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9. ABSTRACT

Different administrative systems influence the outcome of public programs. Many students of development, particularly in agriculture, have overlooked the question of whether administration makes a difference in the social outcomes of government action. The outcome of land reform programs is strongly affected by administrative arrangements for their implementation. Evidence from twenty-five countries shows that arrangements for devolving administrative functions to local noncareer officials produced significantly better results for peasant welfare than arrangements using professional administrators, whether in a centralized or decentralized bureaucratic system. These programs had more effect on peasant income than programs of agrarian reform providing technical assistance and the extension of credit. The study controls other factors which might explain these outcomes, and concludes that the choice of administrative arrangements, including the use of devolved forms, is open--or at least not determined by known political, social, or economic forces. These findings have implications for policy and further research, and those are discussed.

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## Allocation of Authority in Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study of Administrative Processes and Outputs\*

JOHN D. MONTGOMERY†

*Many students of development, particularly in the field of agriculture, have overlooked the question whether administration "makes a difference" in the social outcomes of government action. Surely it is not enough to choose the "right" technologies and establish policies to create incentives at the farm level if administrative styles also have a striking effect on the outcome. There are unfortunately very few comparative studies showing how different administrative systems influence the outcome of public programs. This is one such study.*

*The outcome of land reform programs is strongly affected by administrative arrangements for their implementation. In a study of twenty-five countries, arrangements for devolving administrative functions to local noncareer officials produced significantly better results for peasant welfare than arrangements using professional administrators, whether in a centralized or decentralized bureaucratic system.<sup>1</sup> These programs had more effect on peasant income than programs of agrarian reform providing technical assistance and the extension of credit. The study controls other factors which might explain these outcomes, and concludes that the choice of administrative arrangements, including the use of devolved forms, is open—or at least not determined by, known political, social, or economic forces. These findings have implications for policy and further research.*

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\* This article is reprinted by permission from the Administrative Science Quarterly, March 1972 and Professor John D. Montgomery, Kennedy School of Government Harvard University.

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<sup>1</sup> The greatest risk of a macropolitical approach is that of distorting experience to fit categories. In order to minimize this risk,

area and methodological specialists with an interest in the subject were consulted. Of the friends and colleagues who have commented on this manuscript, the following made specific suggestions regarding judgments or methodology which were especially helpful: Solon Barraclough, Irvin C. Bupp, Peter Dorner, Herman Felstehausen, Jerome T. French, Arthur T. Mosher, Peter B. Natchez, Gary Orren, William Schneider, Harold Voelkner, Pan A. Yotopoulos, and Frank Young. Jeffrey Peters and Richard Swanson independently studied the sources used in this article to verify some classifications and interpretations followed here.

Debate over development policy has usually centered on choices of ends (whether to pursue a policy) rather than of means (how best to pursue it, once adopted). The fact that ends and means cannot be separated is often overlooked in the heat of argument over the comparative merits of new technology and land reform, or of import substitution and mineral extraction. Whether benefits of any policy can be attained depends on whether the policy can be carried out.

Land reform is often an article of faith. Undeterred by documented evidence of its success or failure or by doctrinal heresies, it has appeared in nearly every catechism of social justice prepared for the Third World in the last quarter century. It has been tried with various degrees of conviction in scores of countries. It is thus a rare example of a principle which has been tested and has survived, though its effects have rarely been reported or explained. Because American foreign aid is often involved in urging, supporting, advising, and even financing land reform, there now exists a body of evidence which can offer tentative answers to several questions heretofore left to the priesthood of populist reformers: how often does land reform contribute to social justice; who are the ultimate beneficiaries; does the style or form of administration affect social outcomes; can any government conduct a successful program or does it take an authoritarian regime to overcome political obstacles to such basic rural change; once a government embarks upon general reform, what further steps can it take to increase the benefits it distributes to small farmers?

Analyzing the administrative options available for land reform is a difficult task, but not a hopeless one. One means of approaching the problem is to compare various outcomes or outputs with the policies and administrative devices employed. As yet, data on the outcomes of land reform have not been gathered systematically enough to test and compare the intensity or frequency of outcomes associated with different modes and means of policy application. It is possible, however, to determine whether certain outcomes occurred at all and to relate them to different methods used to implement policy objective in gross terms on the basis of various country studies.

In most of the thirty case studies prepared for the Spring Review of Land Reform conducted by the United States Agency for International Development in 1970, information is given on whether (a) peasants' security of private tenure improved (either through possession of land titles or enforceable rental contracts); (b) peasants' incomes increased as a direct result of land reform; (c) former tenants enjoyed increased political power through increased status as land owners or increased ability to influence local governmental decisions; and (d) the bureaucratic agencies conducting the land reform program increased their local or national political power or authority as a re-

sult of the operation.<sup>2</sup> Since the land reform studies prepared for the Review followed a standardized outline, comparable judgments on these outcomes exist for twenty-five cases. When these outcomes are clustered and analyzed according to the different modes of administration used to carry out the land reform, the implications are striking: the administrative process employed, in particular the allocation of administrative authority, emerges as a distinct and significant independent factor affecting the outputs of land reform programs.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

Land reform involves at least four administrative operations, each of which is potentially complex: (a) initiating changes in ownership of tenancy rights, (b) issuing land titles and enforcing contracts, (c) transferring funds to landlords as compensation and collecting rents or payments from tenants and new purchasers, and (d) adjudicating disputes over boundaries, inheritances, and rights. These functions may be carried out by any one of three administrative processes. A country may centralize land reform functions in the national bureaucracy; it may decentralize them by creating new agencies or using several existing ones; or it may devolve the responsibility downward by transferring some or all of these functions to local authorities.

