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STRATEGIES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:

Selected Propositions for United States Development Assistance

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INTRODUCTION

The Executive Secretary's instruction was to prepare a brief statement of what economics "knows about the process of induced social change, focusing especially on materials relevant to AID programs of rural development in Southeast Asia (Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Laos)."

Research Relevance: Diagnosis, Prescription, and Evaluation

Determining those findings of social science research which have "operational significance" or "programmatic usefulness" is not easy.

There are three ways in which research findings may have relevance for action programs: diagnostic, prescriptive (or constructive), and evaluative.

First, determining the major and priority problems in a given area, country or region. This task is basically "diagnostic" in that it requires careful examination to distinguish sympto s from causes in the determination of the real problem. Research also helps to identify those problems which are likely to be more amenable to attack, since not all problems are equally susceptible to action.

Second, assisting in designing programs and projects which will have maximum effectiveness. The task here is basically "prescriptive" or "constructive" in that research findings may help in the formulation of activities which will effectuate the desired changes successfully. Research helps to make t e appropriate selection of organization, institution, technique, approach, etc. from among the wide range of available choices.

Third, providing for on-going or ex post evaluation of the program or project. The task here is to improve either upon the execution of the activity in question or upon similar activities in the future. Research in this instance adds to our available "operational" or "programmatic" knowledge.

My comments will concentrate upon the second use of research: program and project design. The assumption is that the priority problems in each country have been adequately and properly identified and that internal program evaluation has been done in some form or other for some time and that external assessments are becoming increasingly recognized as equally useful.

The Status of Research

The problems of rural development in Southeast Asia have received a good deal of research attention (Wharton, 1965a). My recent evaluative search of the work in the region certainly cannot claim to be exhaustive, but it uncovered 365 recent and current research projects or publications (as of July 1, 1964).

Although not all economic areas have received adequate research attention and although a great deal more research work is needed, enough has been done to warrant an attempt to assess what is known and what is not known which might have operational relevance for programs of technical assistance and developmental aid.

My previous work has touched on this topic on three different occasions (Wharton, 1962, 1965a, 1965b), but none of them were especially focused upon AID-type developmental assistance. The first attempted to delineate priority research on those factors which were unique to Southeast Asia, which were affecting detrimentally present rates of economic development, and which were critical to future rates of agricultural development. Ten factors were selected and from these ten research priorities derived. 1/

The second effort (1965a) sought to evaluate the deficiencies in recent and current research as checked against a synthesized "stages" model. This paper stressed two areas

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1/ The ten priority problems were equally divided into economic and non-economic as follows: (1) monocultural export dominance, (2) the preponderance of perennial crops, (3) the duality of smallholder and plantation production, (4) the existence of food deficit and surplus areas, and (5) the existence of sizable subsistence sectors. The five non-economic factors were: (1) the physical and climatic forces of nature, (2) population and its attendant problems, (3) the cultural forces, (4) non-agricultural leadership, and (5) economic nationalism.

The ten priority areas for research: (1) supply elasticities of export crops, especially tropical perennials, and techniques for insulating Southeast Asian economies from severe short-run instabilities; (2) economies of scale and optimum-size farms; (3) the economics of subsistence-type farms and the economics of the household; (4) the problems of monopoly and monopsony at the village level; (5) economics of agricultural labor; (6) farm practices and management; (7) limits of agricultural diversification and the limits of economic planning in agriculture; (8) research techniques and methods, both collection and processing; (9) price and income elasticities for foodstuffs and marginal propensities to consume; (10) customs unions.

