

PN-AAD-906

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SPRING REVIEW

LAND REFORM

JUNE 2-4, 1970

**POLITICAL DIMENSIONS
OF LAND REFORM**

JUNE 1970

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SPRING REVIEW OF LAND REFORM

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS

of

LAND REFORM

by

Samuel P. Huntington
Harvard University

June, 1970

Analytical Papers represent the views of their authors and are not generally intended as statements of policy of either A.I.D. or the author's parent institution.

SR/LR/A-4

Introductory Note

The first part of this paper relates land reform to the maintenance of political order in developing countries. It focuses on the role of the peasantry. The author argues that in the absence of land reform they may be the key to revolution -- or with land reform -- the key to stability. The second part of the paper discusses the politics of land reform. The paper is excerpted from "Political Order in Changing Societies," by Samuel P. Huntington, chapters entitled "Revolution and Political Order" and "Reform and Political Change." Reprinted by permission of Yale University Press, copyright (C) 1968 by Yale University. The author is the Frank G. Thomson Professor of Government at Harvard University and a Faculty Member of the Center for International Affairs, Harvard. He has published five books and numerous articles.

I

Peasants and Revolution

The middle-class intelligentsia is revolutionary, but it cannot make a revolution on its own. That requires the active participation of rural groups (which)... become the **critical factor** determining the stability or fragility of the government. If the countryside supports the government, the government has the potential to isolate and contain the urban opposition. Given the proclivity of the dominant urban groups, any government, even one which follows a government overthrown by those groups, must find sources of support in the countryside if it is to avoid the fate of its predecessor. In South Vietnam, for instance, after the Diem regime was overthrown by the urban opposition of students, monks, and military officers, elements of these groups opposed each of the succeeding regimes. Deprived of support from the countryside by the Viet Cong, the successor regimes could find few stable sources of support in the quagmire of urban politics.

The countryside thus plays the crucial "swing" role in modernizing politics. The nature of the Green Uprising, the way in which the peasants are incorporated into the political system, shapes the subsequent course of political development. If the countryside supports the political system and the government, the system itself is secure against revolution and the government has some hope of making itself secure against rebellion. If the countryside is in opposition, both system and government are in danger of overthrow.

The peasantry may thus play either a highly conservative role or a highly revolutionary one. Both images of the peasantry have been prevalent. On the one hand, the peasantry has often been held to be an extremely traditional conservative force, resistant to change, loyal to church and to throne, hostile toward the city, involved with family and village, suspicious of, and at times, hostile to even those agents of change, such as doctors, teachers, agronomists, who come to the village solely and

directly to improve the peasants' lot. Reports of the murder of such agents by suspicious and superstitious peasants are found in virtually all modernizing areas.

This image of a highly conservative peasantry coexists with a more recent one of the peasantry as a force for revolution. Each of the major revolutions in Western, as well as non-Western societies, was in large part a peasant revolution. This was true in France and in Russia as it was in China.

If there is no revolution without the peasantry, the key question then becomes: What turns peasants into revolutionaries? If the conditions which make for peasant revolt can be ameliorated by reforms rather than exacerbated by them, a possibility exists for more or less peaceful social change rather than for violent upheaval. Clearly, in traditional societies, the peasants are generally a static conservative force, wedded to the status quo.

The Impact of Modernization

Modernization typically has two significant impacts upon the peasant. Its initial impact is to worsen the objective conditions of peasant work and welfare. In the traditional society land is often owned and farmed communally either by the village or by the extended family. Modernization -- and particularly the impact of Western concepts of land ownership -- undermines this system. As in southern Italy and the Middle East the nuclear family replaces the extended family: the plots which collectively had been a viable economic unit are replaced by small and often scattered individual lots which are barely sufficient to support a family and which greatly extend the risks that the family may suffer total economic catastrophe.

The impoverishing effect that modernization has upon the peasant would not be politically significant if it were not also for the elevating effect it eventually has upon his aspirations. The time lag between the one and the other may be substantial, in some cases, indeed, amounting to several centuries. In due course, however, the enlightenment of the cities becomes available in the countryside. The barriers to communication and transportation are broken down; roads, salesmen, and teachers reach the villages. The peasant's dissatisfaction stems from the realization that his material hardships and sufferings are much worse than those of other groups in society and that they are not inevitable.

The concern of the peasants with their immediate economic and social conditions does not distinguish them significantly from the industrial workers of the cities except insofar as the peasants are normally worse off than the workers. The common interest of capitalist and worker in a

larger economic product does not exist between landlord and peasant. The relationship of social structure to economic development in the countryside reverses that in the city. In industrial society, a more equitable distribution of income is the result of economic growth; in agrarian society, a more equitable distribution of ownership is the prerequisite to economic growth. It is precisely for this reason that modernizing countries find it so much more difficult to increase agricultural output than to increase industrial output, and it is precisely for this reason that the tensions of the countryside are potentially so much more revolutionary than those of the city. The industrial worker cannot secure personal ownership or control of the means of production; this, however, is precisely the goal of the peasant. The basic factor of production is land; the supply of land is limited if not fixed; the landlord loses what the peasant acquires. Thus the peasant, unlike the industrial worker, has no alternative but to attack the existing system of ownership and control. Land reform, consequently, does not mean just an increase in the economic well-being of the peasant. It involves also a fundamental redistribution of power and status, a reordering of the basic social relationships which had previously existed between landlord and peasant. The industrial worker participates in the creation of an entirely new set of economic and social relationships which had not previously existed in the society. Peasant and landlord, however, coexist in the traditional society, and the destruction or transformation of their existing social, economic, and political relationship (which may be of centuries' standing) is the essence of change in the agrarian order.

The cost of economic improvement for the peasant in the countryside is thus far greater than the cost of economic improvement for his counterpart in the city. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that the more active and intelligent individuals in the countryside move to the city. They are driven there by the comparative advantages of the opportunities for economic and social mobility in the city versus the rigidities of the class structure in the countryside. The resulting rapid urbanization leads to social dislocation and political instability in the cities. These, however, are minor social and political ills compared to what would result in the countryside in the absence of such urbanization. Urban migration is, in some measure, a substitute for rural revolution. Hence contrary to common belief, the susceptibility of a country to revolution may vary inversely with its rate of urbanization.

In addition, no recognized and accepted means exist through which the peasant can advance his claims. The right of labor to organize is accepted in most countries; the rights of peasants to organize are much more dubious. In this respect, the position of peasants in the modernizing countries of Asia and Latin America in the latter half of the twentieth century is not too different from the position of the industrial worker in Europe and North America in the first half of the nineteenth century. Any form of collective action tends to be viewed as inherently revolutionary by the powers that be.

