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BOOK REVIEWS

Rural Land Tenure in the United States: A Socio-Economic Approach to Problems, Programs and Trends, Alvin L. Bertrand and Floyd L. Carty (Editors), Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1962. Pp. xii+313. \$7.50.

Five sociologists and seven economists contributed to this volume. One of the purposes was to achieve an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of tenure—an integration of sociological and economic understandings. Other purposes, expressed by the editors as achievements, were to produce a systematic presentation of knowledge in the field of land tenure, to emphasize change (dynamic aspects of the subject), and to present a broad conceptual framework in social science and in methods of research for land tenure (pp. v-vi). These were ambitious objectives when considering the diversity of views and experiences of the twelve individual contributors. In the judgment of this reviewer, these intended achievements were not accomplished satisfactorily, even though the editors (Bertrand and Carty) had full liberties granted by the contributors "...in co-ordinating, standardizing, and integrating, the various chapters" (p. vi).

Part I, entitled "Introduction", contains three chapters apparently intended to provide the conceptual framework for the remaining chapters. A theoretical integration of aspects of sociology and economics relevant to land tenure is neither accomplished nor seriously attempted, thus, the foundation for an interdisciplinary approach to the subject was not produced. Furthermore, the concepts and ideas from economics and sociology presented in these chapters are not the foundations to what follows.

Part II, entitled "Tenure Programs, Policies, and Classes in the United States," contains four chapters intended to present "...the more important public actions which have influenced land tenure institutions and reviews the tenure systems and classes which have evolved." (p. 45). Chapters 4, 5, and 6 do present a good elementary summary of land and farm policy in the United States since colonial days. However, any influence relations of the policies upon tenure largely is left to the imagination of the reader.

Part III, "Theories, Legal Aspects, and Problems of Land Tenure and Transfers", contains chapters on leasing, water rights, subsurface (mineral) rights, conservation and the land market. The first three of these chapters (8, 9, and 10) do not depart from our "conventional wisdom" on these aspects of tenure; however, neither do they detract from the quality of the book. The book would have been improved by omission of the other two chapters of this section; they inadequately state what we know about conservation, the land market, and the relations of these to tenure.

Part IV, on the impact of change on tenure, contains efforts to relate technical, social and population changes with changes in rural land tenure in the United States. It seems to this reviewer that an opportunity to make a major contribution to the literature on land tenure largely was missed by authors of the three chapters in this part of the book. Drastic changes in the structure of American

agriculture have occurred in the past two decades, and, consequently, a reorientation of our thinking about land tenure appears to be in order. Such was not suggested in these chapters.

The last part of the book is entitled "Research Approaches, Needs, Methods and Concepts." Chapters 16 and 17 represent efforts to state the current land tenure problems and emphasis in research. For a national perspective, the tenure problem, unfortunately, is defined as an income problem. The last chapter in the book, on methods and techniques for tenure research, offers a refreshing contrast to most of the preceding chapters of the book; it is a tight but interesting presentation of scientific method and some techniques for application in tenure or other kinds of research.

W. B. BACK

Agricultural Labour in India, V. K. R. V. Rao (Ed.), Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1962. Pp. x + 196. Rs. 15.00.

Agricultural labour forms the most disadvantaged section of the rural population. Numerically also, it constitutes a substantial proportion. It is therefore necessary to understand the extent to which the various development programmes under way have been able to improve, if at all, the conditions of agricultural labourers. This task was ostensibly undertaken by the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry which attempted to present a comparative picture of the conditions of agricultural labourers in the country between 1951 and 1956-57, that is, on the eve and after the completion of the First Five-Year Plan. The main conclusion, at any rate apparently, was that the economic conditions of agricultural labour had deteriorated during the period; a crude comparison of the data of the First and the Second Enquiry indicated a decline in income, increased consumption expenditure accompanied by a steep rise in indebtedness and very little change in the employment situation. This gave rise to a great deal of controversy, one of the main criticisms being that the results of the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry (1956-57) were not strictly comparable with those of the First (1950-51) because of the changes introduced in concepts and definitions. A straight-forward comparison of the data from the two Enquiries, such as the one put forth by the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry, is therefore unlikely to reveal the true situation. To salvage some comparable picture out of the two Enquiries, it was necessary to go behind the concepts and definitions adopted in the two Enquiries, and wherever possible, re-work the data. It was precisely with this objective in view that the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi convened a Seminar in February-March, 1961. The publication contains the papers presented at the Seminar by several contributors who include K. N. Raj, J. P. Bhattacharjee and B. N. Datar. Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, who presided over the Seminar has summed up the main results of the proceedings in his excellent Introduction.