### Centralization

Nine countries in the study used some existing central bureaucracy to carry out land reform, thus relying upon a single closed system (one whose members are responsible to its own leadership) to discharge the four functions defined above. Centralized land reform programs like that of Vietnam under Diem, or in the

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<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, data for the analysis which follows come from thirty country studies on the history and effects of land reform prepared for the Spring Review, Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C., June 2-4, 1970. The studies used are by Ronald Clark (Bolivia); Folke Doving (Mexico and Yugoslavia); Charles Elkinton (East and West Pakistan); Herman Felstehausen (Colombia); Phillips Foster (Algeria); Antonio Gayoso (Guatemala); Y. O. Koo (Taiwan); Land Reform Office, Vietnam Bureau, AID (South Vietnam, two reforms); Davis McEntire (Italy); R. Murrow and K. Sherper (South Korea); Jack Nixon (Ecuador); Kenneth Platt (Iran and UAR); W. C. Thieshusen (Chile); Charles Treakle (Iraq); USAID/Brazil (Brazil, the North East); USAID/Philippines (Philippines); E. Utrecht (Indonesia); Harold Voelkner (Japan); Christine White (North Vietnam); Harry Wing, Jr. (Venezuela); and Gene Wunderlich (India). Since these reports were prepared for a conference on land reform, the beneficial outcomes may be overstated in a few cases. Few country studies on administrative processes are available. See Lawrence I. Hewes, Jr., *Japan—Land and Men* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1955) and Dwight B. Heath, Charles J. Erasmus, and Hans C. Buechter, *Land Reform and Social Revolution in Bolivia* (New York: Praeger, 1969) for exceptions.

Philippines, the United Arab Republic, Iraq, Algeria, Colombia, and Brazil produced relatively few economic benefits to peasants (doing so only in the UAR); they did little to improve the political position of tenants (except in Indonesia); and they increased the security of land tenure—the minimum aspiration for land reform—in only about half the cases cited above (in Diem's Vietnam, Algeria, and the UAR).<sup>3</sup> In each case, the bureaucracy emerged from the process relatively strengthened as a social and political force. Thus, although the professional central bureaucracy is the most obvious means of carrying out such a major social change as land reform, it is unlikely to produce maximum benefits for the citizens whose plight is the program's ostensible concern. (See Table 1 for data on which these conclusions are based.)

The reason for this outcome can be inferred from the literature on comparative bureaucracy. A centralized bureaucratic organization is often an élite corps, especially in newly independent countries whose civil service is a direct successor to colonial officialdom.<sup>5</sup> Its political orientation is likely to be conservative. It tends to have social links to landlords rather than to peasants; its membership is usually at least one generation removed from rural origins and likely to be unresponsive to peasant desires. To entrust land reform to this group runs the risk of a bureaucratic slowdown for want of commitment. The program may even encounter outright sabotage if the bureaucracy senses any lack of political will on the part of its own leadership. In any case, its performance is likely to be formal, cautious, and correct.<sup>6</sup> A related risk is that the

#### ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY

TABLE 1. STATUS VARIABLES AND POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOME OF LAND REFORM UNDER CENTRALIZED PROCESSES

Country	Type of regime*	Vulnerability index rank†	Improved tenure security	Improved peasant income	Increased peasant political power	Increased bureaucratic power‡
Vietnam, 1956–1962	1	7	+	—	—	+
Philippines, 1903–1965	1–3	14	—†	—	—	+
UAR, 1952–1970	2	8§	+	+	—	+
Indonesia, 1960–1968	2	—	—	—	+	+
Iraq, 1958–1970	2	1	—	—	—	+
Algeria, 1963–1970	2	—		—	—	+
Colombia, 1961–1970	1–3	9	—	—	—	+
Brazil, 1964–1970	2	6	—	—	—	+
Indian States, 1950–1961	3	11	—	—	—	+
Total cases	Extremes	Extremes	2	1	1	9

\* Lyman-French Index, footnote 11: (1) Conservative, (2) Radical democratic or revolutionary appeal, (3) Modernizing middle class.

† See Table 8.

‡ See Note 3.

§ Egypt only.

<sup>3</sup>These findings can be contested in certain cases. Alex Lachman believes that title security was improved for peasants in the Philippines. (See "What is Land Reform?" Washington, D.C., Spring Review, June 1970, Table I.) Economic benefits may be mixed, as appears to be the case in Venezuela where it is reported that the economic position of approximately one-third of the peasants was unchanged, about one-third gained economic benefits from land reform, and another third suffered financially after the reform. Classification of administrative processes also is ambiguous. Venezuela was assigned to the devolvement list, which departs from the impression conveyed in the USAID country paper. Evidence for this classification is supplied by John Powell, "Agrarian Reform or Agrarian Revolution in Venezuela?" in Arpad Von Lazar and B. Kauffman, *Reform and Revolution, Readings in Latin American Politics* (Boston: Allen & Bacon, 1969).

<sup>4</sup>In the scoring of Tables 4, 6, 7, and 9, only peasant benefits were counted. (Bureaucratic strengthening, for instance, though potentially harmful to peasants, was not considered negative be-

cause politics is not a zero-sum game.) Tables do not necessarily have the same N, since data in all cases could not be supplied from existing sources. Each incidence reported of improvement in peasant security, income, and/or political power was tallied as a benefit. Barring averages represent the total benefits reported as a percentage of total possible benefits; this latter number is three times the number of cases in the category, since security, income, and political power could have been enhanced in each case. In the few cases in the tables where regimes were classified under two categories (see fn. 11), the results were scored in each.