The Revolutionary Alliance

The urban middle-class intelligentsia is the most constantly revolutionary group in modernizing societies. But to produce a revolution, the intelligentsia must have allies. One potential source is the lumpen-proletariat in the cities, which is for many years not a very revolutionary group. Its revolutionary proclivities are, however, likely to increase, and hence at some point in most modernizing countries the alliance of the cidade universitaria and the favela, of the students and slumdwellers, may pose a major challenge to political stability. The conditions for the success of this revolutionary combination are, however, in some measure the conditions for its failure. If the society remains primarily agricultural, the intelligentsia and urban poor may be able to overthrow the government, but they cannot destroy the basic social structure of the society since their action is limited to the urban area. They would still have to add the peasants to their alliance to effect a fundamental change in social structure. On the other hand, if urbanization has reached the point where much of the population is concentrated in one or a few large cities, urban revolutionary action might be able to wreak a fundamental transformation of the society.

The rarity of revolution is in large part due to the difficulties of parallel action by intelligentsia and peasants. The gap between city and countryside is the crux of politics in modernizing societies. The difficulties which governments have in bridging this gap are almost matched by the difficulties which revolutionaries have in bridging it.

The goals of peasants and intelligentsia are also different and often conflicting. Peasants' demands tend to be concrete but also redistributive, and it is the latter quality which makes peasants into revolutionaries. The demands of the intelligentsia, in contrast, tend to be abstract and openended; both qualities make revolutionaries out of intellectuals. The substantive concerns of the two groups often differ significantly. The urban intelligentsia is usually more concerned with political rights and goals than with economic ones. The peasantry, in contrast, is at least initially concerned primarily with the material conditions of land tenure, taxes, and prices.

Efforts by intellectuals to arouse peasants almost invariably fail unless the social and economic conditions of the peasantry are such as to give them concrete motives for revolt. The intelligentsia can ally themselves with a revolutionary peasantry but they cannot create a revolutionary peasantry.

The differences in background, perspective, and purpose between intelligentsia and peasants render revolution unlikely if not impossible in the absence of some additional common cause produced by an additional catalyst.

The Peasantry: Reform as a Substitute

Someone once said that the glory of the British Navy was that its men never mutinied, or at least hardly ever mutinied, except for higher pay. Much the same can be said of peasants. They become revolutionary when their conditions of land ownership, tenancy, labor, taxes, and prices become in their eyes unbearable. Throughout history peasant revolts and jacqueries have typically aimed at the elimination of specific evils or abuses. In Russia as well as elsewhere they were almost invariably directed at the local landlords and officials, not at the authority of tsar or church nor at the overall structure of the political or social systems. In many instances, the economic conditions of the peasantry drastically declined shortly before the outbreak of the revolution. The unrest of the 1780s in rural France, Palmer observes, "was due not merely to poverty but to a sense of pauperization."³⁴ The economic depression of 1789 aggravated these conditions, and the price of bread reached its highest point in a hundred years. These material sufferings combined with the political opportunity opened by the calling of the Estates General furnished the fuel and the draft for the peasant explosion. Peasant action in all the great revolutions was directed primarily to the prompt, direct, and, if necessary, violent rectification of the immediate material conditions which had become intolerable. Revolutionary intellectuals proclaim the death of the old order and the birth of a new society; revolutionary peasants kill the tax collector and seize the land.

33. Eugene B. Mihaly and Joan M. Nelson, "Political Development and U.S. Economic Assistance" (unpublished paper, 1966), p. 8.

34. Palmer, *1*, 482.

The material basis of peasant dissatisfaction is of crucial importance in providing an alternative to revolution. No government can hope to satisfy the demands of rioting students. But a government can, if it is so minded, significantly affect the conditions in the countryside so as to reduce the propensity of peasants to revolt. While reforms may be the catalyst of revolution in the cities, they may be a substitute for revolution in the countryside.

The material sources of peasant unrest help to explain the conflicting images of peasant behavior. The urban middle-class intellectual has aspirations which can never be realized and he hence exists in a state of permanent volatility. There is no mistaking his role. The peasantry, on the other hand, may be the bulwark of the status quo or the shock troops of revolution. Which role the peasant plays is determined by the extent to which the existing system meets his immediate economic and material needs as he sees them. These needs normally focus on land tenure and tenancy, taxes, and prices. Where the conditions of land-ownership are equitable and provide a viable living for the peasant, revolution is unlikely. Where they are inequitable and where the peasant lives in poverty and suffering, revolution is likely, if not inevitable, unless the government takes prompt measures to remedy these conditions. No social group is more conservative than a landowning peasantry, and none is more revolutionary than a peasantry which owns too little land or pays too high a rental. The stability of government in modernizing countries is thus, in some measure, dependent upon its ability to promote reform in the countryside.³⁵

Intellectuals are alienated; peasants are dissatisfied. The goals of intellectuals, consequently, tend to be diffuse and utopian; those

35. The phrases "land reform" and "agrarian reform" can be distinguished by "what" and "how." In terms of substance or "what," the phrase "land reform" will be used to refer to the redistribution of land ownership and hence of income from land. Agrarian reform refers to improvements in farming techniques, farm equipment, fertilizers, soil conservation, crop rotation, irrigation, and marketing which have the effect of increasing agricultural productivity and efficiency. The principal focus here will be on land reform, since it is most directly related to political stability. Agrarian reform without land reform, indeed, may increase economic productivity and rural instability. Land reform without agrarian reform may increase political stability and decrease agricultural production. In terms of "how," the phrase "land reform" when used without other qualification will mean changes in land tenure brought about by methods short of revolution. Since all revolutions also produce changes in land tenure, these latter will be referred to as "land reform by revolution" to distinguish them from land reform through more peaceful means.

of peasants concrete and redistributive. This latter characteristic makes peasants potential revolutionaries: the landlord must be dispossessed if the peasant is to be benefited. The situation is a zero-sum conflict; what one loses the other gains. On the other hand, the fact that peasant goals are concrete means that if the government is strong enough to compel some redistribution of land, such action will immunize the peasant against revolution. Material concessions to the middle-class intellectual foster resentment and guilt feelings; material concessions to peasants create satisfaction. Land reform carried out by revolution or by other means thus turns the peasantry from a potential source of revolution into a fundamentally conservative social force.