NUMBER OF RESEARCH PROJECTS ON AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES AS OF JULY 1, 1964[a]

	Burma	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Thailand	Vietnam	Total[b]	
							NO.	%
1. Land tenancy	--	--	10	7	6	3	26	7
2. Farm economics and organization	4	11	12	35	10	4	76	21
3. Finance and debt	1	3	2	14	5	2	27	7
4. Supply and demand	3	7	15	5	3	4	37	10
5. Marketing (domestic)	--	8	5	34	9	--	56	15
6. Marketing (export)	1	1	1	1	6	1	11	3
7. Rural life	5	10	4	35	8	2	64	18
8. Policy	--	15	13	6	1	1	16	4
9. Miscellaneous	1	--	1	4	--	--	6	2
10. Economic and ag. development	5	10	8	13	5	5	46	13
Total	20	55	61	154	53	22	365	100
Per cent	5	15	17	42	15	6	100	

a/ Source: C. R. Wharton, Jr. Research on Agricultural Development in Southeast Asia (New York: Agricultural Development Council, 1965) - Table 2.

b/ Cambodia and Laos - none reported.

of relative neglect: (a) interdisciplinary research on motivational and attitudinal variables as they affect the productive and developmental process and (b) empirical research on underemployment, price responsiveness and the economic behavior of subsistence producers. Three other priority research areas were added in Appendix D: Land settlement and development, marketing (export), and marketing (domestic).

The third effort (1965b) focused upon two critical areas which might be creatively exploited for the advantage of U.S. foreign policy in the region: (a) land settlement and development where greater imaginative efforts are needed to reduce the increasing capital intensity of such investments, and (b) agricultural trade where monocultural export dominance and the well known related issues have led to acute sensitivities to U. S. stockpile disposals.

Since I do not wish to repeat myself and since it will not be possible to cover completely the operational relevance of all research, I have selected a few critical findings which I believe deserve greater attention in program formulation than they have to date. The "research findings" employed are not exclusively limited to Southeast Asian research. Sometimes, the evidence comes from other areas but is considered to be applicable or relevant. Moreover, there are instances where the findings in the region confirm similar evidence secured elsewhere under similar or different conditions.

As instructed, the research findings have been stated in the form of propositions followed by the evidence or logic and concluding with its operational significance. No attempt has been made to present the propositions in a complete fashion as testable hypotheses.

While the general tone of the discussion may at times be critical of AID, there is no intention to disparage the very considerable efforts which have been made and the various successes which have been achieved. Any evaluative effort which attempts to pinpoint weaknesses or to remedy deficiencies is inherently negative in tone. Therefore, I trust that their negative tone will not vitiate the spirit in which they are given which is to participate in a meaningful exchange of views and to lend whatever useful insights I might have which would assist in improving our foreign assistance programs.

A. <u>The Planning of Agricultural Development: The Problems of "Multiple Factor Systems", "Localite Heterogeneity", and "Scattered Decision-Makers".</u>

<u>Proposition:</u> In the early stages of agricultural development many aspects of agricultural production and distribution cannot be centrally planned or directed. Some centralized actions are effective, but most are not.

In much of the developing world, the emerging crisis caused by the race between food and population is forcing greater attention to agriculture and with it a re-examination of the tools available for stepping up the pace of agricultural productivity. Southeast Asia is no exception. As has been pointed out, the 2 to 3 per cent population growth rate in Southeast Asia is having a significant braking effect on attempts to increase per capita food production.

Under the circumstances, there is little question that government is being called upon to play a far more active role in overall development in the LDCs than was the case for today's advanced nations when they were at comparable stages. But exactly how government should exercise its powers and whether it can effectively do so in the case of agriculture is far from clear.

Government intervention into the economic process has automatically meant the need for planning.[1/] But how to achieve successful planning in the case of agriculture is another matter. It is no accident that Price Gittinger in his recent search of the literature (1966) found such a dearth of attention to the topic.

Fully centralized attempts at the planning of agricultural development have fallen increasingly into disrepute, especially due to the repeated failures of such experiments by the Communist nations, notably in Russia and China. More limited attempts at planning have generally resulted in disappointment.

Various explanations have been advanced for the failure of planning in the case of agriculture. The most common explanations are: (a) the weather and "acts of God"; (b) farmers are traditionalists lacking in economic motivation and incapable of altering their patterns of economic behavior because they are traditionalists, illiterates, culture-bound, etc.; (c) the socio-cultural institutions common to early stage agriculture are conservative, culturally restrictive and economically disincentive to change; (d) economic infrastructure and capital are lacking. There are many others. Without disparaging any of them, I would like to advance three others which are coming into vogue and which deserve attention in programming developmental assistance.