<sup>5</sup>Ralph Braibanti, "Introduction," and Hugh Tinker, "Structure of the British Imperial Heritage," in Ralph Braibanti, ed., *Asian Bureaucratic Systems in the British Imperial Tradition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1966).

<sup>6</sup>Fred W. Riggs, "Bureaucrats and Political Development: A Paradoxical View," in Joseph LaPalombara, ed., *Bureaucracy and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963) and his *Administration in Developing Countries: The Theory of Prismatic Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964).

civil service may use the program to advance its own economic or political position. Like any political action group, it is susceptible to corruption in direct ratio to the importance of its decisions.<sup>7</sup> Because land reform actions have important political consequences, a bureaucracy charged with carrying out the reforms can strengthen its relative position by the very fact of possessing instruments of decision making.<sup>8</sup> Yet it may be fairly invulnerable to reform from external sources because its reward system is internal rather than lateral.<sup>9</sup> In spite of these defects, a common practice among countries undertaking land reform, regardless of the sincerity of their purposes, has been to assign functional responsibilities to a central bureaucracy, with the social outcomes described above.

### Decentralization

The second administrative option for carrying out land reform has been to use several different bureaucratic systems simultaneously to carry out various aspects of the program, without attempting to change the bureaucracy itself. Decentralization shares the responsibility among different career services and thus generates an administrative plurality of interests. The social base of the administrators is more likely to be diversified than that of a single central bureaucracy and their performance is thus subject to at least some political manipulation by the local constituency. Decentralization has sometimes been achieved by straight delegation of functions from a national government to autonomous state or province units (as in the case of India and Pakistan; the units, in turn then usually adopted centralized administrative procedures); sometimes by creating special organs staffed by career civil servants on temporary duty (Italy); and sometimes by splitting up the functions among different specialized agencies and using various field offices of the central

or local governments (Yugoslavia, Ecuador, and Vietnam under Thieu).

From the peasant's point of view, the results of this somewhat more flexible, less self-contained administrative approach have been more satisfactory. Two-thirds of the countries taking this approach produced some improvement in tenure security (East, but not West, Pakistan, Yugoslavia, Italy, and Ecuador), and in two cases peasant income was probably increased as a result of the reform (again in East, but not West, Pakistan and in Yugoslavia). The Thieu regime in Vietnam may also succeed in improving tenure security and income. In all these cases, the bureaucracy tended to strengthen its political position through the exercise of new administrative authority, but decentralization at least reduced somewhat the concentration of new bureaucratic power. The existence of the competing bureaucracies engaged in a decentralized program may permit the individual citizen to manipulate them more than when dealing with a remote, unitary civil service. (See Table 2.)

### Devolvement of Authority

The third group of countries made less use of any professional bureaucracy, preferring to bypass it and assign permanent authority over one or more administrative aspects of land reform to local political leaders. The expectation was that local leaders would direct their loyalty toward their own constituents or to traditional groups rather than to superior hierarchy of officialdom. This devolvement of authority would relieve the bureaucracy of the need to engage in detailed fact-finding expeditions and of the responsibility for initiating local actions on behalf of the majority of tenants, who are less privileged small freeholders, or landless laborers, though this does not necessarily shield the bureaucracy from all local involvement.

A variety of approaches has served the purposes of devolvement. Korea, for example, followed village precedents and procedures in making land allocations, letting traditional leaders set the pace of reform. In Taiwan, using a procedure applied in Japan a few years before, newly elected representatives of landlords, tenants, and owner-farmers had to give initial approval to all proposed adjustments in ownership and classification of land. Iran, with limited administrative capabilities, used its central bureaucracy to issue official titles, but only on authorization from local landlord-tenant groups; even then, all boundaries had to be confirmed by adjoining land users and the testimony of village elders. Bolivia allowed individuals and peasant unions to file claims with the local agrarian judge, whose opinion was binding until reviewed by the central agrarian reform agency. Venezuela settled most of its land reform issues on the basis of petitions from local *syndicatos*. Mexico and Guatemala adopted pro-

<sup>7</sup> Joseph S. Nye, "Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis," *American Political Science Review*, LXI:2 June 1967.

<sup>8</sup> A bureaucracy's participation in important reforms automatically gives it superior access to information about land, the technology of land distribution, opportunity for corruption, the privilege of assigning benefits to potentially important individuals and institutions, and close access to political leaders concerned with land as a source of wealth and power. An indication of any of these consequences led to the classification of increased bureaucratic power resulting from the land reform used in Tables 1, 2, and 3. For a general discussion, see Milton J. Esman, "The Politics of Development Administration," in J. D. Montgomery and William Siffin, eds., *Approaches to Development, Politics, Administration, and Change* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).

<sup>9</sup> John D. Montgomery, "Sources of Bureaucratic Reform: A Typology of Power and Purpose," in Ralph Braibanti, ed., *Political and Administrative Development* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1969).

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TABLE 2. STATUS VARIABLES AND POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES OF LAND REFORM UNDER DECENTRALIZED PROCESSES

Country	Regime type <sup>o</sup>	Vulnerability index rank†	Improved tenure security	Improved peasant income	Increased peasant political power	Increased bureaucratic power
East Pakistan (1958-1961)	1	15	+	+	—	+
West Pakistan (1961)		13	—	—	—	+
Yugoslavia, 1919-1953	2	16	+	+	—	+
Italy, 1945-1970	3†	18	+	—	—	+
Ecuador, 1964-1966	1	10	+	—	—	+
Vietnam, 1967-1970	1	—	§	§	§	§
Six cases	Mixed	Mixed	4	2	0	6

<sup>o</sup> See Table 1.