Land reform in Japan after World War II inured Japanese peasants to the appeals of socialism and made them the strongest and most loyal supporters of the conservative parties. In Korea the American-sponsored distribution of formerly Japanese lands in 1947 and 1948 "did much to reduce rural instability, undermine Communist influence, actual or potential, among the peasants, increase their cooperation with the election process, and arouse expectation, later fulfilled, that Korean landlord-held lands would be disposed of similarly." In India the immediate post-independence land reforms by the Congress Party made "the land owners and landed peasants seem more likely to play a role akin to their post-revolutionary French than to their Russian or Chinese counterparts, providing a broad base of small proprietors who have a vested interest in the present system rather than a source for exploitation for rapid industrialization." In Mexico the land reforms following the Revolution were a major source of the political stability which prevailed in that country after the 1930s. In Bolivia the land reforms carried out after 1952 made the peasants into a fundamentally conservative force supporting the government in its struggles with revolutionary groups. "The reform," as one study noted, "despite its initial revolutionary excesses, has not tended to promote the Communization of the country. It appears rather that the peasantry, whose possession of land now gives them a stake in the prosperity and stability of the state, serves as a check on the more radically-minded workers." On occasion the Bolivian government mobilized armed peasants to suppress urban uprisings and violence. In Venezuela as in Mexico and Bolivia land reform made the political climate "more conservative" and increased "the po-

litical influence of a basically conservative sector of the population." 36

That land reform could have this conservatizing effect was foreseen by Lenin in his comments on the changes which Stolypin attempted to make in Russian land tenure between 1906 and 1911. Stolypin's goal was to reduce the role of the peasant commune or *mir*, to promote individual land ownership, and to bring into existence a class of satisfied peasant proprietors who would provide a stable source of support for the monarchy. "Individual ownership," Stolypin argued, ". . . is the guaranty of order, because the small proprietor is the basis on which stable conditions in the state can rest." 37 Lenin directly challenged those revolutionaries who argued that these reforms would be meaningless. The Stolypin Constitution and the Stolypin agrarian policy, he declared in 1908,

mark a new phase in the breakdown of the old semi-feudal system of tsarism, a new movement toward its transformation into a middle-class monarchy. . . . If this should continue for very long periods of time . . . it might force us to renounce any agrarian program at all. It would be empty and stupid democratic phrase-mongering to say that the success of such a policy in Russia is "impossible." It is possible! If Stolypin's policy is continued . . . then the agrarian structure of Russia will become completely bourgeois, the stronger peasants will acquire almost all the allotments of land, agriculture will become capitalistic, and any "solution" of the agrarian problem—radical or otherwise—will become impossible under capitalism.

Lenin had good reason to be worried. Between 1907 and 1914, as a result of the Stolypin reforms, some 2,000,000 peasants with-

36. For these quotations, see respectively, Henderson, pp. 156-57; Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, "Toward Political Stability in Underdeveloped Countries: The Case of India," *Public Policy* (Cambridge, Graduate School of Public Administration, 1959), 9, 166; Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Agrarian Reform in Latin America* (London, Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 14; Charles J. Erasmus, "A Comparative Study of Agrarian Reform in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Mexico," in Dwight B. Heath, Charles J. Erasmus, Hans C. Buechler, *Land Reform and Social Revolution in Bolivia* (unpublished manuscript, University of Wisconsin, Land Tenure Center, 1966), pp. 708-09.

37. Stolypin, quoted in William Henry Chamberlin, "The Ordeal of the Russian Peasantry," *Russian Review*, 14 (October 1955), 297.

drew from the *mir* and became individual proprietors. By 1916, 6,200,000 families, out of about 16,000,000 eligible families had applied for separation; in 1915 about half the peasants in European Russia had a hereditary tenure in land. Lenin, as Bertram Wolfe observes, "saw the matter as a race with time between Stolypin's reforms, and the next upheaval. Should an upheaval be postponed for a couple of decades, the new land measures would so transform the countryside that it would no longer be a revolutionary force. . . . 'I do not expect to live to see the revolution,' said Lenin several times toward the close of the Stolypin period."³⁸ That this expectation turned out to be incorrect was in some measure due to the assassin's bullet which felled Stolypin in September 1911.

Land reform, it would appear, thus has a highly stabilizing effect on the political system. Like any reform, however, some violence may be necessary to produce the reform, and the reform itself may produce some violence. The emancipation of the serfs, for instance, stimulated some local uprisings and acts of insubordination in rural Russia. Unlike the reform-stimulated extremism of the intelligentsia, however, this violence decreased rapidly with time. In 1861, when the emancipation edict was issued, acts of insubordination occurred on 1,186 properties. In 1862 only 400 properties were affected by insubordination and in 1863 only 386. By 1864 the disorders produced by the reform had been virtually eliminated.³⁹ This sequence of a sharp but limited and brief rise in violence and disorder followed by a steady decline and relatively early return to tranquility appears to be the typical pattern produced by land reforms. Land reform, as Carroll has remarked, "when seriously undertaken is an explosive and unpredictable business, but may be much more explosive when left undone."⁴⁰ In terms of political stability, the costs of land reform are minor and temporary, the gains fundamental and lasting.

The advantages and disadvantages of land reform in terms of other criteria are not perhaps so clear-cut. The immediate impact of land reform, particularly land reform by revolution, is usually

38. Quotations and data from Wolfe, pp. 360-61.

39. Mosse, p. 60; Jerome Blum, *Lord and Peasant in Russia* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 592.

40. Thomas F. Carroll, "Land Reform as an Explosive Force in Latin America," in TePaske and Fisher, p. 84.

to reduce agricultural productivity and production. In the longer run, however, both usually tend to increase. After the Bolivian land reform of 1953 the new peasant owners apparently felt no incentive to produce more food than they could consume and agricultural production dropped seriously, rising again in the 1960s. In Mexico, agricultural productivity also dropped immediately after the revolution but subsequently rose, and during the 1940s Mexico had the highest agricultural growth rate in Latin America.

The economic argument for land reform is, of course, that it gives the individual farmer a direct economic interest in the efficient use of his land and thus tends to increase both agricultural productivity and agricultural production. Clearly, however, land reform by itself will not necessarily produce economic benefits. It has to be supplemented by various other types of agrarian reforms designed to facilitate the efficient use of land. So long as the bulk of the population of a country is on the land, obviously the growth of industry will in large part reflect the ability of that population to consume the products of industry. By creating a class of small proprietors and thus significantly raising the median income level in the rural areas, land reform, it is said, enlarges the domestic market and hence creates additional incentives for industrial development. It can, on the other hand, also be argued that insofar as land reform reduces the average size of the agricultural unit, it tends also to reduce the possibilities for large-scale efficiency in agricultural production, and this has a restraining effect on economic growth as a whole.

