial contact could lead to small group meetings, or to invitations to visit farms in order to give methods instruction to the farmer and possibly to his neighbors, or to establish result demonstrations, etc.

Only after at least a year or two of successful work with a group should any attempt be made to organize a club, and then only if those with whom the agent works demand one. Clubiness is neither a part of this culture, nor is the culture supportive of clubs, i.e. there is no norm of "joining" organizations. In fact, the isolated settlement patterns, political divisions, perception of socio-economic class differences, etc., all mitigate against formation of clubs unless there is a strong structural reason, e.g. children in school and the necessity for group action to support the school, the basis for the Padres de Familia clubs.

One word of caution is appropriate before any attempt is made to enlarge the extension clientele. The agent must be able to meet the demands which arise. Of equal importance, he must possess the skills and knowledge required to satisfy the need-dispositions to learn which he has stimulated. He must be able "to deliver", or he must be able to bring in others when needed who are able to perform. Without such knowledge and skills no amount of extension "philosophy", organization, or techniques will be effective. With such knowledge and skills and a genuine willingness to bring them to the farmer, agricultural extension education can be effective in Macaracas.

C. The IFE Agency

Organization:

The IFE office consisted of one agente de crédito and one clerk. The agent had had eight years experience in IFE, the last three of which were spent in Macaracas. During the latter part of the field study he was promoted to the provincial office in Las Tablas.

In addition to the paid staff there was an IFE Credit Committee composed of five local farmer-cattlemen appointed by the central office of IFE from a list of ten names submitted by the IFE agent. This committee met once, twice or as many as three times monthly depending upon the number of loan applications received. Members were paid \$3 per day for expenses. Those who lived at a great distance from the town received a transportation allowance as well.

Functions:

The function of this office has been to extend certain types of production credit to agriculturists and to cattlemen. Most of the clients in Macaracas have been both cattlemen and farmers, and loans have been made to them for the production of either live-stock or agricultural products. In 1968 a total of 90 loans were made, 23 for agriculture and 67 for livestock. Of the livestock loans 52 were for cattle (beef) projects, 31 for milk cattle, and 15 for pigs. The total of 98 projects within 67 loans indicate that many loans were made for more than one class of stock.

The cattle projects consisted principally of buying breeding stock both for beef and for milk purposes. A total of 727 cows and bulls were purchased. Included in the total of cattle loans (\$76,200) were projects for increasing the effectiveness of the farm by putting up fences and improving pastures for the most part, but also including the construction of a few roofed milking stalls. A total of 195 hectares of pasture were rehabilitated through cutting bushes and fencing, but only 1 borrower used funds for purchasing fertilizers for use on pastures. The 15 loans for pigs totaled \$5,900 and were made for purchasing improved breeding stock. The 23 agriculture loans were used to finance 23 hectares of upland rice (preparing land, seeds, fertilizers, etc.), 102 hectares of corn, 25 of coffee, 44 of tomatoes for commercial canning, and 4 of onions.

Since inception of the last BID loan to IFE 109 loans using BID funds have been made in Macaracas. During this same period IFE made 123 loans from its own sources. During the three years, 1966 - 68 in which the IFE-MACI-AID loan program was effective in Macaracas, 64 loans, 51 of which were for cattle, fences and pastures, were made for a total of \$34,046. Twenty, representing \$8,012, have been repaid in full. In 4 cases repayments have stopped entailing a total in arrears at the time of the study of \$270 or less than 1% of the total program. Crop loans mature several months after harvest in order to give the farmer time to sell his crop. Cattle loans are usually for five years. Interest is charged at the rate of 8% annually. The agent judged this program a success in Macaracas but a failure in some other places of which he had knowledge where it was done in a rush and without proper preparation.

The Loan Process:

A farmer or cattleman who wishes to obtain a loan comes to the IFE office where he consults with the IFE agent on what he requires, how he will use the loan if granted, and how it will be repaid. If, after the consultation he has decided to continue, he with the assistance of the agent files an application. The IFE agent, accompanied when possible by the MAG agent, visits the farm to verify the information and to make proper plans with the farmer. The loan is then presented to the Credit Committee. This committee can grant the loan, recommend changes in it or deny it as it sees fit. In the past year five loans were denied by the committee, in all cases because of a lack of "moral solvency" - the applicants had a bad reputation for repaying. When the committee has given its approval the contract is signed by the borrower and the agent. Checks are drawn and issued as the borrower has need to make expenditures which must be in keeping with the loan plan. A number of other forms are used to control the loan expenditures themselves.

Problems:

The major obstacle to the agent's work has been the poor roads in the district. Frequently in winter their poor condition has prevented him from getting out to the farms when he would like to have gone, although the office had two four-wheel-drive jeeps and could rent horses when needed. The poor roads have also often prevented the borrowers from disposing of their crops shortly after harvest, resulting in much wastage owing to poor storage - one manifestation of the lack of knowledge and use of technical

practices by the agriculturists and cattlemen. These things, he stated, have not been taught in the schools, nor, unfortunately, by the MACI agent.

Cooperation:

The agent reported that he had had excellent support from both the alcalde and the personero in two ways especially: (1) in persuading people to repay their loans, and (2) in not permitting IFE-financed and branded breeding animals to be killed or sold. The corregidores have also been very useful in giving him information concerning borrowers, in sending messages to those whom he needed to see at his office, and in accompanying him on visits when he needed a guide.

Analysis and Commentary:

It appeared that the IFE office, in marked contrast to MAG's, was well organized and well run. We say "appeared" since a positive conclusion to this effect would have required an analysis of the actual operation of a sample of loans made by this office, an effort that the study team did not make. However, the loan files of the agency were made available to the team and a cursory examination of some of the loan documents confirmed the generally favorable impression.

IFE has been accustomed to making larger loans than those contemplated for small farmers, with few made for less than \$800. In spite of the fact that the agent was less than enthusiastic over advancing small loans of \$100 to \$300 because of the high cost of administration, it would appear that IFE should be the lending agency in Macaracas for all government lending to farmers.

Concentration of lending functions in an agency apparently well qualified for the job would release the MAG agent for extension work, particularly if instruction in recommended technical practices were made a requirement of the loan. Again, this raises the question of competence to give such instruction and the necessity of periodic inservice short-course education for those who would expect to become and to remain competent agricultural extensionists. (See below, Section E - Small Farmers, Analysis and Commentary for an enlargement on these views especially as affecting the small farmers.)

D. A Chapter of the Cattlemen's Association

A director of the Capítulo de Ganaderos de la Provincia de Los Santos who lives in Macaracas stated that the chapter had as members only 300 of the estimated 5,000 cattlemen in the province of Los Santos. However, the chapter has plans to organize at the corregimiento level in order to attract more members, especially the smaller cattlemen, since only the larger cattlemen belong.

Functions:

The association has as its major purpose the formation of a group of cattlemen powerful enough to bargain with the government on such issues as better markets abroad for beef, with the milk companies to obtain a better price for milk, and with suppliers to obtain lower prices for the supplies carried by its cooperative.

This chapter of the association also pressures the government, its own members and other cattlemen, and the industries which would benefit for better roads, in order that milk and other products may be marketed from the producing areas. At the time of the study the local members were cooperating in cutting a road southwesterly from La Mesa in Macaracas district through Los Pozos district to Quebro on the coast in the province of Veraguas (estimated at more than 50 kilometers). For this purpose a sum exceeding \$5,000 had been collected. Two bulldozers and operators had been hired from the government. The chapter had obtained the promise of trucks from Acción Cívica (the Civic Action agency of the National Guard) to haul river gravel for the road surface, but it was later informed that this would not be done. The culverts were being supplied by CAM. As progress was made on the road the cattlemen farther on in the area through which the road would pass have been paying into the road fund. It was estimated that there were 20,000 head of cattle in the area to be served by the road. It was also reported that about 10,000 hectares owned by the government were available for purchase in blocks of from ten to fifty hectares through the Reforma Agraria. According to the director, this road was denied assistance by USAID three years earlier.

Problems:

Poor roads, the director stated, have been the biggest problem in the development of the cattle industry. The chapter's next project planned within Macaracas district is to drive a road through to Mogollón, about eight miles beyond Los Higos where the

good road now ends. This road will open up a large area to milk production.

Next in importance to roads has been the shortage of veterinarians. The chapter would like to see one per district, but they have been so poorly paid in the past that they could make more money by buying and selling chickens and pigs! The association plans to bring pressure to bear to raise their salaries.

The last problem mentioned was the need for a building in Las Tablas to house the provincial chapter offices, particularly needed if the chapter is to serve an enlarged clientele.

E. Small Farmers

The purpose of this section is to gain some understanding of farmers with incomes under \$1,000, their system of farming, previous experience with loans, needs for loans and how self-regulation of lending might be effected. Five small farmers, three in one group and two in the other were interviewed at length. Some data were obtained from several other informants in the course of interviews which had different objectives. In addition, both the IFE and MACI agents were asked for information (and opinions) concerning small farmers.

Numbers and Income:

There was general agreement that about fifty to sixty percent of the farmers in the district have incomes of less than \$1,000 per year. According to the small farmers themselves most of them have earned in recent years approximately \$400.00 annually, about one-third being derived from rice and corn, one-third from pigs, and a third from the sale of chickens and from working as casual day laborers. However, these figures should be treated as illustrative only since they probably are underestimations.

The Share System:

A large and increasing proportion of small farmers have been share-cropping the lands of larger farmers, in addition to growing small quantities of crops on their own lands. The preponderance of those who have share-cropped live in the northern areas of the district (in the corregimientos of Chupá and

Macaracas and Corozal) where the land is flatter, more easily cultivated and where very little wooded land remains. Rozas also on shares are preferred by those farmers where woodland still exists, for the most part on very steep slopes. Where plowing has been done on share-cropped land, production has been divided fifty-fifty in cases in which the owner had the plowing done, but two-thirds has gone to the sharecropper when he paid for the plowing.

Previous Loan Experience:

Very few small farmers have received government loans in the past. The IFE office searched its files and was able to find only five applicants with annual incomes of less than \$1,000. The MAG agent was able to produce only one name of a farmer in this category. According to one of the small farmers who had applied previously to IFE for a loan, credit was denied because he would have used the loan to finance production on someone else's land. The IFE office had also informed him that the amount he wanted, \$200, was much too small for them to administer and that \$500 was their minimum. He had wanted to use the loan to finance plowing with a tractor at \$3.50 per hour, which he had found was about half as costly per hectare as plowing done by the slower and less thorough spans of oxen formerly used.

Another small farmer (whose name was supplied by IFE) had obtained a three-year \$150 loan from IFE in 1968 to clean and fence a field. In 1964 he had also obtained a loan of \$150 from MAG and the following year \$100, both for agricultural production. A fourth loan for \$225 was used to buy nine pigs. He stated that all loans obtained prior to last year had been repaid. This farmer owned 4 hectares of grazing land including a small plowable field beside a stream which he had bought for \$500 from an aunt who had moved to Chepo. He still owed her \$150. In addition, he has been grazing cattle on 7 hectares in a field jointly owned by his brothers and sisters. Practically all of his crops have been grown in roza lands on a nearby mountain on a share basis.

A neighbor of this farmer who owned 20 hectares, but who cultivated on shares, applied to MAG in January of this year for \$150 for a loan to clean and fence a pasture, but was still waiting in April for action on the application. He has been grazing eight beef cows which were milked last year for about three months, July to September, averaging about 1 liter per cow per day, the remainder going to their calves. This milk was sold to the Macaracas milk plant.

Desire for Loans:

All of the small farmers except one agreed that small loans were a great necessity. For the most part they needed amounts between \$100 and \$200 or slightly larger, to be used mainly for plowing and fertilizers. Three of them agreed that this would be, as they expressed it, "small enough for us to manage". Others expressed the need for loans to buy dairy-type cattle and pigs, and for the fencing of pasture land. In the Chupá area it was estimated by three small farmers that 80 out of the 150 farmers there would qualify for and want small loans. In the Los Leales community it was estimated that only 15 farmers of the total of 55 to 65 in the area would have incomes too large to qualify under the proposed program.

Subsequently, the new IFE agent in Macaracas, who came from the adjoining district of Guararé and has had experience with IFE's small loan program in other parts of Los Santos, has found a great demand for small loans by the small farmers. When IFE has insisted on making larger loans than applicants wanted, the farmers have used, subsequently, only that part of the loan which they felt was prudent and the remainder has not been utilized.

Community Control:

All of the farmers readily appreciated the high cost of supervision of small loans, particularly from having previously applied to MAG or IFE, or from having heard of the experiences of neighbors with these agencies. They also readily agreed that they could vigilate the loans in their areas. In Chupá they proposed the creation of a three-man junta (board) not only to pass on the credit-worthiness of applicants, but also to monitor the use made of the loans. This group pointed out that such a junta would know who could and would repay. "Also some people have gotten loans in the past and have not used them for the right purposes. But we who live in the caseríos know the people - who is a drunkard and who does not like to work. We would vigilate each one." In the Los Leales area two farmers and a storekeeper agreed that a one-man surveillance committee in the person of the highly-respected regidor would be all that would be necessary to judge the qualifications of applicants, and "to see that they don't eat the loans".

These expressions of capacity by small farmers to accept and effectively exercise certain controls over loans to their neighbors are given considerable force by the fact that there

already exists a strong informal net of organization amongst them in the form of work juntas (swap-work groups of neighbors). Whereas the larger farmers and cattlemen must resort to hiring seasonal labor largely from among the small farmers, the small farmers themselves cannot afford this practice and must resort to self-help groups of neighbors and friends for such tasks as clearing land, planting, harvesting and house-building. The host lays out the work to be done, while his family prepares not only a large meal to be served in mid-day, but also a quantity of sweet chicha and several bottles of rum with which the workers are plied throughout the day.

During the course of the field study three housebuilding juntas were observed in action. In each one all members were completely covered, including their faces, in the mud and straw which they were preparing to apply to the previously constructed pole-and-bark-thong framework of the house. Preparation of the mud is done by locking arms and tramping in unison in a large shallow mud-hole to the sounds of a peculiar chant. There is much hilarity, well fed on alcohol and good humor, but sobriety is maintained by two or three in order to get the house built!

Analysis and Commentary:

It is believed that a large demand for small farm loans exists in Macaracas district, particularly in the areas where there are no more roza lands and where plowing and fertilization are necessary. In all sections there is a growing demand for loans for fencing of pastures and the purchase of milk-type cattle. A small-loan program will have to permit the use of loan funds on lands share-cropped by the borrower, or the number of borrowers will be considerably reduced. The administrative costs of a small loan program will be greater than for one making larger loans, but the difference in cost can be minimized if the qualifications of the applicants and the supervision of the borrowers' expenditures and repayments are made comunal responsibilities through community-selected vigilante juntas. There is little doubt of the ability and willingness of many small farmers to assume this responsibility in Macaracas district.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that their common interest in obtaining small loans and their willingness to vigilate them together constitute a sufficient basis to form a permanent organization such as a farmers' or cattlemen's club or a cooperative. There simply is not enough "weight" in such loans to bring about the long-term conformities in individual behavior

which such organizations demand - regular attendance, financial responsibility for others, etc. Besides, it is highly likely that not all of the same farmers will want loans each year; therefore, the membership would be constantly changing. This is not to say that more permanent organizational structures should not be created, but this should take place only when there is a clear demand for them, an event unlikely to occur until a loan program has been underway for several years, and the necessity for further organization is clearly demonstrated to the community.

In the meantime, groups of borrowers would constitute an opportunity for functional agricultural extension. The act of borrowing itself constitutes a commitment by the borrower to increase his production, and creates a receptivity to technical assistance which he believes would make his borrowed dollars and his own go further. The items themselves for which loans are obtained will indicate the general areas of extension education. By enlarging the loan forms to include a standard set of improved practices related to each loan objective, a good indication can be obtained of each borrower's interests. The combined interests of those in a particular community could form the nucleus of an extension program. This, we believe, is one of the major keys to successful extension in Macaracas - organizing the program of extension education around the expressed need-dispositions of the farmers and not in organizing the farmers themselves!

F. The MAG Home Agency

Personnel

The present home agent has been in Macaracas for two years, prior to which she had spent a year in Santiago. She was educated at the Escuela Profesional, a secondary school in Panama City, following which she had taken a six-months course in nutrition. In November of last year she was given notice of transfer to Santiago, but this action was rescinded following her petition to remain here to be nearer her sick mother. This petition was reported to have been backed by the Amas de Casas clubs at her request.

Functions:

Until the time of the field study (March '69) the agent's work had been carried on almost entirely through the Amas de Casa (Homemakers) clubs and the girls' 4-S clubs. Last year she had

served seven of the adult clubs, but this year she had planned to work only in four, one of which is in Macaracas district - in the town itself. The club at La Mesa was eliminated last year because of the bad roads which made it difficult to go there for meetings. When an attempt was made to reorganize the club at Llano de Piedra, she reported, it attracted only three persons. But, since a minimum of ten were required before a club could be formed or continued, the Llano de Piedra club had to be dropped. The Macaracas club had twelve members, six of whom were reported as active. The other three clubs, all in Los Santos district, had a total membership of 28, 11 of whom were reported as active in club work. The girls' 4-S club in Macaracas was organized last year with the minimum 10 members, but the Director of the school stated that it no longer existed. Such clubs are normally organized at the beginning of the school year. The only other club planned by the agent was in another district but it had not yet been formed at the time of the study.

The specific objectives of the work with the Amas de Casa have been to organize or to reorganize their clubs, and to have these clubs join the association; to produce and prepare foods for a better balanced diet; to improve the members' houses; to learn to sew and to make clothing; and, to make small things such as embroidery for sale. For the 4-S clubs the agent had devised a program beginning with organization, and substantively concerned with propagating orchards for better nutrition, the keeping of bees, and better practices in the cultivation of rice and maize.

Problems:

A major problem has been the lack of a car for transportation to scheduled meetings of the Amas de Casa clubs. This has caused the agent to miss meetings which upset the club members who blamed her for not going. On a few occasions she herself has paid for private transport, but when she went to the meetings the members did not attend. During the past year little effective work could be done owing to political activity. The members refused to meet in the houses of those who belonged to other political parties. A third problem has been the inability of the club members to sell what they make. The former social security program of providing materials to the club to enable them to make baby baskets and baby clothing, and then purchasing the finished products, was very successful. But recently the program, which is called "Canastilla", was suspended owing to the inability of social security to finance it. It was instituted by social security as a substitute for part of the cash paid to mothers of

newborn babies. It was reported that the program would be reinstated in July, 1969. If it should become active again, the membership in the club was expected to increase as some of the previous members belonged solely in order to participate in this program.

The final problem mentioned by the agent has been the continuing lack of books, materials, short courses or other means of educating herself in order to meet the changing needs of the women. The occasional short courses given at Divisa have been in the same skills in vegetable gardening, cooking, canning, etc., in which she had previously been instructed. In the absence of new knowledge and skills she has had to make the club programs the same as in preceding years, although the women have asked for different types of instruction. The result has been that many women became less interested in the clubs and ceased to attend.

An Active Amas de Casa Club:

The club in Macaracas was organized ten years ago and has been functioning since then without interruption. Recently it has had twelve members and a reported attendance of nine at the Monday morning meetings. The instructional program of the club has consisted of preparing new foods including pastries and desserts, making paper flowers, wooden wall decorations and wall stands on which to display other objects, and crocheting various articles including handbags of plastic rope. The third area of program emphasis has been on the growing of vegetables in gardens. A project current at the time of the field study was the selling of tamales to pay part of the cost of a visit by a homemaker from New Mexico.

From time to time the club has undertaken community service projects such as having stones put in pot-holes in some of the streets. The members also undertook to keep the church clean for one year, but this work has been interrupted by the reconstruction of the building. For the past three years members have been giving daily assistance to the school in serving the children being fed under the applied nutrition program.

All of the meetings of the club have been conducted by the agent, or in her absence by the president. There have been no attempts to train lay leaders for the various kinds of instruction. During the past year this club joined in a district association with the other clubs served by the agent. The presidents met once each month to discuss how to raise money through rifas and

by other means. The club also belonged to the national federation which meets once per year. At the last annual meeting of the federation much of the time was devoted to the discussion of how to sell the things the club members were making. SENAPI informed the federation that it planned to open a store in Panama City for such items. It was also reported that SENAPI and the Amas de Casa federation have planned to establish road-side stands (ranchos) at four locations on the Pan-American highway.

The reported major problem of the Macaracas club was the financial inability of the members to buy the raw materials and the tools required to garden and to make things for sale. They were discouraged at times, the president stated, by an apparent lack of interest in the club on the part of the agricultural agent. Also it has been difficult for the club members to meet together with those from other clubs since the home agent has had no car and the club members have had no money to pay for other transport.

A Defunct Amas de Casa Club:

The club at Llano de Piedra failed during the past year and efforts by the agent to reorganize it, she reported, were unsuccessful. Investigation of the matter itself was revealing of some of the inherent difficulties in home extension work as carried on by MAG. The town of Llano de Piedra has long been divided into three llanos (fields or sections). The Amas de Casa club which failed had been organized mainly in one llano where most of the small less influential farmers live. Reasons given in Llano de Piedra for its failure included nonpunctuality of the present agent who often arrived at club meetings more than an hour late; the lack of sewing machines which prevented much-desired instruction in their use; and the inconvenience of the time chosen for the meeting. Although the club met once a week, the members did not like to leave projects over from one meeting to the next. They much preferred to work on them each day and to finish them once started.

When the old club failed, the agent attempted to organize a new club to include the two major llanos in the town. However, she found that the women of the llano with higher social status had little desire to associate with those from the other llano, and vice-versa, since there is a long-standing rivalry between the two. However, when she made a census of the women a number from both of the major llanos did agree to meet to form a club, but on the appointed day only three came to the meeting. Their given reasons for not joining included dislike of selling raffle

tickets, a task which would be required to raise money to initiate the activities of the club; the lack of sewing machines; and preoccupation with household and other tasks during the morning hours fixed by the agent as the time for the meeting. It was suggested by informants that meetings should be held in the middle or late afternoons and/or on weekends when the women were free of other duties. It was pointed out that one of the teachers in the town had conducted a night school (Cultura Popular) last year for four nights each week from 6 to 8 P.M. with a regular attendance of about 18 persons. She was reported to have taught the same type of things as had been taught to the Amas de Casa club using her own machine for sewing classes.

Analysis and Commentary:

It is obvious that home extension work in Macaracas district is of minor consequence. Only 12 of the estimated 2,500 or more eligible women and out-of-school teen-age girls in the district were being reached through the Amas de Casa and 4-S clubs and then only in a limited way. With the likelihood that bad roads will be the normal condition for some years, a severe limitation is placed upon the extension agent who must go from place to place to serve clubs. As an ambulatory worker she is limited not only by roads and lack of transport but by the constrictions of the work day. She works from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and simply is not available during the free time of many of the women in the late afternoons and evenings. Even if these conditions did not exist, it is doubtful that the clubs would long remain in existence unless the agent were able to satisfy the members needs for knowledge and skills, which by her own admission she is unable to do without further training.

There would appear to be three alternatives. The first would be to abolish home extension work in districts such as Macaracas until conditions are more favorable, and to concentrate available resources in the interim in those districts where better results are being obtained. It is safe to say that, except for the six to nine regular club attenders in Macaracas town, the agent would not have been missed at the time of this study if she had left the district.

A second alternative would consist of correcting the obvious faults in the present system to the extent that they are correctable. The most important step under this alternative consists of giving inservice training courses to the home agent. In order to know what knowledge and skills to teach her, it would

be necessary first to do a genuine study of the home and community life of a sample of past and potential participants in the extension program, and to determine with them what their felt needs are, in what they want to be instructed, why, how, when, etc. A study of this type encompasses a good deal more than simply making the usual "census" and receiving superficial responses. Nor is the inservice training suggested a one-time thing; periodic short courses must be given to agents throughout their working lives if they are to keep pace with the changing needs of those served.

A second "reform" is to free the agent from the eight-to-five office syndrome. The agent must order her day to that of her clients, e.g. work in the afternoons and evenings and sleep in the mornings if that is the indicated pattern. Her time must be her own. It is obvious that she must be given an all-wheel-drive vehicle to reach the places reachable by this means, and an allowance to permit the hire of a horse when required to reach those places accessible only by this means. Funds to pay for food and lodging are essential, and she must be encouraged to spend the night in the homes of participants when this is necessary, as it frequently will be if her hours of work are adapted to the needs of her clientele. Other funds must also be provided to her for the purchase of several portable sewing machines, a folding cot and accessories, other equipment as needs arise, and a limited supply of materials for use in instruction.

Finally, the alien "club" requirement should be abolished. This does not mean that clubs should not be formed, but they would be instituted only to formalize an existing situation, i.e. when enough women in a community were meeting regularly for instruction and when they felt that a club was necessary. In the meantime, and this meantime might be several years in duration, the agent would be free to work with one, two, three or whatever number of women were attracted. There is sufficient evidence from the sewing and cooking classes of women and girls being instructed by the Peace Corps Volunteer stationed in Macaracas (whose only training in the subject matter was received in Puerto Rico during her Peace Corps orientation), and from the experience of some of the teachers that instruction which genuinely fulfills their need-dispositions to learn will attract more than enough women and teen-age girls to fill clubs all over the district.

Although not as essential as the above, the addition of other inputs should be considered. First of these is the establishment of a revolving loan fund of sufficient size to make small loans

for the purchase of sewing machines (and possibly other home and garden equipment) to those participants in the home extension program who have learned enough to make use of the machines, and who are able to give evidence that the loan will be repaid. A second suggestion is the establishment by SENAPI, or another appropriate agency, of sales rooms in the larger towns and cities where women can dispose of things they make.

The third alternative is to use the present salary and other resources devoted to the work of the home agent to support selected school teachers in the district in the conduct of classes in homemaking in the communities where they live. As illustrated in the case of Llano de Piedra, some teachers are already performing the functions of a home agent by instructing evening classes for several nights each week. According to the provincial director of Literacy and Adult Education, teachers may qualify for a \$5 per month raise by teaching a minimum of 112 hours in night school in a school year under the Cultura Popular program of the Ministry of Education. The greatest single advantage of this alternative is that the teachers live in or nearby the communities in which they teach. Unlike the home agent they are there - they don't have to attempt to go to the communities forty or more times per year over impassable roads. Furthermore, they are there for at least four nights a week and are, therefore, able to give the continuity of instruction desired by the women (at least those in Llano de Piedra).

Although some of the district teachers might be better educated than the home agent, they too will need periodic short courses in the changing knowledge and skills which the women and girls of their communities will want. They too will need equipment such as sewing machines and some materials for demonstration teaching purposes. If the present resources devoted to the work of the home agent were used as proposed here, at least five teachers could be given additional salaries, the annual short course training required could be held, and the necessary equipment and materials furnished. Two or three teachers could be added for a total of seven or eight if the additional funds proposed above for support of the home agent (a car and its upkeep, viáticos, short-course training, equipment and materials, etc.) were also devoted to support of these teachers. The time devoted by each teacher to homemaking instruction, a minimum of 112 hours per year, is approximately equal to that which could be given by the home agent to each club under optimal conditions - 2 1/2 hours per week x 46 weeks per year = 115 hours (assuming 6 weeks lost in vacations and sick leave, attendance at courses, etc.). But

optimal conditions are unlikely to pertain for years to come since road and bridge construction alone is likely to be a long and slow process. Therefore, it is safe to say that at least twice as many women and out-of-school girls would actually learn homemaking skills under an expanded Cultura Popular program for the same amount of resources needed to support a "reformed" home extension program.

Epilogue

In June the study team returned for a final visit to Macaracas to obtain additional data and to check the validity of the analyses and commentaries. At this time the team was informed that the home agent had recently joined the Macaracas School Applied Nutrition Committee composed of one Peace Corps Volunteer, two teachers and one parent. One of the monthly activities of this committee has been demonstrating methods of food preparation to the mothers of the school children. These demonstrations have been attracting from 20 to 35 mothers, only a few of whom are members of the Amas de Casa Club. It was reported that the mothers had expressed satisfaction with this arrangement, largely because they were not required to make a long-term commitment such as that required by the Amas de Casa Club.

CHAPTER 3

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT: THE ALCALDE

A. Composition and Appointments

The alcalde (mayor) is appointed by the President of the Republic on recommendation of the governor of the province. The latter may rely upon others within the province for advise and recommendation. It is reported that the present alcalde and the concejales (members of the Municipal Council) were all appointed on recommendation of the doctor in charge of the Macaracas Integrated Health Center who himself was born and reared in the district. The doctor stated that the basis for his recommendations was the competence of those nominated to perform the functions of their respective positions. It was also an attempt to get away from the old caciques (bosses) who had run things before the present national government came to power.

The alcalde appointed the portera (porter), the oficial de estadfsticas (official in charge of vital statistics), and the secretario de la alcaldia (secretary of the mayor's office), all of whom assist him in the performance of his office duties. Of greater importance are appointments of the corregidores by the alcalde. These officials are the alcalde's representatives in the corregimientos and, according to the alcalde, are appointed on the basis of their serious demeanor, sociability, honesty and reputation within their respective communities. Seven of the nine were replaced last December, several because they could not read or write and were unable to keep proper registers of births and deaths. The regidores are also appointed by the alcalde usually on recommendation of the corregidores.

The present alcalde is a native of Los Pozos district adjacent to Macaracas but in the province of Herrera. He was for several years the alcalde of Los Pozos and has strong ties there including a family and a small farm. However, he is very knowledgable of the district of Macaracas and appears to identify fully with it. His salary was recently raised from \$135 to \$140 per month by the Municipal Council.

B. Functions of the Alcalde

The alcalde has a great many functions to perform ^{1/}. It is necessary to group them into categories in order to get a proper perspective upon this important office and its attached role. These categories may be listed as (1) appointing members of the alcaldia, (2) overseeing the performance of personnel, (3) maintaining law and order, (4) arbitrating disputes, (5) issuing permits and licenses, (6) cooperating with other officials, (7) developing the district, and (8) preparing the annual budget. Each of these, except the first which has already received attention, will be discussed in turn.

Overseeing Personnel:

The term "overseeing" is used in preference to "supervision" as it more nearly conveys the non-bureaucratic nature of the function. For example, the secretary of the alcaldia, who receives \$75.00 per month knows his functions so well that he takes care of the public, issues permits, etc., with little supervision. He, of course, helps the alcalde more directly when called upon to do so. The corregidores by virtue of their distance from the district capital operate with a great deal of independence. This is not to suggest that the corregidores do not have full respect for the alcalde and diligently carry out his occasional orders, but such orders are conveyed without officiousness to men who are honored to hold the position but are by no means dependent upon it. In addition to these employees the alcalde also assists the president of the Municipal Council to "keep an eye on" the municipal treasurer, the park and cemetery watchmen and the collector of garbage. The alcalde has been given also the task by the present governor of overseeing in a general way the performance of all government employees in the district including the judge and personero, and to ensure that there are no botellas ("bottles" i.e. office-holders who do not work). This duty is carried out mainly through maintaining a colleague relationship with these officials in the course of transacting business with them from day to day.

^{1/} See basic list of the duties of the position in Artículos 35-44, Ley No. 8, del 1° de febrero de 1954.

Maintaining Law and Order:

Within this category of functions the alcalde has both general and specific duties to perform. He is charged with seeing not only that municipal laws are "vigilated", but that the constitution and national laws are obeyed. As one of the corregidores put it "the problem in the past was lack of enforcement of the laws by the alcalde - people used godfathers to get out of living according to the law. The present alcalde enforces the law and does so impartially". The National Guard is under his direction for carrying out, when needed, the kind of forcible control for which it is best suited, but there is seldom a need for this in Macaracas.

The alcalde attempts to prevent fights and uses his powers of punishment when fights do occur. Persons charged with fighting are usually brought to the alcalde by the police, a corregidor or regidor, or the case may be referred to the alcalde by the personero or judge. Under the law he may impose maximum penalties of two years imprisonment and a \$500 fine, but he seldom finds any reason to go beyond \$100 and three months. If fines are not paid within twenty-four hours, the alcalde must convert them to jail sentences, one day per dollar of the fine. Sentences of less than thirty days are served in the local police station while those prisoners with longer sentences are taken to Las Tablas.

When fines or jail sentences are necessary the alcalde issues a resolution (resolución) a copy of which is kept in the alcaldía. In the first four months of the present alcalde's government nine resolutions were issued concerning the following cases:

- (1) Three men attacked a policeman, struck him and threw him in a water hole. All three were found guilty and each was sentenced to 90 days in jail or a fine of \$90, plus a fine of \$30 for having a fight. Each raised \$120 and paid it.
- (2) Two men had a fight in which no weapons were used. They were fined \$10 each, which they paid.
- (3) Same as (2) above.
- (4) Two families got into a fight. The alcalde investigated, determined the causes and motives, and

required of each family and of the family's "guarantor" a peace bond (Fianza de Paz y Buena Conducta). The guarantors are charged with keeping the peace between the families. However, if they fail and the families resume fighting, the family found to be at fault must pay the bond. In a case in which the family cannot pay, the guarantor for that family must pay. In the first case of this type presided over by the alcalde the bond was set at \$500 and the period of the bond at two years.

- (5) Same as (4) above with bond set at \$100.
- (6) Same as (4) above with bond set at \$100.
- (7) Same as (4) above with bond set at \$300.
- (8) Same as (4) above with bond set at \$200.
- (9) Same as (4) above with bond set at \$200.

The alcalde explained that the amount of the bond is set at the lowest level which in his judgment will prevent a renewal of the fighting, and, therefore, varies according to the economic class of the families involved. This is an ancient and, he believes, an effective way of preventing feuds.

The study team happened to be present at the initiation of Case No. 7. A woman from the corregimiento of Chupá came into the office of the alcalde and complained to him, and to all present in his office, that a neighboring woman had accused the complainant of trying to take away the accuser's husband. The complainant stated that her accuser was not telling the truth and that her accusations constituted calumny. She wanted the alcalde to call in the woman and tell her to stop making such false accusations. She was afraid that, if this other woman persisted in accusing her, her own husband and the husband of her accuser would get into a fight. Subsequently, the alcalde did call in the two men. They agreed that the matter was really only a dispute between their wives. However, the alcalde, in order to make certain that fighting would not erupt, set a peace bond of \$300 for two years.

So far in his administration no cases have been brought before the alcalde in which the accused has not been found guilty. At the time of the study, three cases were pending.

He had sent messengers to all three but they had not yet come in. Ordinarily he would send a policeman (National Guardsmen), but since there was only one currently serving Macaracas station, this was not possible. In 1968, the judge referred 17 cases to the alcalde all of whom were fined. (In Annex C are described three cases of law violation adjudicated by the alcalde: Case 1: "Pigs in the Water Supply"; Case 2: "The Runaway"; and Case 3: "The Stolen Cow".)

Arbitrating Disputes:

Much of the alcalde's time is consumed in settling disputes which are brought directly before him by the disputants or are referred to him by the corregidores, regidores, personero or judge. The largest number of disputes arise over land property boundaries and the violations of these boundaries by livestock which get into neighbors' crops. Second, and closely related to the first, are problems associated with the erection and maintenance of fences between neighbors.