† See Table 8.

‡ Supplied by author.

§ Undetermined as yet.

cedures whereby peasants initiated reform proposals, which various local land committees then passed along to national or regional authority for action. In the case of Mexico and Bolivia, this decision usually ratified revolutionary peasant programs which had already begun. Chile turned large private holdings over to government ownership, under the management of former tenants, with the provision that a formal election be conducted after five years to determine whether to convert the property to subdivided private holdings or to continue with the collective operation. In each of these situations, an important element of authority was officially transferred down to local levels.

Where devolvement took place (Bolivia, Venezuela, Iran, Mexico, Japan, Taiwan, North Vietnam, Korea, Chile, and Guatemala), the peasant farmers enjoyed clearer security rights as a result of land reform. They increased their political power in eight of the ten cases (Bolivia, Mexico, Venezuela, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Chile, and Guatemala), and their income in

eight (Bolivia, Iran, Venezuela, Mexico, Japan, Taiwan, Chile and Korea). In a few cases the operation was a success, but the doctor died: the attack on landlord power led to a counterrevolutionary coup in Guatemala after only two years. In other cases (Iran, for example), the reforms were abandoned or slowed because of political opposition. In North Vietnam, land redistribution was supplanted by collectivization systems on the community model. There is no evidence, however, that devolvement is inherently destabilizing; most regimes would undoubtedly consider it a potential source of support. (See Table 3.)

Any system of devolvement runs the risk of capture by prestigious local landlords or other notables, but the experience in these countries suggests that this possibility can be countered. Among the twenty-five countries studied, there was no significant landlord class at the time of the reform in two cases (Venezuela and Yugoslavia); in three others, most had left their holdings before land reform was undertaken (Algeria,

TABLE 3. STATUS VARIABLES AND POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOME OF LAND REFORM USING DEVOLVEMENT PROCESSES

Country	Type of regime <sup>o</sup>	Vulnerability index rank†	Improved tenure security	Improved peasant income	Increased peasant political power	Increased bureaucratic power
Bolivia, 1953-1970	2	2	+	+	+	—
Iran, 1962-1970	1-2	5	+	+	—	+?
Mexico, 1915-1942	2-3	4	+	+	+	—
Japan, 1946-1970	1-3		+	+	+	—
Taiwan, 1949-1970	1		+	+	+	—
North Vietnam, 1953-1956	2		+	?	?	—
South Korea, 1949-1970	1		+	+	+	—
Guatemala, 1952-1954	2	3	+	?	+	—
Venezuela, 1960-1970	1	12	+	+	+	—
Chile, 1965-1970	3	17	+	+	+	—
Ten cases	Mixed	Extremes	10	8	8	0

<sup>o</sup> See Table 1.

† See Table 8.

North Vietnam, and Thieu's Vietnam); in four, the class had already been weakened by internal revolution or military restraint (Bolivia, Mexico, Egypt, and Ecuador). In the latter countries, no significant threat of local takeover occurred, and neither the administrative decisions regarding land reform nor the outcomes were predetermined by local political forces.

In the majority of the cases studied, however, the landlords were still in possession of their property, and the government therefore had to consider whether and how to counter their influence in support of the reforms. Legislative and administrative controls were introduced in ten instances (India, Iran, Japan, Iraq, Chile, South Korea, East and West Pakistan, Taiwan, and Italy); yet in six other cases the landlords were not really weakened, except by the passage of time (Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil, Guatemala, Diem's Vietnam, and Colombia). It is significant that devolvement could succeed in all sixteen cases, regardless of whether the landlords had been weakened before land reform took place. As might be expected, centralized processes produced better social outputs when there was no landlord class to hamper the bureaucracy's activities, but devolvement was superior to other administrative procedures in either situation. (See Table 4.)

of the conservative local leadership. In Guatemala, peasant claims were reviewed by a local agrarian committee whose membership was kept sympathetic by the government. In Chile, the government expropriated the land quickly enough to reduce the economic power base of the landlords. Even in Iran, the bureaucracy could be used to offset the power and influence of local landlords. In some cases, political safeguards also protected the peasants. Local mobilization by political parties took place in Venezuela, Mexico, and Bolivia, and the last vestiges of opposition were politically eliminated in North Vietnam as the redistribution took place. Devolvement has not meant a lack of involvement on the part of the central governments. It has required a new posture of administrative and political resources deployed to encourage local popular initiatives. Where the local officials engaged in land reform activities are subject to reelection, recall, or subsequent review of their program decisions, devolvement can contribute to the development of local self-governing capabilities.<sup>10</sup>

In this survey of twenty-five countries, land reform succeeded in improving peasant security of tenure in only sixteen cases, peasant income in only eleven, and peasant political power in only nine. In nine cases,

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TABLE 4. EFFECT OF LANDLORDS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS ON LAND REFORM OUTCOMES

Strength of landlords	Administrative process	Total peasant benefits produced*	Total possible benefits	Batting averages	
Previously weakened (nine cases)	Centralized (2)	2	6	0.333	0.518
	Decentralized (3)	2	9	0.222	
	Devolved (4)	10	12	0.833	
Not previously weakened (sixteen cases)	Centralized (7)	2	21	0.095	0.625
	Decentralized (3)	2	9	0.222	
	Devolved (6)	16	18	0.888	

\* As summarized in Tables 1, 2, and 3. Gross benefits produced divided by total possible benefits (N times 3) gives batting average.