In some measure land reform probably does contribute to economic development as well as to social welfare and political stability. As with other aspects of modernization, however, these goals may at times conflict with each other. In Egypt, for instance, the land reform of 1952 was designed to produce fundamental social changes in the countryside and to be "a lever in the overthrow of the former ruling class." In the years after the reform many improvements took place in the welfare of the rural population, and the agricultural production index rose from 105 in 1951 (1935-39 = 100) to 131 in 1958. These ends, however, were achieved at a cost of the social goals. The reform "evolved into a useful instrument for the fulfillment of the Five Year Plan; and in the process the original conception of reform as a broad measure of income redistribution had evaporated. The authentic social impetus had

been overlaid by the drive for economic efficiency." Despite the reform's technical achievements, the hopes of the peasants "had been disappointed by the small scale of redistribution and cynicism fostered by evasion of rent control."⁴¹ In order to restore the revolutionary impetus and the social goals of land reform, a new law was passed in 1961 further restricting the acreage which landlords might retain and tightening up other provisions of the old law. The purpose of the law, Nasser declared, was to complete the suppression of feudalism, and the law was one element in the significant turn to the left which the Nasser regime took at that time. Five years later, in 1966, the attack on the "feudalists" was again pressed with a new drive to enforce the law more rigorously. This Egyptian experience suggests that insofar as the implementation of land reform is left to the bureaucracy, economic and technical goals tend to achieve preeminence over political and social ones. To keep the latter to the forefront, the political leadership has to act periodically through political processes to give renewed impetus to the reform.

II

THE POLITICS OF LAND REFORM

Patterns of land tenure obviously vary greatly from country to country and from region to region. In general, in Latin America, a relatively small number of latifundia have encompassed a large proportion of the total farm land while a large number of minifundia covered a small proportion of the total farm land. Neither large estate nor small plot has been typically farmed efficiently, and, of course, the disparity in income between the owner of one and the owner of the other has been very great. In Asia land ownership typically has not been as concentrated as in Latin America, but tenancy, absentee landlordism, and high population densities have been more prevalent. Near Eastern countries have been characterized by a high concentration of land ownership in some instances (Iraq, Iran) and by high tenancy rates in others. With the exception of tropical Africa, in one form or another the objective conditions likely to give rise to peasant unrest are common in much of the modernizing world. If, as appears likely, modernization will in due course arouse peasant aspirations to the point where these conditions are no longer tolerable, then the

41. Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East*, (2d ed. London, Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 208-09.

alternatives of revolution or land reform are very real ones for many political systems.

The saliency of land reform to politics in different countries is suggested by the data in Table 6.2. On the horizontal axis this table gives a rough idea of the importance of agriculture to a country's economy; on the vertical axis, it classifies countries by inequality in land distribution, the data for which are for different years for different countries and in some cases two different years for the same country. Underneath the names of most countries on the table are figures on farm tenancy and their date.

From these data it would appear that land reform is not a pressing issue in four types of countries. First, in countries which have reached a high level of economic development, agriculture has a relatively minor role, and consequently even highly inequitable patterns of land ownership do not pose substantial problems of social equality and political stability. Such is the case with virtually all the countries in the left-hand column of Table 6.2. Even in a country like Argentina, characterized by both great inequality in land ownership and a high tenancy rate, the land issue is relatively secondary since less than 30 per cent of the labor force is employed in agriculture. Italy also combines unequal ownership and high tenancy, but the problem there is, of course, largely concentrated in the southern region, and reasonably effective actions have been taken by the government to cope with it. For countries in this category land reform is only a secondary issue in politics.

Second, many countries have had or achieved long ago reasonably equitable patterns of land ownership. Many of the countries of western Europe in groups G and J fall into this category as well as into the first category of countries where agriculture is of minor importance in economic life. While accurate and comparable figures are not readily available, at least some modernizing countries not listed in the table may also fit this pattern, among them possibly Cyprus, Lebanon, Turkey, Thailand, and Indonesia.

A third category consists of those countries, mostly in tropical Africa, where traditional communal patterns of land ownership are just beginning to give way to individual proprietorship. These countries are, in a sense, one phase behind those other modernizing countries where traditional communal patterns of ownership, if they ever existed, were replaced some time ago by individual ownership and then by the concentration of ownership in rela-

TABLE 6.2. Vulnerability to Agrarian Unrest

Distribution of agricultural land: Gini Index of Inequality	Percentage of labor force employed in agriculture		
	0-29%	30-59%	60% and over
	A	B	C
	Australia-93(48) *	Mexico-96(30)	Bolivia-94(50)
	Argentina-86(52)	Chile-94(36)	20(50)
	33(52) **	13(55)	Iraq-88(58)
	Italy 80-(46)	Venezuela-91(56)	Peru-88(50)
	24(30)	21(50)	Guatemala-86(50)
		Costa Rica-89(50)	17(50)
		5(50)	Brazil-84(50)
.800 and over		Ecuador-86(54)	9(50)
		15(54)	El Salvador-83(50)
		Columbia-(86)60	15(50)
		12(60)	Egypt-81(52)
		Jamaica-82(43)	12(39)
		10(43)	
		Uruguay-82(50)	
		35(51)	
	D	E	F
	New Zealand-77(49)	Dominican Rep.-79(50)	Honduras-76(52)
	22(50)	21(50)	17(52)
	Puerto Rico-74(59)	Cuba-79(45)	Nicaragua-76(50)
	4(59)	54(45)	Libya-70(60)
.700-799	United Kingdom-71(50)	Spain-78(29)	9(60)
	45(50)	44(50)	
	United States-71(50)	Greece-75(30)	
	20(59)	18(39)	
		Austria-74(51)	
		11(51)	
		Panama-74(61)	
		12(61)	
	G	H	I
	West Germany-67(49)	Mexico-69(60)	S. Vietnam-67(35)
	6(49)	Taiwan-65(30)	20(50)
	Norway-67(59)	40(48)	Egypt-67(64)
	8(50)	Finland-60(50)	Iran-65(60)
	Luxembourg-64(50)	2(50)	India-63(54)
	19(50)	Ireland-60(60)	53(31)
.500-699	Netherlands-61(50)	3(32)	W. Pakistan-61(60)
	53(48)	Philippines-59(48)	India-59(61)
	Belgium-59(59)	37(48)	E. Pakistan-51(60)
	62(50)	Philippines-53(60)	
	France-58(48)		
	26(46)		
	Sweden-58(44)		
	19(44)		
	J	K	L
	Switzerland-49(39)	Japan-47(60)	Yugoslavia-44(50)
	19(44)	3(60)	
.499 and below	Canada-49(31)	Taiwan-46(60)	
	7(51)	Poland-45(60)	
	Denmark-46(59)		
	4(49)		

Source: Bruce M. Russett et al., *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1964), Tables 50, 69, 70; Hung-chao Tai, "Land Reform in Developing Countries: Tenure Defects and Political Response" (Unpublished Paper, Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, 1967).