The papers and the report of the discussion that ensued help to clarify some of the results of the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry, particularly results which appeared rather paradoxical. One of the apparently paradoxical findings, for instance, was that the total number of agricultural labour households declined from 17.9 million in 1950-51 to 16.3 million in 1956-57. This decline of about

9 per cent came about at the same time as the total number of rural households increased from 58.9 million to 66.6 million or by 13 per cent. On purely deductive reasoning it is rather difficult to understand how such a decline in the number of agricultural labourers could have come about. As the discussion on this point shows, the major reason for the recorded decline was the change in the definition of agricultural labour household; while in the First Enquiry work was the criterion of identification, in the Second income was the criterion. More concrete proof of how the definitional change affected the total number has been furnished by two papers.

Turning to the main controversy it may be noted that the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry brought out that the average income and wages have declined. Here again comparison could not be straight-forward because of the changes introduced. In regard to the average income of the agricultural labour households, for instance, while in the First Enquiry retail prices were used for valuation of receipts in kind, in the Second wholesale prices were used. Obviously, this was likely to lead to underestimation of incomes during the Second Enquiry. Further, the wholesale prices of 1956 used for valuation of receipts in kind in the Second Enquiry were actually lower by about 10 per cent than the retail prices used for this purpose in the First. This fact alone could account for a decline of about 4 per cent in wage rates. If suitable adjustments are made in the data for meeting these difficulties the emerging picture would be different. It is thus concluded that "On the whole, it seems clear that while figures of fall in average agricultural labour household income...shown by the Second Enquiry were largely due to definitional or procedural changes, the fall shown in cash wage rates of hired agricultural labour was somewhat genuine..." (p. 11). It is interesting to mention here that Dr. C. H. Shah who has taken this process of adjustment of data to its logical conclusion shows elsewhere that incomes have actually *risen* by about 15 per cent.¹

While the attempt of the Seminar to salvage some comparable picture from the labyrinth of the data from the two Enquiries is admirable, one cannot help feeling that it would have been better if in planning the Second Enquiry this objective of comparability were kept specifically in mind. That attention to this aspect was not paid is borne out amply by the present publication itself!

Lastly, it is necessary to draw attention to one of the suggestions of the Seminar. This suggestion pertains to the proposal here that *only* landless agricultural labourers should form the subject-matter of an agricultural labour enquiry (p. 14). While appreciating the fact that in the complex structure of the rural population, precise location of agricultural labourers becomes a matter of expert judgment, it should be pointed out that the rather extreme alternative suggested here amounts in effect to throwing away the baby with the bath-water. Even the data of the First Agricultural Labour Enquiry show that the possession of a piece of land does not in any way improve the economic condition of the so-called marginal cultivators who in reality are agricultural labourers. In fact this question was taken up for discussion subsequently at the Seminar, in which the reviewer had occasion to participate, on the Third Agricultural Labour Enquiry convened by the Institute of Economic Growth, in February 1962. It was then agreed that taking up only landless labourers would necessarily imply exclusion of a substan-

1. "Agricultural Labour in 1956-57," *Indian Economic Journal*, April, 1961.

tial section of agricultural labourers and the consequent emergence of an incomplete picture. Any meaningful enquiry into the conditions of agricultural labour will have to, therefore, encompass these families as well.

The 1962 Seminar was itself a result of another suggestion made in this publication that such a seminar be organised well in advance for discussing the plan of the Third Enquiry. One could therefore reasonably hope that there would be no need to repeat the present performance for comparability of conditions between the Second and the Third Enquiry.

N. A. MUJUMDAR

Food Supplies and Population Growth, Royal Statistical Society, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh and London, 1963. Pp. 85. 15s.