One method of protecting local officials engaged in land reform was to pit the national civil servants against local landlords. Japan, for example, provided legal and administrative prods to the local committees it established and used its bureaucratic resources to insure that the intended balance of village forces (five tenants, three landlords, and two owner-operators in each committee) was preserved. In Taiwan, the Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction made similar provisions and placed its technical resources at the disposition of peasant-dominated Farmer Associations. The land reform cadres in North Vietnam served as agents of the New Land Reform Committees. South Korean officials expressed the government's sponsorship of land reform during a period of demoralization

land reform conferred none of these benefits, while in fifteen cases it increased the bureaucracy's political power. The results take on a different complexion, however, when the intervening variable of administrative process is considered.

#### THE SALIENCE OF OTHER VARIABLES

The administrative systems used in these twenty-five land reforms do not appear to be a mere reflection of

<sup>10</sup> Voelkner and French consider local political participation one of several preconditions to successful land reform. Harold Voelkner and Jerome T. French, *A Dynamic Model for Land Reform Analysis and Public Policy Formulation* (Washington: AID, 1970, processed), Figure D.

other political or social circumstances. Neither the ideology of the governmental leaders nor the type of regime determines the decision to use centralized, decentralized, or devolved administrative systems in carrying out the program. Some conservative governments<sup>11</sup> which undertook land reform were prepared to use a process of devolvement (Taiwan and Korea, for example), while other governments, equally conservative, made use of various special or decentralized bureaucracies (Ecuador and Pakistan). Still others preferred to use central ministerial bureaucracies (Vietnam under Diem, Colombia, and the Philippines).

tral ministries. Italy followed a special decentralized approach. Chile devolved decision-making responsibility on tenant committees.

All three of the conventional classifications of regime types represented in the sample made use of the various administrative systems of land reform with no apparent discrimination on constitutional grounds. Among the twelve regimes conventionally classified as authoritarian, three used a centralized pattern of administration and achieved predictably poor results; four decentralized the operation, with only marginal benefits accruing to the peasants; while five were able

TABLE 5. EFFECTS OF LAND REFORM IN TWENTY-FIVE CASES

Administrative Process	Peasants increased income %	Peasants increased political power %	Peasants increased tenure security %	Bureaucrats increased political power %
Centralized	11	11	22	100
Decentralized	33.3	0	66.6	100
Devolved	80	80	100	10

trum which reflected democratic and revolutionary about equal among conservative,

TABLE 6. REGIME TYPE, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS, AND OUTCOME

Type of regime	Administrative process	Total peasant benefits	Batting average
Conservative (11 cases)	Centralized (3)	1	0.111
	Decentralized (3)	2+	0.222
	Devolved (5)	14	0.955
Radical-revolutionary (11 cases)	Centralized (5)	3	0.200
	Decentralized (1)	2	0.666
	Devolved (5)	11	0.733
Liberal (7 cases)	Centralized (3)	0	0
	Decentralized (1)	0	0
	Devolved (3)	9	1.000

Regimes at the opposite end of the spectrum which reflected democratic and revolutionary ideologies also employed all three administrative systems: Guatemala, North Vietnam, and Bolivia used devolvement; Yugoslavia and Indonesia decentralized the operation; and Iraq, Algeria, and the UAR followed conventional processes of bureaucratic centralization. "Middle-class modernizing" or liberal regimes, whose land reforms have had the least successes in terms of equity outcomes, also made use of all three forms of administration. Most of the Indian states used their own cen-

tral authority and produce favorable results for the peasants.

There were also eleven radical or revolutionary regimes in the study, of which five used the central bureaucracy with poor results. One decentralized and conferred noticeable peasant benefits in the process. Five devolved at least some of these responsibilities and achieved good results. Among the seven liberal regimes, three centralized the operation, one decentralized it with negligible effect on peasant welfare, and three devolved responsibilities with excellent results. The prospects for devolvement were about equal among conservative, radical-revolutionary, and liberal regimes—about half in each case—but when devolvement does take place, the outcomes are better in the liberal regimes. (See Table 6.) This fact may justify

<sup>11</sup> To reduce the possibility of bias in regime classification, a threefold classification was used from Princeton Lyman and Jerome French, *Political Results and Land Reform* (Washington: AID, June 1970). Two of their subcategories have been collapsed into their major classes.

the somewhat greater effort needed in these regimes to get land reform started. It does provide grounds, however, for revising the pessimistic views prevailing among political scientists regarding the prospects of land reform in democratic regimes.

Characteristics of political leadership might prove a more powerful predictor of administrative choice and outcome than regimes types, but these characteristics are difficult to classify systematically. One approach would be to classify the land reform programs according to the reasons for their adoption. On this basis, some conclusions might be drawn regarding the seriousness of purpose on the part of the leadership, assuming that they understood the implications of their choice. But this analysis, too, shows that administration is an independent variable.

inclined to devolve responsibilities to local authorities than were other regimes. Whether this decision was because they found it easier or judged it more efficacious cannot be determined from the data. Such regimes on the whole provided more benefits to their peasantries, though this may be a consequence more of the administrative means employed than of the regime's political strategy (means and strategy are presumably related, however). There are not enough data to assess the outcome of land reform motivated by radical ideological objectives. What data exist suggest that the means employed in land reform affect outcomes more profoundly than the reasons for which it is undertaken. (See Table 7.)