* Gini index and date.

** Farms on rented land as percentage of total farms and date.

tively few hands. Depending upon the nature of the processes of individualization of land, these African countries may avoid the problems of its inequitable distribution which now plague so many other modernizing countries.

A final, fourth category of countries where land reform is not a salient problem includes those where effective, thoroughgoing reforms have been carried out by revolution or otherwise in recent years. These include all the communist countries which have collectivized agriculture plus Poland and Yugoslavia, which have created highly equitable patterns of individual land ownership. Among the noncommunist countries, the post-World War II reforms in Japan and Taiwan at least temporarily removed the land question as a major political issue. In some measure the same result has been obtained through revolution in Mexico and Bolivia, although the problems of the inefficiency of the *ejido* and tendencies toward the reconcentration of ownership continue to plague the former country.

In the remainder of the modernizing world, land reform has a high saliency to politics. Land reform problems, it may be predicted, are likely to be most critical in those seven countries in group C which combine high inequalities of land ownership with substantial agricultural labor forces. In 1950 Bolivia had what was probably the highest Gini index of inequality in land ownership in the world and also substantial tenancy; in 1952 Bolivia had its agrarian revolution. In 1958 Iraq also had a highly unequal pattern of land ownership; the same year a modernizing military junta overthrew the old regime and instituted a program of land reforms. In El Salvador and Peru, with similar inequality, reform governments, with the active support of the United States, made major efforts to introduce land reforms in 1961 and 1964. The governments of Guatemala and Brazil also attempted to inaugurate major land reforms in 1954 and 1964, respectively, only to be overthrown by military insurrections. In Egypt the Nasser reforms reduced the index from .81 in 1952 to .67 in 1964. In all six countries apart from Bolivia land reform remained a major issue in the mid-1960s.

Much the same was also true for the countries in groups B and F as well as for those other countries where 30 per cent or more of the labor force was employed in agriculture and where 20 per cent or more of the farms were on rented land (i.e. Dominican Repub-

lic, Cuba, Taiwan, Philippines, South Vietnam, and India). Significantly, two of these countries—Cuba and Taiwan—have carried out substantial reforms, Taiwan's index of inequality dropping from .65 in the 1930s to .46 in 1960. The remaining twenty countries with highly unequal ownership and/or high tenancy rates (groups B, C, and F minus Bolivia, plus the Dominican Republic, Spain, Philippines, South Vietnam and India) are presumably those countries on the chart where land reform is peculiarly relevant to politics. To these must also be added countries (such as Morocco, Syria, Ethiopia) for which no data on land ownership were available but either where land ownership is known to be highly inequitable or where land reform has been a major issue in politics. In all these countries, the long-run stability of the political system may well depend upon the ability of the government to carry through land reforms.

Under what conditions, then, does land reform become feasible? Like other reforms, changes in land tenure require the concentration and expansion of power in the political system. More specifically, they involve, first, the concentration of power in a new elite group committed to reform and, second, the mobilization of the peasantry and their organized participation in the implementation of the reforms. Analysts of land reform processes have at times attempted to distinguish "reform from above" from "reform from below." In actuality, however, a successful land reform involves action from both directions. The efficacy of land reform by revolution, of course, is that it does involve both elements: the rapid centralization of power in the revolutionary elite and the rapid mobilization into politics of the peasantry. In a case like Bolivia the peasants seize the land and organize themselves into national peasant leagues; the new governing elite enacts a land reform law confirming their rights and creating the administrative structures necessary for the implementation of the reforms.

If it is assumed that the traditional elite in the society is a land-owning elite the initiative for reform from above must come from some new elite group which is able to displace the landed interests in the political system and arrogate to itself sufficient power to secure the adoption and implementation of land reform despite the opposition of substantial elements among the landowners. By its very nature land reform involves some element of confiscation.

This may take the form of the outright expropriation of the land by the state with no pretence of compensation, as in revolutions; or taking the land at its assessed value for tax purposes which is, of course, normally far below its market value; or providing compensation through bonds or other forms of deferred payment, whose value typically is drastically reduced by inflation and the instability of the government which makes the promises. The only real exceptions to partial or complete confiscation by one of these means occur in those lucky countries, like Venezuela or Iran, which are able to carry out what might be termed "land reform by petroleum" and provide substantial compensation to owners from their oil revenues. Except in these instances land reform means the forceful taking away of property from one group of people and giving it to another. It is precisely this character of land reform, which makes it the most meaningful—and the most difficult—of reforms for a modernizing government.

The willingness of landowners to lose their property through land reforms short of revolution varies directly with the extent to which the only alternative appears to be to lose it through revolution. In addition, the ability of the government to carry out land reforms may well vary directly with the degree of concentration of ownership. If land ownership is highly concentrated, a substantial amount of land can be made available for redistribution by the expropriation of a small, highly affluent minority which may well be able to afford the loss of the land. If, on the other hand, land reform requires the dispossession of a much larger class of medium-sized land owners or kulaks, the problems confronting the government are much greater.

Displacement of the traditional landholding elite may occur in a variety of ways and with new elite groups drawn from a variety of sources. In land reform by revolution, the peasant uprisings normally eliminate much of the landowning elite by violence and death or by fear and emigration. The radical intelligentsia of the city assumes the political leadership roles in the society, brings into existence new political institutions, and ratifies the actions of the peasants by land reform decrees. **More land reform has taken place by revolution than by any other means.**

The second most effective means of bringing about land reform is by foreign action. **Foreigners, like revolutionaries, have no stake in the existing social order, and while the decrees of revolu-**

tionaries legitimate the actions of rebellious peasants, those of foreigners are themselves legitimated by their armies of occupation. In each case, reform is made possible by the intrusion of new elites and new masses into the formerly restricted political arena. The foreigners typically do not displace the traditional elite completely from positions of power but instead subordinate it either through colonial rule or through military occupation. Changes in land tenure under colonialism have usually involved the replacement of traditional communal ownership patterns by Western-style individual freeholds. As was pointed out previously, this frequently facilitates the concentration of land ownership in a relatively few hands. Only rarely, as was in part true with the United States in the Philippines in the 1930s, have colonial governments expressed much interest in securing a more equal ownership of land.