The most recent explanation is the one advanced as an outgrowth of the 1964 MIT conference that agricultural development is a "systems problem" because it involves the interaction of a large number of variables, both economic and non-economic (Hapgood-Millikan, 1965).

1/ For an excellent description of planning in Southeast Asia see Wilcox (1965).

ESTIMATED PRICE ELASTICITIES FOR MALAYAN RUBBER FOR SMALLHOLDERS[a/]

(at P - 80¢)

Monthly Data

PERIOD	Elasticity	Simple Level of Significance	R^2
Rising Price			
June '49 - Feb '51	+ .13	1 %	.46
Feb '54 - Oct '55	+ .37	1%	.67
May '58 - June '60	+ .20	2.5 %	.18
Falling Price			
Mar '51 - Feb '54	+ .23	1 %	.59
Sept '55 - May '58	+ .22	1 %	.21
Rising and Falling Price			
Mar '53 - June '60	+ .34	1 %	.54

a/ Estimating forms were the log of three month moving price (P*); for example, P* for August is the average of June, July, August $0_m - a^m + b \log P^*_m$

SOURCE: Clifton R. Wharton, "Malayan Rubber Supply Conditions, " ADC Reprint, November, 1964 (Originally Chapter 6 in The Political Economy of Independent Malaya (Canberra, 1963)

Two complexities are involved (a) the very large number of interrelated factors and (b) the unique importance of any one factor or series of factors in any given situation. An exhaustive and almost comprehensive list of the relevant factors and variables which affect agricultural development can be prepared and has been attempted (See attachment). But the importance of any particular factor or of any set varies through time and from place to place. Agricultural development programs must, therefore, be based upon an analysis of the developmental process in its complex totality concentrating upon the key interacting factors, each of which must be studied in each particular situation. Solutions which concentrate upon a single factor while excluding all others rarely are successful. Furthermore, the critical problem in any one country or region need not be the same as in another. Merely because a program attacks successfully a combination of critical factors in one place does not mean that it can be transferred to another problem situation.

In his forthcoming book, Getting Agriculture Moving, Dr. A. T. Mosher has attempted to unravel these complexities and to reduce them to a basic, simplified level. He has identified five "essentials" and five "accelerators" which are universal for agricultural development. The five essentials are: (1) transportation, (2) markets for products, (3) new farm technology, (4) availability of purchasable inputs, and (5) incentives. The stage of development or adequacy of these five determine the possibilities of agricultural development. One or more may be crucial in any given situation, or at any given time, but all are equally important determinants in that they are interrelated with each other in making growth possible. The accelerators are those factors which, while not absolutely essential for agricultural growth, can make a contribution to speeding up the rate of growth once the essentials are met. The five accelerators are: (1) education, (2) production credit, (3) farmer associations, (4) improving or expanding the land base, and (5) planning. Note that traditional economic variables are involved in only two of the essentials -- markets for products and incentives -- and only two of the accelerators -- production credit and planning.

A second difficulty is what I call the "localite heterogeneity" of agriculture. The physical inputs and climatic factors in agriculture are not homogeneous. The quality of labor and management ability varies considerably among farm people. Equally important, the micro-environment -- soil, rainfall, humidity, hours of sunshine, etc. -- also varies considerably from place to place though it may seem uniform to the untrained eye. As a biologic process agriculture is far more subject to environmental factors. Although improved technology has reduced somewhat the influence of climate and environment upon agricultural production, the peasant farmer is still very much controlled by the micro-environment where the biological process takes place. Such "localite heterogeneity" restricts severely the effectiveness of many central plans which cannot take account of these factors.