This short book contains the proceedings of a symposium organised by the Royal Statistical Society in April, 1962 on the vital subject of finding food supplies for the rapidly growing population of the world. Apart from the opening remarks by Professor Ritchie Calder and concluding remarks by Professor Brinley Thomas, the book contains, together with two summaries of discussions, the contributions to the symposium by Mr. B. Benjamin, Professor R. Passmore, Mr. N. W. Pirie, and Professor Colin Clark.

Professor Calder's opening remarks on "The Mathematics of Hunger" are an impressive appeal to recognize the urgent problem of food requirements for the inescapable and unprecedented rapid increase in the world population during the next two decades. He rightly points out that there is no way of withholding the means of death-control from those people of the world who have not yet reaped all its benefits. And birth control is unlikely to make the actual population smaller than the estimate of 4.0 billion by 1980. The food problem can be solved in global terms but the surpluses of foodgrains and milk in some parts of the world co-exist with shortages, hunger and malnutrition elsewhere. And unfortunately, it is a complex task to increase yields and food resources in problem areas. Professor Calder pleads for an imaginative and purposive international collaboration to face the challenge ahead.

Mr. B. Benjamin reviews the U. N. population projections (made in 1958) for the world, its continents and regions, based on medium assumptions. According to these 'medium' projections, the world population was estimated to increase to more than 3.8 billion in 1975 (an increase of about one-third over the estimated 2.9 billion in 1959) and to 6.3 billion in 2000 A.D. Asia, Latin America and Africa—the economically 'under-developed' continents—would experience more rapid growth than the world as a whole. Mr. Benjamin adds that the review of the 1958 projections by the U.N. indicated a preliminary conclusion that the 1958 projection based on "high" assumptions, estimating a world population of 6—9 billion by 2000 A.D., is more likely to approximate reality. The reviewer might report the more recent thinking that during the decade 1950-60, the growth in world population was 19 per cent, *i.e.*, higher than that envisaged in the "high" projection (17 per cent), and if the same rate of growth continues

during the 1960's or if the projected increase of 20 per cent occurs, the world population in 1970 and in 1980 will exceed even the "high" estimates.

Professor Passmore's paper on the estimation of food requirements includes a review of the findings of the F.A.O. Committee on Calorie Requirements which estimated the energy required by a "reference man" and a "reference woman," with specified schedules of daily activity, at 3,200 and 2,300 calories, respectively. Professor Passmore suggests that the use of machines in developed countries reduces physical activity and the need for food. He cites data compiled by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of New York to show that there is a high incidence of obesity among the Americans and the obese seems to be more vulnerable to certain important diseases. In his view, therefore, the F.A.O. report overestimates the food requirements of prosperous communities, although its estimates are broadly applicable to the under-developed countries in the tropics. There is some uncertainty about estimates of protein needs but an aim of 70 grams of protein per head per day is said to be "a sensible target."

Mr. Pirie examines the role of conventional approaches of irrigation, better tools, increased use of fertilizers and the prevention of loss through pests and diseases in increasing food supplies and the possibilities of promoting the cultivation of protein-rich legume seeds and vegetables. But each of the conventional approaches creates problems that require more social, medical and technical research—a plea that we in India would do well to heed. For a non-biochemist, it is illuminating to read Mr. Pirie's review of the research on extracting and using protein from soya, groundnut, coconut, cotton-seed and leaves of plants and possibilities of using micro-organisms and swamps, lakes and the sea as sources of food and the synthesis of food. He points out also that animals are very inefficient suppliers of food. While they act as protein-concentrators, they waste carbohydrate and the "total edible product" obtained from any type of animal is unlikely to exceed 10 or 15 per cent of the amount of food needed to maintain an average population of the species under consideration. Moreover, there is no basis for the "casual impression" that the plant proteins have a lower value than animal proteins. Mr. Pirie then makes the interesting suggestion that the problem of over-population would solve itself if we evolve a contraceptive such that a couple would need to do something to restore an otherwise inhibited fertility. From a technical point of view, the intra-uterine coil, currently under clinical testing, fulfils Mr. Pirie's criterion but the experience in India and elsewhere suggests that the question is more of sufficient motivation than of a perfect contraceptive, although the latter would of course be a welcome development, facilitating the task of creating adequate motivation.