Such has not been the case with military occupation. After World War II the United States promoted in Japan one of the most effective land reforms of modern times. The percentage of tenants and tenant-owners (i.e. farmers renting 50 per cent or more of the lands they cultivate) was reduced from 43.5 to 11.7; the portion of farm income coming from rent, interest, and wages was reduced to less than 4 per cent; the landlords were compensated for their land at its 1938 value which, because of the drastic postwar inflation, amounted to virtual confiscation. In South Korea the American Military Government carried out one land reform involving the distribution of Japanese-owned land, and the ROK government then inaugurated a second one directed at Korean owners. In 1945 full or half tenants constituted 67.2 per cent of the total farm population; by 1954 they made up only 15.3 per cent of that population. As in Japan, the wealthy landowning class was virtually eliminated and a high degree of economic equality spread throughout the countryside. Paradoxically, the most comprehensive land reforms after World War II were produced either by communist revolution or by American military occupation.

A somewhat similar pattern was also followed in Taiwan. There the "occupying power" was the Chinese Nationalist elite which fled to the island after the Communist conquest of the mainland. The reform reduced tenant-cultivated land from 41.1 per cent of the total farm land in 1949 to 16.3 per cent in 1953 and signifi-

cantly improved rents and security of tenants.⁴² The participation of the peasants in the implementation of this program was encouraged by American advisors and supported by the Sino-American Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction, financed from American sources.

In some instances land reforms may be inaugurated by traditional leaders working within the existing structures of authority. The prerequisite here is a high concentration of power within the traditional system. Typically an absolute monarch supported by elements from his bureaucracy attempts to impose reforms on a recalcitrant landowning aristocracy. Alexander II's emancipation of the serfs, Stolypin's reforms, and the Amini-Arsanjani reforms of 1961-62 in Iran are examples of changes imposed through traditional political institutions.⁴³ These instances are the most extreme versions of "land reform from above," and consequently the major problem of such reforms is the mobilization of the peasantry for the sustained action and participation necessary to insure their success.

Other traditional systems lack not only the ability to mobilize power from below but also the capacity to concentrate for purposes of reform whatever limited power there is within the system. In these circumstances reform requires either a full-scale revolution or the overthrow of the traditional landlord-based regime by a modernizing military elite. The latter pattern is particularly typical of the Middle East, as exemplified in Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, and, in part, Syria. The Egyptian case neatly illustrates many of the common features of agrarian development. Prior to the nineteenth century land was in large part owned by the state or by religious foundations. The modernizing reforms of Muhammed Ali, however, encouraged private ownership and the eventual concentration of landholdings in large estates. As a result, "a thin stratum of large landowners had become sharply differentiated from the mass of fellahs by the end of the century."⁴³ From World War I until 1952 the Egyptian parliament and the Egyptian government were

42. See Sidney Klein, *The Pattern of Land Tenure Reform in East Asia After World War II* (New York, Bookman, 1958), pp. 230, 250; R. P. Dore, *Land Reform in Japan* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1959).

43. Gabriel Baer, *A History of Landownership in Modern Egypt, 1800-1950* (London, Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 13 ff. My discussion of Egypt is based primarily on this book.

dominated by the large landowning interests, the largest single landowner being the king himself. The peasants were quiescent, and the absence of an indigenous bourgeoisie and autonomous urban middle class meant that there were no other social groups which could challenge the landowners' dominance. Even extreme radical groups did not give an overriding role to the land reform issue. Egyptian Communists, for instance, endorsed the elimination of large estates, but "the agrarian question as a whole did not occupy an important place in their political and social struggle. Even during the 1940s, when Communist activity was legal, the principal Communist periodical, *al-Fajr al-Jadid*, hardly touched on it at all. Unlike most of the other parties, the Communists had no roots in the Egyptian villages." During the 1940s, however, other groups and reformers began to bring the land issue to the forefront of public consciousness. The military revolution of 1952, in turn, was preceded by what looked like the beginnings of a true agrarian revolution in the countryside. "In 1951, for the first time in modern Egyptian history, a number of rebellions broke out in which fellahs made common cause against their landlords." For the first time on any scale, the fellah resorted to land invasions and violence.⁴⁴ The military regime came to power in July 1952; in September it enacted a land reform law.

Finally, it is at least conceivable that land reforms may be introduced by the leadership of a political party which has won power through democratic means. Land reform measures have been passed by democratically elected governments in India, the Philippines, Venezuela, Chile, Peru, Colombia, and a few other countries. Land reform through democratic processes, however, is a long, frustrating, and often impossible task. Pluralistic politics and parliamentary rule are often incompatible with effective land reforms. In particular, a parliamentary system without a dominant party provides no means by which the modernizing elite can effectively displace the landowning conservatives. In modernizing countries, legislatures are more conservative than executives, and elected parliaments are usually dominated by landowning interests.

A basic incompatibility exists between parliaments and land reform. In Pakistan, for instance, land reform made no progress for a decade under the parliamentary regime but was swiftly adopted

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 214-15, 220-22.

and implemented once General Ayub Khan assumed supreme power. In Iran, similarly, the great landowners dominated the Majlis. To make land reform into a reality, parliament had to be suspended and the reform issued by decree subsequently confirmed by a popular referendum. "Parliaments good or bad," growled reform prime minister Amini, "are an obstacle to reform."⁴⁵ In Egypt, as in Pakistan, land reform legislation got nowhere until the traditional regime with its king and its parliament was replaced by Nasser and his military elite. In Ethiopia the Land Reform Bill of 1963, proposed by the government, was defeated in the Senate.

Latin American legislatures have also traditionally been the graveyards of land reform measures. In the early 1960s the Brazilian Congress, for instance, consistently refused to pass the land reform measures recommended by President Goulart, and they were eventually issued by decree in 1964. At the same time in Ecuador, the congress "was unwilling to give serious consideration to the fundamental reforms urged by President Arosemena, such as tax revision and agrarian reform."⁴⁶ Similarly, the Peruvian Congress in the early 1960s refused to pass land reform legislation and thus willingly forfeited a \$60 million loan from the United States, payment of which had been made conditional upon the passage of such legislation.⁴⁷ In Syria in the mid-1950s, the Ba'ath Party's relatively modest proposals for agrarian reform were stopped in the legislature which was dominated by landowning interests.