In the third category are cases in which women who are separated from their husbands come in to ask for food pensions from the fathers for the support of their children. In such a case the alcalde, after consultation with the husband, obtains agreement, if he can (and he usually succeeds), on the amount of support, which depends in part on the ability of the man to pay. This amount may be as low as \$2 per month but averages close to \$10. The final settlement is then made by the judge to whom they are sent whether or not the arbitration attempt is successful. A fourth class of disputes arises over debts. The alcalde's purpose in arbitrating is to arrive at an agreement between the parties by which the debtor pays off his indebtedness on a schedule. A fifth type of case involves obtaining access to a stream on someone else's property for a person without water sources on his own land.

These types do not exhaust the kinds of problems which the alcalde arbitrates but they encompass most of them. (In Annex D are described specific cases of arbitration: Case 1: "Recognition of Child"; Case 2: "Land Dispute"; Case 3: "House in the Road"; and Case 4: "Cow in the Rice Seed Patch".)

Issuing Permits, Licenses and Letters:

The alcalde regulates a number of activities by issuing various permits and licenses. Much of this work is done.

routinely by the secretary of the alcaldía. Apparently applicants are seldom, if ever, denied what they wish. The following types are issued:

- (1) Dance license. The license fee of \$6.00 is paid to the municipal treasurer who gives the payer a receipt. The applicant then brings the receipt to the secretary who issues the license. A policeman must now be retained by the licensee for the duration of the dance because of the large number of fights that have erupted at dances in the past.
- (2) Permission to kill an animal (Sacrificio de Ganado). This permit is required only if the meat is to be sold. The cost is \$5.75 per cow of which the central government collects \$4.75 and the municipio only \$1.00. The cost for a pig is \$.75 all of which is retained by the municipality.
- (3) Permission to build a house. This is required only in the town of Macaracas and cost \$1.50 which is paid to the municipal treasurer. However, the permit is given only on a special paper (papel sellado) sold by a bank and bearing a \$2.00 government stamp which must be purchased by the applicant.
- (4) Release from jail (Excarcelación). Any prisoner who has been put in jail by the alcalde may be freed by him.
- (5) Guide to transport wood (Gufa para Transporte de Madera). A copy is left at each police check-point enroute to the mill. There is no charge for the permit if issued during office hours. If issued after the office has closed, the applicant must pay \$.50 which goes to the secretary for his trouble.
- (6) Guide to transport cattle (Gufa para Conducción de Ganado). Same regulations as for (5) above.
- (7) Permit to burn (Permiso para Rozas o Quemadas). No charge is made for these permits. It is always issued unless there is a complaint from a neighbor who is afraid that the fire will get out of control.

In addition to these permits and licenses the secretary issues a citation (Boleta de Citación) whenever the alcalde sends for anyone to come to his office. The secretary also keeps three books:

- (1) Libro de Decretos. The decrees contained in this book are issued by the alcalde when employees of the municipality are appointed.
- (2) Libro de Toma de Posesión. This book is signed by each person who is appointed by the alcalde in recognition of his appointment and the assumption of responsibility.
- (3) Registro de Ferretes. In this book are registered all of the branding irons used on cattle in the district. Each registration costs \$.50.

Besides the forms used for permits and licenses the alcalde writes letters asking other officials to perform services for persons who come to his office, and for the purpose of transacting other business of the alcaldía. These letters are instructive in showing the various kinds of activities engaged in. Types of letters include one addressed to the doctor asking for medical attention for a person; another to the doctor asking for the length of time during which a person was incapacitated as a result of a fight, such information to be used in a court case; to the personero asking that the alignment for a new house be given to the owner; to Estadística y Censo transmitting statistics on cattle; to the president of the Municipal Council transmitting a Council decree approved by the alcalde; a good conduct letter required in obtaining a job or visa; to Agrarian Reform transmitting two edicts which had been posted in the alcaldía, the letter indicating that no one had opposed them; to the judge transmitting a case which the alcalde had been unable to handle; and, to the sergeant of the National Guard asking him to accompany the alcalde on an inspection.

Letters to the alcalde are equally instructive. They include an invitation from the president of the Municipal Council to attend a meeting of that body; from the municipal treasurer stating the amount of money collected during the preceding reporting period; from the doctor asking the alcalde to inform a constructor that he should not use water from the public water supply to make concrete blocks; from the

sanitary inspector transmitting a list of those passing the food handlers' examination and asking the alcalde to notify them; from the personero asking the alcalde to have the corregidores come to see him to discuss arrangements for cooperation between them; from a corregidor sending information requested by the alcalde; from the sanitary inspector listing the families in one corregimiento which had no toilet facilities; and from the director of the Macaracas school inviting the alcalde to the graduation exercises for the night school.

Cooperating with Other Officials:

The letters received and sent by the alcalde (see above section) give some indication of the kinds of cooperation between the alcalde and officials both of the municipality and of the national government. More general cooperative arrangements have been effected in the following ways:

- (1) School attendance. When teachers are unable to influence parents to send children to school they inform the alcalde who in turn warns the parents that school attendance is required by law. So far in his government the alcalde has not had to take action beyond warning a few parents, but if they should continue to desist, he could levy a fine of \$5.00.
- (2) Sanitation and health. The alcalde works closely with the inspector of sanitation and the doctor to advance the level of sanitation and health of the people. This he does largely through letters and appeals to the people concerning sanitary toilets, cleanliness of water supplies, the health of food handlers and their competence to apply approved sanitation practices in restaurants, prevention of animals (pigs) from entering houses and water supplies, etc. When people are remiss in these respects the alcalde simply reminds them of their duty and so far they have all conformed. (That this is not always so is indicated by the case of the "Pigs in the Water Supply" as detailed in Case 1 in Annex C.)

- (3) Wanted persons. The alcalde receives notes and telegrams from officials in other districts asking him to trace people believed to be in some part of his district who are wanted for some reason in their home districts. Notes of this type are passed on to the appropriate corregidor. If the man can be found, he is instructed to report to the appropriate official in his home district, and the requesting official (most frequently an alcalde) is notified of the action taken.
- (4) Law and order. As described under this heading above and in the cases in the Annexes, the alcalde is in close contact with the personero in the investigation of cases, and with the personero and the judge in determining jurisdiction of cases and disposing of them.

The above by no means exhaust the types of cooperative arrangements with other officials. For example, as described in Chapter 2, the IFE agent relies upon the alcalde and the personero to induce some clients to repay their loans and to prevent the sale of IFE-financed breeding stock.

Developing the District:

The alcalde has a general duty to bring about all types of development within his district. Of highest general priority in Macaracas is the opening of new roads and the maintenance and improvement of existing roads, the latter falling largely to the corregidores to organize. In February the alcalde and the Municipal Council went to Panama City to present to the President of the Republic a list of the development needs of the district. These are discussed in Chapter 4 under functions of the Municipal Council.

The alcalde also planned to begin the urbanization of Macaracas town in April of this year, with the help of an engineer from Reforma Agraria and a tractor loaned by the Macaracas milk plant. The town has had an ejido (common lands) since 1962 when the central government passed on to the town the lands it owned there. The present powers of the alcalde and council relating to municipal land affairs are set forth in (1) Acuerdo Número Cuarto de 1962 de Macaracas, and (2) Decreto de Gabinete Número 79, 18 de diciembre de 1968. The alcalde and council are empowered to make streets, move houses when necessary, buy more land, subdivide land, sell

lots, etc. The alcalde estimates that there are approximately 100 families now having all or parts of their houses in the streets. (See Annex E, Municipal Land Titling Procedures.)

Preparation of the Budget:

Each year the alcalde is required to prepare a detailed budget for the coming fiscal year (corresponds to calendar year) and to present it to the Municipal Council for its consideration not later than October fifteenth. He is assisted in the preparation of this document by the municipal treasurer. As will be seen from an analysis of the budget in Chapter 4, practically all of the municipal revenues (approximately \$11,000 last year) are used to pay salaries of the mayor and other municipal employees, and to meet the statutory requirements for devoting fixed percentages of the revenues (exacciones) to specific purposes (e.g. 20% to education).

C. Problems of the Alcalde

Political Pressure:

The alcalde stated that he really had no problems which he was not able to solve. The present situation in Macaracas is much better than when he was alcalde of Los Pozos. There he was under constant pressure from the politicians not to do this or that. Here he has had no visits from politicians all of whom have been laying low.

Municipal Code:

At the moment he is somewhat restrained in what he can do by lack of the most recent compilation of laws and regulations issued since the basic municipal legislation was enacted in 1954 (Ley Número 8 de 1º de febrero de 1954 sobre Régimen Municipal y Disposiciones Constitucionales). Since assuming office he has had to use his own judgment in the absence of this compilation and this he considered to be very risky. (By the time of the study team's last visit to the district in mid-June the alcalde had received the required document. The above description has been left in the manuscript because it illustrates the legal character of many of the alcalde's functions, and his need to know and understand the relevant laws.)

Construction of Municipal Building:

The third problem, although not particularly serious, is the lag in construction of the Casa Comunal (community building) on which no work has been done by the contractor (from Las Tablas) since November. This building, which will house all of the municipal offices and some of the national government offices as well, appeared to be about two thirds complete. The cost of the structure, in excess of \$40,000, is being paid entirely by Obras Pdblicas.

Lack of Revenue:

The greatest deficiency, or problem, facing the municipality is the small amount of revenue in comparison to the needs for development. The land tax, the alcalde believes, should come to the municipality, as should all of the slaughter tax (degüello). As stated above, this latter tax on cattle totals \$5.75 for each cow slaughtered, of which the municipality receives only \$1.00, the remainder going to the central government. Since about sixty cattle are killed each month, this would mean an addition to the municipal coffers of about \$3,500 per year. APCI is currently dealing with this problem. Although the alcalde did not know how much would come into the municipal treasury from the land tax, he believes that it would be sufficient to pay all local employees including the teachers, develop the roads and build the bridges required in the district, and construct and maintain all of the school buildings.

D. Status of the Corregidores

As appointees of the alcalde who serve at his pleasure, the corregidores are first and last his representatives in their respective corregimientos. The corregidor is apt to be the only paid government servant, except for school teachers, to be found living in a corregimiento, and the only one in business the year round. The position is a respected one and obviously valued by those who hold it. It has some power and is of considerable importance to many people, as we shall see in a discussion of its functions. While there was little observable variation in the prestige of the position itself among corregimientos, there was a noticeable difference in the people's esteem for the various incumbents, a factor dependent primarily upon their respective social statuses and styles of action.

Several persons, including two former corregidores, expressed the view that the present group of nine corregidores were not picked on the basis of their political allegiances as was usually done. Before the present government the corregidores, as appointees of the government in power, were expected to work for the government party in the electoral campaign. Although the present ones are not political, there is considerable variation in their education, experience and "presence" sufficient to do the job well. Two of the most respected were men who had held the position before, four times in the case of the corregidor of Corozal and three for the corregidor of Chupá. The alcalde has recognized that not all of his appointments were of sufficiently strong men, and that he would have to replace two or three when the time was appropriate.

The pay of the job varies considerably from \$45 per month in Llano de Piedra to \$15 in La Mesa, Corozal and Chupá, but only \$10 in the remaining five corregimientos. Part of the remuneration of all corregidores, \$5 per month, is paid by Estadística y Censo.

E. General Functions of the Corregidor

The activities performed by the corregidores in Macaracas District varied somewhat depending upon their own conceptions of the position and the demands made upon them. There appear to be five general categories which cover all of the functions mentioned. These are (1) promoting the general welfare, (2) giving permissions, (3) keeping records, (4) intermediating in disputes, and (5) maintaining law and order.

Promoting the General Welfare:

As one of the two experienced corregidores expressed it, his most important job was "to improve the corregimiento", while the other one with prior experience in the position phrased it as "attending to all the problems that the people have and taking care of the corregimiento". One of the specific ways of "improving" the area is the cleaning of the roads and trails, a task undertaken usually about three times per year. The method used varies from requiring each land owner to keep the weeds and brush cut on the part of the road or trail through his property, to the use of the faena, or community work group, for this purpose. Occasionally a new trail or road has to be cut and then the entire community turns out for the task.

The corregidor assisted by the regidores maintains essential communications by transmitting messages from the alcalde and other officials to the citizens and even accompanying them on visits. When people fall sick and require medical attention the corregidor may assist in evacuating the person by hammock to Macaracas or in attempting to have the doctor come to the area.

Giving Permissions:

Persons desiring to kill a pig or cow, to have a roza or quema, or to hold a dance are assisted in doing so by the corregidor, either by filling out the necessary forms and sending the applicant with the forms to the municipal treasurer and alcalde, or by simply giving his informal permission and instructing the applicant to present himself to the alcaldia where the proper forms would be executed.

Keeping Records:

The corregidor has a book in which are registered all births and deaths in the corregimiento, or at least all which are reported. These records are often used in establishing parentage of illegitimate children for later "recognition" and support by the father.

Intermediating:

This function takes a great deal of the time of those corregidores in whom the people repose enough confidence in their fairness and sagacity to bring their cases. For example, the corregidor of Espino Amarillo intervened in three "fights" within a two-months period and reported that he had managed to solve all three cases to the mutual satisfaction of the disputants. Many of the disputes occur because animals stray into the fields of neighbors and eat the crops. When a case of this type is brought to the corregidor he accompanies both parties to the field to assess the damage and, if possible, to get agreement on the amount of compensation to be paid by the animal's owner. When a case cannot be settled the parties are free to appeal it to the alcalde. Or, if they prefer, they may bring the case directly to the alcalde, although he prefers that the corregidor attempt to handle it first. Since straying animals are the cause of so much trouble, some corregidores attempt to prevent cases from arising by notifying

owners when animals are seen loose, and by insisting that the owners repair their fences.

Maintaining Law and Order:

Respect for the law and maintenance of order are a general function of the corregidores, but they do not see themselves performing the duties of a policeman. For example, in only one case did a corregidor report it as his duty to see that no whiskey was sold or that no abarroteria (small store) operated without a proper license. On the other hand, the corregidores are required to report routinely when a new abarroteria or other establishment requiring a license is opened in order that the alcalde may send them notice. The new corregidor of La Mesa stated that he required all children to be off the streets (roads and park) by 9 P.M. as required by law, an action which did not endear him to the townspeople. All of the corregidores are required by the personero to assist him in his investigations of criminal cases which occur in their respective corregimientos.

F. Problems of the Corregidores

Of an Administrative Nature:

The most common problem shared by the corregidores was the very low rate of pay for the services rendered. For example, the veteran corregidor of Corozal stated that his pay of \$10 from the municipio and \$5.00 from Estadística was lower than the salary of \$20 which he had received many years ago before he was required to keep the births and deaths register. (In this particular case it was clear that he was thoroughly enjoying the job after being out of office for some years. He was also the owner of sufficient land and cattle not to be dependent on the stipend.) The governor of the province also mentioned the low pay received by corregidores. In a number of cases he had found that corregidores simply could not afford to spend the large amount of time required by their functions, since they had to make a living on their farms or in other work.

One of the other corregidores (La Mesa) stated that as he was too poor to own a horse he had great difficulty in getting about the large corregimiento on foot. The corregidor of Espino Amarillo stated that his corregimiento should have a

corregiduría (corregidor's office) as there was no space in his home for an office. The final item mentioned in this category was the need for more national guardsmen in order that one could always be present at dances as the drunks there respected an armed uniformed man more than they did the corregidor.

Of a Sustantive Nature:

The greatest problem of the corregidor of Las Palmas was in keeping the road improved. He had no trouble in organizing faenas for this purpose, he said, until after he had been able to obtain a tractor to help them on one occasion. After that experience they were spoiled and always asked for a tractor which could not be obtained. The new corregidor of La Mesa also had trouble with the people in getting participation in faenas, although this may have been due in part to the fact that he organized one every Saturday! To the corregidor of Espino Amarillo his major problems were in deciding on the amount of damages caused by animals getting into crops, and in preventing people from fencing in the public trails. He had also had trouble with stopping the slashing and burning in some lands traditionally considered the ejido, or common lands, on which the people were dependent for fuel and for wood for construction. The Bahía Honda corregidor had had difficulty in getting people to pay the slaughter tax as they felt that this was not a just tax.

G. Regidores and Comisarios

The regidores are named by the alcalde, most of them on recommendation of their respective corregidores. There is no fixed number of regidores in a corregimiento and the number may be as many or as few as the corregidor wants, providing he can find suitable people to accept the positions. The occupants of the position are not paid. Five months after the alcalde had assumed office only fourteen regidores in the district had taken formal possession of their offices by signing the Libro de Posesión in the alcalde's office. Fifteen others were reported by the mayor as functioning as regidores in other places but they had not gotten around to signing the book as yet. Functionally, there appear to be two classes of regidores, those who are agents of the corregidor, and those who by virtue of their isolation from their corregidor and relative closeness to the cabecera (capital) report directly

to the alcalde, and thus perform to some extent the same functions as does the corregidor. Both classes were observed in Macaracas.

In the usual case as agent of the corregidor the regidor (1) may help in the organization of faenas to work on the roads; (2) send disputants to the corregidor or to the alcalde; (3) inform the corregidor when deaths or births occur in his regimiento; and (4) distribute notes to the people from the corregidor or alcalde. The two regidores who reported directly to the alcalde operated in very much the same manner as the corregidores described earlier, except that they did not actually record the births and deaths.

Some of these positions seemed to entail a great deal of labor for an honorary position. Therefore, it was not surprising that there was considerable griping about the absence of pay. As one of them expressed it, he had worn out a good horse and saddle and without a centavo for his efforts. Most of them were not happy with having to organize faenas to work on the roads as the people resented these and thought that the government should send a tractor to help them, or at least to furnish the hand tools required. Part of this resentment arose from the feeling that such work was useless as the first rain would wash it away.

The law permits the appointment of comisarios as auxiliaries of the alcalde, corregidores and regidores. This means in effect that they are messengers. Although the alcaldes and others stated that there were comisarios in the district, none were either encountered in this study nor were any named by informants. It appears that in Macaracas the status of the position is too low to attract very many.

H. Analysis and Comment

A Dual System:

To those engaged in development as a profession, both those in international agencies and in host governments, the criteria most likely to be used in judging local governments is the amount and quality of development in which the local government is involved. It is a good local government if it initiates and completes various development projects, and a poor one if no development is underway. This development bias tends to obscure the more usual humdrum functions of local

government, the necessity for which brought local governments into being long before the present emphasis on development. Detailing as we have the structure-function of the alcalde-corregidor-regidor (ACR) system has made it evident that there are functions which, though less glamorous than development, are even more requisite to the on-going daily life of Macaracas.

The most basic of these is the sorting out and mending of the relationships between individuals, and within and between families, which have become strained or broken in the ordinary course of living in proximity to and interacting with one another. Those from the modern industrial-commercial-urban sector of society tend to place their trust in avoidance, in impersonalized segmentally-involved relationships, and in a professionalized bureaucracy of police and courts when these brittle relationships break down to such a point that withdrawal is no longer possible and confrontation is necessary. There is no generally accepted intermediary system for conciliating and arbitrating differences and resolving the conflicts that are inherent in living in an "advanced" society.

But in traditional societies men have a highly-valued, although often implicit, sense of community which must be preserved because it is essential to get along at least reasonably well with their neighbors. Therefore, there arises a mechanism for restoring the status quo ante between individuals and families. In Macaracas this is a primary function of the ACR system. However, if this system had authority only to arbitrate, it is doubtful that it would be very effective in performing even this limited function. For Macaracas is a mixture of traditional and modern culture, firmly anchored in the old ways of thought and action, yet part of a modern society. The ACR system stands between the two. It belongs to and is of the traditional society, but it also belongs to the larger society whose norms it has undertaken to uphold. In this dual membership, in this dual responsibility lies the strength of the system. Its bias is towards community, toward the restoration of interpersonal relationships. But when this approach fails it has and does apply the weight of law, slowly and reluctantly but eventually.

A Linkage System:

The ACR system is not only dual but it serves also as a link between the traditional society as such and the larger society, and in this fact lies its major strength for development. Given the present situation in which the central

government arrogates unto itself most of the available means for supporting government and carrying out development, municipal governments such as the one in Macaracas do well to carry out the more mundane basic functions of local government. To be sure, the municipal government of Macaracas can improve its present position somewhat by better collection of taxes, imposing somewhat higher rates, and raising the price of municipal land. But to make a dent in the backlog of greatly-desired development projects in Macaracas would require either a broadening of the tax base or the infusion of capital and technical resources from the central government. (See more details on this point in Chapter 4 on the Municipal Council.)

But outside resources cannot be used effectively and efficiently except through linking them to the efforts of the people. And it is here that the ACR system can be most useful. Although the first function of the system is to maintain, or to restore, the status quo in interpersonal relationships, there is no devotion to the status quo in terms of community services and institutions. What the community wants is change, more roads and bridges, more schools and medical services, etc. It is the alcalde and his assistants in the outlying areas of the district who have the potential for providing these communication and action linkages, of determining with the people the priorities of their wants and commitments on the one hand, and, on the other, of creating among the people those organizational arrangements which will make use of outside resources at the time and places where they can be most efficiently used in combination with those of the community. We are not arguing here that the ACR system is necessarily the best for planning and executing development plans. What we are arguing for is the use of a system which does exist to assist in bringing into existence the right forms of organization and methods of functioning to achieve development. (We shall discuss these forms of organization and how they might function in Chapter 11 on Community Development.)

Changing System Elements:

So far we have been speaking of the system as a system, not too romantically we hope. For we are aware that a good social system requires that its positions be filled with good men. The more that the study team learned during its stay in Macaracas, the more it came to respect the alcalde and a majority of his corregidores and regidores. However, two or three of the corregidores had neither the social status nor the

style of action suited to the position. This had been recognized by the alcalde who volunteered that he planned to replace several of them and fill their positions with the right sort "when the time is right". Fortunately, the system permits the replacement of such people without much difficulty so long as it is done in a manner to save face. Although the pay is meagre, the position of corregidor has enough prestige to attract able men into it, as exemplified by the two very competent men who had served in the position on more than one previous occasion. What was more amazing was the capacity of the system to attract to the position of regidor men who were obviously performing most useful time-consuming tasks within their respective communities, and doing so without any pay at all.

Strengthening the System:

As basically strong as the ACR system is, it requires bolstering in order to perform its old "regular" functions, and to prepare itself for increased participation in and responsibility for development.

In the past one has learned to be an alcalde by being an alcalde, to be a corregidor or regidor by learning on the job. It is likely that most of the competence to perform will continue to come from experience in the position. However, competence and the capacity to learn from experience can be increased by more formal learning experiences, and it is suggested that these be instituted. In collaboration with an expanded APCI staff the alcalde, assisted by the personero, the judge, the secretary of the alcaldia, the municipal treasurer and perhaps others could improve performance by conducting a series of training seminars for corregidores in such mundane matters as keeping the birth and death registers; assisting the personero to conduct various kinds of investigations of crime; arbitrating the most common kinds of disputes such as those involving the depredations of loose livestock; making a catastro corregimental of all taxable businesses and property for use by the municipal treasurer; learning the most basic laws affecting the more common crimes such as "cuttings"; using faenas and other means for keeping the roads and trails open; organizing the people for development in order to learn their priorities of needs, to plan and to take appropriate action; and determining what outside resources are now available and from what agencies and how the resources may be obtained and used effectively.

Much of value will be learned in these seminars by the corregidores from one another, especially from those with years of experience. Much also could be learned from a series of how-to-do-it booklets. The research required and the writing, testing and production of pamphlets on a wide variety of topics could be arranged for by APCI, with the cooperation of such organizations as the Law School of the University as well as the various ministries and autonomous agencies of the central government, and perhaps through collaboration with the UN, USAID and other international development organizations.

Seminars might be held on one day of each month and attendance encouraged by the payment of a small per diem (perhaps \$2.00) to partially offset the very real costs of coming to the cabecera and devoting a full days time to public business. The per diem costs for a year of such seminars in Macaracas would approximate only \$200.

Similar seminars at the provincial capitals for the alcaldes could be conducted by APCI assisted by provincial officials and such national bodies as IVU, the Department of Valorization, Estadística y Censo, FUNDAVICO, Reforma Agraria, CAM and Community Deve`opment. Transportation and per diem would amount to perhaps \$10 per month for each alcalde.

Our second suggestion for strengthening the system is to increase the prestige of the positions of corregidor by the use of conspicuous status symbols. Each of those who did complete perhaps six of the seminars discussed above, and who had in the alcalde's opinion shown an aptitude for the work as evidenced by performance on the job, could be formally appointed to the position and awarded a framed appointment certificate complete with ribbons and seal, suitable for display on the wall of the recipient's house or other place which he uses as a corregiduria. These appointment certificates might be awarded at public ceremonies, perhaps on each of the two national independence days. As the alcalde expressed it "they would feel more like collaborating as they would feel more honored".

Our third suggestion has to do with expenses and remuneration. At present the alcalde has no way of getting about the district except by cadging rides, of which he does a great deal, or by riding horses which are sometimes brought in for his use by corregidores anxious to have his help on a particular case. Although most of the business transacted by the

alcalde's office is best brought to the alcaldía by the corregidores, there is no doubt that the alcalde needs to visit his corregimientos more often. This he could do if the Council provided him with an expense allowance of perhaps \$25 per month which would enable him to hire taxis and horses as required. The necessity for this allowance will increase greatly, if and when the municipal government becomes really active in development.

This leads us to our fourth suggestion. As noted above, the municipal government of Macaracas cannot get into development in a meaningful way until its income is significantly increased through larger subventions or by widening the tax base. But this move would itself be dependent upon a clear understanding of the respective spheres of responsibility for development to be exercised by the central and local governments. This is well expressed in a recent report on a short investigation in Macaracas in which it is stated "there is no understanding of the appropriate breakdown between central government and local government responsibilities. The concept of greatest use and benefit was not present". ("Investigation of Municipal Government Operation in Macaracas, Los Santos Province" by Frank Dimond and Bryant Ruthven, USAID/Panama, 21 April 1969, p.4.)

Therefore, we would suggest that this use-benefit concept be applied. But this is impossible for one or even all of the local governments to do on their own as the power to decide on the responsibility for performance lies with the central government. What might be done is to carry out an investigation by a "commission" composed of representatives of the local governments (possibly selected by APCI) and of the central government. Such a commission, appointed by the President, would systematically examine all of the present functions of both central and local governments which are carried out at the local level. The commission would have to assemble the data necessary to a decision on each function -- the relevant statutes, financial inputs and outputs including the often hidden costs of administration and supervision.

It might then produce two or more alternatives as to where and how the function should be performed, the pros and cons, and the costs and benefits of each together with recommendations to the President. In this way the various local and national interests might be resolved and a more rational division of responsibilities achieved. Following this exercise, or possibly

as a part of it, a rational system of local taxation supplemented by grants-in-aid both of the "performance" and "deficiency" types could be devised.

The fifth and final suggestion has to do with elections. In its efforts to reestablish the democratic process in Panama, the present government might consider beginning with the election of local governments including the alcaldes and the concejales. Such elections would not only make these officials truly representative of the people (particularly if the concejales were elected from the corregimientos), but it would also provide the government with an opportunity to correct any abuses which might develop, and at the same time prepare the political parties for responsible action within the democratic process in elections to fill national offices.

CHAPTER 4

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT: THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

A. The Municipal Council

Composition:

The Municipal Council (Concejo Municipal) is composed of seven members, as provided by "Ley Número 8 de 1954" for districts with populations greater than 10,000 but less than 25,000. After the military coup in October of last year, the council of Macaracas along with all councils in the country was dissolved. Each of a number of clubs and other organizations in the district were then asked by the new governor of the province to submit to him the names of three candidates for council membership. The governor transmitted these nominations along with his recommendations to the President of the Republic who selected seven representing the following organizations:

Lions Club (Club de Leones)	1
Cattlemen's Association Chapter (Capítulo de Ganaderos)	1
Parents Club (Club de Padres de Familia)	1
Teachers Association (Federación de Maestros)	1
Public Health Committee (Comité de Salud Pública)	1
Committee for the Betterment of Llano de Piedra (Comité Pro Mejoras de Llano de Piedra)	2

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the head doctor at the health center is credited with influencing the governor's recommendations. All of the members except the two from Llano de Piedra are residents of Macaracas town. The councilmen serve without pay, a practice followed in all of the districts of Los Santos Province except in Las Tablas, the capital where each member receives \$3.00 per session for a maximum of two sessions per month. Although not paid, the councilmen are eligible to receive travel allowances totaling \$70.00 a year for the entire council when representing the council at meetings of the Provincial Intermunicipal Association.

The council has elected from among its members a president and a vice-president and has employed a secretary of the council. Because of its small size the council is not permitted by law to carry out its business through permanent commissions as are the councils in larger districts. However, it may appoint temporary commissions or committees and it has recently done so in naming a committee to examine the municipal tax structure.

In addition, the council has three boards (juntas) one each for health, education, and sports. These boards operate independently but receive their support from legally prescribed percentages of the council revenues. Receipts are credited by the provincial auditor to each Board's account based upon the actual receipts of the council. Expenditures may be made only for materials or equipment, and only after the proper forms have been approved by the president of the board, the alcalde and the auditor. The latter sends a check directly to the supplier after receiving properly signed receipts from the board. (These boards are discussed individually in later chapters dealing with the respective fields in which they function.)

Functions:

At the time of the field phase of this study the new council had been in operation for only three months. During this period it was principally concerned with passing a new budget for 1969 (discussed below), as well as preparing and presenting to the President of the Republic a list of the priority needs of the district. The following items making up the list are presented in order of priority assigned to them by the council:

1. Reconstruct the street system of Macaracas town.
2. Construct a sewerage system for Macaracas town.
3. Reconstruct the National Guard cuartel and place the jail in the rear.
4. Repair of main road through the district from Sabana Grande junction to Tonosí.
5. Finish the reconstruction of the church begun by the previous government utilizing the \$10,000 committed by the government for this purpose.
6. Spread gravel on the road from Llano de Piedra to La Mesa.
7. Arrange and repair the streets of Llano de Piedra.
8. Install street lights in the streets of Llano de Piedra.
9. Install mercury lights in the streets and parks of Macaracas town.

Build a bridge on the Macaracas-Chupá road.
Spread gravel on the road from Macaracas to El Galabacito (Los Pozos District).

About six weeks after presentation of this want list, the council received a reply from the president asking what the council was willing to contribute to these proposed projects. The council's reply was somewhat vague in that it dealt with only three of the eleven projects in the original request. Regarding the mercury street lights for Macaracas, the council repeated its request stating as justification that the town's people had already contributed both money (to buy the steel poles) and labor (for their erection). Concerning the system of streets in Llano de Piedra and Macaracas the council promised to give both money and labor. The remaining eight proposed projects on the original list were not mentioned in the council's reply.

Other actions by the council during this period included collaborating with the alcalde in the collection of delinquent taxes in order to be able to expand the budget; allocating a lot in Macaracas town to the government for a post office; studying an increase in many of the taxes on stores and other establishments which were judged to be too low; voting to allocate one percent of municipal revenues to the support of APCI; and finally, consideration of a higher salary scale for corregidores.

In addition, the council has provided a guard for the park and cemetery (\$20 salary per month), another for the slaughterhouse and meat market (\$25 salary per month), and a collector of garbage by oxcart (under contract at \$25 per month).

Problems:

Two problems were mentioned by the president as negatively affecting the operation of the council. First was the need to pay the members of the council since they had been devoting a great deal of their time to the business of the district. However, he felt that with so little money in the municipal coffers it would be quite improper to use part of it for this purpose at this time. The solution could lie in giving a preference to those council members who wanted jobs when certain government positions such as those in Reforma Agraria and in CAM were being filled.

The second problem had to do with the insufficiency of council revenue. The council believed that three taxes which now go to the central government should come to the municipality, the bar tax and animal slaughter tax in their entireties, and all or at least a part of the land tax. The latter is being investigated with Reforma Agraria and is on the work agenda of APCI.

B. The Council Secretary

Position:

The secretary is an employee of the council, a position which requires only six to nine hours of work per week, most of it at night. His pay has been fixed at \$43.50 per month in the new budget. Although the secretary had been in office for only one month at the time of the study, he had served previously for four years as personero and had become familiar with the operations of previous municipal councils.

Functions and Problems:

The major function of the secretary is to attend all council meetings and to keep records of the proceedings. He may make proposals to the council but as a nonmember he has no vote. The record is presented to the next meeting of the council for corrections and final approval. He also prepares acuerdos, official acts of the council which have the force of law. Since taking office he has prepared three, one increasing the salary of the alcalde and the corregidores, another allocating 1% of the municipal revenue to APCI, and the last allocating a lot for the post-office. The only problem which he has at the moment is the absence of a typewriter, the lack of files and an office. The latter will be corrected when the Casa Comunal is completed. The secretary believes that there should be a desk for each member of the council and benches for the members of the public who wish to attend council sessions.

Development Needs of the District:

Although the alcalde and council have submitted a list of development projects to the President of Panama, the secretary felt that there were other more fundamental needs of the district. First there should be a better utilization of its land resources. Practically all of the good land for use in growing

crops has already been slashed and burned. There is only a small amount of land recognized as belonging to the public left in the district, most of it in the mountains of Bajos de Guera near Tonosí, but too steep and rough to be cultivated. However, even this is being misused for rozas. Technical assistance is a great part of the answer. Farmers and cattlemen must be taught how to prepare their present lands properly for crops, and how to care for livestock including the prevention and care of diseases, vaccinations, etc. The MACI agent, he felt, should be giving this kind of help rather than attending to his office.

The second major need of the rural parts of the district is for penetration roads and bridges, roads which can be traveled in the wet season. There is no doubt that the people will gladly give their labor for this purpose as has been repeatedly proven in constructing other roads in this district and in Los Pozos.

Insofar as the development of the town of Macaracas is concerned first priority should go to obtaining some type of manufacturing enterprise to provide jobs for the increasing number of unemployed or those who are employed for only a few months of the year on tomato farms. A close second in priority is the establishment of the first cycle of a high school, since large numbers are being graduated from primary schools not only in this district but also in Los Pozos and Tonosí and there is no place for them to go. The third major necessity is the enlargement of the water supply tank and the construction of a sewerage system in Macaracas town.

C. The Municipal Treasurer

Appointment:

The present treasurer (Tesorera Municipal) was appointed by the Municipal Council in January of this year on recommendation of an officer of the National Guard. The treasurer is a young housewife formerly employed as a secretary by Reforma Agraria in Panama City. Her pay is \$50.00 per month. She uses a corner of the living room of her house, which is near the alcaldía, as an office.

Functions:

The sole function of the treasurer is to receive the tax payments which taxpayers bring to her and to render receipts.

As she pointed out, it is the responsibility of the council to set the rates and of the alcalde and corregidores to see that taxes are paid. The corregidores have been very cooperative in furnishing her with lists of new stores, new branding irons, etc., which she then adds to her municipal tax list (Catastro Distritorial). If the people do not pay voluntarily, they are informed to do so by the alcalde. If they persist in not paying, they will have 20% added to their tax bill for each month of delinquency. Those who are listed in her office are now paying as they are afraid that the alcalde will levy a fine or even jail them.