Finally, agriculture involves a large number of geographically scattered decision-makers and a large number of different kinds of productive decisions temporarily dispersed. In a typical developing country, agricultural production is carried out by millions of farmers who are widely scattered. Planning or controlling the activities of such large numbers over such a wide area is extremely difficult. Further, the time span required in agricultural production involves numerous and varied decisions because most agricultural products have a crop cycle or a time lag between planting and harvest. The production decisions of the cultivator throughout the crop cycle are different and require different skills and knowledge: which crops to choose, which variety, when to plant, when to weed, when to fertilize, when to harvest. An exclusively "top-down" developmental planning effort which does not take account of micro-environmental differences and the important localized knowledge of the farmers themselves will only end in frustration.

Greater research attention and experimentation are needed to determine those aspects of agricultural planning which are capable of being centralized and those techniques which lend themselves to more effective use on a national basis. One example follows.

B. Price Policy: A Neglected Development Tool

Proposition: Agricultural prices are an extremely effective tool for influencing production and stimulating development, and the use of positive price policies should be encouraged and aided in our developmental assistance.

The action-response matrix within which the Southeast Asian peasant farmer operates contains both economic and non-economic elements. Among the economic incentives, prices are among the most powerful. Prices are a very pervasive economic factor affecting farmers, both what they buy and what they sell. Price/cost signals are one of the most rapid socio-economic communicational systems are our disposal for influencing production and development. Price/cost signals transmit their information rapidly, efficiently, and pervasively. Price/cost signals tell the producer what is wanted and what is not; who wants it and who is ready to pay for it or to sell it. Price signals reach down to the most remote village touching even the farmer who sells only a small fraction of his output. Yet agricultural price policy has been neglected in the formulation of most development programs. If anything a strong case could be made that price policy has been used, but in ways which are detrimental to agriculture and to the farmer.

In Southeast Asia, as in many other developing regions, agricultural price policy has generally been used in a negative fashion to keep the price of rice, food and industrial raw materials low to urban/industrial complexes. The term of trade of agriculture have usually been deliberately depressed. To add insult to injury, export agriculture in Southeast Asia

has been further taxed to provide government revenues which are then expended on governmental investments and services disproportionately benefiting urban areas. The failure of the peasant farmer to expand production under such circumstances ought to be ample evidence, though negative, of the influence of price. However, there are other evidences.

The usefulness and adequacy of price/cost signals is the source of considerable disagreement among economists and planners.[1/]

First, there is the question of the extent to which the subsistence farmer or peasant producer is or is not an "economic man". Do such people really respond to economic incentives like their urban cousins? The arguments on this issue have a long history.

Agriculture is the deliberate manipulation of biologic growth by man to produce more of the goods he wants. It is economizing behavior in an economizing setting. Since the manipulation is performed by human beings, the process involves human behavior. But the manipulation also takes place in a setting which involves natural and human forces.

The "economizing setting" includes two types: the man-made setting (social, cultural and institutional) and the natural setting (climates, soils). These two set the boundaries within which the economizing behavior of a farmer is carried out. The limits imposed by the natural setting are more readily recognized than the man-made ones. The socio-cultural-institutional boundaries are created by man and are frequently cited as barriers to the use of price policy. The subsistence farmer may plant by the second moon because his father and his father's father and his father's father's father did so. He will not try a new harvesting date because it violates the traditions of his ancestors. He will not try a new harvesting implement because it may offend the spirit of the harvest or the fertility goddess in the seed. He will not change his marketing outlet because his traditional buyer is his uncle and custom forbids changing buyer even if someone else offers a higher price. Such man-made boundaries impose just as real restraints upon the economizing behavior of a farmer as the natural ones such as the number of days of sunshine.

Too little is known about the economic behavior of subsistence farmers and their motivations, values and attitudes. A character sketch could nevertheless be drawn based on the available evidence. The usual sketch of peasants and subsistence farmers is highly negative -- attitudes of fatalism and resignation, low levels of aspiration, mutual distrust in interpersonal relations, limited time perspective, culturally inhibited, technologically backward, lacking in innovation or achievement motivation,

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1/ For an excellent summary of the literature and the issues involved see Raj Krishna, "Price Policy for Agricultural Development," in the forthcoming SSRC volume edited by B. F. Johnston and H. Southworth, Agriculture and Economic Development.

passive, submissive, dependent, etc. (Rogers, 1965). (Note: A similar list for the Vietnamese peasant was distributed to us after the last SEADAG meeting.) The list is long, partly true, but highly misleading for there is a positive side.