Economic conditions prior to land reform may indicate the urgency of government action. In this sam-

TABLE 7. REASONS FOR ADOPTING LAND REFORM, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS, AND OUTCOMES

Reason	Administrative process	Total peasant benefits	Batting average
Develop support (13 cases)	Centralized (4)	2	0.166
	Decentralized (5)	4	0.200
	Devolved (4)	11	0.916
Forestall revolution (3 cases)	Centralized (2)	1	0.166
	Decentralized (0)		
	Devolved (1)	3	1.000
Weaken opposition (4 cases)	Centralized (0)	0	0
	Decentralized (1)	8	0.888
	Devolved (3)		

Proponents of land reform offer four major political justifications for action. The first reason is to develop rural political support for a faltering or newly established regime or party (conditions which led to programs of the Thieu government in Vietnam and in Mexico, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Bolivia, Ecuador, Yugoslavia, and Iraq). The second is to anticipate or forestall possible revolution (the rationale given in the Philippines, Taiwan, and South Vietnam under Diem). The third reason is to eliminate or weaken political opposition, whether, as in Iran, to counterbalance landlords whose power the Shah distrusted, or, as in Japan, South Korea, and Italy, to outmaneuver a communist opposition. The final reason is ideological purity and consistency (Indonesia, Algeria, and North Vietnam, for instance, undertook land reforms as part of a larger revolution). None of these reasons gives a complete explanation. If undertaken seriously, land reform is a major political venture. Thus, it relates in most cases to other, more obscure, characteristics of political leadership.

In the cases studied, regimes that were using land reform to weaken their political opposition were more

ple, they also predicted to some extent the administrative choices involved in land reforms and hence the social outputs. One index of urgency is the extent of inequality of land distribution; another is the proportion of the labor force employed in agriculture. Presumably, when both indicators are high, a nation is vulnerable to serious rural unrest. In order to test the relationships in this hypothesis, eighteen of the countries examined (no adequate data were available for the other seven) were ranked in order of their presumed vulnerability to agrarian unrest. The vulnerability index was measured by the extent of cumulative inequality of land ownership (Gini index), plus the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture (see Table 8), after both raw figures were expressed in standard scores to reduce distortions.

Of the six most vulnerable countries on the scale, four chose the route of devolvement. Yugoslavia, at the bottom of the vulnerability ranking, used decentralized instruments, while the Philippines, the penultimate, chose centralization. And at the middle levels of vulnerability, the options seemed open. No clear pattern emerges except the familiar one of scattered

TABLE 8. LAND DISTRIBUTION AND AGRICULTURAL WORK FORCE AS INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO AGRARIAN UNREST

Country	1 Gini index of inequality of land ownership in standard score	2 Proportion of labor force in agriculture in standard score	3 Vulnerability index*	4 Rank order
Iraq	0.761 (1958)	1.349 (1950)	2.110	1
Bolivia	1.114 (1950)	0.750 (1950)	1.864	2
Guatemala	0.630 (1950)	0.484 (1950)	1.114	3
Mexico	1.251 (1930)†	-0.181 (1958)	1.070	4
Iran	-0.672 (1960)†	1.282 (1953)	0.610	5
Brazil	0.488 (1950)	0.018 (1950)	0.506	6
South Vietnam	-0.542 (1935)	0.950†	0.408	7
Colombia	0.562 (1954)	-0.381 (1951)	0.181	8
Ecuador	0.655 (1954)	-0.514 (1961)	0.141	9
UAR	-0.114 (1949)	0.218 (1947)	0.104	10
India	-0.796 (1955)	0.684 (1961)	-0.112	11
Venezuela	0.934 (1956)	-1.378 (1950)	-0.444	12
West Pakistan	-0.921 (1960)	0.285 (1955)§	-0.636	13
Chile	1.114 (1936)	-2.044 (1952)	-0.930	14
East Pakistan	-1.541 (1960)	0.285§	-1.256	15
Italy	0.803 (1946)	-2.110 (1960)	-1.307	16
Philippines	-1.206 (1948)	-0.115 (1959)	-1.321	17
Yugoslavia	-1.994 (1950)	0.418 (1953)	-1.576	18

Source: Bruce Russett *et al.*, *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), pp. 239-240 and 177-178, and Bruce Russett, "Inequality and Instability: The Relation of Land Tenure to Politics," in *World Politics*, No. 3, April 1964. These indices are converted to standard scores.

\* Column 1 plus column 2.

† Estimated from country studies.

‡ Estimated from S. P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), Table 6.2, 382.

§ Figure undifferentiated between East and West Pakistan.

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TABLE 9. VULNERABILITY TO UNREST, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS, AND OUTCOME

Vulnerability	Administrative process	Total peasant benefits	Batting average
Most vulnerable (6 cases)	Centralized 2	0	0
	Decentralized 0	0	0
	Devolved 4	10	0.833
Moderately vul- nerable (6 cases)	Centralized 4	3	0.250
	Decentralized 1	0	0
	Devolved 1	3	1.000
Least vul- nerable (6 cases)	Centralized 1	0	0
	Decentralized 4	4	0.333
	Devolved 1	3	1.000

administrative choices with predictable social outcomes (see Table 9). The most vulnerable countries chose devolvement in four of the six cases, as compared with only one of the six least vulnerable and one of the middle group, again with the expected results. It may be significant that so many of the most vulnerable countries chose to devolve land reform operations. Unfortunately, none of the available evidence explains this relationship. It is not explained by regime types or the political reasons given for undertaking land reforms, which seem randomly distributed

among our three vulnerability classes. Vulnerability to rural unrest on the basis of land tenure patterns may help explain why political leaders in these situations chose to involve local leaders in the administration of land reform. It is more significant that the administrative device they chose to use to bring about such involvement is a better predictor of social outcomes than mere vulnerability to rural unrest.