The tax list and rates on establishments for the corregimiento of Macaracas and the remainder of the district are shown below in Table 4.1. As pointed out by the treasurer, this list is incomplete and better information is being received from time to time from the corregidores. There are, of course, other types of taxes collectable by the treasurer and these are shown below in the section on the budget. The council has recently raised a number of the tax rates as they were generally too low, and has lowered that on oxcarts from \$7.50 to \$5.50 as many taxpayers complained that the old rate was inequitable since they did not use their carts frequently.

Table 4.1 does not present the full picture, owing to changes in some rates and to inherent difficulties in presentation. For example, the slaughter-house tax was omitted from the table since the tax is levied on each head of livestock actually slaughtered. The rate was recently raised by the council from \$0.75 per hog to \$1.25 and from \$4.00 to \$6.00 for each beef animal. The rate for dances has also been raised from \$4.00 to \$6.00. Formerly Agentes Vendedores de Club (club salesmen) were not taxed but now there is an imposition of \$2.00 per month. Restaurants, pensions, jukeboxes and gasoline pumps which were formerly charged only \$1.00 per month each are now charged \$2.00. Owing to insufficient data it is not possible to compute the net effect of these changes in rates and in those levied on stores of various kinds.

Problems:

The treasurer's major need is for equipment, especially an adding machine and a safe in which to keep the tax collections. There is a considerable danger of being robbed and she has been informed that she herself is not insured should she be injured. When the new Casa Comunal is completed she has been told that

TABLE 4.1

COMMERCIAL TAX LIST (IMPUESTOS COMERCIALES), MACARACASDISTRICT, MARCH, 1969

Commercial Establishment	Number In Macaracas Corregimiento	Number In Remainder of District	Total	Annual Rate	Total Collectible
Large General Stores (Tiendas al por Mayor)	9	-	9	\$96.00	864.00
Small General Stores (Tiendas al por Menor)	5	50	55	\$24-\$36	1,650.00
Small Food Stores (Abarroterías)	-	24	24	\$24.00	576.00
Jukeboxes (Cajas de Música)	4	1	5	\$12.00	60.00
Rice or Coffee Mills (Piladoras)	2	3	5	\$18.00	90.00
Billard Hall (Billar)	3	-	3	\$15.00	45.00
Refreshment stand (Refresquería)	3	-	3	\$24.00	72.00
Restaurants (Restaurantes)	3	-	3	\$24.00	72.00
Pharmacy (Farmacia)	1	-	1	\$60.00	60.00
Weights & Measures (Pesas y Medidas)	14	-	14	\$ 1.00	14.00
Branding Irons (Ferreterías)	50	558	608	\$ 1.00	608.00
Oxcarts (Carretas)	18	59	77	\$ 5.50	423.50
Gasoline Stations (Bombas de Gasolina)	1	-	1	\$12.00	12.00
Kiosco	-	2	2	\$24.00	48.00
TOTAL					4,594.50

-76-

Source: Letter to the study team from the municipal treasurer of Macaracas dated 13 March, 1969.

N. B.: This table does not reflect the changes in rates made by the Municipal Council to take effect on 1 April, 1969. The study team was informed on its last visit to Macaracas in mid-June that several of the rates on the new schedule had been changed owing to protests from taxpayers.

her office will be moved there. This will make it difficult to continue in the position as she accepted it originally because it could be done on a part time basis while carrying on household tasks and attending to her two small children.

There is a great deal of work to be done now particularly with the collection of back taxes and the installation of a proper office system. When she took over there was no card index and the other records were confused. Many people have been to the office to say that they have paid their taxes, but since the records were so poor she was unable to determine if this were true unless the person could produce a receipt. If they could not do so, the treasurer felt that she had no alternative but to continue to charge them for the back taxes.

D. Budget-1968

A summary of the budget for 1968 and the amounts actually spent and collected by the end of 1968 are shown below.

Income:

The budgeted income for 1968 totaled \$11,488 and the collections \$10,722. The major subdivisions of the income budget and the amounts actually collected were as follows:

Items	Budget	Collections	
		Amount	Percent
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 113	\$ 113	1.1
Sale or rental of municipal property			
Sale of lots	300	94	
Rental of slaughter-house and market	310	298	
Cemetery lot sales and vault rentals	64	49	
Guides for cattle transport	500	276	
License plates	275	327	
Other (tax on itinerant salesmen, photographers, etc.)	<u>15</u>	<u>-</u>	
Total	\$1,464	\$1,044	9.8

Tax on commercial establishments

General and food stores	1,350	1,838	
Other (bars, pharmacies, grain mills, bakeries, etc.)	<u>705</u>	<u>664</u>	
Total	\$2,055	\$2,502	23.3
Tax on dances	\$ 450	\$ 528	4.9
Tax on vehicles			
Commercial	1,140	769	
Private	500	865	
Oxcarts	350	140	
Motorcycles	<u>-</u>	<u>29</u>	
Total	\$1,990	\$1,803	16.8
Fines	600	413	3.8
Tax on branding irons	250	99	0.9
Other (public spectacles and building permits)	144	2	-
National Subvention	2,922	2,922	27.3
Delinquent taxes	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,296</u>	12.1
Grand Total	\$11,488	\$10,722	100.0

Source: "Ingresos del Municipio de Macaracas, mes de diciembre 1968", Contraloría General de la República, Dept. of Auditoría, Las Tablas.

Of the actual collections it is apparent that the single largest item is the subvention from the central government consisting of more than one fourth of the total (27.3%), reportedly much higher than the national average. The reason for the favorable treatment of Macaracas is not known, but the fact that a powerful diputado (representative in the National Assembly) in previous governments came from there may have been a factor. The next largest item, the tax on commercial establishments, accounted for almost a fourth (23.3%) followed by the tax on vehicles (16.8%).

Although there were a large number of families in the town wanting land on which to build, and the town had land which it could have sold, the sale of lots accounted for less than 1% of

the total. The alcalde stated that municipal land was sold at 5¢ per square meter, while the annual municipal tax rate on land ranged from 5¢ per square meter in the town center, to 4¢ in the western neighborhood and 3¢ in the eastern part of town. However, it is apparent from the table above that no such taxes were collected last year. An inspection of the March, 1969 Income budget also revealed no land tax collections. The new alcalde and council are seeking technical assistance in planning the town after which they expect to sell a number of lots, perhaps at a higher price, although the alcalde is more interested in properly locating the squatters than in higher revenues for the district from this source. He stated that the price for land should be about 25¢ per square meter and that he planned to raise the price to this level, but not in the immediate future as it was impolitic to do so at present.

Outgo:

The budgeted expenses of running the municipal government for 1968 totaled \$11,487 and actual expenditures \$10,509. The major subdivisions of the budget and the actual expenditures were as follows:

Items	Budget	Expenditures	
		Amount	Percent
Salaries	\$ 7,463	\$ 7,160	68.1
Travel and per diem	210	135	1.3
Other expenses (office supplies, surety, cleaning materials, garbage collection, purchase of licenses, etc.)	965	577	5.5
Public works	238	-	-
Fixed percentages for services:			
Education Fund (20% of taxes collected)	1,099	1,103	
Physical Education Fund (5% of taxes collected)	225	275	
Public Health Fund (5% of taxes collected)	225	275	
Fire Department (2% of taxes collected)	100	110	
Total	\$ 1,649	\$ 1,763	16.8

Social Security	368	326	3.1
Miscellaneous (old accounts, etc.)	<u>585</u>	<u>546</u>	<u>5.2</u>
Grand Total	\$11,478	\$10,507	100.0

Source: "Egresos del Municipio de Macaracas, mes de diciembre, 1968. Contraloría General de la República, Dept. of Auditoría, Las Tablas."

As the table above shows, most of the costs of local government in Macaracas go for salaries. When the related personnel costs of travel expenses, office supplies and social security are added in, the total constitutes about three fourths of the total expenditures. Thus only one fourth is left for such services as garbage collection, supplements to education, physical education, public health and fire-fighting.

As of mid-June, 1969, the alcalde reported that the treasurer had already collected in 1969 more than \$10,000, of which about \$1,000 represented back taxes, and that revenues were expected to exceed \$15,000 for the year.

E. Associations

APCI:

The council is a member of APCI, the Asociación Panameña de Cooperación Inter-Municipal, a voluntary organization composed of most of the municipal councils in Panama. According to the alcalde this association has been formed to work as a power group to extract the maximum assistance possible from the central government. Since the new government has come into office, APCI has become much more active than previously. In February it arranged for the alcalde and members of the Macaracas council to be received by the President of the Republic to whom the group gave a list of priority development needs of Macaracas. At a recent meeting the council voted to allocate 1% of its annual revenues (\$115 in the 1969 budget) to the support of APCI, and directed the provincial auditor in Las Tablas to begin payment.

The Provincial Intermunicipal Association:

The council also belongs to the Asociación Intermunicipal de Hacienda de la Provincia de Los Santos, a body permitted but not required by law. The association is governed by a council composed of one representative of each of the municipal councils which have joined the association. (The Municipal Council of Los Santos District is not a member.) The president is elected from among the municipal council representatives and is currently the representative from Las Tablas. The Provincial Auditor gives this Association assistance in the preparation of a consolidated budget for the province.

The association has prepared a memorial to the Minister of Hacienda asking that the Ministry give effect to a law which provides that the municipalities receive a percentage of the proceeds from the sale of public lands in their respective districts. When this law has been made effective, the alcalde indicated that the association would then press the government for a share in the land tax which, it is reported, is to be applied to all land in 1970, irrespective of whether or not it is titled.

F. Analysis and Comment

Council Composition and Program:

The present Macaracas council membership is concentrated entirely in the two largest towns in the district, the capital with perhaps eight or nine percent of the district population and Llano de Piedra with approximately seven or eight percent of the total. Thus, eight of the ten corregimientos are not represented. However, it must be pointed out that appointments to the council were not made to represent geographic entities but from among the members of organizations having interests in development or in basic institutional growth. Three of the members represent organizations - Ganaderos, the teacher's federation and the health committee - which are concerned with aspects of development on a district-wide basis. The other four representing the Macaracas (town) Lions Club, the Llano de Piedra Betterment Committee (2), and the Macaracas Padres de Familia Club can be expected to be primarily concerned with these two towns, judging from the programs of their parent organizations.

The composition of the council has been reflected in the development program presented by the council to the central government. Six of the eleven projects (street systems, street lights, jail and sewerage) were of exclusive benefit to the town dwellers, four projects for Macaracas and two for Llano de Piedra. Although the church is located in the capital, it serves the entire district and is so understood by the people. The remaining four projects concern roads and bridges which, of course, are relevant to the needs of the rural residents as well as to some of those in the towns. However, the council's reply to the President's inquiry (concerning their self-help plans) was revealing of the council's town bias in that the only three projects mentioned by the council were located in the two towns.

A positive action of the council was its decision to exploit the present tax system by collecting back taxes, and by raising taxes, mostly on commercial establishments, to levels more nearly reflecting their increased volume of business and prosperity. For the long-term increase in revenue the council is relying in part upon APCI, as reflected in its allocation of 1% of its annual revenue for APCI support, to bring pressure on the central government, a time-honored method for getting results in Panama and well-understood by the council. Also on the positive side are the council's recognition of the vital role of the corregidores as evidenced in action to raise their abysmally low pay, and its decision to seek technical help in planning and physically developing the capital town on sound lines.

Current Revenue and Expenditures:

As has been noted above, three fourths of the total budget in 1968 was devoted to the payment of salaries and other personnel-related costs. This is usually enough to set heads to shaking, the implied assumption being that development and services are thereby being starved. A closer look at the actual situation in Macaracas discloses quite a different picture. First is the incredible efficiency of the personnel "system", whereby for less than \$8,000 (salary, per diem, social security, office supplies, etc.) the municipality receives the full-time services of seven men including the alcalde, the secretary of the alcaldía, a clerk and a porter in the alcaldía, two watchmen and a garbage collector, as well as the services as needed to carry out the functions of their respective positions of the municipal secretary, the municipal treasurer, the council secretary, and nine corregidores! This is not to mention the unpaid services of the council members and the regidores neither of whom would be able to serve without the above "paid" officials. It doesn't

take much imagination to determine what services would be furnished by a central government bureaucracy for \$8,000!

Second, as we have noted in Chapter 3 on the alcalde, the arbitrativo, quasi-judicial, judicial and law-and-order-maintenance functions provided by this system are not only vital, but some of them could not be provided by non-acculturated outsiders at any price. Therefore, one is led to conclude that the top-heavy allocation of the present resources to personnel costs is not only fully justified but inescapable. As we shall see in later chapters, the mandatory council budget allocations to education and health are marginal and although useful, are in no sense essential to the functioning of these institutions which get most of their resources directly from central government appropriations.

Increasing Revenues - Alternatives:

It is apparent that even if the entire income of the Macaracas council were devoted to development projects, the amount (\$11,000 in 1968 and about \$15,000 this year) would not be sufficient to undertake more than two or three projects on the council's priority list with any prospect of completing them.

One alternative, of course, is to restrict the Municipal Council to its present level of activity, or permit it to extend its development program only to the extent that it could do so through increasing tax collections and raising further the rates of the taxes and licenses it is presently permitted to levy. However, it is unlikely that there is much expansibility in the present revenue system except for collection of the municipal land tax and sale of lots at prices more nearly approximating their real value. Recent council action has probably raised the remainder of the taxes to the limits deemed equitable by the citizens. If the council were restricted to the present tax structure, central government would be faced with carrying out local development, or of neglecting local development as it largely has done in the past. If recent experiences in Macaracas are a guide, a decision by central government to undertake real local development through its ministries could be an expensive one. For example, last year the previous government is reported to have constructed under contract a simple 2-room unequipped auxiliary health center in La Mesa at a cost of \$16,500, although the materials and labor to construct the identical building were estimated locally at less than \$2,500.

A second alternative is for the central government to allocate to the municipalities a proportion, say ten to twenty percent, of its development budget each year for use on self-help development projects within their respective districts. If Macaracas received \$30-40,000 per year for this purpose, the council and alcalde could complete development projects worth at least as much as \$100,000 would in the hands of central government ministries, judging from past experience. Even if the central government should make such an allocation to municipalities, the money alone would not be sufficient. The central government would have also to give technical assistance, primarily of an engineering type, and provide on a donation or hire basis the rock-crushers, dump trucks, road graders, etc., needed by the municipalities. CAM has proven to be unable to meet the needs of the municipal governments for equipment and operators when they are required, a not surprising result since CAM's primary mission is to undertake large projects itself or to work through contractors on large-scale construction. While this second alternative has many superior features to the first one suggested (continuance of the present system), it merely extends the dependence of the municipalities on the central government. Furthermore, the annual competition between ministries and autonomous agencies of the central government for government resources makes it all too likely that such substantial allocations to local governments will not be made, or, if made, would not be long sustained.

A third alternative is to increase the tax base available to the municipalities. The Macaracas Council has asked that it receive the bar and slaughter taxes which currently go to the central government. While these taxes, especially those on slaughter animals, appear to be well-suited for local collection and administration, i.e. in accord with local feeling (a cow killed to be eaten locally is a local thing and no business of the central government), it must be realized that the amount of additional income, possibly \$4-5,000, will not substantially alter the income picture. A third tax, that on all of the land in the district, would make the difference. Now that a proper cadastral survey has been completed of the rural lands and values set, the municipalities might be permitted to collect and to use this tax for their own development. It would enable them to assume some of the responsibility, such as building and maintaining local (not national) roads and bridges, and school buildings and other public structures, etc. 1/

1/ See footnote on following page.

There is good reason to believe that local initiative, and locally-contributed labor and materials will result in a greater efficiency than can possibly be obtained by central government ministry construction or by contractors. With such a tax base municipalities, individually when they are large enough to warrant it and collectively through their Provincial Intermunicipal Association (or through APCI) when it is most efficient to do so, could hire their own engineers and foremen and buy their own road and bridge-making and maintenance equipment. Such personnel and equipment would be available when it is needed. Furthermore, the equipment could be of the type required - picks, shovels, wheelbarrows, small road graders, small concrete mixers, etc., and be manned by those with experience in using such equipment to supplement community - donated labor.

It is unlikely that either the second or third alternative will become policy unless there is a great deal of pressure brought to bear by the municipalities themselves. And this pressure can probably be best applied through APCI. Therefore, it would appear that APCI should be strengthened.

One alternative would have the central government allocate to APCI an annual subvention. But experience in other countries leads us to question the wisdom of such an action. A subvention, if it is large enough to be meaningful, is likely to bring with it central government controls which would have the effect of turning APCI itself into a government bureau. If APCI received an appropriate subvention, but was able to retain its independence and was effective in gaining some power and resources for its constituents from the central government, the continuance of the subvention would be sure to be opposed by the central government ministries and agencies which perceived the municipalities' gains as their loss. On the other hand, it might be argued that APCI by receiving large subventions for two or three years would thereby be enabled to gain sufficient strength and secure enough advantages for its constituent municipal governments to permit it to dispense with central government largesse and rely upon its members' budgetary allocations for support.

I/ After reviewing this statement Mr. Bryan Ruthven of USAID expressed the opinion that property tax revenues alone probably could not finance all local bridges and roads, as suggested above, but that another source of capital financing would have to be found. We agree on the desirability of obtaining such financing, probably in the form of long-term loans, in which case property tax revenues should be adequate to repay principle and interest.

A second alternative envisages obtaining assistance from international agencies, either in the form of donations or loans, to permit APCI to provide such services to its member councils as (1) publishing a newsletter; (2) sponsoring a series of short seminars for alcaldes, presidents of municipal councils, corregidores, municipal treasurers, alcaldia secretaries, and others on aspects of local administration and development, and on techniques of pressuring the central government to obtain changes in or additions to laws, as well as access to financial and technical resources required for local development; (3) giving technical assistance of a type not ordinarily available to municipal governments from central government, such as legal talent for use in drafting local and national legislation affecting municipal affairs, and conducting research studies, such as this one, of municipal government in other parts of Panama; and (4) providing opportunities for alcaldes and others to study aspects of local government as practiced in other municipalities of Panama and in the local governments of other countries.

CHAPTER 5

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT: JUSTICE

This chapter is devoted to a description and analysis of the more formal side of the dispensation of justice in the district of Macaracas. As noted in Chapter 3, one of the alcalde's major functions is to sit in judgment on various kinds of cases and to mete out justice through arbitration, warnings, fines and jail sentences. The major subjects discussed below, the prosecuting attorney (personero) and municipal judge (juez municipal), work in a very closely coordinated fashion with the alcalde, not only in administering justice, but also in the case of the personero in the legislative and executive functions of local government as well.

A. The Personero

Status:

The personero is appointed by the attorney-general (procurador) of the government of Panama usually from among nominees of the provincial circuit attorney (fiscal del circuito) in Las Tablas. The present occupant of the position took office in late January of this year, but he had held the office previously from 1960 to 1962 and was, therefore, familiar with its functions. He had also served previously as alcalde for two years, and as the judge and in other public posts since 1948. The personero makes monthly reports to the fiscal del circuito. He is paid directly by the central government and, therefore, is not a municipal employee.

Functions: Investigation and Prosecution

The primary task of the personero is to investigate crimes within the district. These may be reported to him by the alcalde, a corregidor, by the police, or by citizens. He must conduct his investigation personally at the scene of the crime, if it is possible to do so.

In the case of a murder he takes the doctor with him to perform an autopsy. If no doctor is available, he sends the corpse to Las Tablas for autopsy and commissions the personero there to make the reports. If the body of the victim is in too

remote a place and it is too difficult to reach, he may designate a person in the area to make a report of the wounds, etc., and to perform the burial. All witnesses are required to come to the personero's office to give their testimony. In the event that a witness lives in another district, the personero of Macaracas writes to the personero of that district who then obtains the testimony and transmits it to him. To complete a murder investigation the personero obtains the murder weapon, the clothing of the victim, the autopsy report and a copy of the corregidor's death register report. All evidence, documents and reports are sent to the fiscal del circuito who takes over the case for trial in Las Tablas.

Similar investigations are made by the personero of other serious crimes which are required to be prosecuted by the fiscal. These include stealing cattle, wounding so as to leave visible scars, stealing \$300 or more, suspicious deaths, crimes against the public health (such as a case of well-poisoning in Mogollón under investigation at the time of the field study), satutory rape (girl below the age of 15), forcible rape, and wounding in any manner which incapacitates the victim for longer than thirty days.

Cases which may be tried by the local judge are also investigated to the extent required. The statements of witnesses are recorded, relevant police records are obtained from DENI, and in the case of minors birth certificates are obtained from the registro civil in Panama. All of the evidence in the case is then sent to the judge with the personero's recommendation that it be tried by either the judge or by the alcalde. If the case is tried by the judge, the personero represents the state. In the event of a hearing (audiencia) the accused is always represented by counsel, either of his own choosing if he is able to pay, or by someone not usually a lawyer appointed by the judge.

Not all cases go to trial as some lack sufficient evidence. In such an instance the case is closed either temporarily or permanently. According to the personero, many things tend to slow the pace of investigations such as nonappearance of witnesses, and delay in receiving the doctor's reports of the severity of wounds and the period of incapacitation. Each month the personero submits a report to the fiscal on the status of investigations being conducted. Normally he is expected to complete investigations within two months of their initiation.

The cases investigated by the personero's office in 1968 were as follows:

Wounds	15
Stealing	11
Car accidents	3
Suspicious death	2
Suicide	2
Death in car accident	1
Murder	1
Poisoning of well	1
Shooting at a person	1
Total	<u>37</u>

Other Functions:

The present government has added a new function to the personero's duties, an overview of government employees both municipal and national, to see that they perform their duties. If he should find that an employee is not working, he must inform the fiscal. In order to perform this duty the personero occasionally visits the offices of employees to see if they are on the job.

Other duties include defence of municipal possessions both land and buildings against encroachment by others; setting the line the correct distance from the street for new buildings to be constructed in Macaracas town; keeping roads open throughout the district by backing the alcalde and the corregidores in cases of noncooperation by landowners through whose property a road passes; collaborating with the alcalde, the council, and the municipal treasurer in the collection of taxes; and, finally, attendance at the meetings of the Municipal Council to participate in discussions. The last two duties have always been required of the personero, but until the present government came to power, little was done about it as 'the Council seldom met, tax collection was lax, and the alcalde ran everything."

Problems and Development Needs:

The personero felt that there were no serious obstacles to his work. He needed a secure office in which to keep his files, a telephone, office furniture, workable typewriter, etc. He expected that the office and telephone would be provided as soon as the new Casa Comunal is occupied. (No work has been done on this building since November as the government is investigating

the contractor.) The only other difficulty in his work has been the number of very minor cases brought to him which are not worth investigating. Such cases are usually sent on to the alcalde. The number of cases to be investigated is small since the new government came to power as "the people are behaving better now".

In a broader context the personero stated that lack of all-weather roads have been the number one obstacle to progress in the district and an obstacle to his own investigative work. Other development needs of major importance are agricultural technical assistance from MAG not being given now, the lack of lands for rozas, the need for a first-cycle high school to take in the large numbers of qualified students from this district and from the districts of Tonosí and Los Pozos; more primary schools in the caseríos; and more medical assistance to the outlying areas through giras médicas (visits by medical personnel).

B. The Municipal Judge

Status:

The area served by the municipal judge (juez municipal) is the district of Macaracas. Until 1950 the office was under the municipality, but since that date it has functioned under the Second Circuit Court in Las Tablas (Juzgado Segundo del Circuito). The present incumbent has served as judge in Macaracas for the last thirteen years. Before assuming office he had spent three years as secretary to the former judge of Macaracas.

Functions:

The judge has four major functions: (1) the trying of civil cases, (2) the trying or referral of criminal cases, (3) arbitrating disputes, and (4) performing marriages.

By far the most important function concerns civil cases, which during the past year consisted entirely of thirty "casos de alimentos". A caso de alimento concerns the support by a father of a dependent child. Such cases are brought to the court because of abandonment of the family by the father, or because of a formal separation of the father and mother of the child. When a woman comes to his office and presents a claim for the support of a child, the judge writes to the registro civil in Panama City for a copy of the child's birth certificate. If the certificate shows the name of the father, the judge proceeds to fix the amount of support to be paid by the father. This may



PHOTO 8 Juzgado Municipal

vary from a low of \$3 to \$4 per month for the poorer rural families to a high of \$10 to \$15 for more affluent town families. The amount depends in part upon what is applied for and in part upon what the juez thinks the father is able to pay. The father makes payments to the judge who gives him a receipt, and the mother of the child collects from the judge to whom she gives a receipt. His accounts are audited by the contraloría. If the father refuses to pay, he may be sent to jail for up to 30 days. However, they always pay eventually and no one has been sentenced for this offense during his tenure on the bench.

All penal cases go first to the personero for investigation. When the personero's report has been received by the judge, he decides whether to try the case or to refer it to the alcalde. Since most of the cases which reach him are "cuttings" with a machete, the jurisdiction of the case is determined by the length of time the injured person has been incapacitated. If it is for less than twenty days, the alcalde tries the case; if it is between twenty and thirty days, the judge takes the case; if it is for more than thirty days, it must be sent for trial to the circuit court in Las Tablas. Out of a total of 21 criminal cases which came before him last year, 17 were sent to the alcalde and 4 were tried by the judge. The records of all cases tried are sent to the circuit court for review.

When a bond is required, the person who requests it must go to the bank in Las Tablas where he makes payment, receives a receipt, and returns to the judge who issues the bond. The judge stated that persons appearing before him in a trial are always represented by counsel of their own choosing, if they wish and are able to pay the counsel. If the person does not engage his own counsel, the judge assigns any citizen he sees fit to this duty. Such designees must represent the defendant and do so without receiving payment. Most of those so appointed are "tinterillos", little defenders, who are employed in the alcaldía or other offices. Although they are not paid for their services as defenders, they do charge for writing letters and petitions and drawing up documents of various kinds related or not related to a particular case. In his entire 13 years on the bench the judge recollected that defendants had brought lawyers to his court on no more than three or four occasions.

The judge's third function has been that of arbitrating in debt cases. If the amount of the debt is less than \$25, the alcalde usually handles the case while he takes care of those involving larger sums. No written record is made of such cases.

Performing civil marriage ceremonies composed the fourth category of the judge's duties. The law requires that the intention of two people to marry must be posted in writing on the wall of his court fifteen days prior to the wedding, and that it be signed by two witnesses. If this is not done, the ceremony may be performed anyway by the payment of a \$5 fine. All persons under 21 years of age require parental permission and the payment of a \$5 "liberation" fee. If parental permission is obtained, boys can marry at the age of 14 and above and girls at the age of 13. Couples intending to marry must produce a health certificate, but this is waived if they state that they have already been living together.

The judge is the only official authorized to perform civil marriages in the district, but any minister of a legally recognized religious body may perform religious marriage ceremonies. Both the civil and religious rites are legal, and only one is necessary although both may be performed. Before a religious ceremony can be performed, the couple must obtain a license (gratis) from the judge. Marriages may also be performed in his office during regular office hours without charge. However, if he is called upon outside of office hours he charges fifty cents. When a marriage is performed in a home the usual donation is \$5.00. The judge performed a total of seven marriage ceremonies in 1968.

The only problem mentioned by the judge was the difficulty in getting some of the fathers of dependent children to willingly accept his decision in *casos de alimentos* cases.

C. Analysis and Comment

Of the two positions described above, it would appear from the functions performed that one is essential and that one is marginal. The investigation and prosecution of criminal cases is not only essential but are functions that require a separate office for their performance. It does not seem to require the full-time services of the personero, but his participation in the administrative and legislative functions of local government are not only complementary time-wise, but also seem to fit well with his major duties.

The judge's position is another story. It would appear that in Macaracas most of the judge's functions are being performed at present by the *alcalde*, and that practically all of the remainder could be discharged easily by the *alcalde* with the assistance of

the secretary of the alcaldía. The alcalde already handles some of the casos de alimentos cases. These appear to be so routine that the addition of the remainder would not impose a burden on the alcalde and the secretary. Practically all of the criminal cases which have come to the judge (17 out of 21 in 1968) have been sent to the alcalde for trial. The four which the juez did audience either could have been tried by the alcalde under a somewhat broadened jurisdiction, (extension of the twenty-day incapacitation limitation to thirty days), or could have been sent to the circuit judge in Las Tablas without burdening that court. As to the debt arbitration cases, it appears that the alcalde actually handles most of these already, and the transfer of the remainder would present no problem since there is no legal debt limit on the power of the alcalde to arbitrate. Finally, the performance of seven marriages in a year would consume so little time of either the alcalde or the secretary of the alcaldía that it would not be noticed by either.

An obvious alternative to transferring the judge's functions to the alcalde is the reverse, i.e. making the judge responsible for all of the civil and criminal cases presently handled by the alcalde. This would in effect strip the alcalde of his magisterial functions. However, such a step would not only take away functions and a measure of prestige from the office of alcalde, but would also deprive the alcalde of the contacts with people and the insights he gains into their behavior from resolving conflicts. Of course, if the municipality should be able to increase substantially its revenue and engage in a development program of some magnitude, the alcalde might have his hands full of other matters and be quite happy to be rid of petty judicial functions.

A third alternative, and perhaps the most feasible, would be the transfer to the judge of certain types of cases in their entirety. The alcalde himself suggested that all casos de alimentos should be the sole responsibility of the judge as well as land disputes. However, in analyzing the latter it became clear that land cases are being resolved much more efficiently by the alcalde than would be possible by the judge. For example, during the last visit of the study team to Macaracas the alcalde was called to Bajos de Güera to resolve a complex land problem involving five parties. The matter was settled and his arbitration accepted by all parties within the space of a morning. He stated that this quick settlement was possible because he made it a practice not to take any written testimony, but to go to the disputed land itself with all parties

concerned and have each side present its case where the other side could hear it. In this way the real causes of the dispute could be uncovered and the matter resolved on the spot. Had this case gone to the judge, he would have built up a written record several inches thick and the matter would not have been resolved for a very long time if ever.

This incident points up the necessity of making a thorough analysis for each type of case of the methods used by both the judge and alcalde and the consequences to be expected from each. Such an analysis would make it possible to allocate responsibilities between the two in a rational manner. That this needs to be done was emphasized by the alcalde who feels that he is overworked and does not devote sufficient time to the development of the district because too much of his time is taken up by work that the judge could do as well.

CHAPTER 6

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The major focus of the field study of public education in Macaracas district is on the school as a community institution, more specifically on the participation of the community in the school, and the influence of the school on the development of the community. No attempt was made to study what went on inside the school as regards either content or method. Although schools were not in session during the field phase of the study, several teachers, residents of Macaracas, were interviewed, as well as officers and members of a number of the parents clubs (Clubes de Padres de Familia).

After presenting an overview of the numbers of schools, teachers and students brief descriptions follow of three schools, one of the largest in the district and two of the small one-teacher variety. These sections are followed by others on the municipal board of education, the teachers' association and cooperative, school inspection and adult education, and the Padres de Familia clubs. The analysis and commentary deals with aspiration levels, a first-cycle high school, supervision, school buildings, parent clubs and popular culture.

A. Schools, Teachers and Students

The 36 schools of the district of Macaracas constitute a school zone for purposes of inspection and supervision by the Ministry of Education. The distribution of schools by numbers of teachers and students is shown in Table 6.1. Note how small the variation is in teacher load by school size groups. Even the extremes are within 2.1 of the mean, considerably less than 10% in maximum variation. However, within the one-teacher and two-teacher size groups there is a very large variation.

NUMBERS OF SCHOOLS BY SIZE IN MACARACAS DISTRICT,

FEBRUARY, 1969

School Size Groups	Number of Teachers	Number of Schools	Number of	
			Students per School	Teacher
TOTAL	85	36	60.6	25.6
Large	9 & over	(2)		
Llano de Piedra	11 <u>a/</u>	1	283	25.7
Macaracas	10 <u>b/</u>	1	244	24.4
Medium	5 to 8	(3)		
Corozal	6	1	161	26.8
Chupá	6	1	150	25.0
La Mesa	5	1	137	27.4
Small	1 to 4	(31)		
Los Botoncillos	3	1	83	27.7
Bahía Honda	3	1	73	24.3
Los Leales	3	1	71	23.7
(Names not listed here)	2	10	49 <u>c/</u>	24.5
(Names not listed here)	1	18	27.1 <u>d/</u>	27.1

a/ Included 9 teachers, 1 director and 1 teacher for home education

b/ Included 8 teachers, 1 director and 1 special teacher

c/ Varied from 40 to 66

d/ Varied from 16 to 43

Note: Enrollment totaled 2,180 for the 36 schools.

Source: Letter from Inspector Provincial de Educación de Los Santos to Professor García de Paredes, dated 10 May 1969.

B. The Macaracas School: "Rudecinda Rodríguez"

Organization and Functioning:

This school, the second largest in the district, had last year, eight teachers, a director and a special teacher for home economics. The position of director appeared to take the occupant's full time throughout the year, as the director was extremely busy during the summer visits of the study team. Her functions include general administration, supervision of the teaching (largely through classroom visits), community relations and instructing in a night course in adult literacy. Last year eight of the ten members of the faculty were permanent residents of the district while the other two came from a district nearby. The school was expected to have an enrollment of 250 or more when the new school year began in April. Part of this increase was attributed to the expected transfer of a number of students from nearby one-room schools on the initiative of parents who want their children to receive better education than they could get in a school where four or more classes are taught by one teacher. The Macaracas school teaches grades one through six with some of the grades having more than one section.

Last year the Municipal School Board (Junta Municipal de Educación) gave the school some supplementary help in buying utensils and tools especially for use in the CARE-assisted pilot project for applied nutrition. However, the amount received from the junta was insufficient and it was necessary to solicit funds. The school received a new roof during the past summer. The reported expenditure of more than \$400 will absorb a substantial proportion of the funds available to the board in 1969 for the whole district.

According to the director, there has been no problem of student discipline, as supervision is divided among the teachers and scheduled for all recesses and other periods when students are on the school grounds. Since all of the teachers live in Macaracas during the school year and like teaching in this school, there has been no problem of absenteeism as is true in some other schools of the district.

Last year nutrition received a great deal of attention from the school teachers in Macaracas. CARE provided powdered milk which was available each day to each child. The children also received one meal per week from materials provided by CARE including wheat, oatmeal, and fruits combined with such items as

are available from the school garden (huerto escolar). The use of the school garden has been emphasized by the applied nutrition (Nutrición Aplicada) program sponsored by the Ministries of Education, Agriculture and Social Welfare, and aided by seeds and tools from FAO and UNICEF. This program, the director pointed out, has two objectives, (1) teaching the students to work the land properly, and (2) to use the food produced in the garden in a nutritionally balanced manner. Records are kept of the health of the children as a check on the effectiveness of the program.