Ample evidence exists that peasants and subsistence farmers are not such a special breed. Although the items in the aspirational bundle of any peasant are limited, subsistence farmers are "economic men" in that they do want more than what they have even if what they aspire to is only a modest increase with a few new items added. The peasant is above all realistic. He does not aspire to things which he is convinced are beyond a his reach. He may know about motorcycles, but he will merely wish to have bicycle; he may know about hand tractors, but he will only wish for a water buffalo. These may be considered by some persons to be low levels of aspiration and therefore a negative growth factor. While the aspirations may be low, they do exist. Since these aspirations exist, they may be utilized.

There is growing evidence that peasant and subsistence farmers can react to economic stimuli almost as quickly as the most commercialized farmers in the modern world. The evidence is quite clear that, given a favourable economizing setting, subsistence man is highly responsive to the opportunity for a larger income (higher gain beyond costs and effort spent). His responsiveness ranges from the introduction of new crops to the adoption of new practices, even those sometimes at odds with existing cultural factors. Many of today's crops in the developing world are not indigenous to these areas. For example, rubber is not indigenous to Southeast Asia, yet in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia small peasant farmers adopted the crop more than fifty years ago even though they had to wait six to seven years before they could expect any financial reward for their efforts. This certainly is not the behavior of an indolent, tradition-bound peasant with a short-time horizon. The explosi... of corn production in Northern Thailand for export to Japan is another recent example. From 1956 to 1960 corn production increased more than 500 per cent! Similarly, Filipino farmers responded to the government's price support program for tobacco by changing from the native to Virginia tobacco and then booming production from 3 million kilos in 1954 to over 30 million kilos in 1962 (Castillo, 1965).

In preparing for the ADC conference on subsistence and peasant agriculture in early 1964, we compiled a preliminary bibliography which listed twenty-seven published articles dealing with price responsiveness alone. At the recent AURP seminar at the University of Minnesota in February, papers were presented involving various estimates of supply and marketable surplus response all over the world. Included in the estimates were several from Southeast Asia: rice in Thailand (Behrman), rubber in Malaysia (Chan, Wharton, Stern), rice in Indonesia (Mubyarto, Fletcher), and rice and corn in the Philippines (Mangahas, Recto, Ruttan). All showed positive response to price by peasant farmers; yet the myth persists that they do not.

Another doubt regarding the use of price policy is its likely effect upon "subsistence farmer" is inaccurate since pure subsistence farmers do not bulk large in Southeast Asia. Most farmers and even primitive isolates are linked to commercial markets, even though their degree of participation is minimal. The term as it is actually used intends to describe a particular kind of producer whose basic production orientation is not towards the market but towards the home. At our recent conference on subsistence and peasant economics the definition which seemed to emerge was an agriculturist who sold less than fifty per cent of his production and who depended almost exclusively upon family labor. Therefore, the term is a short-hand which embraces the vast majority of the peasant smallholders of Southeast Asia. There are very few peasants in Southeast Asia who do not grow and sell some of their production. The peasant who grows rice for the home but rubber for sale is the more common type.1/ Such a "dualistic" peasant is an economic man.

Advocating that greater use of price policy be made to implement planning and developmental strategy for agriculture does not mean that I consider it to be perfectly effective or universally applicable in all cases. One can find many instances where price response has not occurred or has been imperfect. Careful study of such cases show that lack of response has usually been where either (a) the price signal was frustrated by intervening barriers, such as isolation (non-existent transport) or by price distortion (a monopolist) or (b) the signal lost its strength by being overwhelmed by non-economic forces such as cultural values.