Another possibility is that some kind of political will to reform explains the successful outcome of such programs. Political will, however, can only be mea-

sured in terms of actual effort.<sup>12</sup> Hung-chao Tai has made an effort to segregate countries according to the "willingness and readiness of the political élite to mobilize all available resources to carry out a reform program," implying a definition of political will which bears a relation to the process variable suggested here.<sup>13</sup>

It is also possible that the choice of process is related to preexisting administrative traditions or preferences. The only consistent effort to classify countries as centralized versus local in administrative tradition fails to produce satisfactory predictions of the patterns these countries actually used in administering their land reforms. Adelman and Morris<sup>14</sup> indicate that seven of the countries in this study had highly centralized administrative traditions. Four of them used centralized means in carrying out land reform (Algeria, Iraq, UAR, and Indonesia), but two devolved responsibility (Iran and Guatemala) and one (Pakistan) used decentralized techniques. The same authorities report that eight of the countries on the list had decentralized or local governmental units which had, or were gaining, significant political power; of these, five devolved land reform authority (Bolivia, Chile, Japan, Venezuela, and Mexico), and three treated the operation as a central responsibility (Brazil, Colombia, and the Philippines). Unfortunately, this index does not separate local self-government tradition from decentralized administration. India, for example, is also listed in the second (local) category, but its constitution automatically decentralized land reform operations. Thus, India relied on state governments which were themselves actually strongly centralized administrative systems. In the end, therefore, land reform in the Indian states was a strongly centralized operation, although Adelman and Morris correctly list India among the countries with a growing potential in local self-government. What is needed to test this precondition is a new index of local self-government tradition.

## CONCLUSIONS

A few suggestions can be made for policy makers dealing with land reforms and other problems of development administration, and for further research on the social outputs of administrative systems.

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<sup>12</sup> John D. Montgomery and Stephen A. Marglin, "Measuring the Extent of Governmental Effort in Agriculture: An Approach to the 'Will to Develop,'" in David Hapgood, ed., *Politics for Promoting Agricultural Development* (Cambridge: Center for International Studies, MIT, 1965) and *Indian Administration Review*, Jan./March, 1969.

<sup>13</sup> Hung-chao Tai, *Land Reform in the Developing Countries: Tenure Defects and Political Responses* (Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, Harvard, 1967, processed.)

<sup>14</sup> Irma Adelman and Cynthia Morris, *Society, Politics and Economic Development, A Quantitative Approach* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), p. 59.

The first policy question is whether to undertake land reform at all. Many agricultural experts point out that reforms in land ownership alone are unlikely to produce increases in productivity. The findings of this study suggest that with devolvement, land reform is more likely to increase peasant income than technical aid and credit institutions in combination (agrarian reform). Extensive and effective programs of agrarian reform occurred in sixteen of the land reform cases covered here (Philippines, UAR, Algeria, Brazil, Colombia, Indian states, East and West Pakistan, Yugoslavia, Italy, Vietnam in 1967, Iran, Venezuela, Japan, Taiwan, and Chile). Of these sixteen cases, only eight resulted in improved peasant income—not an impressive showing for the effort involved. More significantly, in those countries where substantial agrarian reform took place, the peasant income increased in only one of the six countries that used centralized means of conducting land reform, and in only two of the five decentralized cases, but in all of the five devolved cases. Again among countries using devolved processes of achieving land reform, there were eight in which peasant income definitely improved, although only five of the countries had introduced significant agrarian programs. Two of the countries showed an increase in peasant income without substantial agrarian reform, and both had implemented land reform through development.

If the objective is greater distributive justice through income increases among small farmers, rather than general agricultural productivity increases, programs of devolved land reform show a better record than programs of new agrarian services. There is no reason to assume that both goals could not be served if both types of programs—devolved land reform and new services and technical supports to agriculture—were undertaken.

A second question is whether local institutions have the capacity to assume the sustained responsibilities represented by land reform operations. No clear answer appears from the data presented, but speculation as to the reasons for success of devolvement may suggest an indirect answer. Devolvement seems to work because of a combination of certain factors that come with public participation in program implementation: (a) easier access to knowledge, (b) more powerful motivation, (c) better communication, and (d) increased community solidarity.

Administratively, the making of decisions about land reform is an easier process when the detailed knowledge necessary for action is already available to decision makers, and extensive documentation, information standardization, and data processing do not have to be introduced in order to act. The immediate purposes of land reform in the Third World do not require the vast documentation used to accomplish title transfers in the West, since there land matters are already public information carried about in the heads of

landlords, tenants, and village notables in the minutest detail. When the Diem government tried to carry out a land reform program that would conform to Western standards in documentation and geodetic technology, it succeeded in expropriating about 453,00 hectares of rice land and purchasing about 230,000 hectares of former French lands from 2,000 large landowners and 450 Frenchmen in 1954, but it could redistribute only about a third of these to small farmers. Still more significantly what they could not distribute could easily be managed under rental agreements with the villages, which in turn arranged for the farming of small plots.<sup>15</sup> The bureaucratic system used by the Diem administration "actually prevented most provincial and district officials from developing a sound understanding of rural conditions." This is not a condition exclusive to Vietnam. Bureaucratic performance there was "no worse than those of some other Southeast Asian states emerging from colonialism."<sup>16</sup> The principles of work simplification call for the assignment of administrative decisions to those who have access to information necessary to make them, when possible. Devolvement to local authority simply reduces the number of people who have to gain access to local knowledge and postpones the need for converting this information into Western style standards of legal and administrative detail. In terms of social justice, speed is more important than elegance for successful land reform.

