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Aims of land reform, implementation of land reform, and formulation of adequate land policy were discussed from the standpoint of what an agricultural economist as such can contribute to the problems of land tenure.

Japanese and Indian reforms constituted a springboard for discussion of aims. Analysis of objectives recognized broader goals than simple economic efficiency. Other aims include: more equal distribution of personal incomes and wealth, possession of the land by the tiller, stimulation of labour mobility to the non-agricultural sector and within agriculture, elimination or regulation of intermediaries, regulation of rents, abolition of tenancy, breaking up of feudalistic structures, integration of indigenous populations into modern society, geographic integration or colonization of isolated regions. These aims and objectives may be mutually inconsistent at least in part, so a useful role of the agricultural economist is to analyse the aims of a land reform programme with a view (a) to showing the extent to which goals may be inconsistent, and (b) to evaluating the programme in terms of objectives. Plantation-type agriculture in India and Ceylon illustrates how productive efficiency would suffer if units were subdivided. In many countries, however, where there are many latifundias, a thoroughgoing redistribution of land could achieve an increase in productivity even in the short run. In designing a programme the agricultural economist should consider how the existing

landowner may be induced to accept land reform voluntarily. He should not define his role in too narrow or too professional a sense.

For countries with low levels of income, poor agricultural production, and slow rates of economic growth, it may be beneficial to use agricultural surpluses both for ameliorating distress and for speeding up reform.

The experience of Taiwan provided insights into certain aspects of land reform, such as the willingness of landowners to accept reform, and methods of compensation, including compensation in kind. Two limitations were cited: (1) that the process of natural increase together with the inheritance pattern tends to reduce the subsistence level in agriculture with the passage of time, and (2) that an agricultural reform programme cannot be an end in itself; it must be integrated with other policies calculated to make economic development successful in the long run.

In those parts of Latin America and the Middle East where latifundias exist, it is often difficult to induce existing landowners to accept more than a nominal adherence to the principle of wider diffusion of land ownership. Ethical and political, rather than economic, considerations rise to the fore. Land-tenure conditions in at least four countries—Egypt, Iraq, Nicaragua and Peru—sparked spirited discussion of these aspects and left the agricultural economist's role unresolved. There was a tendency to justify a broader role for him than to be no more than a policy adviser. Members suggested the following points: In an under-developed country the agricultural economist may be better trained in related disciplines than any other person immediately available, and his potential is not fulfilled if he limits himself to too narrow and professional a role. Sometimes, particularly in the evaluation of land reform, he is the best informed person concerning the non-economic aspects of a given situation. In any event economists are properly concerned with the distribution of income and wealth, and the distinction between normative and positive economics in this field requires a nice sense of perception.

The formulation of adequate land policies was considered. The dangers in establishing fixed physical limits to either maximum or minimum sizes of holdings were strongly emphasized. There is considerable ignorance of both the actual and potential capacities of the land in almost all countries where thorough-going land reform seems appropriate. The so-called optimal size of holding may vary as income increases, or as the availability of assets changes, or for other causes.



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Flexibility in land reform was advocated to meet this point. The design of programmes is a field in which the agricultural economist can operate constructively and properly.

He can suggest alternative plans designed to go as far as possible in the direction of a particular reform within a given time. Recommendations could be calculated, say with three, ten and twenty-five year horizons. Programmes within each period would differ but there would be periodic review. Credit, marketing, and extension services should be integrated to such plans.

The group considered the need for farm holdings of varying sizes, with special emphasis on the highly capitalized large units found in efficient plantations, and the loss that would result from naïve subdivision of such units. Co-operative or government ownership were suggested as means to assure a more equitable distribution of the product of these units. Egyptian experience in crop consolidation led to the view that this is a useful way to retain efficient management of plantation units. The group rejected exclusive patterns of land tenure—state, co-operative or individual farm—as an overall prescription for the future.

Despite the bad name acquired by the institution of tenancy, the group agreed that tenancy should not be prohibited *per se*. It recognized that tenancy relationships frequently provide a useful transitional purpose, either in the life of the family, or in the implementation of land reform. These relationships permit flexibility with specialization of economic function not easily available otherwise. Members pointed out that government supervision could readily prevent a return to exploitation.

Land policy should be regarded as part of larger policy issues, such as population and development policy. Land reform was described as a means of getting breathing space within which to implement other important aspects of development policy. Despite an effort to generalize land-reform experience, it was agreed that specific institutional, geographic and other factors militate against a uniform prescription for all countries.