The closer one gets to the producer, the greater the likelihood of imperfection or distoration in the price/cost signal. There is too much "static", "jamming," or interference. In some cases, the interference is due to merchants who exploit their monopoly powers through their control of credit or limited markets. Another example can be seen in the case of 'agrarian reform.' In many countries, the existing pattern of land ownership and the associated distribution of production can frustrate attempts at change. The price signal may be effective, but the actual cultivator's share of any improved income may be such that he has no incentive to respond. Or the tenurial arrangements may be such that the subsistence farmer feels he has limited control -- economically, or politically or both -- over his own future. Therefore, why invest in the present for someone else's future gain -- not yours or your heirs?

These socio-cultural-political forces can and do interfere with the operation of the price-cost signaling process. But the evidence thus far is that they can be overcome in many, many instances. Since most developing nations have a majority of their economic activities operating on a private enterprise basis, despite their national policies favouring greater state enterprise, greater use of pricing instruments seems warranted.

1/ A fascinating area for interdisciplinary research in Southeast Asia of considerable relevance for AID programs concerns the differential economic response of such "dual peasants." Meager evidence indicates that there is greater resistance to change when economic factors touch the home-food-staple complex, than the commercial.

C. The Execution of Agricultural Development Plans: "Top Down" vs. "Bottom-Up"

Proposition: The most effective execution of agricultural development is that which decentralizes as much as possible those planning decisions to the levels where localized knowledge of needs and requirements are best known and which integrates local, regional, and national planning in a "bottom-up" fashion on those areas where overall coordination is required.

Past technical assistance efforts have not fully capitalized upon the positive features of peasant farmers and the unique characteristics of subsistence and traditional agriculture. On the whole our agricultural technical assistance programs have been problem and project oriented -- what is the problem and what project will solve it. Execution is usually from the top down: we must tell the peasant farmers how to farm better. We identify their problems and then we initiate programs and projects to meet their problems. Actually, the reserve should be the procedure. We should help the farmers find out what they require to farm better and then develop projects which will service the farmers' needs and problems as they have identified them. The approach should be from the bottom-up and the focus should be upon people.

"Top-Down" and "Bottom-Up" approaches are not always mutually exclusive for there are areas where both approaches should be followed in a complementary fashion. The criticism is that "bottom-up" efforts have been seriously neglected with disastrous consequences -- both economical and political.

A major reason for advocating "bottom-up" approaches as much as possible in agricultural development is to offset many of those factors which were previously listed as obstacles to successful centralized planning -- "localite heterogeneity" and "scattered decision-making". If the peasant and the village know their problems and needs best, then why not build upon this knowledge? But this must be done in such a fashion that there is two-way communication -- village to capital and capital to village based upon the comparative advantages of each. And the communication must involve a meshing of need with service. Most developmental projects seem to be based upon the erroneous implicit assumption that the capital and central government have a greater advantage in all respects.

Two objections to such proposals are frequently raised. First, does the peasant farmer know what his problems are? There is a good deal of evidence that he does. Moreoever, beginning where the farmer believes that he has a problem is a sound principle of extension (see Mosher's paper).

The second objection is whether the peasant farmer and the village really want to be involved in a servicing cum communicational contact with the external world to improve their lot. Anthropologists frequently point out that in many instances rural villager contacts with "outsiders" have been

painful if not harmful. Anthropologists and rural sociologists are also fond of pointing out the limited world of peasant farmers. I agree that despite the increasing exposure to mass media, the subsistence farmer is still predominantly concerned with his own more limited world -- his farm and his own village. James Hendry's recent study of a Vietnamese village was aptly titled "The Small World of Khanu Hau." But the peasant knows about the outside world -- the urban world of his own country and other worlds overseas. More and more he is being drawn into the network of mass communications, but his primary attention is still upon his own small rural world. Physical isolation, ethnic differences and cultural divergence -- all lead to a lesser concern with national affairs and international affairs. But the lesser concern does not mean a lack of concern with his own farm and his own village. Nor does his semi-literacy and lack of sophistication mean that he is unintelligent regarding his every-day problems. Survival at the barest level of subsistence generation after generation through wars, droughts, and pestilences cannot be accomplished by the ignorant.