A second factor explaining the successful outcome of devolvement is associated with the motivation or volition of the respective administrative actors involved. If, as Weber argues, a bureaucracy is characteristically means-oriented, it is the end result that motivates the villagers who want access to the promised lands. No doubt an administrative rewards system can be designed to convert a centralized bureaucracy into an instrument of change, although organizational interests plus the tradition of neutrality make it difficult to commit bureaucracies to novel programs involving social problems.<sup>17</sup> Such reforms are not easily accomplished. The mechanics of administrative reorganization are not well enough understood to insure that any given overhaul will necessarily bring about desired changes in motivation.

Communicating agricultural goals and techniques to farmers is a task difficult to undertake through the use of central bureaucracies, especially when the desired citizen responses involve the expenditure of their per-

sonal capital and labor. A natural suspicion exists between farmers and civil servants in many parts of the world, where government agents of all kinds are regarded as the equivalent of policemen and tax collectors rather than as servants of the people. For their part, professional civil servants tend to regard farmers as indolent, tradition-ridden amateurs, a perception which encourages them to resort to the very tactics that confirms the popular suspicions of bureaucrats.

A fourth range of speculations concerning the outcomes of devolvement arises from the psychological principle that participation in a government program improves both public understanding of its purposes and loyalty to its processes. Participation reinforces the sense of citizen efficacy. It also encourages individuals to make better use of the resources made available by the government. Devolvement of land reform operations thus gives substance to local government, converting its activities from structural formalities to common efforts at community improvement. The expected result is a spiraling citizen interest, and presumably a greater commitment to the political process by which government enters into developmental activities.<sup>18</sup>

A more precise analysis of these relationships would serve little purpose here. It would be possible to reconstruct the circumstances under which the land reforms we have reviewed above took place to ascertain the extent to which these considerations were present. Even in the absence of such knowledge, however, decisions regarding the administration of a land reform can take place independently of other objectively definable political circumstances, and a fairly wide range of choice lies open to development planners.

The research issues raised by this study begin with the evidence available to examine these questions further. The social output indicators used here are crude and impressionistic. Although they represent composite views developed in standardized official reports, they lack the precision and richness that would be possible if such second-stage consequences of land reform were made the subject of systematic inquiry. The relationships established here could be more rigorously explored, using such powerful tools as multivariate analysis, if the frequency, intensity, and duration of the equity outputs were known. Much needs to be known as well about the details of a system of devolvement used in various cases, since it is likely that the four administrative functions examined are not equally susceptible to devolvement or equally important influences on the social outcome. There may also be significant variations in the effectiveness of different organizational devices used for devolvement under various circumstances. Finally, it would be helpful to

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<sup>15</sup> Macdonald Salter, "Land Reform in South Vietnam," *Asian Survey*, 10:8 (August 1970), pp. 726-727.

<sup>16</sup> John Donnell, "Expanding Political Participation—The Long Haul from Villagism to Nationalism," *Asian Survey*, 10:8 (August 1970), p. 92.

<sup>17</sup> Herbert Kaufman, "Administrative Decentralization and Political Power," *Public Administration Review*, 1969: 1, p. 8.

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<sup>18</sup> See John D. Montgomery, "Land Reform as a Means to Political Development in Vietnam," *Orbis*, XII:1 Spring 1968. The article gives an empirical analysis of the political effects and requirements of land reform in that country.

know more about the political processes by which the administrative systems were chosen in the twenty-five countries studied. Was there any recognition of their respective social benefit potential? Were administrative alternatives proposed or considered? Did any specific administrative traditions serve as preconditions to the choice of devolvement?

It would be more useful to extend these findings regarding land reforms to other social and developmental programs to see whether they also fare better using various forms of devolvement.<sup>10</sup> A basic hypothesis might be that interaction between administrative style and administrative effectiveness is closest in programs where success depends upon specific voluntary cooperative behavior of citizens. Developmental programs requiring little action by citizens are obviously easier to manage by administrative action than those depending on sustained or repeated citizen commitment. Counterparts to devolved land reform operations may well

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<sup>10</sup> Significant comparative studies relating organization to environment have already been undertaken in industry. An excellent example is Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, *Organization and Environment, Managing Differentiation and Integration* (Boston: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1967).

exist in other developing sectors, such as industrialization, the modernization of educational opportunities, and the improvement of public health standards. Water use regulation in tertiary irrigation systems would appear to be an obvious candidate for routine, sustained reliance upon local initiatives, coordinated on the appropriate regional basis. Devolvement of educational and service programs in family planning might also produce greater administrative effectiveness in dealing with problems of custom and motivation.

Such arguments ultimately rest on grounds of rational efficiency or improved bureaucratic routines, or even on issues of competitive organizational politics, rather than on social equity consequences. The land reform example might be more suitably applied in other programs designed to confer public benefits on a specific client group, especially those involving the opportunity for self-advancement, such as education, local resource development, or environmental improvement. As in the case of land reform, the problem would be to find how various reciprocal and reinforcing functions and responsibilities may be divided among different bureaucratic and client groups to maximize designated social outputs of a program.