Professor Colin Clark analyses the economic problems of future sources of food supply. By using the device of "wheat equivalents," he reckons that the minimum agricultural requirements per capita would range from 240 to 280 kilograms of wheat equivalents annually, depending on climate and body-weight. On the other hand, the per capita annual consumption in advanced communities such as U.S.A. is about 10 times higher, or 2½ tons of wheat equivalents which seems to be the physiological maximum.

The potential agricultural area of the world is estimated at 2039 million hectares of standard farm land equivalents of two crop tropical areas and 1090 million

hectares of standard farm equivalents of cold climate areas (the standard farm land being taken as the equivalent of good temperate farm land). The best experimental techniques in use in agricultural laboratories would, when practically applied, yield a man's food requirements by the continuous cultivation of only 20 square metres of land. The presumption (never made explicit in the paper) seems to be that the food requirements of the growing world population can be met for a long time to come. It must be noted, however, that such optimism is not valid in the long run, for, as Mr. B. Benjamin points out earlier, if the current rates of growth continue for 600 years, the world population would reach a figure that would leave only one square metre of space per person.

In the short run, the acuteness of the problem is due to the low productivity of agriculture in under-developed countries. Professor Clark reviews the main findings of a number of studies in India and other low income countries to point out the very low marginal productivity of labour. He argues that the Indian agricultural output can be increased $3\frac{1}{2}$ times if India can attain Japanese standards in the use of fertilizers, plant breeding and rural education. One would generally agree with Professor Clark's appraisal of such a technical feasibility. But one fails to see any logical support for his opposition to a contraceptive of the type sought for by Mr. Pirie on the ground that it would lead to under-population. It must be emphasized that the population policies of under-developed countries aim at restraining and lowering the otherwise rising rates of population growth and not at reducing the absolute size of populations. Unless, this aim is attained, the need for 'demographic' investments—investments to maintain the current levels of per capita output and to equip the additional workers at the present standard of techniques—will continue to restrict severely the ability of these countries to invest in measures to increase productivity, measures that Professor Clark himself supports.

On the whole, as Professor Brinley Thomas notes in his concluding remarks, the pointed sense of urgency evident in Professor Calder's remarks is absent from the four contributions. While one can be optimistic regarding the technical feasibility of solving the food problem for the next two or three decades, in the longer run one cannot escape a pessimistic view. Unless death-control is followed by birth-control, the disturbance in the ecological equilibrium between the man and finite resources of mother earth cannot be corrected.

Thus, this short book is a succinct and stimulating introduction to the nutritional, biochemical, demographic and some of the economic aspects of the food problem of growing world population.

PRAVIN M. VISARIA

Agricultural Development in Modern Japan, Takekazu Ogura (Ed.), Japan-FAO Association, Tokyo, Japan, 1963. Pp. xvi+688.

The book gives a factual and analytical treatment of the evolution of the pattern of agricultural development of Japan against the background of the country's history, social evolution, economic development and political set-up. Japan has successfully brought about a transformation of her agriculture even with

small-scale farming. Hence a study of the type reviewed here will prove to be of great interest and value to many of the Asian countries which have progressed slowly and haltingly. It is true that in many ways the Japanese experience is unique and is the outcome of the operation of forces which are peculiar to her economy, not merely of climate and geography, but also of history and politics, tradition and social institutions. Despite these differences, the achievements of Japan in the sphere of agricultural economy are of profound significance to other Asian countries facing similar problems.

The volume under review which is a symposium was originally planned to be the account of the contributions made by Japan to the Freedom From Hunger Campaign of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The study consists of four parts: the first three parts deal with economic, legal and technological aspects respectively of Japanese agriculture and the fourth part deals with the significance of Japanese experience to other Asian countries. Each chapter is contributed by experts in different fields. The result is an admirable volume presenting a comprehensive picture of Japanese agriculture in all its aspects between 1868 to 1963.

The study provides a useful and interesting illustration of the inter-relationships between agriculture and other sectors of the economy in the course of general economic growth. It vividly brings out the important role played by agriculture in the economic development by providing resources and funds needed for investment by industries. Agricultural export also provided most of the foreign exchange needed for development, while providing adequately for the growing demand of the people for farm products preventing inflation in the country.