Moreover, as development proceeds and as agriculture is modernized the process itself necessitates increased exposure. Marketing a greater share of his production increases the peasant farmer's dependence upon the outside world. Greater commercialization means an increased vulnerability to forces which are beyond the farmer's control -- and he will be increasingly forced to be alert to what is happening outside the bounds of his paddy field.

Therefore, I believe that the peasant farmer ought to be and can be successfully enmeshed in a greater bottom-up approach to agricultural development. The subsistence farmer's concern with his immediate problems and his knowledge of the localized adaptations needed for any technical changes can become powerful building blocks for successful agricultural development -- and for political maturation. The greater the extent to which one involves peasant farmers in programs devoted to their immediate problems the greater the effectiveness of implementation. Direct involvement gives the peasant an increased awareness of controlling his own destiny and eliminates the feeling of having plans imposed from the top down.

How is this best accomplished? Based upon the experience to date of village-level change organizations two propositions seem indicated:

> Proposition: The most effective decentralization of planning and the execution of agricultural development is carried out within a broad, two-fold coordinative approach: (a) horizontal coordination at the local, village level of the activities of all agencies involved in the developmental process; and (b) vertical coordination upward through the "developmental bureaucracy."
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> A related Proposition is that an "experimental and innovative spirit" be encouraged and maintained at all levels among the individuals involved in the developmental process in recognition of the uniqueness of agriculture's special characteristics.1/

1/There is a third one which deals with the political insulation of the organization, but I will leave this to Professor Wilson, and a fourth dealing with the agents of change (in extension and education), which I leave to my other colleague, Dr. Mosher.

There are several elements in the ideal "bottom-up" development model as I conceive of it. Let me say at the outset that "bottom-up" should not be confused with traditional "grass (rice?) roots" projects, or the garden variety community development programs, though some features of these are involved. What I have in mind is closer to the pattern of infrastructure decision-making involved in the Malaysian "Red Book" rural development program (see Ness' forthcoming book).

A rough outline of a synthesized model for "bottom-up" village level organization would be along the following lines. The basic unit would be an effective village level organization. Its features would be drawn from the best or the most viable aspects of other village-change institutions around the world -- community development (like the original Etawah or the 'group-dynamized' PACD version in the Philippines) village councils (like the elected barrio councils in the Philippines or the district development committees of Malaysia), farmers associations (on the Taiwan model), farmers cooperatives (on the Comilla pattern), etc. Regardless of name or type, the critical features of such an organization would be:

(a) that the selection of its membership be based as much as possible upon achievement rather than ascriptive bases, as is consonant with existing cultural values;

(b) that wherever possible it have available in an active consultative capacity the relevant government officers related to all facets of village development;

(c) that its duties combine determination of problems and needs as well as responsibility for working on them within its competencies; and

(d) that its duties be coordinative of the existing agencies in the village or district, not supplementary or duplicative.

The deliberations, plans, and requirements as determined by the local unit (village or district) would then be meshed into an organizational framework at some provincial, regional, then national levels. Similarly, execution and implementation would be assigned to the most feasible level and would also be coordinated where desirable. A good example of regional coordination is the new organization created by the Governors in the Bicol in the Philippines. For a local-regional-national example of cooperation probably the best model is the Malaysian one.

Maintaining an innovative and experimental spirit is vital to the success of such approaches. Many successful "pilot projects" have failed when attempts have been made to duplicate or to "extend" them on a national basis because of a failure to recognize the importance of maintaining an innovative and experimental spirit. It was this spirit in the pilot project which frequently enabled it to develop a program with component activities which met the localized needs of the pilot area. In many cases it was not the

particular projects or approaches which were the basis for success but the fact that innovation and experimentation led to the adaptation of projects and techniques as well as the development of uniquely suited approaches. When attempts are subsequently made to duplicate or to extend the pilot project unchanged as though the original was the "master plan" or "magic key", there are predictable disappointing results.

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