Last year the school was the site of an evening school (Educación de Adultos) conducted as an extra duty by three of the day school teachers. This work was divided into two parts, literacy training (alfabetización) and skill training (cultura popular). A total of 53 adults were enrolled in a three-level literacy program with an average attendance of 42. Thirty, 3 men and 27 women, were promoted from the lowest to the second level, or from the second to the third level. Seven others, 3 men and 4 women, completed the third level and were given diplomas, the equivalent of sixth grade passing. The number in the cultura popular (skill training) program was smaller than in alfabetización (literacy education) owing to the fact that entry to cultura popular was restricted to those who had either a sixth grade education or were the possessors of an alfabetización diploma. Those who applied to the cultura popular program but who had too little education to meet the entrance requirements were enrolled in alfabetización. Some exceptions were made in the case of a few elderly people. Of the total of 16 enrolled in cultura popular, 13 successfully completed the pastry-making course and 10 the dress-making course.

It is reported that two of the three teachers who conducted these evening classes for adults are not planning to do so this year because they found the work excessive, and they would not receive a further salary increase for participating. One of those who taught a cooking class complained that she had to use her own kitchen for the class and that she was not compensated for the gas used.

Problems:

The number one problem, according to the director, has been poor nutrition on the part of pupils whose parents seemed to feel that any dietary deficiencies should be made up through feeding the children at school. Last year the school imposed a charge of five cents per child per month (45 cents per year) in order that

parents would accept a part of the responsibility. In the next session this charge will be increased to \$1.00 for the year.

The parental attitude toward nutrition, the director felt, was symptomatic of an indifference to the education of their children on the part of perhaps half of the parents. They have seemed not to care whether their children attended school or not. Nor have they visited the school to learn from the teachers how well their children were progressing. Although these parents appeared not to be concerned about their children's grades, they have expected them to be promoted at the end of the year. The difficulties of many students have been attributable to parental permissiveness in allowing the children to be on the street at night or to stay up late viewing television. A meeting, to be attended by the alcalde, the school inspector, the directors of all the schools in the district and the corregidores, has been planned for early in the new school year to discuss the matter and to take appropriate action.

In the director's experience the parents have seldom shown any initiative - "they are followers only." For example, the Club de Padres de Familia has relied too much upon the teachers, who have had to present the problems of the school to the club, lead the discussions and form the action committees. When committees have been formed an official having to do with the particular type of problem for which the committee was established, e.g. the sanitary inspector for health and hygiene, has been made a member of the committee and has had to do much of the work.

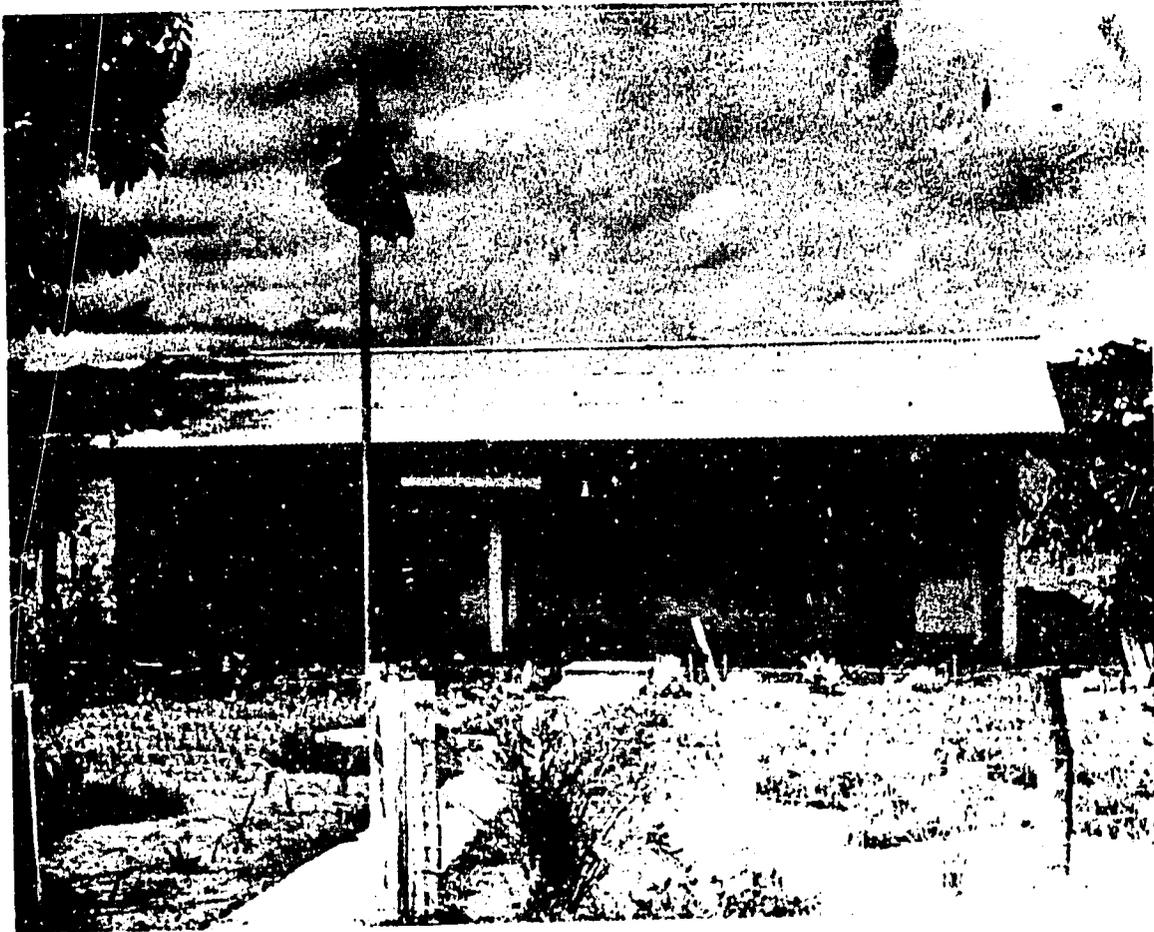
Regarding physical facilities, the school building has been found to be much too small for the present student population. Although there were nine teachers and a director last year, there were only six classrooms. This required the division of some classrooms into two parts and the rental of a house for other classes. In addition to the paucity of classrooms, there are not enough desks for all the pupils. The director stated that the Ministry had been informed of these shortcomings.

Of greater importance than the addition to the primary school, is the necessity for constructing a vocational school and a first-cycle high school to serve the districts of Macaracas, Tonosí and Los Pozos. A few of the parents have been sending their children to high school in Chitré, Panamá and Las Tablas at great personal sacrifice. It was believed that these parents, and others who could not send their children away, would

PHOTO 9 Peace Corps Volunteer teaching English, Macaracas

PHOTO 10 Self-help-built school at Chupafto

PHOTO 11 The first Alianza-aided school in area, Los Leales



participate gladly through donations of labor and some money in the construction of a high school.

C. A One-Teacher School - Chupaíto

The Teacher:

The teacher who has served this school in the Chupá corregimiento for the past four years had her home in Macaracas during this period. Until the road became impassable in winter she commuted the three or four miles from her home to school by personal car. But for most of the school year it has been necessary to go by horseback on Monday morning and return Friday afternoon. During the week she stayed in the school itself, but since the roof developed "as many holes as a sieve" she has been staying with a family in the community. Last year the school had five classes for the nineteen pupils in the school. The school building was completed in either 1946 or 1948, having been built by the parents without any outside assistance. The desks were also made by the community.

The Padres de Familia Club:

The teacher organized the Club de Padres de Familia which has been meeting each month. It raised funds which were used for several purposes including preparation of the CARE milk for the children, lending to parents with sick children to enable them to pay for transport of their children to the doctor, paying for special events such as sending a group to a church event in Macaracas, and repairing the school building. Last year the club had \$120 in the bank to use in repairing the roof and doors, but the teacher advised the club not to begin this work as the amount of money was insufficient to complete it. Ordinarily they could have raised the remainder through dances, raffles, etc., but this was unlikely at the time as the community was in the process of constructing a chapel and it was thought best not to have two uncompleted buildings.

It is the teacher's belief that most of the parents in Chupaíto are very much sold on education and want their children to finish elementary school. Usually those who have been sent to school have been kept there until they completed the fifth year. After that about two out of five have gone to Macaracas to finish the sixth grade. There has been a great demand by the people of Chupaíto for a first-cycle high school. Although it

has been possible to send children to the Los Santos first-cycle high school, they have been faced with the problem of finding living accommodations of any type but especially those which were priced at a rate they could afford to pay. The first-cycle high school in Chitré has been considered a superior school, but it has been very difficult to gain entrance to it. It has had few vacancies and these have been reserved for those who completed the sixth grade in Chitré. As a result of this condition some of the children from Chupaíto have been sent to Chitré to repeat the sixth grade there in order to secure entrance to the high school.

Problems:

For some years the teacher's major problem and that of the community has been the poor condition of the road between Chupaíto and the capital of the district. Running a close second has been the rundown condition of the school building, especially the roof. There has been also an insufficiency of desks and only one blackboard for the five classes. With the latter limitation she has had to wait until one class has copied a lesson from the board before she could begin using the board for another class. Because one class has interfered with another the teacher would like to have some way of separating each class, but this she has found to be very difficult in the present room and with the type of desks it has.

The funds given for education by the Municipal Council are intended to be used by the schools to purchase needed items. Under the established procedure, the teacher has obtained approval of the school inspector, bought items from one of the local stores which then billed the council. However, owing to the difficulty of collecting from the council the stores have become very reluctant to sell on this basis. Her last purchase, cups and saucers for the nutrition program, were purchased three years ago.

The final problem mentioned was the need to recondition the school orchard and garden which have not been used for some years and have become bush land. Last year the community decided to slash and burn it, but the teacher stopped it because she thought that this practice was no longer recommended. Since there was no tractor in the community to plow the garden, nothing was done. This year the school has the promise of a tractor for this purpose.

D. A One-Teacher School: El Tallo

The Teacher:

During the past year the school at El Tallo in the corregimiento of Bajos de Güera had as its teacher a young man of twenty. He had just completed normal school and this was his first year as a teacher and thus the beginning of the customary two-year probationary period. El Tallo, in contrast to Chupaíto, is very distant from the capital of the district and is located in a wild and isolated area. The school was built seven years ago by the parents who were induced to do so by a teacher who had been sent there for this purpose. However, this teacher left within a month after the school was erected. He was succeeded by a teacher from Panama City who stayed on for five years. The year following a teacher was posted there but remained for only one week. His successor stayed only a month after which the school was closed for the remainder of the year. Those who left gave as their major reason the isolation of the place - "the lack of roads, too much mud and nothing but hills."

Last year the teacher lived in the community with a family but returned occasionally on weekends to Macaracas to his parental home. He liked it in El Tallo very much as he had known some of the families before going there and they had expressed a desire for him to come. The people of El Tallo have always exhibited a great deal of respect for the teacher even though he might be very young. For the coming year he was offered a position in the two-teacher school at El Cedro situated much closer to Macaracas; however, he declined as "El Tallo needs me".

The School:

On arriving in the community last year he was informed that there were between 8 and 11 children who were eligible to attend school. But his census turned up 24, 18 girls and 6 boys, ranging in age from 7 to 17. At the beginning all were placed in the first grade. As each was able to demonstrate his ability, he was moved up to a higher grade, only one making it to the third. None were qualified to go higher. Although some of the students were much older than the others, they were quite small, a result, the teacher believes, of malnutrition.

There were no problems with attendance. However, occasionally the parents did ask him for permission to keep their children, for the most part the older boys, out of school for as

much as a week to work in juntas and faenas. These requests were always granted as the teacher felt that, if he refused them, his refusal would be interpreted by the parents as taking their children away from them. This, he felt, could result in removal of the children from the school. All of the students made satisfactory progress last year and were promoted with the result that next year he will have one in the fourth grade. The enrollment anticipated for the coming school year is between 30 and 35. The teacher felt that he had won the people's confidence, not only in El Tallo and the caseríos which sent pupils last year, but also in other nearby caseríos which did not enroll children last year. Parents in three of the latter have informed him that they would send him their children for the coming session.

In addition to the day school the teacher responded to a request from the community and established a night class. The class attracted 15 adults between the ages of 20 and 40, composed of 12 men and 3 women. Although attendance was good, it was frequently necessary to excuse members of the class who had been working all day and were too tired to participate. Three members of the class "graduated", i.e. reached the third grade level, although the teacher felt that they were not entirely literate!

The Padres de Familia Club:

The Padres de Familia Club, whose president was the local regidor, consisted of the 15 families which had children in the school. The meetings were well attended not only by the members but by others from the community. Attendance per meeting averaged between 30 and 40 persons. The meetings usually consisted of reports by the teacher on how well the children were doing followed by discussions of various projects. One of these was the holding of a fair on the Day of Separation, November 3rd, at which food and other things donated by the parents were sold. This was followed by a dance. These affairs added to the treasury which at one stage had a \$60 balance. Part of this was used to celebrate Mother's Day and Christmas with presents for all of the children. Club dues are set at five cents per month. Community projects which have been successfully completed include the construction and installation of doors in the school, the construction of a small bridge near the school with the help of the entire community, enclosure of the school by a fence made of wire given by the school inspector, and the planting of 1,000 coffee trees in the school garden.

Problems:

Although the school building did not have a floor except of earth, this has not been considered to be as important as the school's small size which was insufficient to accommodate the number of children attending last year. The lack of bridges on the trails and roads leading to the school has been a major limiting factor on school attendance. The school itself is located between two creeks which rise rapidly after a rain and prevent movement across them. During the worst part of the past winter it rained frequently in the early afternoon. This forced the children to go home after the eight to eleven morning session in order not to be cut off by the creeks. When this happened the two to four afternoon session could not be held. In order to circumvent this problem the teacher plans to ask permission of the school inspector to permit class sessions to be held from 7:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Some of the parents, most of whom are illiterate, have stated that the third grade is high enough for their children; more schooling merely makes them lazy and unfit to work on the farms. In an attempt to combat this attitude, the teacher used two meetings of the Padres de Familia Club for discussions of the issue. He has also promised the community that he personally will help any student who completes the sixth grade to go on to high school. There are four sixth-grade graduates (adults) living in the community but none of them had children in school last year.

The last problem mentioned by the teacher was the poor health of many of the people. In his opinion they have been suffering from waterborne diseases caused by using water from the creeks without boiling it. In addition to giving lectures on this matter to the parents, he initiated the digging of a well near the school, but this operation was suspended until he could return to the community.

Unfortunately, all of the data for this school was obtained from the teacher and could not be checked in the community.

E. The Municipal Board of Education

The Junta de Educación (Board of Education) is a nominal body of the Municipal Council composed of two teachers, two retired teachers representing the Ministry of Education, two representatives of the Padres de Familia Clubs one of whom is

a teacher and the other a chauffeur, and a member of the Municipal Council (a cattleman).

The board receives 20% of the taxes collected by the Municipal Council. It has to expend these funds in accordance with a formula established in a resolution of the Ministry of Education (Resuelto 46 de 27 de enero de 1964). This formula and its application are illustrated by the board's budget for 1969:

Balance 31 December, 1968	\$ 457.18 **
20% of estimated tax collections 1969	<u>1,099.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,556.18

Budget Line Categories:

I	Construction and repairs to furniture and buildings (20%)	\$ 311.23
II	Materials and equipment for teaching (20%)	311.23
III	Materials and tools for manual work (5%)	77.80
IV	Materials and equipment for school dining rooms (25%)	389.03
V	Materials and equipment for school gardens (10%)	155.60
VI	Books and equipment for school libraries (5%)	77.80
VII	Materials and equipment for cleaning (6%)	93.37
VIII	First aid kits and medicines (5%)	77.80
IX	Transport of materials (4%)	<u>62.24</u>
	TOTAL (100%)	\$1,556.10

Since disposition of 100% of the board's resources is predetermined by this formula, it follows that budgeting is a mechanical exercise over which the board is unable to exercise any discretion. In fact, the matter is left to the provincial auditor and it was from him that the above data were obtained.

It also appears that the board has little or nothing to do with determining which school shall receive assistance from the board's funds. Usually a request is initiated by a teacher and

** See footnote on page 109

is approved by the school inspector, the president of the board and, finally, by the provincial auditor. The latter sends a check directly to the supplier when receipted bills are presented. Inspection of the bills presented and paid during 1968 showed expenditures for the following:

1. Food, utensils, and cleaning materials for dining rooms and kitchens	\$ 429.75
2. Desks, stools, benches and chairs	305.40
3. Gravel and sand and their transport	171.00
4. Wire fence for school gardens	168.40
5. Paint, cement, roofing and other construction materials	132.50
6. Paper (including delivery)	124.25
7. Library shelving and books	79.50
8. Medicines for first-aid kits	64.35
9. Brooms	45.00
10. Gas lamps	45.00
11. Plumbing equipment	<u>38.95</u>
TOTAL	\$1,604.10 *
Average size of bill	\$ 33.42

About 20% of the total was expended for items for the school system as a whole such as brooms, paper, chairs and paper. The remaining 80% went to only 14 of the 36 schools. These fourteen included the eight larger ones listed by name in Table 6.1 above. The largest recipient was the new school at Corozal which received 16% of the total for a wide variety of construction and initial equipment items. Macaracas school, although not undergoing construction or reconstruction in 1968, received almost as much. Only 6 of the 28 one-teacher and two-teacher schools were recipients.

* : See footnote on page 109

The audited report of the board's fund follows:

Balance, 31 December 1967	\$ 702.99
Total receipts for year 1968	<u>1,328.03</u>
TOTAL	\$2,031.02
Total expenditures, 1968	<u>1,603.75*</u>
Balance, 31 December 1968	\$ 427.27**

F. Teachers' Associations

There are two teachers' organizations in Macaracas, one voluntary and one to which all teachers automatically belong. The first, a savings and loan cooperative, is unique to Macaracas while the second is reported to be common to the remainder of the country.

The Teachers Credit Cooperative:

This cooperative (Cooperativa de Créditos y Ahorros del Educador Santeño) was founded in Macaracas five years ago by a teacher who has since moved up to the position of provincial sub-inspector of schools. It is the only organization of its type in the province and is dedicated to serving all of its teachers. In March of this year it had approximately 85 members. Under the rules current at the time of the field study loans could be made to members for sums up to \$800 for a maximum period of 18 months at 1% interest per month. At the end of November, 1968, the cooperative had deposits of \$6260 and loans outstanding of \$6364.

By arrangement with the contraloría, both savings and loan repayments have been deducted from pay checks and sent to the cooperative manager who deposits them in a bank. No interest has been paid on savings deposits, since the opportunity to borrow small sums when needed has proven to be a sufficient

* and **: Discrepancies in these two sets of data (\$457.18 vs. \$427.27 and \$1,604.10 vs. \$1,603.75) were not accounted for by rechecks of the computations. Lack of time after their discovery prevented a referral to the auditor at Las Tablas. Their size is not sufficient to affect the conclusions.

savings incentive. The profits of the cooperative have been used to pay the costs of the annual meeting and a party for the members. This affair has been held in a different town in the province each year in order to propagandize the cooperative and gain more members.

Three committees were established to control the cooperative. The comité de vigilancia reviews the books occasionally and keeps an eye on the whole operation. The comité de administración, as its name indicates, administers the cooperative, while the comité de créditos approves or denies all loan applications. So far the cooperative has had no problem with bad debts since the contraloría does the collecting (at no charge to the organization).

The District Teachers' Association:

All of the teachers in the district are members of the association which is supervised by the school inspector. The monthly meetings, which formerly were supposed to be rotated to all the schools in the district, have been held in recent years only in schools on the paved road since it was too difficult to get to the others in the winter months. The association has the usual officers and sustains itself through monthly dues of twenty-five cents per teacher.

A major objective of the association is said to be the maintenance of uniformity in the "global" system of teaching reading. This system is reported to be superior to the older phonetic method because fewer students "get lost" and more of them participate in it as a game. A second purpose of association meetings is to check the teaching programs to see that all schools are teaching the same, especially in agriculture.

At one of the meetings each year the teachers vote, along with their colleagues in all parts of the country, for a representative of the teachers to sit on the Junta de Personal del Ministerio de Educación, the body which passes on salary raises and other teacher benefits. Some of the association meetings have been devoted to practical work such as painting a school and installing a toilet. These projects have been undertaken not only to accomplish these things, but to instill the concept of self-help in the people of the host community. Social affairs, including occasional excursions, have been a part of each meeting of the association.

All association revenue is supposed to be used in equal parts for recreation and entertainment, for a scholarship to permit a local student to attend high school, and for purchasing didactic materials such as maps. However, many of the teachers do not pay their dues and the funds are not as large as they would be if all participated. In spite of having more than \$400 in the bank no scholarship has been awarded because of a deadlock between those who have wanted to send a student from the town and the others who have taken the position that he must come from the neglected rural areas. This problem would have been easily solved, it was said, if there had been a good supervisor (school inspector). But most inspectors, according to our informants, have been too old, concerned mainly with their impending retirement, and with little interest in the association.

G. School Inspection and Adult Education

From the comments of the teachers interviewed it was apparent that the inspector has played a key role for better or worse in the quality of education in Macaracas district. For this reason the last regular inspector was sought out by the study team in Las Tablas, but unfortunately he had retired and moved elsewhere. However, the study team interviewed a member of the provincial staff, normally in charge of adult education in the province, who had substituted as the acting inspector for Macaracas from October of last year until the end of the school year in February. Other data on school inspection came from teachers and parents.

Role of the Inspector:

The inspector is the supervisor of all aspects of education in his zone of inspection - in this case the district of Macaracas. It is generally not a long-term assignment since Macaracas has had six inspectors in the past eleven years. All but one of these has been close to retirement when appointed and have remained in the position for only one or two years. Four of the six were adjudged by two of the more mature teachers from the Macaracas school as being relatively ineffective.

The diligent inspector is credited with great positive influence, especially on the small rural schools. If he is indifferent to his duties, i.e. makes only cursory or infrequent inspections, many of the rural teachers will take it easy, repeat lessons rather than take up new material, and fail to

prepare their students for further education. That some teachers have followed this course of action has been evident from the performance of many students who have come to Macaracas from the smaller schools to complete their primary education. The better inspectors have enabled teachers to overcome their problems and to give effective education even when they have been teaching multiple grades, which most of them have to do. In some cases, when an inspector has failed to give proper supervision and help and teaching quality has declined as a result, children have been withheld from the school by their parents and the school has closed. An example was recounted of a rural school which had had a poorly supervised teacher. When a new teacher was posted there only fourteen students were found. However, the new teacher's census uncovered forty more for a total of fifty-four, with the result that the school had to have two teachers.

According to the acting inspector of Macaracas, at least five inspections should be made of each school each year. But in Macaracas with its 36 schools, many of which are isolated, it has been possible to make no more than three circuits annually. (In the case of El Tallo no visits were made by this inspector last year.) When possible the inspector informed the teachers that he was coming in order that they could make preparations for his visits including the scheduling of meetings of the parents. There was no set routine for the inspector to follow when he reached a school. In some cases the morning was spent in observing the teaching, followed by a demonstration to the teacher of some technique which the inspector had found useful in his own teaching. Usually, however, the inspector has had some definite objective in mind, such as testing the ability of students in the first grade to read or write to a given level of proficiency.

But these objectives are often not realized as the situation on arrival may require other action. For example, the school building may be almost ready to fall down and the inspector must talk to the Padres de Familia about making repairs. If he should be convinced that the community cannot afford to buy the repair materials - cement, roofing, etc., - he may use the funds of the Junta Municipal de Educación for this purpose. In this case the teacher makes out a list of materials and sends it the Inspector who obtains the approval of the provincial auditor and the Municipal Junta de Educación. If either of these disapprove the expenditure, there is no other recourse and the matter is dropped. Approvals are usually obtained if there is money.

Besides observing the teaching, the inspector stated that he usually talked to several of the students and occasionally with the parents, particularly if the teacher was having trouble with the latter. He also explored with the teacher his extra-curricular activities in terms of night schools and community activities. Based on these observations and conversations he felt that he was able to judge the teacher's effectiveness.

The director of the school in Macaracas has found the visits of the inspector very helpful in solving the problems of the school and in improving the teaching. The inspector has been enabled to be effective by going over the teachers' plans of work, observing the teaching and the children's reactions, and better orienting the teachers to their functions, the latter in part through teachers' meetings called every two months by the inspector.

Problems:

Absenteeism of teachers has been found by the acting school inspector to be the most serious problem of the school system, especially in the rural areas where there are infrequent inspections. In the more isolated parts of Macaracas there has been also a considerable amount of student absenteeism owing to the spread-out pattern of settlement, the broken terrain and lack of roads. Aside from attendance the greatest difficulty has been the lack of didactic materials.

Occasionally, the inspector has encountered and has had to deal with hostilities between teachers themselves, and between a teacher and parents. One case of the first type occurred in a three-teacher school in Macaracas district during the past year. The matter was initiated by a visit to the inspector in Las Tablas of a parent from the community in which the school was located. The parent accused one of the teachers, the school director, of absenteeism, immorality and poor teaching. The inspector then visited the school and investigated the charges. First, he gave the students of the accused a test and found them very well prepared, much better than the records showed the other classes to be. Next, he found by questioning that the teacher had been absent for only one day in the year. As for the immorality charge it turned out that the teacher had taken his girl friend for a walk! On further investigation the inspector discovered that one of the other teachers had been jealous of the teacher who had been made director, although the post of director carried no

extra salary. It was this teacher who had prevailed upon the parent to bring the charges to the inspector. Behind this jealousy was a long history of enmity between the families of the two teachers. The inspector's solution was to have a meeting of the three teachers at which it was agreed that the uninvolved teacher would be made director. Other than a lecture no sanctions were brought to bear on the teacher who brought the false charges.

Although the quality of the teachers in Macaracas has been considered to be generally good, very few of them continue their education after leaving normal school. It was explained that they could do this easily, since there is an extension of the University of Panama in Las Tablas which some of the teachers attend on weekends. The cost is nominal, only \$11 a semester for three courses.

Adult Education:

Teachers are encouraged to participate with adults in extra-curricular work of three types, literacy teaching, skill training and community development. Normally teachers are given a \$5 per month salary increase at two-year intervals for satisfactorily performing their usual in-school teaching duties. By working with adults they may qualify each year to receive an extra monthly increment of \$5. This requires the teaching of literacy courses to adults or of giving instruction in skills, e.g. cooking, sewing, barbering, artcrafts and pastry-making, for a minimum of 112 hours per year. In the case of community development, the construction of a school or similar-size project must be undertaken to qualify for a raise. Simply helping a community to build a small bridge would not be enough, although this activity would be noted on the teacher's evaluation by the inspector.

Last year in Macaracas district ten teachers held evening classes in five schools with a total enrollment of 203. A total of 29 received diplomas in alfabetización signifying attainment of sixth grade level, and 36 were successful in their cultura popular training. However, there were no cases in the entire province in which teachers applied for increases based upon community projects. It was surmised that this is probably because most of the projects are undertaken by communities on the weekends when the teachers are either absent from the community or are busy caring for their families.

The provincial director of Adult Education admitted that some teachers do tend to pad the figures and sometimes to graduate those who are not really literate in order to make a good showing and obtain salary increases. Some of the teachers have not been qualified to work with adults, since the techniques that should be used with adults are quite different from those used with young children. An attempt to instill suitable techniques has been carried out by the provincial director, he reported, through sending written matter to teachers, giving instruction at teachers' meetings in the districts, and through a weekly radio program. (For examples of adult literacy and popular culture programs, see sections above on the Macaracas and El Tallo schools.)

H. Padres de Familia Clubs

Structure:

Clubs composed of the parents of the children and with the participation of the teachers (Clubes de Padres de Familia) were found in a number of the schools of Macaracas district. The expectation that a club should be formed in every school was so strong that some of the teachers were convinced that their formation was a legal requirement, although a spokesman for the Ministry of Education stated that there was no such requirement in the law. At any rate, in the reconnaissance study of the corregimientos clubs were reported to exist in only 13 of the 36 schools, but this is probably an under-reporting as some of the informants were not too familiar with some of the more isolated schools in their areas. Officers of Parents Clubs in the two largest schools (Macaracas and Llano de Piedra) and in a three-teacher school (Los Leales) were interviewed at length concerning their clubs. Also clubs were reported by the teachers as very active in the two one-teacher schools described above.

In most schools parents with children in school have automatically been members of the club. This included those teachers who had children in the school. All teachers in the school have been expected to attend club meetings and to take an active part as "advisors" in club affairs. A Peace Corps Volunteer who has observed the operation of clubs in four communities, two of which are in the district (Macaracas and La Mesa), has reported that these clubs have been dominated in the past by the women teachers who appear to be under great pressure to take a lead in their respective communities. But

a past president of the Macaracas Parents Club felt that they had not been dominated but had been helped by the teachers.

The Macaracas club has had an attendance of about sixty percent of its membership with a higher proportion of mothers than of fathers present. The club in Llano de Piedra reported that slightly less than half of its 140 members usually attended meetings. Active clubs in the smaller schools appear to have had somewhat higher proportional attendance. All clubs have the standard four officers: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, plus two vocales whose function it is to prevail upon parents to attend and participate. Dues have been running between \$0.45 and \$0.75 per year per family, although the treasurer of the Los Leales club reported collecting \$2.20 per family last year. On occasion small additional funds have been obtained by some of the clubs from the Junta de Educación of the Municipal Council. But the council has not been a reliable source in past years for some schools (see the experience of the Chupalito teacher above in Section C). The club in Llano de Piedra has also obtained some funds from a local committee which had raised funds to build a police station, a project which had been abandoned. The more usual method of supplementing funds is through community collections, raffles and dances.

The larger clubs belong to the Federación Nacional de Padres de Familia de Panamá. But this federation seems to hold little significance for the clubs, even for the one in Macaracas which once sent a delegate to the annual meeting.

Functions:

Meetings have usually been held each month by all of the active clubs. Programs are usually set by the teachers, or at least they give advice to the president on what should be scheduled. A major feature of all programs has been a report by the teachers on the overall functioning of the school and the performance of the children. In one of the larger clubs a part of each meeting has been devoted to smaller assemblies in the classrooms where each teacher could discuss each student with his parents.

A large variety of school-related service and development projects have been carried out by the clubs. In terms of continuing services all of the clubs except one reported giving assistance in the CARE school feeding program. Annual

fiestas to celebrate national days, Mother's Day and Christmas are sponsored by several of the clubs. The club in Macaracas has decided to make a continuing effort to discipline students who stay out too late at night on the streets of the town. Three of the five clubs analyzed have constructed fences around their school gardens and, in one case (El Tallo), planted coffee trees in the garden to provide a future source of revenue for the school.

The club at Los Leales helped to construct their school about five or six years ago, the first Alianza-aided school in the area, by providing sand and rock, making concrete blocks, etc. More recently this club has added a kitchen to the school, and at a cost of \$60 purchased utensils for it. As noted earlier, the club of El Tallo last year made and installed the doors to the school and built a small bridge on a road to the school. The club at Chupaíto is ready to begin reconstruction of the roof and doors. The Llano de Piedra club has organized a junta twice a year to cut grass and bushes and clean the grounds of the school and the adjacent town park.

During the past summer the Macaracas club has helped to build a septic tank and drain-field at the school. Each parent chose the one or two days on which he wanted to work and either came himself or paid for a peón's services. Even some persons who had no children in school assisted in the work. However, some parents who have never cooperated on previous projects also failed to participate in this one, but no action was taken against them. Only one community development project not related directly to a school was carried out by any of the clubs. This exception was the construction of a gravel road from the Macaracas school to the cemetery.

Problems:

The president of one of the large clubs felt that the school teachers did not receive sufficient supervision from the school inspector and, therefore, the officers of the club had "to keep an eye on them". The only other problem mentioned by one of the clubs was the lack of participation in the club by some of the parents. On second thought our informant stated that this had always been true and, therefore, really did not constitute a problem!

I. Analysis and Commentary

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, we are concerned with the school as a community institution. What goes on inside the school in terms of both content and method of instruction is fundamental, of course, but it belongs outside the scope of this study. What we have learned is "about education" in Macaracas i.e. something of its institutional setting and functioning. What we shall attempt to do in this section is to analyze some of the things we have learned and to project certain alternatives within the institutional setting. The objective is to contribute to a more efficient functioning of the institution to better serve the needs of the citizens of Macaracas and of the larger society.

Aspiration Levels:

The people of Macaracas exhibit a strong faith in education for their children, and in some cases for themselves as well. However, this faith is tempered with more reasonable expectations of the results of education than has been observed in some countries of Asia and Africa where education is looked upon as the answer to their children's future. Educational aspirations are not uniform throughout the district. From an analysis of the observations of our various informants, they appear to be inversely proportional to the degree of community isolation. In El Tallo, one of the most isolated areas in the district, most of the parents believed that the third grade was quite high enough with very few aspiring for a sixth grade completion for their children. In Chupafto, which is fairly close to Macaracas but somewhat isolated by poor roads, most of the parents wanted their children to finish elementary school, and about half would like for them to go on to the first cycle of high school.

Practically all of the parents of Los Leales, located on the main road a short distance from the district capital, desired that their children should have a complete primary schooling, and all who could profit from it should go on to high school to become teachers and secretaries, with the remainder receiving instruction in such fields as mechanics and practical engineering. The people of the two towns in the district are probably at about the same aspiration level as the parents of Los Leales, with a larger proportion expecting as a matter of course to send their children on to high school.

Last year in an essay contest sponsored by the Lions Club on the theme of "The Development of Macaracas", the forty children from the district who entered the contest placed the first-cycle of a secondary school at the head of their list. Among parents and others in the district as a whole a first cycle high school stood out as the number one educational need.

On the qualitative side, parents appeared to be quite satisfied or possibly unconcerned with the kind of education which their children were receiving. One gained the impression that few knew what their children were being exposed to but that practically all wanted them to have more of it! Teachers were invariably spoken of with appreciation.

A First-Cycle High School:

An increasing proportion of the students are completing the sixth grade in Macaracas District each year. Except for a handful, perhaps fifteen percent whose parents can afford to send them to Los Santos, Chitré or Panama City, and are lucky enough to find a place for them in the schools of these cities, the end of the sixth grade is the end of education. For most parents the cost is prohibitive; there are no openings in the schools in these places, and even if they could be placed no suitable living arrangements exist which are within their means.

There would appear to be three alternatives. The first is to do nothing as at present. Let the few lucky ones go elsewhere to high school while the remainder seek a living in an area where the chief occupation of farming-cattle-raising is becoming more and more restrictive, and in which the work is seasonal and for peones only. This alternative would appear to waste a particularly valuable human resource, a partially-educated person who by passing the sixth grade has proven his capacity for more. If secondary schooling does pay off in Panama in socio-economic development terms, as has been found true in most other countries, perhaps educational goals in Panama should reflect this fact. This would mean greater priority in the allocation of funds within the present education budget, even if this meant fewer new and expanded primary schools.