In Korea, the Interim Legislative Assembly which operated under the American military government in the 1940s failed to take action on land reform proposals. As a result, "After long KILA debate unproductive of satisfactory legislation, [General] Hodge had to issue a land reform ordinance unilaterally." Subsequently, after the Republic of Korea was established, the Assembly, in which landlords were a major influence, nonetheless passed a land-reform measure in order to assert its power against the executive. The bill was vetoed by President Rhee, but subsequently another bill was passed and approved by the President. In the Assembly,

45. Prime Minister Ali Amini, quoted in Donald N. Wilber, *Contemporary Iran* (New York, Praeger, 1963), p. 126.

46. Edwin Licuven, *Generals vs. Presidents*, pp. 47, 74-84.

47. Tad Szulc, *The Winds of Revolution* (New York, Praeger, 1964), pp. 182-83.

"Landlords were a dominant minority; their common interests were reflected in the land-reform and even the law on public officials."⁴⁸

The tendency for landed elements to dominate the legislature in modernizing societies with electoral competition reflects the absence of effective political organizations. The bulk of the population is in the countryside, and hence the nature of the regime is determined by the nature of the electoral process in the countryside. In the absence of effective parties, peasant unions, or other political organizations, the crucial resources are economic wealth and social status, and the traditional elites capitalize upon their possession of these to secure election to the parliament in overwhelming numbers. In some instances, of course, the electoral procedures themselves help to insure this. In Brazil, Peru, and other Latin American countries parliamentary seats were apportioned on the basis of population but suffrage was limited to those who were literate. Consequently, a small number of upper-class rural voters controlled a large number of rural seats. On the other hand, in some Middle Eastern countries, almost the reverse situation has existed. Conservative, landowning groups pushed for the extension of suffrage to the illiterate peasants because of their confidence that their economic and social influence would control this vote and bring it into the political arena on their side.

Democratic governments are able to enact land reforms where there are vigorous and popular executive leadership and strong party organizations with a corporate interest in winning the peasant vote. In Venezuela Rómulo Betancourt plus the strong organization of the Acción Democrática and its close affiliation with the *campesino* unions resulted in the passage of a land reform law in 1960. Even under these favorable circumstances, however, parliament remained the major focus of opposition, and recourse had to be had to semi-extraparliamentary procedures. A non-parliamentary land reform commission was created which after extensive hearings, consultations, and investigation, drew up the proposed bill which was then submitted to the legislature and forced through by the government's majority with little or no significant change. "The Commission was, at the outset, an aggrega-

48. Gregory Henderson, "Korea: The Politics of the Vortex (Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, 1966), pp. 413, 425-26, 447.

tive body, comprised of representatives of all political parties and philosophies, and most Venezuelan interest groups concerned with agriculture. Thus it was that all political factions could be brought to a consensus on the final version of the Commission's proceedings." ⁴⁹ In effect, the legislative process was performed in the more favorable environment of the land reform commission rather than in the less favorable environment of the legislature. The success of this land reform measure produced an active competition among the political parties appealing to the peasant on the land reform issue. "Vote-buying," as one Venezuelan agrarian reform official said, "is good politics. There is no better kind." ⁵⁰ Somewhat similarly, the Colombian land reform law of 1961 was also drafted by an extraparliamentary commission; unlike the Venezuelan law, however, the bill also received extensive consideration and further amendments in the legislature.

In India land reform legislation was the product of the historical commitment of the Congress Party and its leadership. The first phase of the reforms, the elimination of the zamindars, moreover, was viewed as part of the process of independence. The land titles of the zamindars had been created by the British in the nineteenth century and hence their abolition could be held to be a necessary element in the completion of independence from British rule. Just as foreign rulers can, with relative ease, dispossess local landlords, so also local rulers can, with relative ease, dispossess foreign landlords or those whose property rights seem to stem from foreign sources (provided the foreign landlords cannot sponsor foreign intervention to restore those rights). Subsequently, however, land reform in India moved very slowly. It was within the jurisdiction of the state legislatures, and throughout the 1950s, with the notable exception of Uttar Pradesh, no state legislature enacted effective land reform legislation. Those laws which were enacted were often filled with substantial loopholes which made it difficult for the peasants to secure their rights and easy for the landlords to escape their obligations.

In the other principal democratic country in southern Asia, the Philippines, land reform suffered a similar and perhaps worse fate. The Hukbalahap rebellion and the dynamic leadership of Magsay-

49. John Duncan Powell, "The Politics of Agrarian Reform in Venezuela: History, System and Process" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1966), pp. 176-77.

50. Quoted in Erasmus, p. 715.

say induced the Philippine legislature to pass a land reform law in 1955. The law was, however, shot full of loopholes. Some suggestion of its ineffectiveness is perhaps furnished by the guarded comments of a 1962 UN report: "Even if the law were fully applied, the large area which landlords are allowed to retain would still maintain high tenancy rates. The provisions are in fact regarded as inadequate, and tenants tend to prefer good relationships with the landowning families to the benefits which they might obtain under the law."⁵¹ The weakness of this law led President Macapagal to press for passage of another law in 1963.

In any political system enactment of effective land reforms requires some other elite group to break with the landed oligarchy and to support such legislation. In an authoritarian system either a monarch, a dictator, or a military junta must take the initiative in bringing about land reforms. In a democratic system with strong political parties, the leadership of the dominant party may play this role. In the absence of strong parties with a commitment to land reform, the enactment of such legislation normally requires a break in the ranks of the economic upper class and the support for land reform by industrialists, commercial interests, and "progressive" landowners. The passage of the Philippine land reform law of 1963, for instance, was made possible by industrial and middle-class groups who backed the legislation as a necessary element in a general program of economic development. President Macapagal, indeed, formulated his appeal for this measure designed to eliminate tenancy more in terms of its contributions to economic development than in terms of its contribution to social justice. The bill still met substantial resistance in the legislature, but was eventually passed. "Congressional resistance to changes in the land tenure pattern," it was observed, "has weakened as new industrial groups have come to share power with the landed interests."⁵²

A similar pattern has manifested itself in Latin America. Differences between industrialists and "progressive farm owners and operators," on the one hand, and the "semi-feudal" landowners, on the other, facilitated passage of the Colombian land reform law of 1961. In Peru a similar division helped passage of the land reform bill of 1964. In the Brazilian state of São Paulo the agrarian

51. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Progress in Land Reform: Third Report* (United Nations, 1962), p. 22.

52. Jean Grossholtz, *Politics in the Philippines* (Boston, Little Brown, 1964), p. 71.

transformation law of 1961 was in part the result of the fact that "the new middle and upper classes in the city can have a strong influence on land policies."⁸³ In the absence of a strong political organization capable of forcing through land reform legislation despite the opposition of the landowning group, it would appear that industrial and commercial leaders may be necessary partners in securing the approval of land reform legislation.