Another striking feature brought out by the study is the drastic and far-reaching change brought about in the structure of agriculture as a result of land reform. It gives an analytical description of the historical situation which made such changes inevitable and also of other socio-economic conditions which made it most acceptable. Japan nurtured good leadership which made implementation of land reform successful. Even though Japan did not do away with tenancy as an institution, the low ceiling made it possible to extract a great deal of surplus land for redistribution and enlarge the area of individual ownership. The result was that whereas before the reform 48 per cent of Japan's land was owner-operated, after the reform, the figure has risen to 90 per cent. With a low ceiling,—no evasion and effective implementation, the majority of the tenants became peasant proprietors.

The vital importance of legislation to agricultural development is brought out in Part II of the volume which is devoted to an exhaustive study of legislative measures in the various sectors of agriculture and the impact of such measures on Japanese agriculture. The outstanding success of Japanese agricultural development is largely ascribed to the flexibility and thoroughness with which its policies and measures have been applied.

Rice cultivation being very important for Japan, rice culture has been the pivot of agricultural development and productivity. The development of productivity in rice culture showed the way to Japanese agricultural progress, thus emphasising the basic importance of rice culture to the entire economy.

The chapter on Agricultural Problems in a Rapidly Growing Economy analyses the causes that had contributed to the difference in the pace of growth of the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy. It points out the paradox that in spite of the development of agricultural techniques and increase in the productivity of labour, the ratio of net farm production to the invested capital declined from 104 per cent in 1957 to 92 per cent in 1960—according to the farm household economic survey (p. 95). There is also a decline in the efficiency of farm management.

It is needless to point out that the Japanese experiments and experience are of profound significance to those countries where agriculture is the mainstay of the economy and the process of transformation of agricultural economy has been initiated. Japan has shown to the world what could be achieved within the framework of traditional small-scale farming.

(MRS.) B. SHARADA RAI

Adjustments in Agriculture—A National Basebook, Mervin G. Smith and Carlton F. Christian (Editors), Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa, U.S.A., 1961. Pp. xvii+376. \$3.95.

The problems of adjustment in agriculture are not typical to under-developed countries. They are faced by developed agriculture too, though for different reasons and with different magnitudes. A perusal of this 'Basebook' consisting of contributions by several authors on various aspects of U. S. agricultural economy reveals how their varied analysis leads to one major problem of adjustment in U.S. agriculture.

An under-developed agriculture suffers from pressure of population, low returns to resources and low per capita incomes. The developed agriculture of United States too faces a cost-price squeeze and a less favourable income situation. Farm costs have risen so much so that the production expenses are in the neighbourhood of 60 per cent of the total gross farm income. On the other hand, commodity prices have declined in view of rapidly increasing production and low price and income elasticity of demand for farm products in the United States. Though per capita income of farming community has increased, the increase is less proportionate than the increase in farm production. Besides, this increase itself has been smaller than the same for workers or managers in other industries. So the main problem facing the U.S. agriculture is to achieve a balance between supply and demand for farm products.

On supply side, as one of the papers points out, the migration of labour out of agriculture has been very slow. The labour transfer has been difficult mainly due to the problems of adjustment such as severing the family ties, acquiring skill and experience more suited to non-farming occupations, etc. This point is harped upon quite frequently in the book by various authors. However, the fact that the rate of growth of U.S. economy and hence the absorption capacity of the non-farm sectors has not increased at a rapid rate during recent times has been missed. Besides, the avenues for employment that demanded labour in large quantities irrespective of its quality, such as rail-road construction, are exhausted. The

technological development that has taken place in U.S. industrial sectors themselves is so tremendous that it demands only skilled labour as an ally to the capital resources. This problem could be obscured during the war period when demand on the economy was tremendous. Now it is again there as a mark of wealthy nation.