The second alternative, of course, is to build a high school in Macaracas. It is centrally located to serve not only its own hinterland but a part of Los Pozos, Guararé and all of Tonosí districts. The paved road would accommodate one

or more buses each day from Guararé and others from Tonosí. At least a few of the other potential students who live too far from the paved road to get to the bus stops on foot or by horse, could room and board in the town from Sunday evening until Friday afternoon. Although it would not substantially affect the cost of construction and operation of a school, it is quite clear from our investigation that the district could be relied upon to furnish the labor and a small part of the cash needed for construction.

A third alternative, suggested in part by an officer of a parents club in Macaracas district, is the possibility of a night school for the first cycle of high school. As an expedient until a high school could be built and manned, such a night school might be an effective answer. Based on experience elsewhere (see especially the high school correspondence courses of the Universities of Nebraska and California) this would require the preparation by the Ministry of Education of correspondence courses. Such courses could be packaged in units and presented in a manner suitable for the student to understand and carry out with the part-time assistance of a qualified teacher.

To be qualified to teach in this night high school a teacher might be required to have a minimum of two years of university education, including a course in high school pedagogy and an orientation course in this particular method of helping correspondence students. The teachers could be drawn from the faculty of the primary schools in the area or from among the local retired teachers. If regular teachers were used, perhaps the night school could operate for only two hours per night, four or five nights per week, as is presently done in the literacy and popular culture programs. If retired teachers were used, the time might be extended to three hours per evening.

With lessons designed to be understood and carried out by the student himself, the teacher's role in the evening school would be that of helping the student to interpret the written instructions, checking work done to see that the student was on the right track, and helping individually or in a group those having needs for more formal instruction in some aspect of a subject. Teachers, of course, would receive pay for this work commensurate with or slightly higher than their usual salaries. Under this system, students would be expected to take only two thirds of a full study load over the nine months of the school year. The other third would be made up either at a full-time summer high school operated perhaps in the

Macaracas School for this purpose, or in night school the first half of the following year. Examinations would be set by the Ministry and centrally administered at the end of the first and second halves of the regular school year, and at the termination of summer sessions. This system may not work for all students. But, if properly implemented, it should save the upper half of the students not now able to go beyond sixth grade and at a cost which the state could afford.

Supervision:

More and better supervision is the major recognized means in Macaracas for improving the quality of the school system. If the past experience of Macaracas is typical, school inspectors are usually old teachers about to retire, few of whom have any interest in more than perfunctory performance. It would appear that this job should be upgraded in terms of prestige, remuneration, and qualifications. Suggested eligibility requirements would include at least two years of university beyond the normal school, instruction in community relations, teacher supervision, on-the-job teacher training, and school building requirements. A minimum of ten years primary teaching experience inclusive of at least one year in a one-teacher school would be desirable. The inspector, unlike at least two of those who have served Macaracas recently, should live in the district capital where he could be available to teachers and parents who need him in the evenings and on the weekends. He should be paid a suitable per diem for all nights on which he is absent from his house on supervisory duties, provided a folding cot and similar necessities, and permitted to hire a horse or vehicle as required to make his rounds.

School Buildings:

School construction and maintenance are by their nature local projects capable of local execution, as is evident by the presence in Macaracas and other towns of locally-constructed buildings of greater size and complexity than a school building. There would appear to be no need for a costly central government bureaucracy to build and maintain school buildings in Macaracas district. Full responsibility should be passed on from the central government to the Municipal Council and in part from the latter to the Padres de Familia Club in each school. Of course, if this were done, the resources of the municipalities would have to be increased. Preferably this would be done through broadening the tax base, or alternatively,

through per-pupil subventions from the central government to the local governments earmarked for maintenance and construction of new buildings. Local governments in turn would make donations of materials to parents clubs and, where required, would provide a maestro de obras. Such donations would be made to Padres de Familia Clubs by the council, provided that their applications were accompanied by plans approved by the school inspector.

Subsequent inspections by the inspector to see that the construction or repair had been made at the proper quality level would protect the interests of the central government, while the inputs of the Municipal Council would be safeguarded by inspections of the alcalde and corregidores. If this method of devolving responsibility from the Ministry to the Municipal Council, and from the council to the parents club were put into effect, the Ministry would not post school teachers to those schools which did not meet the inspector's minimal standards. In Macaracas we believe that no such sanctions would have to be imposed, but if they were necessary, they would be highly effective in getting the necessary construction done.

Padres de Familia Clubs:

These clubs are a much greater resource than had been expected and appear to combine the efforts of the teachers and the parents in a way that produces good results. Although by the standards of more highly developed societies it may appear that the teachers dominate the clubs, it is not so perceived by the parents themselves. The past records of the clubs show that they are most useful organizations through which to channel aid for all kinds of school-related projects, such as school lunch programs, school building construction and maintenance, school water supplies and sewerage, school gardens, school play grounds, and approach roads to the school.

While it is tempting to think of using the Padres de Familia Club as the organization for overall community development, this most probably would not work for two reasons. First, the club is composed of teachers (albeit in an "advisory" capacity) as well as parents, and teachers are primarily and often exclusively oriented to the school. Second, there was only one instance of involvement of a club in community projects not directly related to the school, an indication that people do not think of their club as serving more than the school.

This does not mean that the Padres de Familia Clubs do not offer a forum for the presentation of other programs, nor that they would not cooperate with other community entities in projects. But this is not the same as taking over the responsibility for various special projects, or for using it as a general development instrument for which it would not appear to be suited.

Cultura Popular:

In the section of Chapter 2, dealing with the MAG Home Agency a number of notions for expanding the cultura popular program were expressed, and there is no need to repeat them here.

The only additional suggestion to be made is the need to change the system of remuneration for participation by teachers in this program as well as in literacy training. At present a teacher can earn in one year of participation a \$5 per month increment in his salary, or \$60 per year. If he is a young person in his first year of teaching with the expectation of teaching 30 years more, this apparently small payment of \$60 could amount to \$1800 plus compound interest, perhaps \$3000 or more in the course of his career. This would appear to be excessive remuneration for only 112 hours of work. To take the other extreme, a teacher in his next to last year of teaching who participated would earn only \$60 for the same 112 hours of work. If he participated in his last year, he would gain nothing as the increment takes effect the following and subsequent years. What would appear to be more equitable and probably more effective in inducing greater participation would be payment to teachers at their usual salary rates for conducting evening schools, with the proviso that no payment would be made unless the teacher completed teaching a whole course.

CHAPTER 7

PUBLIC HEALTH

The public health establishment of Macaracas is composed of four entities: (1) the Integrated Health Center (Centro de Salud Integrado), commonly referred to as "The Hospital"; (2) the Health and Welfare Committee (Comité de Salud y Bienestar), an adjunct to the center; (3) the inspector of sanitation (Inspector de saneamiento ambiental), an appointee of the Ministry of Health, and (4) the Municipal Board of Health (Junta Municipal de Salud) appointed by the alcalde but largely under the direction of the inspector. Since the inspector has his office in the center and works with the other center personnel, public health in Macaracas has become an integrated affair as the center's name implies. Somewhat outside of the establishment, but more or less complementary to it, are the practitioners of folk medicine.

A. Integrated Health Center

Physical Plant and Personnel:

The building itself was constructed in 1967 with the help of the Alliance for Progress, a fact that is widely recognized. It was designed primarily as a maternal and child-care center and out-patient clinic, and has seven maternity beds and bassinets in one ward and six small children's beds in another ward. There is a delivery room, a kitchen, a recently-added large roofed back portico, space for nurses' desks, two out-patient consultation rooms, a laboratory, a pharmacy, a waiting room, toilets, and offices for the doctors, the administrator and the inspector. The center is located on the edge of the town of Macaracas on two hectares purchased for the sum of \$1,000 and subsequently donated to the Ministry of Health by the Sociedad de Mejoras Pro Macaracas.

The center is controlled by a head doctor with another doctor as assistant chief. The head doctor reports to the medical director of the area in Los Santos. Normally there are two nurses, although there were three at the time of the study team's visit of whom one was temporary. In addition, there are two trained auxiliary nurses and four others who have been partially trained at the center and at the hospital in Los Santos. There is also a pharmacist and one secretary, one cook, one

laundress, three artisans, one chauffeur and one porter. The latter five are considered to be jacks-of-all-trades, since they guard the center at night, keep the place clean, make latrine bowls (more on this later), and do other things as needed. The center formerly had three additional secretaries and an administrator but these were eliminated by the Ministry in January of this year.

Functions:

The major function of the center is the delivery of babies and the post-delivery care of the mothers and their offspring. For the benefit of the inpatients a weekly schedule of examinations and clinics is maintained. In addition to inpatient care a daily average of 40 to 50 out-patients are seen. Outpatient clinics have been scheduled for every morning and afternoon Monday through Friday. Two half-days per week are devoted to maternal cases, one half-day to well babies, one to post-partum cases, two to immunizations, one to cancer prevention, one to a school clinic for Macaracas when school is in session, and one as a general clinic in Llano de Piedra and La Mesa. The nurses and auxiliaries conduct the clinics and call in a doctor only when he is required. The nurses and doctors have been taking turns, a week at a time, in attending to births and other emergencies during the off hours. For the first months of operation of the center until the patient load built up, more clinics were held in outlying areas by a team composed of a doctor, a nurse and the sanitary inspector. A dentist on contract has had a clinic in the center several afternoons each week.

Birth control information has been available on request but such requests are very infrequently received. The head nurse and doctor reported that there were practically no induced abortions in the district, although a number of natural ones occurred as a result either of being carried to the hospital in hammocks over considerable distances, or by hard work during earlier stages of pregnancy. Last year with the cooperation of the Lions Club a "charla" on the prevention of cancer in women was held in the town library, in outlying areas and in Tonosí, resulting subsequently in examinations of more than 700 women in the center by nine doctors who came from Panama City for this purpose.

Problems:

The most acute problem for the first two months of this year has been a lack of personnel. The dismissal of the administrator

and the two trained secretaries in January forced the nurses and the doctor to undertake most of these functions, with the result that they have been overworked. Their reports were three months in arrears. The one secretary remaining, a chronically-ill political appointee, is unable even to keep up with the forms which have to be filled out on patients who come in for treatment. Added to the nurses' problem has been the lack of sufficient training on the part of three of the auxiliaries to assist the nurses in some of their more professional work. The absence of a lab technician has reduced the lab work to that which the sanitary inspector, a trained lab man, has been willing to do without pay. (See more below in the section on problems of the Inspector).

A second difficulty of the professional staff, also of recent origin, has been the lack of money to pay for such things as transport and per diem (viáticos) when clinics were held in other parts of the district. Before last October the center received \$216 per quarter from the Ministry for transport, gasoline, medicines and various other items. The payment for the last quarter of 1968 should have been received by the center in January, but two months later it was still unpaid.

A more chronic problem has been the low salary of \$70 per month paid to auxiliary nurses. This matter has been eased somewhat recently by giving those auxiliaries who required it a room in the old dispensary building in the town, and in furnishing all of them meals from the center's kitchen.

Insofar as the physical plant is concerned the greatest need has been for an adult ward of at least six beds to accommodate the steady stream of patients who have had to be turned away and sent to Los Santos. Inability to admit adults has been a great disappointment to the people of the district. Many patients have arrived in need of immediate surgery and/or hospital care after being carried for miles in hammocks. There has been no ambulance service and patients have had to depend upon taxis and local buses for transport to Los Santos, Las Tablas or Chitré. The center's original plans included a lecture-conference room for use in instructing patients in such matters as cancer detection, but this feature was reported to have been eliminated from the plans by the contractor in the course of construction. According to a member of the Health and Welfare Committee, the health center was supposed to have been a small complete hospital but was reduced by whom no one seemed to know to its present size and functions. The area medical director is reported to have said recently that the center would

eventually be made into a hospital, but not in the immediate future as this would require an additional doctor and two nurses and the latter are very hard to obtain.

Equipment is considered adequate for most of the center's needs. Minor requirements include parts for the dentist's drill, the absence of which restricts the dentist to pulling teeth rather than making repairs. A large electric centrifuge is needed in the lab to replace the small hand-operated one, the use of which greatly slows lab work.

Relationships to the town and district have been less close than formerly, partly because of the realization, mentioned above, that adult inpatients could not be accepted. But more to the point has been the difference in the approach of the new head doctor as compared to that of his predecessor. The first had the reputation of being rather lenient in requiring payment for medicines by those claiming an inability to pay. Both he and his wife entered whole-heartedly into the social life of the town, becoming members of the Lions Club, attending dances and other social functions, visiting, etc. By contrast his successor has been very strict in requiring payment for medicines. Although he was born and reared in the district, he and his wife have not joined local clubs and have not visited nor intermingled with as many of the citizens as had been expected.

On the occasion of the study team's last visit to Macaracas in mid-June, the acting head doctor stated that he was having difficulty in eradicating internal parasites in the children of La Mesa because of the pollution of the drinking water sources by pigs, and the unsanitary disposal of human wastes caused by a lack of latrines by about thirty percent of the families. He has written to the alcalde concerning the matter and has suggested that those without latrines be fined \$10 each. Those fined would then be presented with a concrete latrine box which normally sells for \$4.

B. The Health and Welfare Committee

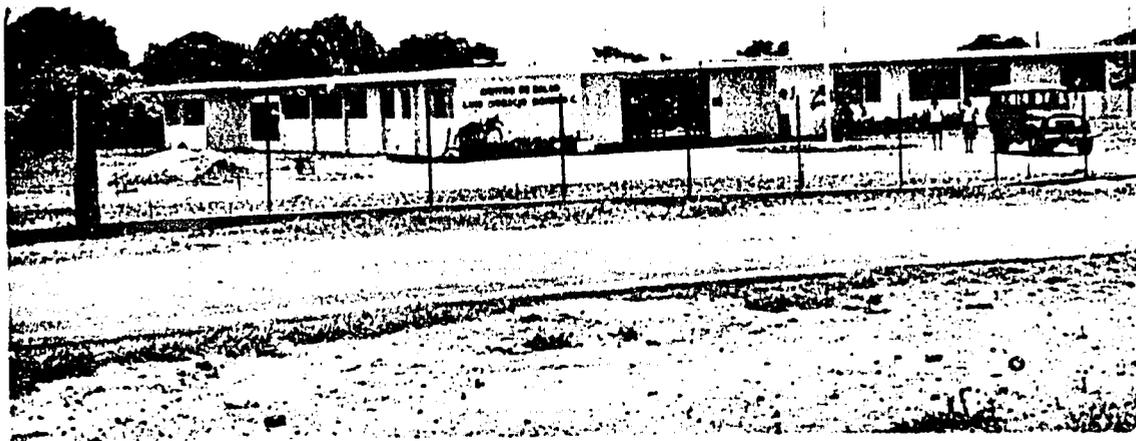
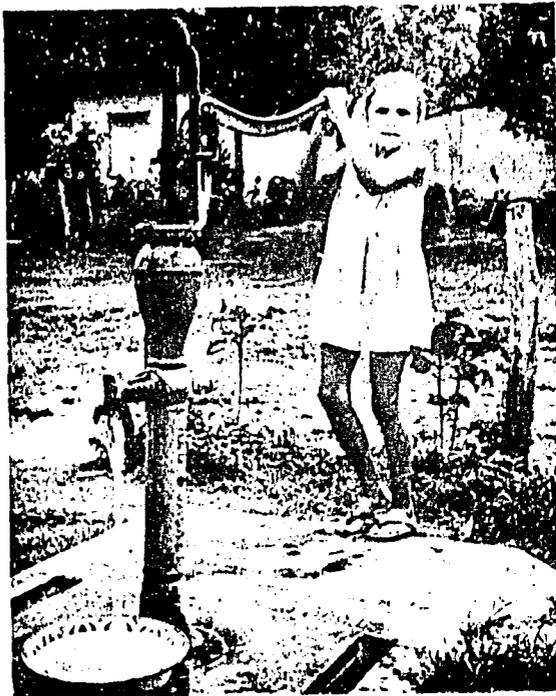
Organization:

This committee, a local voluntary organization and official organ of the Ministry of Health, was organized around 1960. It was reorganized in 1966 with seven members including one representative from each of the following organizations:

PHOTO 12 Centro de Salud Integrado, Macaracas

PHOTO 13 Doctor and patient, Centro de Salud Integrado, Macaracas

PHOTO 14 Artesian well



The school teachers	The Society for Macaracas
The Padres de Familia Clubs	The Municipal Council
The Firemen's Brigade	The Lions Club
The Agricultural Organization (Divulgación Agrícola Panameña)	

The head doctor at the health center, the sanitary inspector and the head nurse have been advisors to the committee. The head doctor reorganized the committee sometime after the study team had gathered data on the organization, removed some old members and added others. The president is usually elected each year in July. Meetings have been held monthly.

Functions:

The purpose of the committee has been to raise funds and disburse them, apparently in accord with the head doctor's wishes, in support of the Integrated Health Center and other public health activities in the district. The principal sources of income are the small fees of \$0.25 to \$0.50, contributed by those patients able to pay, and the sale of medicines at a small mark-up over the purchase price. Approximately \$6,000 came from these sources in 1968. In 1967 a dance and a raffle were sponsored by the committee, both providing some income. Because of the fund-raising activities of the Lions Club and Firemen's Brigade during the past year, the committee decided not to undertake similar activities again as they were not considered likely to succeed. Inactivity of the committee in fund-raising was reported to be the head doctor's reason for reorganizing the committee.

On the occasion of the study team's last visit to the district in June, 1969, the acting head doctor reported that revenues from fees and the sale of medicines had increased recently to a rate of \$1,100 to \$1,200 per month.

One of the major expenditures by the committee is the payment of salaries and salary supplements as follows:

Salaries of \$35 per month each to the cook and laundress.
Salary of \$45 per month to the receptionist-collector.
Salary supplements to each of the two nurses of \$10 per month.

In addition to salaries the committee has been paying a per diem of \$1.50 per day to the sanitary inspector when he worked in the outlying areas.

A major expenditure last year was the construction of a very large covered concrete platform to the rear of the center used principally for hanging clothes to dry and for making concrete toilet bowls. The latter have been sold to the public for \$4.00 each, a little more than their actual cost. Maintenance of the center building has also required some funding by the committee. A major capital expenditure for the current year was the recent purchase of a four-wheel drive vehicle (a Toyota), for use in transporting the doctors, nurses, and sanitary inspector on visits to outlying rural areas. Also a refrigerator in which to keep perishable medicines was recently bought by the committee.

The only problem that was mentioned by the president is the complaints received from those being paid by the committee. These employees have protested that their salaries are too low. However, the committee believes that they are high enough when compared to other salaries in Macaracas. Recently, the auditors from the Contraloría General informed the committee that their accounts were among the best that they had seen. With the arrival of the new vehicle the committee expects to have meetings with the health committees in both Llano de Piedra and La Mesa to teach them how to function properly and to cooperate with the committee.

C. The Inspector of Sanitation

Personal:

Prior to joining the Ministry of Health the Inspector had spent eight years in the National Guard where he rose to the rank of sergeant. In June, 1967 he began working as a sanitary inspector in Los Santos, but shortly thereafter he was asked to go to Macaracas to work out of the Integrated Health Center. His education consisted of graduation from high school, three years in a science curriculum in the university, and special courses in laboratory work, public health and medical service. All of these courses were taken at Albrook Field in the Canal Zone while he was serving with the Guard. More recently he participated in a seven-month course in Panama City on environmental sanitation and community development.

Functions:

When the Inspector arrived in the district he made a provisional program covering a study of the communities in the district, an inspection of the houses, a reconnaissance of the communities, and instruction in the schools. Data were

gathered on and action programs planned for water supplies, disposition of human excreta, the collection and disposal of garbage, and medical services. During this early period he worked as a member of a traveling team composed of the doctor, a nurse and himself. But this arrangement had to be discontinued when the patient load at the center built up to such an extent as to demand the time of the other members.

The inspector estimated that about forty percent of his time has been devoted to "letración", an effort to see that all households had a proper sanitary toilet. He stated that this objective could be accomplished only with the cooperation of the people and the municipal authorities. The latter may require those who do not cooperate to install proper toilets. The health center is essential, he stated, in supplying workmen and a place to fabricate the toilet bowls and caps. Next in terms of time expended (30%) has been the training of people who handle food in restaurants, and the making of regular inspections of food servers to see that minimal standards of sanitation are maintained. Overseeing the proper collection and disposition of garbage has been utilizing about a fifth of his time. This duty requires the cooperation of the people and the municipal authorities. The remainder of his time has been spent in house inspections and in helping owners to improve their houses and to develop their communities. The time devoted to each of his functions has varied by seasons, with latrines and water supplies receiving most of his attention in the summer time.

The inspector emphasized the effectiveness of cooperation in his work by both the Health and Welfare Committee and the Municipal Board of Health.

Problems:

Lack of transport has been the chief obstacle to efficient performance of his work. It has required three days to do what could have been done in one, if he had been more mobile. The new vehicle at the health center will help, but the inspector would like to have a motorcycle to enable him to go on his own practically everywhere in the district in summer and to many places in the winter.

Although no longer a problem the inspector reported that owing to differences with a former head doctor he had not been permitted to use fully the resources of the center in his work, obtain per diem, and receive cooperation from the municipal and school authorities and from the Health Committee and Board of

Health. However, at present he has excellent working relationships with the center authorities and full use of the facilities.

His third problem has to do with supplementing his present salary through lab work at the center. Since the center was without a qualified technician, he began working there on Saturdays. This enabled the center to examine specimens of 500 school children, work which could not otherwise have been done. The doctor approved of this arrangement and called it to the attention of the Health and Welfare Committee which paid him \$30 per month. However, the Union of Laboratory Technicians denounced this activity to the regional medical director because the inspector did not have the title of lab technician. The medical director then informed the director of environmental sanitation in Los Santos who ordered the inspector to cease making laboratory analyses. In addition to depriving him of a needed salary supplement this action meant that no lab work was being done at the center. The final problem mentioned was the low salary of the position, \$120 per month. In view of his education, experience and the type of work done he feels that it should be upgraded to \$130.

D. Municipal Board of Health

The members of the Board were named by the alcalde with the concurrence of the Municipal Council. The health inspector, a councilman, one representative each from the Firemen's Brigade, the Padres de Familia Club and the Lions Club, and a store-owner composed the board at the time of the study team's visit.

By law this board has at its disposition five percent of the "exacciones", taxes raised by the Municipal Council. Expenditures were made on materials (cement, nails, reinforcing irons, etc.) for making the toilet bowls, on small improvements to the public market, on items of equipment for the health center, and to purchase medicines for preventive purposes. The financial accounts of the board for 1968 furnished by the provincial auditor are as follows:

Balance 31 December, 1967	\$462.28
Received from the Council in 1968	<u>331.99</u>
TOTAL	\$794.27
Expended in 1968	<u>206.50</u>
Balance 31 December, 1968	\$587.77

E. Folk Medicine

Herb doctors (yerberos), of whom there were reported to be four in the district, are well thought of and patronized by many people. Their general practice has consisted of mixing certain herbs with patent medicines and giving these potions either orally or by injection. Although this practice constitutes practicing medicine without a license and is, therefore, a violation of the law, the yerberos have not been prosecuted as they have not attempted to treat serious diseases. As payment for their services they usually receive whatever their patients decide to pay.

In a somewhat higher class is the only "curer" (curandero) known in the district. It was reported that he had received instruction in certain medical practice techniques from a doctor who also provided him with samples of medicines. These have been used by the curandero who in addition has written prescriptions for other medicines to be filled at a pharmacy. At the end of the month the curandero was reported as receiving a percentage of the sales price of the filled prescriptions a part of which was passed on to his patron. The curandero is said to be very intelligent and able to apply medicines successfully. He has a large clientele with patients from as far away as La Chorrera.

There were also reported to be one or more witch doctors (brujos) in the district who used medicines and occult "powers" to do either good or evil, but no investigation of them was made by the study team.

Analysis and Comment

An Adult Ward:

To the non-medically trained study team there appears to be a very strong case for adding a six-bed adult ward to the Integrated Health Center in Macaracas. Not only is it so evidently needed and strongly desired by the citizenry of the whole district, but it appears to be an economically efficient thing to do since the remainder of the plant (kitchen, offices, examination rooms, laboratory, etc.) is sufficient to support this addition. The normal complement of personnel for the center was thought to be adequate for a small hospital as well, except for the addition of a doctor and two nurses. Actually much of the time of these professionals would be spent on caring

for the increasing load of out-patients as well as in serving the six-bed adult ward. A six-bed adult ward would not eliminate the necessity for sending some patients on to the Los Santos hospital, but it would mean that many others would not have to make this long journey. The worst-off cases could be accommodated, if only for a short time, and cases could be sent on to the larger hospital as they were able to be moved. Clearly the addition of this ward would appear to take precedence over the addition of more beds to accommodate Macaracas adults at either Los Santos, Chitré or Las Tablas.

Responsibilities for Construction:

On the level of public policy, it appears that the Ministry of Health is hardly the right agency to be charged with small health center construction. Nothing in the education or experience of doctors fits them for this task which, it is suggested, should be the responsibility of the municipal government. The same principle suggested in an earlier chapter for school building construction would seem to apply to construction of small health centers as well. The ministry would establish minimal standards for health centers and insist upon their attainment before agreeing to place medical personnel in them. Again as for schools, municipal councils should find the money for center construction from a broadened tax base, or in lieu of this forward step, it might receive a per capita quota from the central government for construction based upon such factors as willingness of the district to participate, need for facilities, and complementarity of requested additions to those already in place.

Mobile Teams:

It would appear that any scheme for allocating sizable resources to equipping and operating mobile health teams at the expense of constructing and operating integrated health centers (including adult wards) should be carefully examined within the limits placed upon the mobility of such teams by the condition of the roads. For much of the year, four to six months in Macaracas, even a four-wheel drive vehicle is limited to the one paved road through the district and, with great difficulty, to the unpaved roads to the villages of La Mesa, Chupá and Los Higos. Therefore, a mobile health team could serve only the people who now have good access to the center in Macaracas. There is little doubt that those further from the road, as well as those on it, would rather have a complete facility in Macaracas operating around the clock seven days a week, rather

than the very incomplete service which a traveling team could bring them beside the road on their occasional forays. As the alcalde observed, a mobile team could hardly be expected to time its visits to coincide with the day and hour when people get sick! Before making large expenditures for mobile teams it is suggested that further studies be undertaken in several districts. The choice of either mobile teams or expanded health centers should be made in collaboration with those for whom their benefits are meant.

Mobility and Utility of the Inspector:

If the sanitary inspector is performing a necessary function, and it appeared that he was, his efficiency in covering the whole district could be greatly enhanced by providing him transportation, possibly a motorcycle as he suggests, the hire of a horse when necessary, and regular viáticos when he has to travel. It would also appear that with his background of training and experience \$120 per month is quite inadequate pay even in rural Panama. Teachers with lower qualifications are paid considerably more. If for other reasons, it is not desirable to increase this particular individual's salary, there would seem to be no reason for the further blocking of his arrangement with the committee for working in the laboratory on Saturdays. Aside from the question of remuneration, failure to permit the utilization of such a rare resource as a trained lab technician would seem to indicate an unnecessary giving in to unrealistic union demands at the expense of the peoples' health.

CHAPTER 8

OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICES

This chapter, as the "other" in the title indicates, is a residual category. The two government offices which did not fit into categories treated in previous chapters are discussed here. These offices are the Collector of Revenue (Recaudador de Ingresos de Macaracas) and the Office of Identity Cards and Election Registry (Oficina de Cedulación y Registro Electoral). Each office is quite unrelated to the other either structurally or functionally, their only common denominator being central government sponsorship.

A. Collector of Revenue

The Collector:

In Macaracas during the past seven years the collector has been a private person under contract to the Administración General de Rentas Internas, Ministerio de Hacienda y Tesoro. He has been receiving ten percent of all the money collected. Out of this ten percent he has had to pay all costs of collection and of delivery of the collections to Las Tablas. He has been using his home for an office, an arrangement which permits him to carry on the management of his farm, as his wife is available to receive tax payments in his absence. He has been assisted by a man in Llano de Piedra who collects for that area the deguello tax of which he keeps the ten percent collector's fee.

Functions:

The collector's sole function has been to collect tax monies based upon notices sent to the taxpayer by the Contraloría in Panamá City.

These notices specify the date upon which payment must be made. His collections in the month of February, 1969 are useful in indicating the type of taxes collected and their relative importance, at least for that time of the year:

Inmuebles (land tax)	\$60.04
Ventas de licores al por menor (retail sales of whiskies)	192.66
Deguello (slaughter tax)	273.25
Boletas timbres (certificate stamp)	17.85
Multas (fines)	10.00
Gaceta oficial impuestos (official gazette taxes)	
Timbres ganaderos (\$1.50 per animal sold-out of the district)	220.00
Matricula (\$5.00 license for each abarroteria and \$5-\$150 for each tienda)	5.91
Arena (tax on each load of sand removed from a river)	2.00
Total	\$ 781.71

There are other taxes and types of income which were not collected in February, but which may be collected as the occasion arises including the following:

Sobre la Renta (Income Tax)

Sobre la Renta-Planilla (Income Tax-Payroll)

Renovación de Patente Comercial (Commercial Patent Renewal)

Acueducto (Aqueduct)

Turismo (Tourism)

Registro Civil (Civil Register)

Ventas de Tierras Nacionales (Sales of Government lands)

Arrendamiento de Tierras Nacionales (Lease of Government

Juegos (Games)

Most income taxes have usually been paid in March. Last year about thirty persons in the district were required to pay this tax resulting in total collections of about \$500. Land taxes are fixed by Ministry of Hacienda on land to which title has been given. As noted in Chapter 2 only 6.7% of the lots (predios) in the district have been titled. Many others have been paying for their lands according to a schedule fixed by Reforma Agraria, but most of these were reported as reluctant to complete payment and receive title since they would then have to begin paying the land tax. However, it was later reported that beginning in 1970, according to a recent government decree everyone who had possessory rights to land would have to pay a land tax, irrespective of possession of a title.

When taxes of any kind are not paid on time a surcharge of ten percent is added and interest accumulates. When taxes are paid in full the taxpayer receives a paz y salvo from the Ministry stating this fact. This document is needed for many purposes including the sale of real property, the receipt of credit at a bank, and obtaining a visa to travel abroad.

Problems:

Lack of a safe place to keep the collections until they can be taken to Las Tablas has been the collector's number one difficulty. Recently, thieves broke into his house while he and his family were away. They found the \$35 which he had barely concealed in the hopes that it would be found if burglars should come, but they failed to locate more than \$1,000 which he had hidden.

Next on his list was the expense of the office, i.e. pens, paper, the cost of transport to Las Tablas, etc., which he has had to bear out of his ten percent of the collections. Lack of any paid vacations is a cause of complaint as well. Recently he was told that he would be required to move into the office provided for him in the Casa Comunal when construction of that building is completed. This would require that he be present at all times during office hours, an arrangement which he feels that he could not afford unless he was placed on a regular salary. His farm and other business affairs would suffer as he

would not be able to turn over the office to his wife when these other affairs demanded his attention.

He recalled that when he first began collecting taxes some persons neglected to pay. He then had the alcalde call them in and "explain" the matter after which he had no difficulty. Of course, many continue to wait until the deadline before paying up. More recently since the new government took over, laws concerning tax collections have been more effectively enforced, especially the requirement that back taxes be paid. This has required a great deal of explaining to the people as to why they must pay when formerly they were not required to do so, a task which he has found quite disagreeable.

B. Identity Card and Elections Registry Office

The holder of this office was appointed last May just before the national elections. However, she had nothing to do with the elections per se nor with counting the ballots, although she had been told to be ready to come to Las Tablas if she was needed.

Her work, which is conducted in one room of her house, has consisted of taking applications from those who require an identity card (cédula), either a new one or a replacement, taking these applications to Las Tablas each Friday, receiving the cards that are ready, and passing these on to the applicants when they call for them at her house. All persons require a cédula at the age of 21, but on occasion a minor may be given a cédula number in Las Tablas, if he needs it for Social Security purposes. She receives \$80 per month as salary and to cover the cost of transportation to and from Las Tablas.

C. Analysis and Comment

The collector of revenue and the municipal treasurer (see Chapter 4) are engaged in the same business of collecting taxes. They also have a common problem stemming from the use of their homes as places of business. Although this arrangement permits both of them to fit their businesses into the routines of household care and farm management, it has the big disadvantage of lack of security for themselves and for the public funds which they collect. If they are required to keep

offices at the new Casa Comunal, neither one feels that he can continue to work in his present position, because such an arrangement would make impossible the care of their households and of their other private businesses.

If we assume that the insecurity of public funds is intolerable, there would seem to be two alternatives. The first is to provide to each a suitable safe in which to keep funds until they can be transmitted to a bank. While this would largely solve the problem of funds security, it would be somewhat costly and would not remove the danger of physical injury in the event of robbery. It would have the advantage of permitting the present incumbents, who appear to be adequate to the demands of their positions, to carry on as before.

A second alternative would be to combine the two offices (Collector of Revenue and Municipal Treasurer) into one, and place it in the new Casa Comunal in a cashiers box equipped with a vault or safe suitable for the purpose. This alternative would mean the elimination of the contractor and the upgrading of the municipal treasurer's office to a full-time responsibility for collection of both municipal and central government revenue. The ten percent collection fee presently paid to the contractor could be paid by the Ministry directly to the Municipal Council. The Council could use a part or all of it to raise the salary of the treasurer to a level commensurate with the duties performed. This rearrangement would have the further advantages of professionalizing the office, concentrating public offices in one building to better serve the citizenry, and increasing the personal security of the treasurer. This alternative, of course, has the disadvantage of depriving the collector of a job and disrupting the pattern of living and working of the present municipal treasurer, with the possible consequence that a new treasurer would have to be found.

CHAPTER 9

VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

In previous chapters we have described several voluntary agencies, notably the Clubes de Padres de Familia and Amas de Casa, and the Capitulo de la Asociación Nacional de Ganaderos. Several other organizations which have been treated are in one sense voluntary in that the members are not paid although they serve a public function. These are the Concejo Municipal itself, the Comité de Salud y Bienestar, and the Junta Municipal de Salud Pública. Both the consejo and junta are statutory bodies.

In this chapter we will be concerned with the Club de Leones (Lions Club) and two local betterment societies, a total of three more or less "pure" voluntary organizations. In addition, we shall treat two other organizations which subsist upon public monies but whose members are volunteers, the Brigada de Bomberos (Firemen's Brigade) and the Junta Municipal de Deportes (Municipal Sports Board).

A. The Lions Club

Organization:

The Lions Club has the reputation of being the elite club of Macaracas much envied by many nonmembers. It has been noted in previous chapters that the club is represented on the Municipal Council and on the Health and Welfare Committee. However, two men reported to be the wealthiest in the district are not members, one being retired and the other in semi-retirement, the latter after more than twenty years service in various important government positions. In March of this year the club had seventeen members, five less than the maximum of twenty-two reached in 1967. The president is the owner of a large general store; the first vice-president until his recent transfer was a doctor in the health center; the second vice-president is the pharmacist and a leader of the Capitulo de Ganaderos; the secretary is a senior school teacher who is also president of the Health and Welfare Committee; and, the treasurer is owner-operator of a medium-sized farm.