"In the beginning of any undertaking," Mustafa Kemal once said, "there is a need to go from above downward; not from below upward." Many students of land reform argue to the contrary that reform can only be inaugurated by the positive action and demands of the peasantry. In actuality, however, so far as the inauguration of land reforms is concerned, neither extreme position would seem to be correct. Land reforms may result from the initiative of either governmental elite or peasant mass. Short of revolution, rural unrest and violence and the organization of peasant leagues capable of making effective and coordinated demands on the government usually serve to hasten land reform legislation. The Hukbalahap rebellion of the late 1940s and early 1950s made possible the Philippine law of 1955. Peasant land seizures in the Cuzco area and the growth in strength of peasant organizations helped the passage of the Peruvian land reform law of 1964. In Venezuela land invasions in the late 1950s eased the passage of a land reform law in 1960. In Colombia the agrarian reform law which was passed in the 1930s was, like the typical action of revolutionary governments, primarily designed to legitimize peasant land seizures which had already occurred. The formation of national peasant organizations in Chile and Brazil in 1961 gave an impetus to those elements in both governments interested in pushing reform.

On the other hand, land reform is not only the result of push from below. In most countries, tenants and landless peasants lack the skills and the organization to make themselves an effective political force. They are more likely to take advantage of the weakness of government and to attempt to seize land for themselves than they are likely to take advantage of the strength of government and to attempt to induce political leaders to use governmental power on their behalf. Even in a country like the Philippines, the poor farmers and tenants lacked effective organization

83. Hirschmann, pp. 155-56; Carroll, pp. 107-08.

in the early 1960s and played little role in securing passage of the 1963 land reform law. As a result, in many instances elite elements may take the initiative in dealing with land reform in the absence of any immediate peasant demand, but in anticipation of future demands. In Colombia, in the early 1960s the "social group which stood to benefit most from the law—Colombia's small tenant farmers, sharecroppers, minifundio holders and landless laborers—took only a small and indirect part in its adoption." Some land invasions did occur, but only on a relatively small scale. In Venezuela the ideological commitment and political leadership of Betancourt were the necessary complement to the mild land invasions. In Iran there was no peasant violence or extra legal activity at all. In this case, like Colombia, the leaders pushing reform were more concerned about the possible major violence in the future than actual minor violence in the past. "I do not wish to be a prophet of doom," one Colombian legislator declared: "but if the next Congress fails to produce an Agrarian Reform, revolution will be inevitable." "Divide your lands or face revolution—or death," Prime Minister Amini warned the Iranian elite.⁵⁴

"Land reform," Neale has observed, "does not make new men of peasants. New men make land reforms."⁵⁵ In the absence of revolution, the new men are initially usually from the non-peasant classes. The effectiveness of land reform, however it is initiated, nonetheless depends upon the active and eventually organized participation of the peasants. Mobilization of peasants is not necessary to start land reform, but land reform, to be successful, must stimulate the mobilization and organization of the peasants. Reform laws only become effective when they are institutionalized in organizations committed to making them effective. Two organizational links between government and peasants are necessary if land reform is to become a reality.

First, in almost all cases, the government has to create a new and adequately financed administrative organization well-staffed with expert talent committed to the cause of reform. In most countries where land reform is a crucial issue, the Ministry of Agriculture is a weak, lethargic entity, with little commitment to modernization

54. Hirschman, pp. 142, 157; Prime Minister Amini, quoted by Jay Walz, *New York Times*, May 30, 1961, p. 2.

55. Walter C. Neale, *Economic Change in Rural India* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962), p. 258.

and reform, and often quite subservient to the established agricultural interests. An indifferent bureaucracy can make reform a nullity. The failure of land reform in several districts in India, for instance, was ascribed in one survey to two causes: "one is faulty legislation itself, and the second is the negative attitude of the government officials at state, district, block or village levels. With the exception of Aligarh, no serious attempt was made to enforce the enacted land reform legislation."⁵⁶ Virtually all effective land reforms thus involve the creation of an agrarian reform institute. Where such institutes are not created, as was generally the case in India, the reforms tend to become ineffective. In addition, it is also often necessary to mobilize a substantial bureaucratic force to implement the reform in the countryside. The Japanese land reform required the assistance of some 400,000 people to purchase and transfer 2,000,000 hectares and to rewrite 4,000,000 leases. The reform in Taiwan required an administrative force of some 33,000 officials. In the Philippines and in Iran the army has been employed to help implement the reform.⁵⁷ In India, in contrast, in the early 1960s only about 6,000 full-time workers were concerned with land reform.

The second organizational requirement of land reform is the organization of the peasants themselves. Concentrated power can enact land reform decrees, but only expanded power can make those decrees into reality. While peasant participation may not be necessary to pass legislation, it is necessary to implement legislation. In democratic countries, in particular, land reform laws may be passed in deference to public opinion or ideological commitment. They often remain unenforced because of the absence of peasant organizations to participate in their implementation. "The clue to the failure of rural development," it was argued in India, "lies in this, that it cannot be administered, it has to be organized. While administration is something which the civil service can take care of, rural development is a political task, which the administration cannot undertake."⁵⁸ Peasant leagues, peasant as-

56. Wolf Ladejinsky, *A Study on Tenurial Conditions in Panchayat Districts* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1965), p. 9.

57. J. Lossing Buck, "Progress of Land Reform in Asian Countries," in Walter Froehlich, ed., *Land Tenure, Industrialization and Social Stability: Experience and Prospects in Asia* (Milwaukee, Marquette University Press, 1961), p. 84.

58. *The Economic Weekly* (Bombay), Feb. 1964, p. 158, quoted by Wayne Wilcox, "The Pakistan Coup D'Etat of 1958," *Pacific Affairs*, 38 (Summer 1963), 153.

sociations, peasant cooperatives are necessary to insure the continued vitality of land reform. Whatever their declared functions, the fact of organization creates a new center of power in the countryside. De Tocqueville's democratic science of association brings a new political resource into rural politics, counterbalancing the social status, economic wealth, and advanced education which had been the principal sources of power of the landowning class.

The creation of peasant associations, consequently, is a political act, and it is most often and most effectively performed by political parties, who have an interest in mobilizing peasant support and firmly binding the peasants to their party through the mechanisms of peasant organizations. Virtually every strong political party in a modernizing country is closely affiliated with a peasant organization. Such organization clearly serves the interests of the party leaders, but it also serves the interests of the peasants.

Whatever power the peasants gain [one comparative analysis has concluded], it will tend with time to exert a conservative influence on the national government, for, as small proprietors they have a high regard for private property. But most important to the growth of power among the rural masses is the phenomenon of peasant syndicate organizations which tend to accompany agrarian reform. The formation of these interest groups may well prove to be the most important outcome of many agrarian reform movements.⁵⁹

Reform, in short, becomes real only when it becomes organized. Peasant organization is political action. Effective peasant organization comes with effective political parties.

⁵⁹ Erasmus, p. 787.