On demand side, U.S. economy has reached that stage when demand for food can be influenced by population increases and not by per capita income increases. It has been broadly estimated by one of the authors in this book that the increase in population will be about five times as powerful a demand factor during the 1960's as will be the expected increase in per capita income and the consequent changes in the commodity pattern of food consumption. As far as the non-farm uses of farm products are concerned, which accounted for only about 11 per cent of total utilisation of farm products in 1958, a further decrease is expected during 1960's due to inroads of synthetic products into markets formerly dominated by fibers and other products of farm origin.

This imbalance between demand and supply could be corrected by the manipulation of government policies. However the government programmes in relation to agricultural adjustment have been without consideration for efficiency, according to one of the authors. The United States has had for more than 30 years a policy of protecting farmers—or at least groups of farmers from falling prices, whatever the cause of price decline. This results into sharp conflict between the requirements of agricultural adjustments and such government programmes. Prof. Heady, in one of the articles in this book, goes even a step further and asserts that the government farm programmes have been less important than positive programmes in education, vocational guidance and employment services to facilitate the movement of farm workers into better jobs. In this respect, it makes little sense for the U.S. society to make large capital investment in promoting farm technology which has the main effect of displacing farm labour without investing equally in guiding this farm labour to production of non-farm goods and services desired by consumers in general. That this problem is not grasped properly by the administrative authorities is recognised by some authors in this book. As an example, it is stated that education and training directed at farm youth has focussed on farming even in regions where the number of births greatly exceeds farming opportunities and out-migration has been necessary.

Besides this problem of disparity in incomes between farm and non-farm sectors and the technological adjustment, there is also a problem of disparity in income levels within the farm sector that is faced by U.S. agriculture. The range of variation in farm incomes is very large which shows that farm industry in U.S. is not homogeneous. It faces two major income problems : (1) that of commercial farming wherein production outpaced demand and therefore incomes have been low accordingly and (2) that of chronically low income farms with farm families owning so few production resources that meager incomes would be forthcoming under any level of prices.

The book discusses these and many other problems of adjustment facing U.S. agriculture. The authors, as stated in the introduction, are not pleading a special case for farmers but have presented basic information so that the greater

insight obtained may be helpful while considering future programmes and policies for U.S. agriculture.

(MRS.) TARA SHUKLA

The Changing Pattern of Economic Activity in a Gambia Village, M. R. Haswell, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1963. Pp. x+109. 15s.

This small booklet embodies the report on a resurvey of an African village conducted by Miss Haswell twenty-four years after the first survey. It is comprised of six chapters. The background of the resurvey is provided in the first chapter giving an account of the geographical, historical, sociological and economic features of the Genieri village. In spite of the primitive socio-economic set-up it is interesting to note that the work on crop production is clearly divided between men and women, the former concentrating on the cultivation of a cash crop, groundnut and the latter producing the foodgrains. However, this is not an economic proposition. Despite the high intensity of labour inputs by the womenfolk, the yield per acre of paddy is low and the scarcity of foodgrains has been a common feature in these villages. The fertile tidal swamps surrounding the villages are not used for cultivation. The inaccessibility of the swamps was a major hurdle in this direction until in the early 1950s when the Gambia Government undertook the construction work of cheap causeways and roads connecting these swamps. With this not only the cultivated area expanded but the output of rice rose up due to the higher yield rates in these reclaimed areas. Then the 'culture contacts' developed through the opening of the groundnut buying stations exerted their own influence on the changes that have taken place in the economic activities in these villages. They brought within the reach of the villagers a large number of consumer goods.

The change in the crop pattern that has accompanied the reclamation of marshy lands has enabled rice to be used by women as a means of exchange. Gradually rice cultivation and women labour are breaking away with the subsistence farming. But no substantial improvements in the income levels have taken place. The fluctuations in the price of the cash crop, groundnut, and the competition from the cheap imported rice have rendered the farmer's income position vulnerable. The conclusion is that the desire for a higher standard of living has certainly manifested itself in these villages, though the technical limitations of production remain as bottlenecks. It is highly interesting to note that "the lack of assured markets at remunerative prices for agricultural products" according to Miss Haswell, "is perhaps the most pressing factor inhibiting the process of economic growth in the agricultural sector, upon which the nation so vitally depends."

The reviewer feels that the presentation and style could have been improved. On the whole, the book is interesting and would prove useful to students of agricultural economics.

N. K. THINGALAYA