Functions:

The club participates with others in the Comedor Pre-Escolar, a nutrition program for preschool children. Caritas provides oatmeal, milk and oil for tortillas, while the club pays for the services of a person to do the cooking and serving and for the transportation of the food. This program was initiated following a census of all children of five and six years of age in the town of Macaracas. The parents of those children found to be both poor and lacking in good nutrition were advised to have their children participate in the program. Between thirty and forty-five have been attending the feeding each morning. A part of the old dispensary building on the main town square was being used for this purpose.

In 1967 money was raised through a Lion-sponsored raffle and used to construct a library on land donated twenty-five years earlier for this purpose. The Ministry of Education assisted in the construction by providing cement and roofing. The Ministry also hired a librarian and sent her to Panama for training. The library has been operating for eight hours each day, five days per week. Children have been permitted to use it as a study room in the evenings from six until eight o'clock.

While the study team was in Macaracas the members noted that light poles were being welded for installation in the two town parks. This project was being sponsored by the Lions Club which had initiated it with a fund-raising campaign. However, this approach had failed and the club had had to resort to a raffle which produced a net of \$418.

Last year the club in cooperation with the head doctor of the health center organized a "charla" (talk) in the library on the prevention of cancer among women. As a result of this talk cancer-detection examinations of more than 80 local women were made in the center. During 1968 the club also organized and paid food costs for a one-day course on the "Development of Macaracas" for children from the district. Each child was permitted to submit a paper on the course subject. Predominant among their themes were the construction of a first-cycle high school, a complete hospital and all-weather roads in the district.

During the same year permission was obtained from the Ministry of Health to use a part of the old dispensary building to house some of the nurses and auxiliaries from the integrated

Health Center. The center is also assisted on occasion by the Lions to purchase blood in Los Santos, as there is no equipment in the center to take and preserve whole blood.

Future projects planned by the club include (1) the construction of a crematorium in which to burn the town's garbage, as the quebrada in which it has been dumped previously has been filled; (2) construction of a sewerage system for the town, as there is no room for septic tanks for some of the houses; and (3) pressure on the government to repair the main road through the district which is deteriorating rapidly.

Problems:

Money raising has become a problem. Although the club has been successful with raffles for various purposes, a recent effort of this type failed to provide enough to accomplish the objective of building a kitchen onto the library in order that this institution might be used by the club and others for social affairs. The president was of the opinion that Macaracas was simply too small and too poor to support all of the demands of the various voluntary agencies in the district.

The only other difficulty mentioned was the drop in membership. The Lions International had become concerned at this occurrence also and had asked the club to investigate the causes. The president of the club believed that most of those who had left had done so for economic reasons, but other informants in the town thought that their departure was mainly a result of last year's political campaign. Even so, the club was said to have functioned effectively throughout the political campaigns because all talk of politics was strictly forbidden at club meetings. The president stated that some who had joined out of the mistaken idea that the club was merely a prestige organization were among those who had left the club, but some of these have been attracted back recently by the realization that the club's only purpose is to render service to the community.

B. The Firemen's Brigade

Organization:

The brigade, until recently designated only as a company (compañía), consists of 28 members, all volunteers, plus two paid sergeants. One of the latter has been classed as an

electrician and the other as a mechanic, but neither has been trained to perform these functions. The officers consist of a major in command with a lieutenant at his second, and with sub-lieutenants holding the positions of secretary and treasurer. The major reports to the colonel of firemen in Chitré who is the "boss". Recent promotion to major culminated ten years of service for the incumbent who has held all of the positions from second to first corporal, second to first lieutenant, captain and finally the command post. Succession through the ranks is the normal method of attaining command, according to the major, but the colonel may deviate from this norm if he chooses to do so. The major's regular job is that of secretary to the personero. He is also operating a small lime and bark tannery to produce leather which he sells in his house. The major expects to obtain formal training for the volunteers sometime in the future, and then to accept only those who are able to pass the examinations given at the conclusion of the training.

The brigade occupies a fire house constructed on a self-help basis between 1961 and 1964. It consists of a space for the two fire trucks, an office, an equipment storage room and toilet. The main apparatus was formerly a Coca-Cola truck now converted to a fire engine.

The Ministry of Government and Justice contributes \$345 per month to the support of the brigade, from which the salaries of the two sergeants, \$60 and \$45 respectively, are paid. It was reported that the amount of the Ministry's subvention to a particular fire company has been determined in the past by the influence which the company has had with its region's diputado, and in turn the influence which he has had with the government. The major stated that he knew of one unimportant company in another town which received no subsidy at all.

Payment on the main fire truck amounts to \$150 per month. Until last year when the indebtedness on the fire station was liquidated, monthly payments were necessary for this item. Since then the remainder of the monthly subsidy has been used to purchase and maintain equipment. The brigade is also the recipient by law of 2% of the taxes collected by the Municipal Council. Last year this amounted to \$110, but more is expected this year owing to better tax collections.

Functions:

Not too surprisingly the major function of the brigade is to extinguish fires, first in the district and second in other towns which call for its assistance. During the past summer the brigade was called out twice to control fires in fields, and twice also during the winter. In one case a stove had set a house afire and in the other an auto was ablaze. About four years ago there was a large fire in a store in Macaracas, but this was controlled by the brigade without outside assistance. Although trucks came in from both Chitré and Las Tablas they arrived after the fire had been extinguished. The Macaracas Brigade was called to Chitré once, but by the time it arrived it was no longer needed. It was called to Tonosf once also where the members were able to control the fire, although they had to fill the firetruck tanks by hand from the river.

The brigade's officers have been meeting at two-week intervals and the troops when called, usually at fifteen to twenty-five day intervals. These meetings are in addition to the readiness runs with the fire engines which are held each Sunday.

Besides fighting fires the brigade sponsors a band and doubles as a life-saving unit. It is called when auto accidents, drownings, and other similar events occur. The doctor from the health center has given the members some instruction in first-aid techniques. The "war band" (banda de guerra) consists of eight bugles, one large drum and two small ones and two cymbals. The members are largely self-taught, although they had two sessions with an instructor imported from Chitré. The band plays (quite badly according to some hearers) on the two independence days, at Christmas, and on such special occasions as the school inauguration at Corozal last year. It is also available for private processions for which it requires payment, but apparently its services are not in great demand.

The brigade has also engaged in several special projects. On the occasions of floods in Tonosf, Chepo and Bocas del Toro, the members collected clothing, food and money for relief of the victims. The brigade, along with other organizations, became interested in the two parks in the town and assisted in construction of the concrete curbing and benches. The government provided a machine to level the ground and a minister secured 100 sacks of cement. One of the large cattlemen donated a calf which was raffled off for \$500.

Problems:

The need first-mentioned by the major was for an instructor for the band. Several members of the band have had trouble with their gums which became very sore when they played. This could be corrected, according to the major, by providing each one with new front teeth to replace those now missing.

In terms of fire-fighting there is need for a fire alarm and enlargement of the fire station to provide a tower, dormitories for the two paid sergeants, a meeting hall and a more adequate storeroom. In performing their life-saving duties the brigade has been handicapped by the lack of an ambulance in which to evacuate the victims.

The major's own greatest difficulty is that of discharging his duties as fire security officer, a position to which he was appointed two years ago. This inability arises partly because he has had no training in what constitutes a proper electrical installation, and partly because he has had no time for inspections. The result is that people build whatever they like.

C. The Municipal Sports Board

Organization:

The Sports Board (Junta Municipal de Deportes) is composed of one member of the Municipal Council designated by that body to serve for four years, one member elected by all the sports league players to serve for one year, and one appointed by the Departamento de Cultura Física y Deportes in the Ministry of Education. The last, a teacher, is given an indefinite appointment until he resigns or is asked to resign. The board receives by law five percent of the taxes collected by the Municipal Council. CARE once donated to the board some sports equipment.

Functions:

One of the major responsibilities of the board is to determine the distribution of that half of its income which goes to the schools for the support of athletics. According to the records of the board all 36 schools in the district were to receive a share last year. The smaller ones were allocated \$8.17 each, most of the others \$12.50 each, one \$16 and one \$35.00. The out-of-school program, which was allocated

he other half of the funds, gave support to baseball (\$145.36), basketball (\$12.50) and football (\$12.50). A donation of \$40 went to support national championships in baseball and in track and field events. A further \$122.35 was budgeted for constructing basketball courts, but was not used owing to a lack of interest on the part of the people of Llano de Piedra in organizing a junta to do the construction work.

The data presented by the board regarding its allocation of funds was found to be at considerable variance with the audited accounts of the board's actual receipts and expenditures, which were obtained at a later date from the provincial auditor. According to the accounts no board funds were expended for sports in any of the schools of the district in 1968. The expenditures actually made were as follows:

District baseball league	\$88.50
Support of the provincial baseball championships	<u>\$65.00</u>
Total	\$153.50

The balance sheet for the year revealed the following:

Balance, 31 December 1967	\$321.80
Receipts from Municipal Council, 1968	<u>\$331.91</u>
Total	\$653.71
Less expenditures in 1968	<u>\$153.50</u>
Balance, 31 December 1968	\$500.21

Unfortunately it was not possible to return to Macaracas to determine why the board's allocations did not result in expenditures. However, the auditor did point out that there is a normal two-months lag between the two accounts.

The major emphasis is on baseball which is very popular, partly because it can be played almost anywhere. In the summer of 1969 (January-March) there were five teams of post-school youth, two of which were sponsored by Nestlé and one by a store in Llano de Piedra. The other two were unsponsored. The league season lasts for only six to eight weeks during the summer with scheduled play each Sunday. Basketball is not yet played as

there are no proper courts. Two organized football teams which play during the winter months round out the post-school program.

Problems:

The major problem of the board is the lack of money. The small amount allocated to each school is hardly enough to buy even one glove, or no more than a couple of balls, as most of the equipment is very high in price. The lack of equipment has been the major obstacle to organizing more clubs. However, in spite of these problems the teacher member of the board, himself an athlete of yesteryear, is convinced that the sports clubs which have been organized have brought about among other benefits a decrease in drunkenness among the members.

Sometimes there has been interference in the work of the board. For example, in 1966 the teacher member was removed from the board for seeing to it that the outlying schools received a part of the board's resources rather than spending all of the resources in the towns as was customary. However, he was later reinstated on the board.

D. Betterment Societies

The Inclusive Societies:

Societies for the general advancement of their respective towns were formed about three years ago in Llano de Piedra (Comité Pro Mejoras de Llano de Piedra) and Macaracas (Sociedad Pro Mejoras de Macaracas). The society in Macaracas, as noted in the chapter on Public Health, purchased the land for the present Integrated Health Center. Having accomplished the purpose for which it was created, the society then went out of existence, since its members belonged to other civic organizations which could carry on other projects as needed.

The committee in Llano de Piedra was formed to bring together five civic organizations, the Club de Padres de Familia and the Comités de Acueducto (Water System), Parque (Park), Iglesia (Church) and Alumbrado (Street Lighting). However, in the heat of the political campaign of last year the inclusive committee fell apart and each of the original five units reasserted itself as an independent entity. At the present time the Parks Committee is inactive and it was uncertain whether the Street Lights Committee was still working.

The Water System Committee:

The Comité de Acueducto de Llano de Piedra, consisting of thirteen members, was alive and in action at the time of the study team's visit. The committee has been planning for some time with IDAAN the building of a water system for the town. The committee has agreed to furnish food and lodging to the technicians who come from IDAAN to supervise the work. It has also undertaken the provision of all of the necessary labor. The committee is now in process of collecting the funds with about one third of the required total in the till. It has sponsored a raffle and a dance but finds that it must undertake other measures to reach its goal. Meanwhile, it is laying plans to allocate the work among the people of the town. However, those who wish can hire a peón instead of working themselves. The committee reported that so far it had had full cooperation from everyone. It was anticipated that cooperation would continue as all of the townspeople very much wanted a water system.

E. Analysis and Comments

Voluntary organizations in Macaracas district may be placed in four categories based upon their sponsorship. First are those required by law and exemplified by the Municipal Council itself and the organs of the Council, the Boards of Education, Health and Sports. Second are the branches or organic affiliates of national organizations such as the Lions Club, the Cattlemen's Association Chapter, the Firemen's Brigade, and where they exist, the Amas de Casa Clubs. In the third category are those formed by local institutions for their own support such as the Padres de Familia Clubs founded by the schools, and the Health Committee formed by the Integrated Health Center. Finally, there are those which have arisen in a particular time and place for support of particular projects such as the four improvement committees in Llano de Piedra. As noted above, the overall local development organizations have not persisted for long. The one in Llano de Piedra broke up into the same parts which originally constituted it, while the one in Macaracas lived only long enough to perform the one function for which it was created. All of the voluntary groups, including some of the organizations which receive their major support from the public treasury, use the same methods for obtaining their funds - public subscriptions, raffles and dances. In effect they are in direct competition with each other. Apparently their demands within the last year or two

have exceeded the willingness of the public to supply funds, as was evidenced by the failure of the Lions Club to raise enough to build the kitchen at the library, and the decision of the Health Committee not to attempt to raise funds from the public.

All of the voluntary organizations found in the district, with the sole exception of the Padres de Familia Clubs, are found in the district capital and in the town of Llano de Piedra. This is not altogether unexpected as the statutory bodies must be located in the capital, and those which normally have only one entity per district, such as the Lions and Cattlemen, would be expected to locate in the capital. It is also not surprising to find that the leaders of these organizations for the most part live in the capital, where they are available to serve as voluntary organization members and leaders. A small number of these persons tend to be the same leaders in a number of organizations. When these factors are considered, it is to be expected that the needs of the two towns should get far greater attention in the programs of voluntary agencies than those of the remainder of the district, an expectation which is fully met.

The value of a service club is normally measured in terms of the participation of its members and in the increment to the locality of projects which it carries out. On both of these counts the Lions Club must be given high scores. However, it is probable that neither of these benefits is its chief value to Macaracas. That value is the prestige which the location of a branch of an international organization confers upon a town. When the Lions Club came to Macaracas it signified that Macaracas had "arrived", that it was a place of sufficient importance to be recognized and well worth developing. No wonder that this organization is looked upon as a source of prestige for its members.

What, if anything, does all of this mean for the future development of Macaracas through voluntary efforts? Insofar as the towns are concerned it probably means that new development organizations are not needed, and, if formed, would not succeed unless they have their own sources of funds. Put another way, there are a number of voluntary organizations, official and unofficial, through which development may be carried out and through which new development funds may be channeled, either as individual organizations or as temporary alliances of several organizations formed for particular limited purposes. Only

when these possibilities have been exhausted should consideration be given to forming new organizations for development in Macaracas.

So much for generalizations concerning voluntary organizations. One further specific requires our attention, the anomalous situation in which a local volunteer group, formed originally for one very limited purpose in two towns of the district, is given a subvention by the central government much larger than that allotted for all other local government purposes. We refer to the \$4,140 annual government subsidy received by the Firemen's Brigade for firefighting and music-making, as opposed to the \$2,922 which went to the Municipal Council last year in support of the multiple legislative and executive functions of local government for the whole district. Firefighting is, of course, important, but so are many other functions of government on the local level. It is not our intention to argue for less for firefighters but to suggest that it be considered a normal function of local government. As such it should be an organ of the alcaldia, and its present subvention made available to the Municipal Council. The brigade would then receive such funding as the Council should decide in its wisdom to allocate to this function among its many competitors for the limited Council resources.

CHAPTER 10

RELIGION AND MORALS

In Macaracas district adherents to formal religion are for the most part Roman Catholics. Insofar as is known there are only a few Protestants but no organized church. Since there is only one Roman Catholic church in the district, its priest, its functions, etc., will be discussed as if they were the whole of "religion". This is, of course, not true. A proper description of religion in Macaracas would include the belief systems and religious practices of the adherents and nonadherents of the church including the few Protestants. But the collection of systematic data of this nature was not planned for this study because of a lack of time.

The same caveat applies to the description of "morals". What is contained here on this subject represents mainly the views of one man, the priest, supplemented with a few items from other interviews. Other insights into morals may be found in various other chapters but particularly in those concerned with the Alcalde and Justice.

A. The Priest and The Church

Organization:

In a very real sense the priest is the church in Macaracas. No boards or other organizations of lay participation and control have been formed. The church functions in accord with and as a direct result of what the priest does. Nothing else is done unless he directly leads others to do it. Therefore, a functional description of the church becomes almost entirely a recital of what the priest has been doing, his problems, and his plans for the future.

The priest himself was found to be a most personable young man of about 28 on his first assignment as a parish priest. He was born in Las Tablas and educated in Panama for the priesthood for eight years beyond high school, followed by one year in Colombia. He described himself as "modern and liberal" and there is little doubt that this is the perception, both positive and negative, that most of the people of Macaracas have of him as he drives about the town in a sporty car frequently with filled with teenagers of both sexes.

The priest reports to the bishop, of course, but apparently the control exercised by the latter is quite loose. The bishop himself visits the district on the average of once every four or five years for his regular pastoral work and for confirmations.

The church building itself was being reconstructed with finances provided by the central government. Photographs of the church prior to reconstruction show it to be a charming example of traditional Panamanian "colonial" architecture. Rebuilding has been necessitated by deterioration in the basic structure. The tile roof has been replaced by one of shining metal, the roof line flattened by raising the walls, the symmetry of the doors changed. When completed it will be a far sounder and more utilitarian structure but unlikely to be visited by connoisseurs of sacred architecture.

How the church is financed was not entirely clear. The priest must earn his living from his congregations. Collections, about \$5.00 per month, made at regular masses were supposed to support his food needs. Special gifts have been received from time to time e.g. for Holy Week, but sometimes these have been found to be inadequate to meet the expenses of the observances. Stipends have to be given for private ceremonies as follows:

Low mass in Macaracas	\$ 2.00
Low mass in Tonosí	\$ 4.00
High mass	\$10.00
Baptism	\$ 2.00
Marriages	\$ 5.00 to \$10.00 (depending upon the time and the economic condition of the families).

Of the \$2.00 given for a baptism, \$1.00 is retained by the priest, fifty cents goes to the bishop and fifty cents is for the "cult", i.e. upkeep of the church building.

Functions - Dogma and Mass:

The professed objective of the priest is to "develop the whole man" as a member of the tripartite community composed of men as brothers, the priest, and God. Within the community are to be fulfilled the three promises, first to develop oneself as a spiritual, moral, social and economic man; second, to aid one's neighbors in their development; and third, to love and serve God Himself. To these ends, the priest has been educating the people,

so that in doctrine their method of thinking would be in accord with the Bible. Masses and all other ceremonies of the church have been used only as means to the attainment of the professed objective.

Mass has been celebrated each day in the Macaracas church at 7 A.M. but usually the attendance has been poor except on Sundays. A mass has been said also on Sundays at 10 A.M. On alternate Sundays masses have been celebrated at 4 P.M. at Tonosi and Llano de Piedra. In addition to this weekly schedule the priest has been going to La Mesa three to four times per year. Once a year, if requested, he has visited each caserío important enough to have a patron saint. Frequently, special morning masses have been offered at 9:00 A.M. in the Macaracas church for the dead when requested by relatives who lived in outlying areas and who could not attend the earlier service. All masses have included two lectures: one from the Epistles and one from the Gospels, followed by a sermon and explication. Although the doctrine preached is universal, the priest has attempted to make the sermon itself direct and concrete with the life and problems of the people used as examples.

Masses followed in some cases by processions through the streets have been celebrated on special occasions throughout the year. One of the most important from the standpoint of social integration of the district occurred on the nine days in March around the Fiesta de San Juan de Dios. A mass was offered each day for the people of one of the nine corregimientos of the district, and people of that corregimiento were invited especially to attend. A procession was taken out only on the day of the fiesta itself. During Holy Week masses were celebrated each night followed by processions through the town. Special masses and processions have marked Corpus Christi on 6 June, the celebration of the district's patron saint San Juan Bautista on 24 June, the Virgin del Carmen on 16 July, the Inmaculada Concepción on 8 December, and the Concentración Mariana on the Sunday following 8 December. The latter is noteworthy in providing an opportunity for wide participation and community recognition. Each caserío in the district and each civic organization is invited to make a procession in which an image of the Virgin is carried to the church in Macaracas. Rockets are set off by the processionists as they approach the town. Last year twenty-seven processions arrived on the appointed day to the din of much rocketry!

When the priest has received a petition from a caserío to participate in a saint's day he has made it a point to attend,

PHOTO 15 Macaracas church undergoing major repairs



even if this has required bringing in another priest for the regular services. In the first eight months of his ministry he has been able to meet the demands of the caseríos and has attended 15 such fiestas. Not only has the priest wanted to participate personally in these affairs in order to extend his ministry, but the people have expected him personally to attend and not to send someone from outside as his visit gives prestige to the fiesta. Usually he has gone to the caserío the day before in order to perform baptisms, of which there have been on the average about half a dozen, and to visit the sick who needed spiritual assistance. The service has been most frequently held in the school as there are only five chapels in the district.

Functions - Confessions, Baptisms and Funerals:

Confessions are always held before masses. Confessions also afford the opportunity for consultations, if desired by the confessor. In the confession the old custom was for the parishioner to kneel before the priest, but the priest of Macaracas has not liked this custom and has insisted that the confessor sit on a chair opposite him as in normal conversation.

When schools are in session the priest lectures at the ones in Macaracas, Llano de Piedra and Tonosí each week or at two-week intervals. Lectures have been given at the schools in the outlying caseríos as a part of his visits on their saints' days. Teachers prepare the children for confession as a regular part of their teaching duties.

Aside from the baptisms performed on the annual visits to the fiestas in the caseríos, an opportunity has been afforded each Sunday for parents to bring their children to the Macaracas church from 11:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 to 2:00 to be baptized. In Llano de Piedra and Tonosí baptisms are performed after the mass. On one occasion in Tonosí, the priest recalled, there were 15 persons present at the mass but more than 100 for a baptism which followed. The greater turnout for the latter, he thought, was in keeping with social tradition especially the drinking customs. As is usual on such occasions the father of the baptized child has to pay for the liquor. This may be rather expensive. Although only \$2 are given for the baptism, \$50 for the whiskey is not uncommon. The priest was of the opinion that the stipend for the ceremony should be raised!

Most marriages are performed in the summer months before Lent.

Formerly, funerals were of two classes but the priest has changed this to only one. At funerals the custom is to have a great show of grief by the relatives with much wailing by the women. However, the priest has tried to emphasize in the funeral mass the positive aspects of dying as a counter to the excessive grief. Mass has not always been observed as special prayers have at times been said instead. When a person dies in a caserío a long way from Macaracas he is usually buried without calling the priest. On such occasions many rosaries are said in the house before the burial. Later, up to a year after the burial, the relatives may come to Macaracas for a special mass held in the church for the departed. When someone is dying and the priest is sent for, he goes to administer last rites if the person is still conscious, but the usual practice is not to call him until the person is unconscious and almost dead.

While this study was in progress, the priest was host to two Redemptorist priests, one from El Salvador and one from Costa Rica, who visited his parish for a "mission of evangelization" including masses, baptisms, preaching, and marriages of those who had been living together. After two weeks together in Tonosí district, one priest spent a week in the corregimiento of La Mesa while the other was in Llano de Piedra. Then they joined forces at Macaracas for a week. During these four weeks, a total of 82 marriages were performed. The priest believed that the work of these visitors would give him a better basis for his normal ministry.

Functions - Youth Work:

The young people of Macaracas, principally those from fifteen to twenty years of age, have been the objects of a special program originated by the priest during the study team's visit. The objective is to train them to be the lay leaders of the church. Two meetings per week have been scheduled for the group, one devoted to recreation, games, singing, etc., and the other to various projects connected with the church such as repairs, painting, cleaning, helping in sending letters to the parents, and in general developing through action a responsible attitude towards themselves and their community. Both sexes have been included on the assumption that it is unwise to separate the sexes when each person is likely to be living quite soon with someone of the opposite sex as a married couple for the remainder of their lives. The priest believes that there has to be a bettering of relationships between the sexes, and that this can be achieved by young people through experiencing a feeling of

companionship and equality at this stage of their development. Following the priest's instructions, the young people have begun to sit together in organized groups at the masses, to walk together in the processions, and to lead in the responses, the singing, etc. The priest expressed the hope of developing a continuing dialogue between the young people and himself, between them and their parents, and between the sexes in order to understand and solve their own problems.

Functions - Chapel Construction and Morality:

The priest has found that the people of many caseríos want to secure his assistance in constructing a chapel (capilla). Although he has found some religious motivation, for the most part a chapel is viewed as a symbol of "urbanization"; it gives a higher status to their community. The priest stated that he preferred to work first on the spiritual side and let the chapel be the result of their own spiritual growth. In practice, however, he has gone along with the construction of the material entity which could then hopefully be used as an instrument for greater spirituality. For example, at Chupaíto the people had wanted a chapel for a long time but had been unable to proceed without help. Accordingly, he was prevailed upon to make a list of contributors together with dates when they were to pay. It was reported by others that the major reason for building the chapel was rivalry with the nearby village of Chupá, the cabecera of the corregimiento, which had obtained an Alianza school, some wells and other government-assisted services, which Chupaíto did not have. The chapel would show the people of Chupá which did not have a chapel that Chupaíto could do things for itself without government assistance.

One other function, considered by the priest as a major duty, is "to watch out for the public morality". At the time of the study team's visit he was in the process of composing a letter to all the parents in the town on moral matters. The letter was to be issued jointly with the alcalde. It would be composed of three parts. The first section would consist of an explanation of the duty of the priest to denounce all things which were militating against public morality. This would be followed by an exposition of specific morally-wrong behaviors, especially those which adversely affected the children. Among the examples planned for inclusion were (1) permitting the playing of small children in the park very late at night, and (2) letting young girls go out with men several years older than themselves with compromise of the girl and court charges against the man a

probable result. In the concluding section of the letter he planned to point out to the parents what their specific responsibilities should be. The alcalde's contribution to the letter was to consist of informing the parents of the legal aspects of some of the matters discussed by the priest.

In order to carry out both his religious and moral duties the priest feels that he has to know his parish - what people have good qualities, who are the leaders in ideas, what are the obstacles to social, economic, and religious development of the parish, and in general to gain a knowledge of the communities served. This he has done in part through informal visiting and talking to all of the people.

B. Morals and Social Problems

Economic Influences:

Basic to an understanding of public morality in Macaracas district, the priest feels, is the land tenure system. The land, for the most part, is well distributed. Nearly all of the people are small agriculturists or cattlemen living on their own land even though they may also work the land of others. This pattern is satisfactory to practically all of the people. There is very little envy of those who have more. This attitude is accompanied by a very strong sense of personal independence. Although most of the people are not very ambitious, they are quite cooperative with one another in such matters as juntas to build houses.

Most social problems, he stated, arise from friction with close neighbors. Very common are depredations of straying cattle in growing crops. In such cases it is not unusual for those on whose land the cow trespasses to set dogs on it or to hurt the animal in some way. The placement of fences also often generates disputes. Usually when a person owns land which does not abut on the road, he makes an oral agreement with his neighbor, the owner of the tract on the road, to permit him to have a path across his neighbor's land. Or, he may buy a strip about two meters wide and fence it on both sides. This arrangement usually works well until something happens to reduce the sociability of the families, or the owner of the land nearest the road dies and his heirs do not honor the agreement. These events might be followed by a closure of the access path, or a cutting of fences and other acts which would lead to further enmities.

Sex and the Family:

Irregular sex relationships are another source of difficulties between families. In cases in which a man takes a minor girl, violates her and then leaves her, the girl's father often forces the man to marry his daughter in a civil ceremony, threatening him with fines and jail sentences if he refuses. Frequently, the father then brings the couple to the priest for a religious marriage as well. But the priest has found that the girl and man usually do not want to be married in the church and the priest refuses to perform a religious ceremony unless they are willing. In another type of case a man takes a girl and lives with her without getting married. The father, as a point of family honor, then forces the pair to be married.

In Macaracas a great deal of importance has been attached to virginity. Often suitors back out of a courtship if the boy discovers that the girl is not a virgin. Knowledge of this fact circulates among the boys and men with the result that she may be courted for ends other than marriage. If she responds to their advances, she usually does not get married and her parents sometimes throw her out. In the event that she is either very discreet and goes out only with those from outside the area of residence, or desists from such illicit affairs, she eventually marries, but usually at a lower level than had she remained a virgin. The cause of most of these sexual problems, according to the priest, is the social immaturity of the girls. They tend to grow up physically much earlier than they do in other ways. Since there is no sex education in the home, they have to learn on the street. As a consequence, young girls are quite defenseless.

Daughters from the poorer families often go off to Panama City where they are employed as maids. In a year or two they return with one or even two babies which are deposited with her parents. The family usually accepts the responsibility for raising the children, but requires that their mother keep working in order to contribute to their support. There have been other cases in which marriages have failed and the mother has left the children with her parents while she has sought work in the city to earn funds for their support.

Internal disintegration of families, i.e. deterioration of the quality of relationships between husbands and their respective wives, has not been uncommon in Macaracas. In most of these cases there has been no dialogue, no real communication between them. They have talked at rather than with one another and have

168995

often used harsh words. Infidelity, especially on the part of the man, has often been associated with family deterioration. Extramarital relations have usually been carried on with pick-ups (not uncommonly found around dance halls). Permanent mistresses have been extremely rare as they usually demand a house, furniture, etc., which few men can afford.

Contributing to family disintegration, according to the priest, is the decline in the authority which parents have been able to exercise over their children. For some time the old pattern of unquestioning obedience by the child has not been observed. Because the parents are not educated in how to reason with their children, the latter have become rebellious. There has been little discussion in the home between parents and children.

C. Analysis and Comment

Fewer cross-checks have been made on the data in this chapter than on any other part of the study. We believe that the description of the church organization and the priest's functions are fully factual as presented, with the possible minor exception of that concerning the school lectures. The material on morals, while no doubt qualitatively factual, may or may not reflect the most significant behavior in Macaracas, simply because of the relatively short time which the priest has had in which to make observations, and the inevitable biases inherent in the role itself.

There is no doubt of the impact which the priest is having on Macaracas town. While upholding the traditions of religious substance and ritual, his methods of conducting some of the age-old ceremonies, e.g. seating rather than kneeling at confessions, change of funerals to only one class, and use of young people to lead the singing and responses, must be somewhat upsetting to the oldsters. From our first-hand observations there is no doubt of the enthusiasm which he has been able to generate in the youth. Also of great importance is his determination to get about the district and to identify himself with all of the corregimientos through their patron saints. On the negative side he has appeared to have, on several occasions, unnecessarily affronted the sensibilities of a number of the older leaders of the town and to have seemed somewhat immature and less than fully wise in his relations with them.

If he can overcome these negative tendencies, it would appear that the priest will exert an increasing influence for economic, social and political development of the district. Not only is his forte with the younger people, but he is willing to project his views vigorously in sermonizing and in the life of the community even when the issues are controversial. It is safe to say that any effort at development in Macaracas which ignores the priest is unlikely to advance at as fast a rate as if his views are heard and taken into account.

CHAPTER 11

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Before beginning a discussion of community development (CD) it is necessary to deal first with a logically prior question: What is the community in Macaracas? An attempt to answer this question is followed by a description of some of the past efforts to develop communities within the district, and a summary of the presently self-perceived needs of its communities. The descriptive part ends with a presentation of some of the approaches to CD which have been suggested by Macaraqueños. In the analysis and commentary are presented some CD principles derived from the prior experience of the communities of Macaracas. This is followed by a proposal for giving assistance to the people of Macaracas and other parts of Panama in the development of their communities.

A. What is the Community?

By its very nature a community can be delineated only by those who live in and identify with it. They alone know with whom they share a sense of community. In our study of Macaracas the people identified at three levels, the caserío, the corregimiento and the district.

The Caserío:

The smallest of these is the caserío. As noted in Chapter 1, most of the caseríos are very small, nearly a third having less than 25 persons (one to five families) and almost two fifths more having from 26-75 persons (five to fifteen families). On examination these small places turned out to be areas in which the occupants of small farms live within a short distance of one another and share one or more roads and trails and a commonly-recognized place name. Several of the families of a caserío, if not all of them, may be interrelated by blood and/or marriage. If not so related within the caserío, there is considerable likelihood of familial relationships to others in nearby places. The small caserío may, but more frequently does not, have other institutions or services such as a store

or school. Although caseríos having 50 or less inhabitants account for half of all the caseríos in the district, only 3 of the 36 schools in the district and only 4 of the 67 stores are located in them.

The Corregimiento and District:

The second place of identification was the corregimiento. The corregimientos, which are minor civil sub-divisions, were named as such many years ago, in fact, beyond the recall of most of the people. One exception to this was found in the case of the rather isolated corregimiento of Bahía Honda which was created out of a part of Corozal some ten to twelve years ago, according to the corregidor of Corozal. This, he said, was done either for political reasons or because the undivided corregimiento was simply too large to be governed as one unit. He believed that Corozal itself had been carved out of the corregimiento Cabecera forty or fifty years earlier. Identification with the corregimiento is not surprising in view of the several municipal functions that it serves. As noted in Chapter 3, the corregidor is governor of the corregimiento and may require the services of all citizens in such public services as keeping the roads open; he may give permissions or arrange for obtaining permission to hold quemas and rozas, to kill animals, etc.; he keeps the birth and death register; he is available for mediating disputes; if mediation fails, he attempts to maintain law and order; and, finally, he is charged with the general welfare and development of his corregimiento. The third place of identification, the district, is used only when one finds himself occasionally in other districts or in nearby cities.

The Institution-Service Community:

Although these three place identifications are universal in Macaracas, there is a fourth evolving, the institution-service community based upon schools, roads, trading and local leadership. For example, the community of Los Leales on the main road a short distance from the town of Macaracas appears to command the loyalty of those who live in the surrounding caseríos to a greater extent than do their respective corregimientos. Several factors appeared to be responsible. First is the very strong influence on both children and adults of the three-room school at Los Leales, and its active Padres de Familia Club which has carried out projects to increase the size and quality of the school. Second is its location on a

main road at the convergence of smaller roads and trails from the other caseríos served by the school. Third there is a good-sized general store apparently well patronized which serves also as a kind of informal social "club" or meeting place. Fourth and of considerable importance, is the presence of a very strong and forceful regidor. Although he himself lives in the Chupá Corregimiento, he never goes to Chupá which is three hours away as compared to only half an hour's walk to the town of Macaracas. Therefore, he reports directly to the alcalde and in effect serves informally as corregidor for the parts of the 3 corregimientos which make up Los Leales community. By force of personality and his willingness to serve the people irrespective of where they live, he is recognized as the alcalde's representative by the people of the school area, although most of them live in the Corozal or in the Cabecera corregimientos.

The point here is that the combination of strong community institutions (the school and its associated Padres de Familia Club and a store), plus favorable location with respect to roads, plus strong "official" leadership has led to a sense of community independent of corregimiento lines. There are other emerging institution-service communities in the district. It can be expected that they will increase in number and influence as the schools become stronger, the commercial enterprises diversify, the roads become more passable, and as they are used by the people and by outside agencies as units for development.

Juntas and Faenas:

Before leaving the subject of community per se, we should note the continuing strong influence of private juntas of the swap-work type. These are found chiefly among the small farmers and their families who constitute perhaps half of the population of the district. As noted in an earlier chapter, the medium-sized and large farmers have increasingly relied upon hired labor. But the small farmers have been financially unable to do this. They have continued to organize juntas amongst their neighbors, principally for planting, harvesting and house construction, as they have done for generations past. These juntas have been a strong factor in fostering a sense of community, and especially important from a CD point of view, in working together to achieve mutually-desired ends.

Contrasted with these private juntas are the faenas which have been organized by the corregidores "to keep the roads open".

So long as these work parties have been confined to cutting the bush back and removing fallen trees and other obstructions from the roads, they have been recognized as legitimate and participation in them has been more or less willing. Even so, in the more open areas where all of the land is fenced the tendency of the more experienced corregidores is to require the individual owners to keep open that part of the road or trail which passes by or through their property. The reception to faenas has been quite negative when the work has been extended from bush-cutting to digging and otherwise attempting to improve the roadbed itself. Considerable disapproval of this work was expressed as it was felt to be quite useless since the first rains would wash away whatever they had done. "Legitimate" faenas probably have been a community-building factor in Macaracas, but the use of this device, or the threat of its use for other purposes, may be quite disruptive.

B. Public Development Efforts

Government-sponsored Projects:

The most spectacular development in Macaracas, the paved road through the district, was carried out entirely by the central government. According to a former diputado from Macaracas (representative in the National Assembly) who served from 1948 to 1952, it was his strong advocacy of this road which caused the President of that day to extend the road (unpaved at that date) as far as Macaracas. This was done after the diputado had organized a political meeting in Macaracas to honor the President, a meeting attended by 6,000 people. The diputado used the occasion not only to ask for the road but to petition the government to establish a health center. The latter, a dispensary and predecessor of the present clinic, was subsequently established on the green across from the church in Macaracas town.

Other more recent projects carried out by the central government apparently with no local participation include (1) the health sub-center at La Mesa, built at a reported cost of \$16,000, although local estimates of costs were less than \$2,500; (2) a community building of Llano de Piedra to house the corregiduría, the jail, the telegraph office, and the health sub-center; (3) the reconstruction of the church in Macaracas; (4) the construction of the \$40,000 casa comunal in the cabecera; and (5) the sinking of wells by the Ministry of Health in various parts of the district.

In addition to projects carried out entirely by the central government, at least one, the Integrated Health Center, had the assistance of the townspeople of Macaracas. In this case, a number of the more affluent citizens of the town formed the Sociedad de Mejoras Pro Macaracas which raised money to buy the land on which the center was built. The Society then went out of existence, as one of the former members explained, because it had done what it was created for and there were other organizations, notably the Lions Club, to carry on other development.

Locally-Sponsored Assisted Projects:

A second general class of development projects concerns (1) those which are locally-sponsored but for whose execution central government assistance has been requested and received, and (2) those carried out without such assistance. Prominent among assisted projects in this general class are the two bridges, one across the La Villa River at Macaracas linking it with Los Pozos District, and the one across the Río Estibaná at Los Higos. Both of these bridges, which had been supplanted by more modern ones on the Pan-American Highway, were donated by the central government. However, the people built the abutments, approaches, etc., under the direction of government engineers.

The story of the La Villa bridge is often mentioned throughout Macaracas District although, according to the alcalde and authenticated by others, all of the labor and practically all of the other locally-furnished resources came from the district of Los Pozos. The immediate impetus to build the bridge came from an incident which occurred in November or December 1958. A sick woman had been carried in a hammock to the river enroute to the old dispensary in Macaracas from one of the two corregimientos of Los Pozos which lie much closer to Macaracas than to their own district capital. As the boat in which the ill person and her attendants was making its way across the river, it capsized. Although all were saved from drowning, the incident provided the drive to organize for building a bridge which had been discussed for many years previous to the accident.

The first step was the preparation in late 1958 of a memorial to the minister of Public Works by a "committee" composed of persons from Los Pozos with the present alcalde of Macaracas, a resident at that time of Los Pozos, as committee president. The minister replied by telegram to the effect that

PHOTO 17 La Mesa Health Sub Center

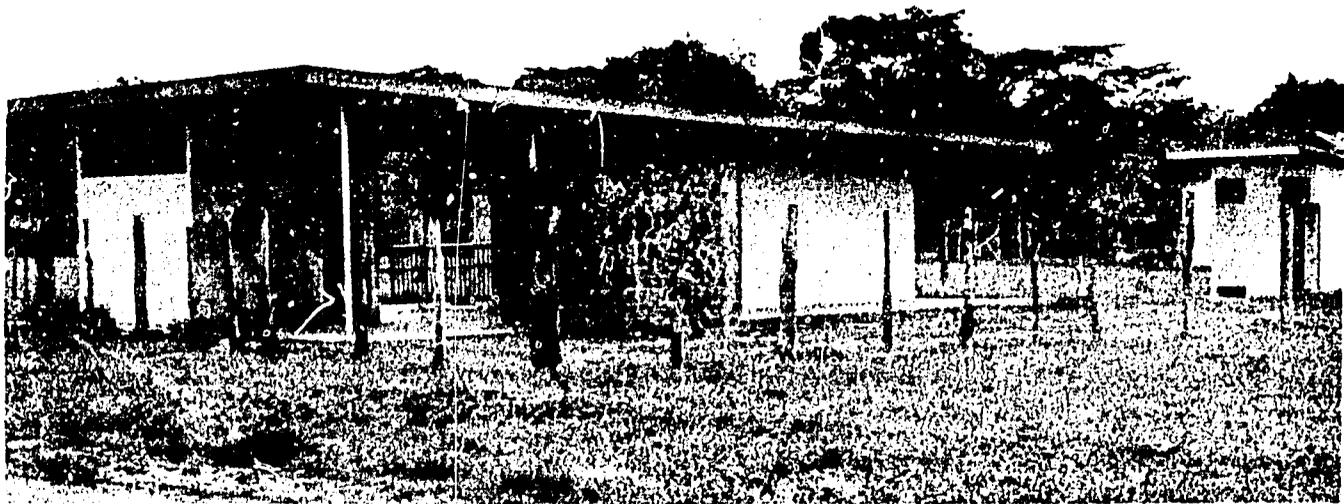


PHOTO 18 Self-help-constructed bridge over La Villa river
about 1/2 mile
at Macaracas



he would be in Macaracas in January (1959), and the committee proceeded to meet him there. His reaction to their proposal was that such a bridge would be too expensive. But he stated that, if the people would build the bridge abutments and supports, he would have the government erect the bridge itself. The minister further promised that he would obtain the cement for the underpinnings at the low price of \$1.10 per sack, provided that the people collected the \$1,540 required to purchase the 1,400 sacks of cement which his engineers estimated would be required.

The committee returned to Los Pozos and in a short time had collected the necessary funds, so great was the desire for the bridge. The committee then went to see the minister who was very surprised at their success. Based on their actions, he agreed to execute a contract with them and sent engineers to make a more detailed study of the project. They decided to choose a new and better site for the bridge than the one previously considered. Although it was on private land, the engineers put in the stakes for the approach road without consulting the owner, a resident of Macaracas, who owned the land on both sides of the river. The minister then informed the committee that it would be the committee's responsibility to erect the fences on each side of the approach road before proceeding with the bridge abutments. Following this instruction the committee organized a very large junta of more than 200 men and proceeded to install the new fences in only one day.

The surprised landowner, who had not believed that the committee would undertake this task, complained to the governor of the province who then sent for the committee. When the members arrived at Las Tablas, the governor referred them to a local politician. She proposed to the committee that in exchange for a promise to help her in the next election, she would see that the landowner did not institute a suit against the committee as he had threatened to do. However, the committee members responded to the effect that they could not promise the votes of their neighbors and that the owner would have to be permitted to proceed.

Following their return from Las Tablas the committee visited Macaracas and informed the landowner of their decision. He was quite furious, but after further consideration and a promise from the minister that he really would erect the bridge, he decided to withdraw the suit and donate the land which had

already been "expropriated" by the committee. The minister made good on his promise by sending a road machine to assist in making the road. The committee returned to Los Pozos, organized another junta of between 200 and 300 men, and in just two days dug the foundations of the bridge according to the engineers' specifications.

In order to convince the minister that they had done this, the committee had photographs made which were sent to the capital. The minister responded with eight trucks loaded with materials for the bridge abutment and support forms. In just 22 days the abutments and supports were finished by the junta and the committee's commitment was fulfilled. However, the committee continued to work through organizing juntas of 30 men per day to help the ministry to erect the bridge itself, which had been cut into sections and brought to Macaracas from its previous site. The alcalde emphasized that the only contribution made by the people of Macaracas was the contribution of the land. All the labor and money came from Los Pozos where the need for the bridge had been so deeply felt.

A number of schools have been built in the last few years, or have been added to, with government assistance. For example, in 1960 in Los Higos, the people with the help of the regional CD worker, constructed such a school. The government gave the cement, reinforcing iron, windows, doors and paint, while the community provided the roof timber, roof tiles and the bricks, and arranged for the services of a bricklayer and a carpenter. As usual, money was raised through dances and raffles.

While the school in Los Higos required only a short time to construct, the recently-completed school at Corozal required slightly longer - a period of 18 years from initiation to completion! It seems that in 1950 a local committee was organized to collect money and to plan the school. The matter proceeded slowly until the election of 1952 when one of the candidates for diputado became interested in the project and gave sufficient help to get the walls erected before the election. He promised the people that after the election the government would complete the structure. Although he was elected, his promise was not kept and nothing further was done for the following four years. The scenario was repeated in the elections of 1956, 1960 and 1964 with the same results - unkept promises. Finally, in 1966 the community organized a committee which inveigled USAID into sending an investigator, resulting eventually in a project to complete the part begun in 1952 and

to add other classrooms. The people contributed their labor, the sand and gravel required, and the structure was finally completed in May, 1968.

Other projects in this category, described in Chapter 9; Voluntary Agencies, include the construction of the library in Macaracas by the Lions Club to which the Ministry of Education donated the cement and roofing and the services of a librarian; and the building of the two parks in each end of town for which the government furnished machinery for ground leveling and the cement for curbing.

The final story to be told here concerns two projects, one of which did not take place. When the study team paid its last visit to Macaracas in mid-June, it was told that following receipt of a request from the people of Llano de Piedra, transmitted by the alcalde and the doctor at the Health Center, the governor had sent the previous week a cuchilla (road grader) to the town of Llano de Piedra. This machine was then at work cutting new streets in the town. The very precise engineering work was being done by eye by the machine operator as he drove along! The townspeople had raised sufficient money for this purpose to pay his wages of \$17 per day while CAM furnished the machine and fuel.

The team was further informed that the people of the corregimiento of La Mesa had been offered the opportunity of using this machine on the bad road between La Mesa and Llano de Piedra. The same terms were given as to Llano de Piedra. However, the people of La Mesa had refused this golden opportunity, it was explained, because of short-sightedness and factionalism which prevented them from getting together and acting for their common good. Further probing by the study team produced a different story. The people of La Mesa had indeed refused to participate but not for the reasons given by the first informants. It seems that the community had paid for the use of road graders on previous occasions, only to have the results of its work disappear into the river with the first hard rain from lack of gravel to hold the soil pushed up by the grader. Accordingly, the community's spokesmen had asked for assurances that the governor would send a number of trucks (one was regarded as useless) to dump the estimated 1,000 loads of gravel on the roadbed immediately following the work of the grader. When this assurance could not be given, the people declined to finance what appeared to them to be another wasteful exercise.

Locally-Sponsored, Non-Assisted Projects:

Finally, we will discuss briefly a number of development projects which have been carried out by the people of the district without outside government assistance. For the most part these projects have consisted of construction of the older quincha (mud) school houses and minor roads. The schools at Bahía Honda and Chupaíto were both built entirely by the local people and, in the latter place, the furniture as well. In 1962 the community of Chupaíto also built a wooden bridge on the road to Macaracas, without outside assistance. This is the bridge described in a previous chapter which was torn down by CAM in 1967 with the promise of a better one, a promise which had not been kept at the time of the study. About a year later this same community decided to make a part of the road to Macaracas an all-weather one. They organized a junta, obtained a tractor and pushed up a large pile of tosca (disintegrated stone). CAM intervened at this point by offering dump trucks, an offer which the community gladly accepted. However, more than a year later no trucks had been made available and no further action to spread the tosca had taken place.

The experiences of Chupaíto with both the road and bridge, those of Corozal with its school, and La Mesa with its road illustrate a theme expressed by a number of respondents, i.e. the spirit of mutual cooperation on community projects has been greatly hurt by the false promises of politicians and government departments. In the case of the former, the usual practice is for candidates to go around the district during a political campaign in order to find out what the people want, and then to promise that these projects will be carried out, if they are elected. However, usually nothing happens, or just enough is done to prevent the community from going ahead on its own. The result, as one respondent expressed it, is a "spirit of crossed arms and a disbelief in everything". In the case of government departments, it is too often too little too late.

(The above accounts should be regarded merely as indicative of some of the types of community development projects engaged in by the people of Macaracas. A full inventory of all projects would have required visits to several parts of each corregimiento and more thorough investigating than was done. It should also be noted that this section does not contain a summary of those projects undertaken by the Padres de Familia Clubs at the schools studied as these were covered in Chapter 6 on Education.)

Perceived Needs

awareness of problems is an indicator of readiness for action, Macaracas is at the take-off stage. For, wherever the study team went, there was a desire to talk about problems and what was needed and what they were prepared to do about it. The things the people were most concerned with are shown in Table 11.1.

It should be noted that this compilation resulted from many hours of investigation with the people in their communities in nine of the ten corregimientos - and with representatives of the tenth in Macaracas town. Corregidores, regidores and ordinary citizens were consulted. The replies received were in most cases subjected to further questioning by the study team to insure that the items given were really the highest priority concern of the community concerned, and that there was a commitment on the part of respondents to participating in projects to resolve the needs presented. Respondents were disabused of any idea that the study team would obtain any assistance for them from either the government or USAID. Put another way, the method of ascertaining the perceived needs of the people of Macaracas used by the study team was in sharp contrast to the usual techniques, utilizing either a complicated questionnaire to the alcalde, or a brief visit by a high government official to the cabecera. The result of these techniques is all too often only a shopping list of wants of the more affluent inhabitants of the district capital, not the priorities of the majority of the people who live in the outlying corregimientos.

Roads and Bridges:

It is evident that roads and bridges are by far the most important need of the entire district. Only in the case of the town of Llano de Piedra do they take second place. Respondents had given much thought to this problem and tended to see it as the limiting factor on most other types of development. Without roads and bridges, they argued, it has not been possible to get the sick out except in hammocks on the backs of men, nor to get the doctor into the caseríos. Some isolated schools have had no regular teachers for years as the isolation and immobility are most unattractive features and have repelled many of those who have been assigned to these schools. Owing to the early afternoon rains in some parts of the district it has not been possible to keep children for the afternoon sessions, because the creeks rise and those who stay at school risk being

TABLE 11.1 PERCEIVED NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT AS A WHOLE AND OF ITS CORREGIMIENTOS BY PRIORITY SCORES

Perceived Needs	The District	Cabe-cera	Bahfa Honda	Bajos de Güera	Coro-zal	Chupá	Espino Ama-rillo	Llano de Piedra Town	Rural	La Mesa	Mogo-llón	Las Palmas	Total Scores
1. Roads & bridges	21	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	75
2. Teachers and schools	10		3	4	5		4	3		3		4	31
3. Chapels				3		4	3				3		16
Church (completion)	4	4											8
4. Wells			4			2			4			2	16
Water system	2							5		4			7
5. Auxiliary Health Centers	2				4			2			4	2	14
6. Factory	10												10
7. T. A. & credit for agriculture	5			2					2				9
8. Corregiduría					3	3				1			7
9. Sewage System	3	3											6
10. Market									3	2			5
11. Electricity					2					1			3
12. Telephone	2				1								3
13. Street Lighting	1	1											2
14. Police station enlargement		2											2
15. Cemetery												1	1
Total Scores	60	15	12	14	15	14	12	14	14	16	12	17	215

- N. B. 1. The scoring system used awarded 5 points to the highest priority need, 4 to the next highest, etc.
2. Needs of the district as a whole represent a compilation of those given by the Concejo Municipal (with the participation of the alcalde), the personero, the secretary of the Concejo and a former diputado.

stranded for the night. Large quantities of perishable produce has perished because it could not be gotten to market. For example, a farmer in Mogollón reported that he had received offers of only seventy-five cents to one dollar for a hundred large avocados on his farm, although they were selling for as much as twenty-five cents each in Panama City. All through the rainy season milk collectors are unable to serve large parts of the district. Thus the farmers of these areas are denied an opportunity to substantially increase their meagre incomes through this means, the only one available to most of them.

Other Needs:

Second to roads and bridges in importance are schools and the teachers to man them. Not surprisingly in view of the lack of bridges and roads, the more isolated corregimientos (Bajos de Guera, Bahía Honda, Espino Amarillo and Las Palmas) gave a high priority to this necessity.

The third priority given to chapels may be accounted for mainly by the prestige-value accorded to communities by virtue of having a chapel, and possibly in part by the recent rejuvenation of formal religion brought about by visits of the new priest to many parts of the district.

An awareness of a relationship between impure water supplies and ill-health has made for an increased demand for wells. Oddly enough the need is as great, for many even greater, in the rainy season than in the summer. This is so because of the custom of digging shallow wells near streams for summer use. But, owing to flooding, these wells are not usable in the winter. In other parts of the district it is no longer possible to obtain water in the dry season by means of shallow dug wells, a result possibly of the cutting down of the forests and a consequent lowering of the water table.

Except for the need for auxiliary health centers there is not a great deal of difference in the frequencies with which the remaining needs were mentioned, nor in the priorities assigned to them. Although it does not appear in the table, a number of the interviewees expressed a desire to have the Integrated Health Center expanded to include an adult ward. There was a greater sentiment for this development than for multiplying auxiliary centers which could not be staffed owing to poor roads and the lack of doctors and nurses.

Approaches to CD

An Earlier CD Program:

One of the teachers in Macaracas, president of the Health Committee and member of the Municipal Council, recalled the operation of a previous national CD program which began in either 1954 or 1956 and ended with the elections of 1964. During this period a CD worker, who was responsible for three provinces, was stationed at either Chitré or Las Tablas and came occasionally to Macaracas to arrange for assistance to various projects. In those days the Padres de Familia Club of Macaracas took an active interest in CD and sent two of its members and one of the teachers to short courses in CD. The CD worker acted as a link between the communities of the district and the government agencies, especially CAM, in the building of bridges and other structures, and gave assistance to the community in organizing itself for self-help work. Disruptions caused by the political campaign of 1964, plus the transfer of some of the more interested teachers, resulted in a suspension of projects. One of those which had been planned but not carried out was the construction of a hostel for the parish priest.

Padres de Familia Clubs versus Corregidores:

Two differing points of view were expressed by those to whom the question was posed as to the way to organize and carry out a CD program in Macaracas. Teachers and the officers of the Padres de Familia Clubs were generally of the view that the best way to approach the communities would be through the clubs themselves. It was argued that each club represents the entire community while the teacher-advisors are dedicated and nonpolitical, and thereby acceptable to the whole community. Although they stated that the present corregidores were not appointed on a political basis, in times past political affiliation has usually been an important factor in their naming. Furthermore, former corregidores have often acted as instruments of town, i.e. political, interests rather than representing their corregimientos. Some of them have been true community leaders and their political affiliation has not interfered with their performance, except at election time. However, as appointees of the party in power, they were expected to get out and work during electoral campaigns for the candidates of the government party. Thus, as soon as a political campaign began, all development stopped, tension increased and the communities fell apart.

For these reasons, according to these teachers and officers of the Padres de Familia Clubs, corregidores should not be entrusted with CD.

The other point of view held that the corregidor is the recognized "government" of his corregimiento and is, therefore, the proper person to lead in its development. Holders of this perspective point out that the Padres de Familia Clubs are properly concerned only with the school, and that such projects as roads, bridges, wells, health services, etc., are not their business. Since the corregidor is responsible for all development, he would call upon the Padres de Familia Clubs for help on those things which they could do. Furthermore, the corregidor is a part of and understands the whole community, not simply those matters pertaining to the school. He is the normal link to the central government which must provide assistance on projects, and, by implication, would have a better chance of getting what was needed.

The alcalde was of the opinion that neither the Padres de Familia Clubs and teachers, nor the corregidores, should be given a monopoly on organizing for CD. Because of the large number of community projects which were sure to be generated by a CD program, the government should post a full-time CD worker to the district, or as a minimum, one CD worker for the two districts of Macaracas and Tonosí. The individual selected, he urged, should be a mature person who understands the people and how community mutual help works in practice. Such a person should be a secondary-school graduate and chosen by the district itself. The CD worker would consult with the alcalde and together they would consult the corregidores and the regidores. The latter two, in turn, would determine the needs of their respective communities, i.e. what the people wanted and what they were willing to work for. When a corregidor brought forward a project from his corregimiento, the CD worker would go with him to the community concerned to investigate the project, and help in its planning. When the CD worker was satisfied that it was a good project, he and the alcalde would bring the project to a district CD committee. If this committee (composition not specified) approved, the project would then go to the provincial committee which would allocate the funds. The alcalde stated that the CD worker should have an office in the new alcaldía and be able to work closely with him. He was quite sure that, if this system were followed, the people would not only give their labor to the projects but would be willing also to pay some of the cash costs, for example, the gasoline for tractors and road graders.

E: Analysis and Comment

Community:

After spending a considerable period of time in studying the nature of community in Macaracas, we came to the rather prosaic conclusion that sociologically considered the community is still evolving. For the purposes of community development, it was concluded, the corregimiento should be considered, in the initial stages at least, as the community. Since community development projects are put forward from the corregimientos, the relevant communities of interest, i.e. those willing to commit themselves to the attainment of the project objective, will become evident project by project. This stand is not merely expedient but is consistent with both community and community development theory. Theory holds that only the people who live in a community are able to define it and determine its boundaries; that such boundaries are, at any point in time, more or less flexible depending upon the community of interest in a particular issue, service or institution; and that a community grows in its sense of identity, and in its capacity to grow further, and to function effectively by engaging in the process of self-development. It was quite clear from our research that these propositions applied to the communities of Macaracas.

Contracts, Needs and Participation:

It is obvious from the description of central government development projects recently completed or underway that Macaracas has been the recipient of considerable largesse from Panama City within the last couple of years. Our informants accounted for this by the fact that a diputado for that part of the country in the last two governments came from this district, and that he had exerted considerable influence within those governments. All of the projects involved construction done by contractors at what appeared to local observers to be excessively high prices. Since at least one of the contractors involved had been in jail for some months, it is possible that the present government shared this view.

Judging from the priorities of needs, as shown in Table 11.1 above, it is reasonable to conclude that had the people of the whole district been consulted it is unlikely that any of these central government projects would have achieved a sufficiently high priority to be undertaken. There was, of course, no protest from the people against these projects since they were being carried out by the central government which was paying the

bill. After all, it was felt, the district should get whatever it could, even if what it did get was marginal to its real needs. What is also quite clear in retrospect is that had any of these projects commanded a local priority high enough to receive local support, the costs of constructing them would have most likely been much lower than they were. Although donated labor and some local materials would have been important in lowering costs, even more important would have been a reduction in the fat built into the contracts, especially those let for the reconstruction of the church, the construction of the casa comunal in Macaracas town, and the building of the health sub-center in La Mesa. There is, of course, no proof of this assertion and none is adducible. It is made because of the evidence from the other self-help projects which have been undertaken in Macaracas. When the people of this district have put their own money and labor into projects, they have seen that the costs are kept down. They tend to get their money's worth.

Expectations, Delivery and Technical Assistance:

The stories of the La Villa bridge, the Corozal school and the La Mesa road illustrate certain other principles of CD which it is well to note when consideration is being given to expansion of CD to the whole of the country.

The first of these is the need to set forth clearly to the communities at the beginning what opportunities are offered to them and what obligations they assume. This was well exemplified in the case of the bridge. The Los Pozos Bridge Committee was told what it could expect to get and what would be required of it. In this particular case the Minister's motives may be questioned, as there is the suspicion that he made his promises on the assumption that the committee would not be able to meet the contingent conditions. However, this does not vitiate the principle that the committee was told simply and concretely what it had to do to gain its objective.

The second principle exemplified is that opportunities offered become binding obligations on the government and have to be honored as the community fulfills its obligations. In other words, the government "must deliver on its promises", and do so promptly and in synchronization with the actions of the community. In the case of the bridge, the Minister faithfully followed this dictum at each phase of the project, resulting in completion of a very complex and costly structure within a few months of its initiation. The school at Corozal is, of course, a classic case of the negation of this principle.

The third tenet illustrated is that the right kind of technical assistance must be made available at the time it is needed, if projects are to be successful and their products socially useful. Again the bridge is a good example of having the right technicians (bridge engineers) available each time they were needed. Not only did the project come to a successful conclusion, but its product, the bridge itself, is as useful ten years later as when it was first erected. On the other hand, the La Mesa road demonstrates some of the negative consequences of lack of technical assistance. Had the governor been advised by a road engineer, he would have known that the road grader alone would be useless. He would have either provided the dump trucks to haul the stone, or he would have made no offer and, thus, would have avoided the minor furor created when the community refused the offer. Fortunately, the community had learned from past experience and did not waste its scarce resources on the project.

We may learn one other valuable lesson from the La Villa bridge; i.e. where a need is deeply felt by a sufficient number of people and where the above-discussed CD principles are practiced, very large and complex projects can be brought to fruition. Put another way, there are no projects originated by communities that are too large for self-help efforts. It is not the size of the project but the degree of commitment by all concerned in the community and in the government which results in success.

F. A Proposal

It is proposed that the Government be guided in planning the extension of a CD program to rural and small-town Panama by the above-discussed and illustrated principles of CD. The suggested plan projected below attempts to do this. It is possible, of course, to formulate other plans, but it is urged that they too be tested by how well they incorporate these principles.

Since this proposal utilizes the municipal government (Concejo Municipal, alcalde and corregidores), it is suggested that the reader refer when appropriate to those sections of Chapters 3 and 4 which deal with the development functions of municipal government, and with the training of local officials to perform such functions.

Informing the Participants:

The first step in initiating a CD assistance program, as we have suggested earlier, is to thoroughly inform potential participants. This may be done through a series of meetings which will permit a full interchange of information and views between all of those involved at the national, local and intermediate levels. The first of these meetings should be of about two days duration, held at the provincial capital, and conducted by the director of the Office of Community Development (OCD) assisted by his staff. Participants should include the governor, provincial heads of all ministries and agencies in the province, and the alcaldes and presidents of all municipal councils in the province. The first day might be devoted to general explanations and discussions, while the second would concentrate on operational details and a feedback from the alcaldes and presidents. These meetings would cover the CD approach, OCD and other government organizations and resources available to communities, and the process by which projects are proposed, acted upon and implemented. They would also include a discussion of the types of projects which the alcaldes and presidents believed would be forthcoming from the communities in their respective districts, the kinds of technical assistance, equipment, etc., needed, and the problems which they could foresee in the formulation and implementation of such projects. It should be noted that the informational process is two way, with the OCD learning from the other participants as well as giving them information and instruction.

The holding of two such provincial seminars each week would require about a month to cover the entire country. They should provide OCD with the kind of relevant data and insights needed to plan for field operations, to order equipment, and to train CD workers and regional CD supervisors. It is suggested that the initial training period for workers and supervisors should be short, perhaps of no more than two or three weeks duration, to be followed by inservice short courses as needed. Thus, the field personnel should be trained and ready for posting in the provinces within two to three months after completion of the provincial seminars.

The first act of the regional CD supervisor and CD workers after taking charge of their positions would be to conduct a two-day seminar in each district capital, with the assistance of the alcalde and president of the Municipal Council. To these

seminars would be invited all of the corregidores, regidores and presidents of Padres de Familia Clubs in the district, plus the members of the Municipal Council, the personero and municipal judge, the municipal treasurer, the MAG and IFE agents, the sanitary inspector and chief doctor of the Health Center, and representatives of the voluntary agencies such as the Lions Club, the Bomberos and the Teacher's Federation. These seminars would follow the pattern of those conducted at the provincial level with emphasis the second day on feedback especially from the corregidores, regidores and presidents of the Padres de Familia Clubs. The district CD committee would be formed at this time by having the corregidores and presidents of the Padres de Familia Clubs elect two representatives and alternates from each group (see more below regarding this committee).

The third phase of this information-exchange process would occur at the "community" level and be conducted by the alcalde with the assistance of the corregidores, presidents of the Padres de Familia Clubs and the CD worker if the latter should be requested by the alcalde. The scheduling, conduct and duration of these meetings would be left up to the local officials. A part of the district-level sessions might well be devoted to helping them prepare for those at the community level.

Project Initiation:

When the communities have been informed of the opportunities and responsibilities involved, they would be given an opportunity to determine their needs, the priorities among them, and to apply for such assistance as might be needed on the project chosen for action. The corregidor would fill out a simple application form setting forth what the community proposed to accomplish (e.g. build a bridge at a certain point); what it was prepared to do (e.g. donate all the unskilled labor, haul to the site the stone and raw timbers needed, obtain rights to the site, etc.); and what it requested the government to do (e.g. provide an engineer, steel, cement, forms, reinforcing bars, cement mixer and tools, etc.). This application would be signed by the heads of families in the community as a sign of their intention to participate.

The corregidor would then bring this application to the alcalde who would transmit it to the CD worker, an engineer (or qualified constructor). The latter in company with the

corregidor and the alcalde would visit the community to determine the authenticity and feasibility of the project, and the extent of community support for it. At this time the CD worker would draw up a proper engineering construction plan in the event that the project involved construction, as practically all projects will for some years ahead in Macaracas. In the event that the project did not involve construction, the alcalde with the assistance of the CD worker would consult with the appropriate official at the district or provincial level to determine the project's technical feasibility, and to secure such technical assistance inputs as might be required.

Project Approval and Execution:

When the project had been planned to the appropriate technical level, the CD worker and alcalde would recommend the project to the district CD committee. This committee might be composed of the alcalde, the president of the Concejo Municipal, two or three corregidores, and two or three presidents of the Padres de Familia Clubs in the district. If this committee approved, the project would require the further approval only of the regional CD supervisor in the event that it did not involve an input by OCD, exclusive of technical assistance, of more than \$5,000. For more costly projects, the additional approval of the national OCD director would be necessary.

When the project had been approved it would be returned to the CD worker who, with the assistance of the alcalde and the corregidor, would draw up a contract between the OCD representing the central government and the community specifying the inputs of each according to an agreed-upon schedule. Copies of the project and contract would then be sent to the regional OCD supervisor and to the national OCD director. The latter's staff would take the indicated actions, such as preparing purchase documents, and give the appropriate support required.

Major responsibility for monitoring the project would belong to the alcalde and the corregidor assisted by the CD worker. The latter would provide technical assistance, arrange with the regional CD supervisor for the use of such machinery and equipment as the project required, assist the alcalde in the purchase of inputs, and render reports on the progress of each phase of the project to the regional CD supervisor as a basis for his release of OCD and other government inputs for the next phase.

CD Workers and Supervisors:

In the initial stages and until the volume of projects exceeded their capacities, no more than two CD workers would be posted to each province. They would be made fully mobile, each being provided with an all-wheel-drive vehicle, and with travel funds to permit the hiring of horses as needed. Office space and secretarial help for the CD worker would be provided in each district by the Municipal Council. Failure to provide this minimal support would be taken as evidence that the Council was not interested in CD, thus eliminating the need for a CD worker in that district. The first CD workers would be selected only from the ranks of qualified construction engineers (anyone whether called an engineer or not who is fully able to give the technical assistance required) for the simple reason that they would be dealing for some years ahead almost exclusively with construction projects. To have both non-engineer CD workers and staff engineers would be inefficient. Engineers can learn the other functions of CD workers as well as social workers or other types. If and when there was no longer a need for engineers, (perhaps in five years), they might be replaced gradually by other less-expensive types.

Regional CD supervisors might be posted at David (Chiriquí and Bocas del Toro), Santiago (Veraguas and Coclé), Chitré (Herrera and Los Santos) and Panama City (rural Panamá, Darién, Colón and San Blas). They would be provided by OCD with an office, a clerk, an all-wheel-drive vehicle, and funds to hire horses or airplanes as needed to permit them to give the CD workers the supervision and non-engineering assistance they will require. They themselves would not need to be engineers, but should have enough training in CD methods, in accounting and in management to keep up with financial inputs, and to see that the CD process is followed. In addition to the CD workers, the supervisors would manage the storage, use and repair of the equipment in the equipment pools. Liaison with other ministries and agencies would be one of their major responsibilities. Under this staffing pattern total personnel needed initially, exclusive of that required for the equipment pools, would be as follows:

- 4 Regional CD supervisors
- 4 Clerks
- 18 CD workers

The numbers of CD workers could be increased after a few months of experience if the work load warranted it.

Equipment Pools:

Equipment would consist of those items required to complement, not substitute for, the maximum use of unskilled labor. Failure to provide the required equipment, it may be predicted, will result in a failure of CD to meet the needs of the communities of rural and small-town Panama. Types of equipment might vary with the needs of each province, and would have to be determined by those competent to do so. An equipment pool for Los Santos Province might have a small bulldozer, three or four dump trucks, a small rock crusher, two jack hammers and a pressure tank, a small cement mixer, a small road grader, a small sheeps-foot roller, an equipped maintenance truck, a number of wheelbarrows, a large quantity of picks, shovels, and other hand tools, and such other equipment as would be needed to assist the communities in the construction of bridges, roads and buildings. Rough estimates indicate that a provincial equipment pool might be minimally equipped for about \$150,000, or a total cost for the entire country of about \$1.5 million including a central major repair depot.

Provision of equipment should be undertaken by the agency of the central government which can do so most efficiently. At present it appears that no agency of the government has either the types or quantities of equipment for meeting the needs of communities on a continuous basis. CAM, the most likely source, has equipment of the large-sized type designed to save labor on large-scale road construction and maintenance projects. Only a few pieces can be made available to communities and then only for limited periods of time, mostly on weekends. It must be carried long distances, operated for a few hours and then recalled, all at great expense. In other words, CAM does not presently have a capacity to meet the needs of communities in either equipment, or in men to supervise, maintain and operate it. Therefore, the government must choose an agency (possibly CAM, Acción Cívica, or even OCD), add and train the additional staff required, buy the small-scale equipment needed on community projects, and manage it in such a way as to have it available when it is needed, for as long as it is needed to supplement the efforts of the communities.

It is suggested that the districts which wished to use the equipment would have to furnish and pay the wages of qualified operators. If no qualified operators were available in a district, the Concejo Municipal and alcalde could select persons and send them to the equipment pool for training. Supervision,

maintenance, repair and the provision of fuel would be a responsibility of the pool and be budgeted by OCD, or other agency of the government that had been given responsibility for furnishing the equipment.

Discussion of Proposal:

The above proposal attempts to make maximum use of the existing social structure of a district. In a very real sense the alcalde, assisted by the corregidores and in some cases the regidores, is the local CD worker in a district. As we have seen in earlier chapters, he and his assistants are the links between the communities and the central government. Their use, as described above, is simply a recognition of this fact and a logical extension of their roles. Similarly, the presidents of the Padres de Familia Clubs are the elected leaders of their respective communities. Although elected for the narrower function of serving their schools, it was evident in the course of the study that in most cases they represented the whole community as well.

The designation of engineers (or competent practical constructors) as CD workers is also designed to fit the social structure. What the corregidores, presidents and alcalde need is mainly engineering technical expertise, plus assistance in the work associated with project formulation and implementation. To have non-engineers as CD workers would fill only a very small part of this need. Such CD workers would simply encroach on the functions of the alcalde, corregidores and Padres de Familia Club presidents while providing none of the technical assistance required. Thus, we have concluded that to hire initially both non-engineer CD workers and staff engineers would be very inefficient. Later, if a clear need develops for non-engineer types, they should be hired and trained, either as CD workers or as specialists in other government departments operating at the provincial or regional levels.

It will be noted that approval of projects is kept at the lowest level possible, i.e. one level above the level of initiation. If projects are permitted to get into the hands of the national bureaucracy, a great deal of time will be lost and nothing of value added. No special wisdom concerning local projects resides in the offices of Panama City. The only reason for referring to the national level projects with OCD inputs in excess of \$5,000 is their probable complexity, requiring coordination at that level. If experience shows that such coordination is not needed, the field offices should be

permitted to approve projects of \$10,000 or higher. Timeliness of national response to local responsibility is of the essence in CD. Disregarding this principle will make CD far less effective than it could be. Functional control by the OCD central office may be exercised through training, supervision, auditing and evaluating, not through involvement in operations.

The cost projected above of buying the equipment needed for community projects, plus the resources required to supervise, maintain and operate it should set at rest any notion that CD is 'development on the cheap'. If Macaracas is not seriously atypical, the people in the communities of Panama are anxious to engage in developing their communities and are ready to take part in literally hundreds of development projects selected by themselves. But they cannot do it alone. They need specific kinds of technical assistance and equipment and some construction materials to supplement their own labor and material contributions. Therefore, if the government should decide to sponsor a meaningful CD program in Panama, it must consider the allocation of real resources, not only to capitalize the program, but also to operate it at full capacity for a minimum period of five to ten years. Experience in Macaracas and in other parts of Panama, as well as in a number of other developing countries, indicates that the unit cost, e.g. per mile of road, per bridge, per school, etc., of community self-help projects is substantially less than that achieved by contracting projects of the same size and quality, or by having a government agency construct them without community participation. Put another way, CD requires an initial major capital outlay and an annual operational and capital budget large enough to make a difference in the national budget. If the government is unwilling to allocate the required resources to CD, it should forget CD as a worthwhile contributor to national development. If, on the other hand, it decides to make the necessary commitments, it may expect to reap, not only the economic benefits alluded to above, but also growth in local social and political capacities, as well as the allegiance of a people too often disappointed in the past by too little too late.

A Modification of the Proposal:

Some of the steps in the above proposal may be viewed as rather radical departures from the conventional CD wisdom of Panama. Perhaps the proposal should be applied initially only to one province rather than to the whole country. In this event what is proposed is that this plan, with suitable alterations

because of reduction in scale, be instituted in Los Santos Province now. To the extent possible, qualified personnel presently employed by OCD might be used to fill the positions of the regional CD supervisor and the two CD workers (engineers). If the latter are not to be found amongst the present staff, it should require a much shorter time to recruit and train two of them rather than the eighteen needed for the whole country. In the meantime an equipment pool could be established quickly by either buying from the in-country stocks of equipment suppliers, or by having items brought in under emergency procedures. The objective would be to become operational in Los Santos within three months, and to study intensively each step taken in Los Santos for application of what was learned in the other provinces.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY AND PROJECTION

If the purpose of this study were the provision of basic sociological data required for the development of Macaracas district, we could proceed to plan its development (with the Macaraqueños, of course) with considerable confidence that development inputs would be efficiently used. But the development of Macaracas per se is not the objective, although we confess to harboring very positive sentiments for its people and their future well-being. Rather, as stated in the introductory chapter (pp. 1-2), the intent is to derive from the study of Macaracas the most relevant generalizations for the development of all the districts of Panama.

In this chapter let us then return to our original statement of purpose and attempt to complete its fulfillment by drawing as necessary on the presentation in the first eleven chapters.

A To Understand Organized Life

The first objective states that we seek to understand the organized life of the district conceived as an entity of interdependent communities. Although we feel that a great deal was learned and understood about the organized life of Macaracas, the conception of the district "as an entity of interdependent communities" requires modification. The fact is that there is little mutual interdependence among the communities of Macaracas district. Rather, all share a common dependence upon the cabecera, while the capital town itself has its *raison d'être* in providing goods and services to its outlying communities. In this sense it is as dependent upon them as they are upon the town.

To be more specific, the capital provides the authority structure for both municipal and central governments in the maintenance of law and order, the mediation of relationships, the placement of teachers and public health personnel, the allocation of the proceeds of the municipal council juntas, the appointment of corregidores, etc. In a few of the communities the land is owned and to some extent controlled by residents of the town. But this is not a factor for most as the ownership of land is widespread, and this fact gives a good deal of

independence to the communities where this is true. In the area of religion there is a full dependence upon the priest and the church for those who participate in its religious life and ceremonies, for which there are no substitutes in other parts of the district. Although there is considerable commercial interchange between the capital and its hinterland, the trading dependency is reversed since the outlying areas are quite free to buy and sell in other towns and cities, whereas Macaracas town thrives on their patronage or languishes without it. In the area of health most of the district is dependent upon the Integrated Health Center in the capital for child and maternal care especially. Thus, as these examples illustrate, it is mutual interdependency between the capital and each of the other communities which in large part makes the district a functional entity rather than a mere geographic collectivity.

The numerous cross references throughout the study to the alcalde and corregidores, Padres de Familia and Lions Clubs, the schools and health center, roads and bridges (or lack of them) etc., make it unnecessary to enumerate again the functional interrelationships of the various parts or aspects of organized life in Macaracas. This is not to suggest that each part or aspect is equally interrelated with others. But there is far more than enough interrelating of all of its parts to justify the assumption that the way to study a district and its communities is as "wholes". Life is lived in Macaracas holistically and not segmentally.

B. To Formulate Propositions

The second objective of the study is the formulation of a series of generalizations or propositions for testing through study in other districts. Such study might follow either one or both of two methods, the holistic as used in the present study, or the cross-sectional investigation of particular areas or problems considered important to development. In the case of the holistic approach, these propositions will suggest a number of sub-topics or questions to be attached to the role-analysis guide for use when analyzing the particular position-roles to which they apply. Of course, a properly done role-analysis interview will normally produce data on all of the added topics or questions. But having them available to the interviewer will mean greater assurance that the interview will not be terminated until these specifics have been covered. In the case of cross-sectional investigations the propositions will permit the

derivation of conceptually relevant and empirically interrelated hypotheses for testing.

Most of the propositions presented below are in the form of generalized positive statements. A few take the form of generalized prescriptive statements when appropriate. The empirical referents of the statements in each of the subsections may be found in a previous chapter pertaining to the subject matter of the subsection.

Pertaining to Extension Education:

1. Emphasis on structural arrangements rather than functional training, i.e. forming clubs of farmers and homemakers rather than giving the maximum of instruction irrespective of clubs, is dysfunctional for attaining the major objective of agricultural and home extension education, i.e. substantial increases in the learning of technical knowledge and skills by a large proportion of the farmers and homemakers.
2. The objective of extension education for farmers and homemakers will be more efficiently attained by:
 - a. Determining through in-depth studies in what the clientele want to be trained, when they want to receive instruction, and what other conditions of learning are appropriate.
 - b. Preparing extension agents through preservice and inservice training courses to provide the kinds of service, knowledge and skills desired by potential clients.
 - c. Giving each extension agent (1) the freedom to use his time and other resources in whatever ways he (and his clients) believe is most appropriate to reach the objective; and (2) the equipment and materials required for maximum mobility of the agent and maximum learning of the clients.
 - d. Providing market outlets for items produced for sale by clients as a result of the application of knowledge and skills learned, or discontinuance of the particular type of training which results in production of such items.

- e. Judging the success or failure of agents on the basis of objectively evaluated results, i.e. the number of skills and the amount of knowledge imparted to a number of people, at the end of two or three-year periods or longer as appropriate, rather than short-term judging on the basis of the "philosophy" and "methods" used.
 - f. Utilizing existing formal and informal groups, and official networks (such as the alcalde-corregidor-regidor system) to inform potential clients and to arrange for instruction.
 - g. Forming informal or formal organizations only as required by the clientele to maximize learning, irrespective of size of group, length of the group's gestation period, or other extraneous criteria.
3. Properly trained and equipped school teachers employed through the cultura popular program are an inherently more efficient means of home extension education than peripatetic extension agents, because the former eliminate time and space factors - they are in the community and available when the women want to be instructed.

Pertaining to Capitalization of Production:

- 1. It is more efficient to have separate banker-type institutions to concentrate on lending operations to farmers with client participation in extension education a prerequisite to loan disbursement, than it is to require extension agents to carry out both lending and educational functions which conflict in both time demands and approaches.
- 2. The use of both small-farmer and large-farmer locally-nominated vigilance committees, to pass on the personal and business qualifications of loan applicants in their respective size categories and to oversee loan usage and repayment, materially reduces the cost of administration and the incidence of loan defaults.

Pertaining to Municipal Government - Executive:

- 1. The value of the alcalde-corregidor-regidor (ACR) system lies more in its performance of the usual functions of local government, i.e. arbitration, maintenance of law and order, the regulation of commerce and social events, maintenance

of minimal official communication, etc., than in its role as developer of the district.

2. Because of its function of providing linkage between the traditional and modern sectors, the ACR system (reinforced by the Padres de Familia Clubs) is the most efficient means for initiating the development process within communities, and for bringing into being the forms of organization required to maximize development.
3. The municipal executive personnel "system" (including the ACR, treasurer, secretary of the alcaldía, secretary of the council, etc.) requires strengthening through:
 - a. Appointment of those with statuses, personal esteem and styles of action appropriate to the performance of each position's functions.
 - b. Increasing the prestige of the positions by the use of appropriate status symbols for display on person or in office, and pay and allowances more nearly appropriate to the responsibilities assumed and to local pay scales for similar work.
 - c. Regular inservice training of the ACR incumbents in the usual administrative and new development functions of their respective positions, such training to be conducted at provincial and district levels with the assistance of the federation of municipal governments (APCI), in cooperation with appropriate government and private organizations, the university, and international agencies.
 - d. Increasing the mobility of the alcalde to provide supervision and assistance within the communities of the district.

Pertaining to Municipal Councils:

1. Since development projects sponsored by a council tend to be located within the communities in which the members live, a more equitable distribution of projects would result if the membership represented all parts of the district.
2. Personnel employed by the municipality are much more efficient (output of work of the same volume and quality per unit of inputs of salary and other remuneration), than

personnel employed by the central government for the performance of the same or similar functions.

3. Expansibility to the maximum of the present system of municipal taxation would not appreciably increase the capacity of the councils to finance development, but could appreciably affect the quality of normal municipal administration which requires relatively small additional inputs.
4. Because of the strong tendency for communities and local governments "to get their money's worth", it is more efficient in the construction of public works desired on a priority basis by the districts to finance them partly through grants from central government, partly from a broadened municipal tax base, and partly through community self-help measures, than it is for central government to let contracts for the same works.
5. Because of the budgetary and other commitments of municipal governments to APCI, and their belief in its potential efficacy as a mechanism for legitimate pressure on the central government, it is more efficient for international development agencies interested in promoting democratic participation of citizens in their government to channel their assistance through APCI rather than through central government ministries.
6. Systematic analysis by a joint central-municipal government commission of all functions of government executed at the local level, and the subsequent assignment of responsibility to either central or municipal government on the basis of use-benefit-cost criteria would increase considerably the efficiency of both central and municipal governments.

Pertaining to Justice:

The ends of justice and administration would be better served through a rational division between the alcalde and the judge of the judicial and arbitative functions of local government.

Pertaining to Public Education:

1. Educational aspiration levels of parents for their children are inversely related to their own educational attainment levels and to the degree of isolation of their communities of residence from the towns and cities.

2. As the numbers of those successfully completing the sixth-grade increases, the demand for first-cycle high schools will increase at a faster rate owing to the socio-economic pressures created by large numbers of unemployed out-of-school youth.
3. Partial grants-in-aid, along with devolution of responsibility from central government to municipal councils and from councils to communities, are a more efficient use of funds presently allocated by the central government for school construction and maintenance, than the present system of constructing a relatively few schools and neglecting the construction and maintenance of the many.
4. The districts are predisposed to assume the responsibility for the construction and upkeep of elementary school buildings from increased revenues which would be provided by a broadened municipal tax base, contingent on the use of the savings by central government to construct and man first-cycle high schools.
5. Until proper first-cycle high schools are established, a majority of the parents of sixth-grade graduates are willing to assume a considerable part of the cost of an interim first-cycle high school conducted through correspondence courses, and supplemented by tutoring in evening sessions conducted by qualified active primary-school or retired teachers.
6. The most efficient use of additional funds to improve the quality of public primary education would be for measures to upgrade the quantity and quality of supervision by resident school inspectors.
7. Expansion of the cultura popular home skills instruction program will result in a very inefficient use of funds unless:
 - a. The teachers' skills are periodically upgraded and they are provided with the necessary instructional equipment.
 - b. The present dysfunctional and inequitable system of remuneration is replaced by a system of payment for work successfully completed.

Pertaining to Public Health:

1. In areas with a poor road system for year-round travel, a proposal to add an adult ward to an Integrated Health Center will be supported by many more people than will support a proposal to establish mobile health teams.
2. The efficiency of sanitary inspectors will be substantially raised by:
 - a. Providing them with suitable transportation such as motorcycles and horses, and
 - b. Using on an off-duty paid basis other skills which they may possess, e.g. laboratory analysis, and which are required by the integrated health centers to which the inspectors are attached.
3. Partial grants-in-aid and the requisite devolution of authority and responsibility from central government to municipal governments will result in a more efficient use of funds allocated by the central government for construction of integrated health centers than the present system of central government use of contractors.

Pertaining to the Collection of Revenue:

1. Lack of proper facilities by the municipal treasurer and the collector of revenue for safeguarding collections invites burglary, robbery and assault, and promotes unsound management practices.
2. It is more efficient, both administratively and economically, for small and medium-sized districts to combine the positions of municipal treasurer and collector of revenue, while keeping separate accounts, than it is to maintain separate positions.

Pertaining to Voluntary Organizations:

1. With the exception of Padres de Familia clubs, voluntary organizations are found almost exclusively within the district capital or other large towns within the district.
2. Municipal Councils, their boards, and the Firemen's Brigades are manned by volunteers although they are statutory bodies funded from public treasuries.

3. "Pure" voluntary organizations, i.e. those not funded from the municipal or national treasuries, are funded only in small part from membership dues.
4. Competition amongst voluntary organizations for public support in the form of solicitations for donations and the sale of raffle and dance tickets has reached the point of greatly diminished returns for the time and effort expended.
5. Existing voluntary organizations with a record of successful completion of development projects provide efficient channels for development funds for similar projects.
6. The present 'nonsystem' of central government support for firemen's organizations is less efficient in promoting the public welfare than channeling such funds equitably to municipal councils, with budgetary allocations by each council to its firemen's organization as needed.

Pertaining to Religion:

1. Organized religion as presently functioning is a positive force for change and development through:
 - a. Emphasis on youth and on dialogue between the sexes and between the generations.
 - b. Modernization of religious forms while reaffirming religious and moral precepts as guides for living.
 - c. Reinforcing a sense of community and an integration of the parish (district) through formal recognition and observance of the communities' saints days, the construction of community chapels, and the annual designation of masses in the parish church for particular communities.
2. The church as a community institution is stronger when laymen participate in its direction and administration than when it has one-man rule by the priest.

Pertaining to Community Development:

1. In areas of isolated settlements community tends to be identified as the immediate small area of settlement, the caserfo, or as the legal subdivision, the corregimiento.

2. With the development in one place of a school, a store and the focus of a road net, the institution-service community comes into being and is identified as the primary community, rather than the caserío or corregimiento.
3. Institution-service community boundaries are neither rigid nor ephemeral, but are dependent upon the residents' conception of the area of convergence of their interests.
4. The process of community self-development (with or without outside assistance) increases both a community's sense of identity and its capacity for further growth.
5. Local projects to be carried out by central government agencies entirely with central government finances are very unlikely to be identified by the people of the district as having high priorities in their own development plans.
6. Local projects carried out by local groups or communities in which they have invested substantial resources are consummated at much lower costs per unit than similar projects undertaken by central government contractors.
7. Successful CD projects which receive outside assistance are consummated under the following conditions:
 - a. The nature and extent of outside assistance are clearly specified by the donating agency at the beginning, together with the obligations to be assumed by the sponsoring community.
 - b. Promised assistance, both technical and material, is delivered by the outside agency in coordination with the community's fulfillment of its obligations.
8. It is not the size and complexity of a project per se which determines its fitness for CD, but rather the degree of commitment to the project by the community and the outside agency.
9. The alcalde-corregidor-regidor system constitutes a built-in CD-agent capacity with the following consequences:
 - a. Greatly decreased need for CD agents supplied by central government.

A KEMMA

- b. Increased need for information-exchange seminars at the provincial, district and corregimiento levels.
 - c. Increased need for specific, readily available technical assistance.
10. Construction projects, especially of roads and bridges, will have the highest priority for most communities for several years ahead, thus requiring central government to give the highest priority to supplying practical engineering technical assistance and small-sized construction equipment to complement community resources.
 11. Approval of community projects and allocation of central government resources is more efficiently done at the CD agency supervisory (regional or provincial) level than at the national CD agency office level.

C. Towards a Sociology of Development

Sociology as a scientific discipline may be said to consist of five parts - methods, observations, empirical generalizations, hypotheses and theories. 1/ This present study has used sociological methods to make observations, to order, present and analyze them, and to generalize in the form of propositions from which may be deduced a large number of hypotheses for testing. As a case study it does not attempt to test hypotheses, but to provide the basis for the generation of those with the most relevance for development as a pragmatic profession, and for the sociology of development as a discipline which may give guidance to developers, especially those controlling policies and programs for development at the local level. Its significance for both the profession and the discipline will increase as further case studies are made of other districts in Panama or in other countries; the results of such studies will tend to confirm or to modify the generalizations presented here, thus leading to the derivation of the most relevant and productive hypotheses. Hopefully these hypotheses will be tested and thereby contribute to building a solid theoretical base for local and national development policies and programs in other parts of the developing world.

1/ Walter L. Wallace, editor, Sociological Theory: An Introduction, Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1969, p. vii.

ANNEX A

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Listed below are those interviewed in Macaracas, followed by the few others who were seen in Chitré, Las Tablas and Panamá City. In several cases individuals were interviewed more than once on the same or different subjects.

MUNICIPIO DE MACARACAS

Alcalde
Corregidores - 8
Regidores - 3
Secretario, Alcaldía
Tesorero Municipal
Presidente, Concejo Municipal
Secretario, Concejo Municipal
Concejales
Juez Municipal
Personero

GOBIERNO CENTRAL - MACARACAS

MACI Agente del Hogar
MACI Agente Agrícola
IFE Agentes - 2
Inspector de Saneamiento Ambiental
Enfermera Principal del Centro de Salud Integrado
Ceduladora
Recaudador de Ingresos
Ex-Diputados - 2
Doctor del Centro de Salud Integrado

EDUCACION - MACARACAS

Directora de la Escuela - 2
Maestras - 2
Maestros - 2
Tesorera, Asociación Distritorial de Maestros

ORGANIZACIONES VOLUNTARIAS - MACARACAS

Clubes de Padres de Familia:

Presidente
Ex-Presidente
Tesorero
Asesores - 2

Clubes de Amas de Casa:

Presidente
Ex-Miembro
Miembros Potenciales - 4
Asesor

Presidente del Club de Leones
Presidente del Comité de Salud
Presidente del Comité de Acueducto
Mayor de Brigada de Bomberos
Miembro de la Junta de Deportes
Presidente del Capítulo de Los Santos de la Asociación Nacional de Ganaderos
Cura Párroco
Voluntaria del Cuerpo de Paz

OTHERS - MACARACAS

Ganaderos Grandes - 2
Finqueros Pequeños - 7
Dueños de Abarroterías - 2

CHITRE

Sub-Director del SENAPI

LAS TABLAS

Gobernador de la Provincia
Inspector Provincial de
Educación
Director de Alfabetización y
Educación de Adultos
Auditor Provincial y otros
funcionarios

PANAMA CITY

Ex-Director Médico del Centro
de Salud Integrado de
Macaracas
Geógrafa, Planificación de
la Presidencia
Evaluador de Recursos Naturales,
Catastro Rural
Evaluador del Catastro Fiscal

ANNEX B

LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

1. Ley número 8 (de 1° de febrero de 1954) Sobre Régimen Municipal y Disposiciones Constitucionales República de Panamá.
2. Acuerdo No. 4 de 1962
(de 3 de abril) del Concejo Municipal de Macaracas (reglamento sobre adjudicación y venta de solares dentro del área de la Cabecera.)
3. Código Administrativo, Libro III, Policía. Anotado y concordado por Jorge Fábrega P., impreso en "La Estrella", Buenos Aires, 1968.
4. Alfabetización y Educación de Adultos
Decreto número 288 (de 26 de junio de 1961).
Ministerio de Educación, República de Panamá.
5. Decreto de Gabinete No. 79 de 18 de diciembre 1968
(relativo a la adjudicación de tierras de los Municipios). República de Panamá.
6. Decreto de Gabinete No. 30 de 6 de diciembre de 1969
(relativo al Impuesto de Inmuebles y la presentación de las solicitudes de títulos para las personas que tengan derechos posesorios de tierras.) República de Panamá.
7. Censos Nacionales de 1960, Volumen I, Lugares Poblados de la República. República de Panamá.
Censos Nacionales de 1960. Segundo Censo Agropecuario, 16 de abril de 1961. Volumen III, Características de las Explotaciones Agropecuarias.
Estadística y Censo, República de Panamá.
8. "Listado de Fincas Mayores de 500 hectáreas"
9. "Listado de las fincas y predios del distrito de Macaracas"
Tabulación del Departamento de Procesación Automática de Datos del Ministerio de Hacienda y Tesoro.

10. Egresos del Municipio de Macaracas, diciembre 1968
11. Ingresos del Municipio de Macaracas, diciembre 1968
12. Ingresos del Municipio de Macaracas, marzo 1969
Depto. de Auditoría, Contraloría General de la República .
13. Presupuesto de Ingresos y Egresos 1969
Concejo Intermunicipal, Provincia de Los Santos
Municipios Unificados.
Concejo Intermunicipal de Hacienda, Los Santos.
14. Presupuesto del Fondo Municipal de Educación
Para el año de 1969, Municipio de Macaracas. (Los
archivos del Auditor Provincial.)
15. Aviso de Impuestos; Concejo Municipal, Macaracas, 15 de
marzo 1969.
16. Estado de Situación. Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito,
"El Educador Santeño". Noviembre 30 de 1968.
17. Carta de la Tesorera Municipal de Macaracas,
Catastro Distritorial, 13 de marzo de 1969.
18. Carta del Inspector Provincial de Educación de Los Santos,
"Lista de Escuelas del Distrito de Macaracas", 10 de
mayo de 1969.
19. Informe del Inspector de Saneamiento Ambiental, Macaracas
marzo de 1969.
20. Manual para Clubes Agrícolas, DAP, Ministerio de
Agricultura, Comercio e Industria, 1964.
21. Formularios de la Alcaldía, Macaracas.
22. Formularios de IFE, Macaracas.
23. Investigation of Municipal Government Operation in
Macaracas, Los Santos Province. Frank Dimond and
Bryant Ruthven, April 21, 1969.

ANNEX C

CASES OF LAW VIOLATIONS ADJUDICATED BY THE ALCALDE

Case 1: Pigs in the Water Supply

During the summer of 1969 the village of La Mesa experienced more than usual difficulties in obtaining drinking water. The two public wells which had been drilled some years before had failed as had one of the two private wells. The majority of the people were being forced to get water from the river or from small springs in the hillsides, since the owner of the one working private well belonged to a different faction from the majority of the people and did not permit them to use his well. When the sanitary inspector visited the town in early summer he found that the pigs which ordinarily ran loose were polluting the make-shift springs and a small stream which were used as sources of water supply. He reported the matter to the corregidor who then passed an order to the villagers that everyone should shut up their pigs and that this must be done within a month at the latest. When the deadline arrived some had complied while others had not. The corregidor appealed to the alcalde who sent the sanitary inspector with a member of the National Guard to ask all those who had not complied to do so and all complied - for awhile.

In late March a group of nine persons from La Mesa came to the alcalde to appeal his decision and to gain permission for the pigs to run freely as it was much too difficult to bring water to them when they could find it themselves if permitted to roam. The alcalde said that he was sorry, but that they had to be kept up for the good of the community since the sanitary inspector believed that some diseases were being carried by fouled drinking water. He then gave the petitioners three days in which to comply. After three days he was informed by the corregidor that they had not complied. The alcalde then sent out an order to them to appear before him. He stated that when they came in he would fine each one \$5.00 for defying his authority. This small fine would be merely a symbol of reestablishing his authority and would not be seen to be punitive. However, when these men did appear, the alcalde decided not to fine them because of their poverty and because all of them had put up their pigs. The alcalde felt that his authority had been reasserted.

03 In the final visit of the study team to the district in mid-June, the alcalde reported that the eight people involved had been cited the week previously by the corregidor for letting their pigs out after keeping them up for nearly two months. The doctor from the health center had also complained that as long as the pigs ran loose he could not eradicate the parasites from the children in the La Mesa school. The alcalde stated that this time he had no choice but to fine them and would do so the following week.

Case 2: The Runaway:

The corregidor of Llano de Piedra brought a case to the alcalde of a boy of eight years of age who had repeatedly run away from home. His father and mother had been divorced and both were remarried. Neither wanted him and the boy claimed that he had been mistreated by his step-mother. The corregidor had previously attempted to settle the matter by placing the boy with his older brother, but the lad had run away from him as well. The brother had petitioned the corregidor to relieve him of responsibility as he was unable to discharge it. The mayor's solution was to send for the boy's father and to tell him that he was responsible for the boy. He also informed the father he should see that his wife did not mistreat the boy and, if she did, the alcalde warned that he would take further action against the father. The alcalde told the corregidor to appoint a comisario to keep an eye on the family and to see that the boy received good treatment.

Case 3: The Stolen Cow

The corregidor of Corozal came to the alcalde in January to report a strange cow in his pasture, one whose brand mark he did not recognize. This mark was not registered in the alcaldía. Subsequently, the cow strayed to a neighbor's field where it remained for three weeks and then it disappeared. The corregidor came again to the alcaldía to find out if the animal had been sold according to the alcaldía's record. It turned out that it had been offered for sale to a cattle buyer but the buyer had become suspicious of the animal and had left it in a corral in Corozal. But when the corregidor investigated the animal had disappeared from the corral. The corregidor began to look for it and found it in the road being driven by a man who could not establish his ownership of the animal. The corregidor then convened a panel of six men to investigate the case. When their

Investigation was completed, the corregidor took the results to the alcalde who put the case in the hands of the personero. Finally, the owner of the cow, who had been found living in the next district, filed a suit against the man caught driving the animal. The case was scheduled to be heard in the court of the Juez Segundo del Circuito in Los Santos.

ANNEX D

CASES ARBITRATED BY THE ALCALDE

Case 1: Recognition of Child

A corregidor sent to the alcalde an unwed mother whose child had not been recognized by the father. She brought with her a form issued by the corregidor called a "Certificado de Nacimiento Vivo" which showed the name of the father as given by the mother or by her family at the time of the child's birth. The alcalde called in the man and succeeded in getting him to admit parentage of the child, to agree to recognize the child publicly as his own, and to provide for his support. The case was then sent to the judge where the support agreement was formalized.

Case 2: Land Dispute

Two men in the corregimiento of Bajos de Guera disputed rights of possession of a piece of land near a creek. They took the case to the corregidor who could not arrive at a decision. He then told the men to work out a solution themselves, but they were unable to do so and brought their case to the alcalde. The alcalde went on horseback with the men to see the actual situation. He found that one of the men owned much land bordering on the creek itself while the other man had none. The alcalde then decided to divide the land in such a way that the boundary reached the creek at a point on a high bank or precipice making it easy to maintain a fence which cattle could not circumvent. This happened to be the middle of the disputed land. This solution, which gave both parties full access to the creek, appealed to them and the alcalde's decision was accepted.

Case 3: House in the Road:

In the corregimiento of La Mesa a man without land on which to build a house appealed to the corregidor for a lot on public property. The corregidor gave the man a small lot in a camino real (public trail) which was not used very much. Here the man built a small house abutting on a woman's property. She came to the corregidor to complain that because the house was so close to her property her cattle might reach out and ruin the straw roof of the house. To this complaint the corregidor responded

that even if this happened, it was not her problem. She then brought the case to the alcalde (at a time when the study team was present).

The corregidor happened to be in the alcaldía when she arrived, whereupon she accused him of giving his decision in the matter because he did not like her. The mayor then told the corregidor to have the man move his house two meters from the woman's property. Later in the day she returned to the alcaldía when the corregidor was gone to say that her real protest was against the improper manner in which the corregidor had rendered his decision, i.e. he had not shown enough respect for her.

The following week three men came to the alcalde to complain that moving the house had made it more difficult to drive cattle through the road. The alcalde investigated the matter personally and agreed with the complaint that the hut was an obstruction and must be removed. He thereupon allotted the man a lot in the municipal lands and ordered him to dismantle the hut.

Case 4: Cow in the Rice Seed Patch

The corregidor from Corozal came in to consult with the alcalde, or, more exactly, to tell him how he had solved a case in which the alcalde had previously been involved. Last August a cow had gotten into the rice seed patch of a man in his corregimiento. The latter had brought a case against the cow owner to the previous corregidor who thought that he had settled the case by obtaining an agreement of the cow owner to pay the rice patch owner the sum of \$10. However, in December the rice patch owner came to the new alcalde to complain that he had not been paid. The cow owner, when called in to explain, stated that no agreement had been made, nor could one have been made as the former corregidor had not visited the rice patch to assess the damages as he should have done. The alcalde then checked with the former corregidor who stated that indeed he had not made the appraisal and that no agreement had been made. The alcalde ruled that since no appraisal had been made and no settlement agreed upon there could be no settlement.

The matter rested until late March when the rice patch owner reopened the case with the new corregidor. It so happened that the new corregidor knew the facts in the case as the cow had been brought to him by the rice patch owner last August, and he had kept it for two weeks until the owner had come to claim it.

He also knew that, although the former corregidor had not appraised the damages, there had been a binding agreement for the cow owner to pay \$10. When the new corregidor confronted the former corregidor with these facts, he admitted that they were true. The case was subsequently settled by payment of the \$10 by the cow owner. The new corregidor believes that the reason the former corregidor had equivocated in the case was because he was compadre of both men and did not want to take sides in the matter.

ANNEX E

MUNICIPAL LAND TITLING PROCEDURES by Frank Dimond and Bryant Ruthven

A. Public Domain

The Panamanian Government exercises sovereignty over all of its territory. Traditionally, this sovereignty has been exercised through the Ministry of Hacienda, which then concedes title to private owners, records such titles, collects payments for sale of property, and charges taxes on private property. Over the years laws have been passed under which the Ministry has delegated sovereignty in two ways, as follows:

1. Each municipality may obtain title to an "area y ejidos" under established procedures, and then may proceed to give title to private individuals.
2. The Agrarian Reform Agency has been delegated general responsibility for giving title in rural areas, specifically excepting municipal areas y ejidos.

The procedure by which a municipality may establish its title to an area y ejidos is the following:

1. A request is sent to the Ministry of Hacienda requesting title to a surveyed area.
2. The Dirección de Tierras y Bosques, del Ministerio de Hacienda y Tesoro, reviews the plan and approves it.

In the case of Macaracas a plan of the district capital covering more than 96 hectares was approved on March 19, 1960. No other populated place in the district has obtained title to its area y ejidos, although Llano de Piedra, the other large place was reported to have a plan.

B. Municipal Titling Procedure

Once a municipality has obtained title to an area y ejidos corresponding to a populated place, it may proceed to concede title to private individuals. The interested party submits an application for title to the municipality, accompanied by a lot survey.

In Macaracas, the Municipal Council fixes the price, and gives title with the condition that building be undertaken within 1 year. The front property line is determined by the personero who measures 6.3 meters from the center of the adjacent street.

Prices of lots where the municipality has given title were observed to amount to a few cents per square meter (estimated at only 1-2% of market value). The majority of the people obtaining title were those who already had a locally accepted possessory right to the property. While in theory they are required to build on their lots, it was observed that they generally had already built on the property when it was subject to possessory rights. People are allowed to have as many lots as they want. There has been no instance of cancelling title because a person did not build within one year.

While land can be expropriated, this has never been done. The municipality rents certain parcels of land, at a similar price to the cost of outright purchase (a few cents per square meter).

During January and February 1969, Macaracas received B/.9.00 from property rentals and B/.96.00 from sale of lots.

C. Possessory Rights

Possessory rights have traditionally been recognized in small towns where everyone knows everyone else. Most of the area y ejidos of Macaracas is subject to such possessory rights. Only a relatively small part of the area y ejidos has been duly titled. The municipality is assumed to own the streets and public rights-of-way, as well as other property not claimed by private right of possession or for which title has not been given. There is no inventory (cadaster) of property holdings within the area y ejidos.

Since all property rights in Macaracas had their origin in possessory (squatters) rights, it seems odd that Macaracas would have a squatter problem. Established families (those with acknowledged rights of possession) can obtain title without any difficulty and at very reasonable prices. However, as new families of modest means move in from the smaller towns, they are experiencing difficulty in finding a place to build. This is demonstrated by the substantial number of houses and shacks being built in public streets.

An instance was noted where a person had made an investment of over B/.600.00 on a very tiny lot purchased at B/.30.00 from another squatter. Both "lots" were in a public right-of-way.

This information conflicted with the mayor's statement to the effect that the municipality had lots for sale at very low prices. The squatter in question told us the municipal lots were in a gully; and that to build on one of them would have required an expensive foundation. We were also told that the biggest land-owner in town was hesitant to sell him a lot, even after repeated efforts.

Source: "Investigation of Municipal Government Operation in
Macaracas, Los Santos Province"

By: Frank Dimond, UDD

Bryant Ruthven, PAD, April 21, 1969

USAID/Panama

