

# LAND REFORM STUDIES

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## INTRODUCTION

LAND REFORM AS A SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION IN LATIN AMERICA POST-dates its appearance as a political measure, and although its appearance as a plank in programs of liberal and leftist parties and movements has been in vogue since the Twenties, few serious studies that can be properly referred to as land reform investigation took place until the Thirties. Many of the early studies that may be cited as pioneer works in this field are fact-finding land use studies by the geographers (e.g., McBride in Bolivia and Chile), and some early rural sociological studies in the same vein (e.g., Carl Taylor in Argentina and the Consejo de Bienestar Rural study on the Venezuelan Andes). In many cases these types of studies have continued into the past decade (DeYoung in Haiti, Ford in Peru, and Fals Borda in Colombia). The wave of anthropological community studies (mostly rural) were microcosmic, pioneer type research on land tenure. There were few agricultural censuses upon which any sort of nationwide study would need to have been based and in general the basic reference material for land reform until 1950 was most spotty and conjectural.

On almost any subject in Latin America with general research significance there tends to be abundant data, but few hypotheses and generalizations. On the subject of land reform this situation tends to be the reverse. For this reason and also because it is virtually impossible to separate the component categories of land reform in any general treatment, we have decided to treat generally of "land reform" (in Spanish, *reforma agraria*) rather than any of the less controversial and more restricted concepts such as "land tenure."

Intense interest in land reform like community development and population explosion, was generated by the immediate post-war trends in newly emerging countries in Asia and Africa which helped precipitate the articulation of aspirations in countries of the Western Hemisphere. Largely as a result of this stimulus a number of agricultural censuses which provide our more reliable quantitative benchmarks for land reform discussions over time date from the middle forties. Rural economic data, however, was scarce and unreliable. The reviewer can remember back over little more than a decade when it was considered impudent to ask a senior economic analyst to discuss locally consumed food production figures in any Latin American country, not to mention farm income, on anything less than a 100 hectare enterprise. Little if any data was available on land tenure for the majority of Latin American countries on anything like a national basis. As of 20 years ago, most authorities considered

it a short term impossibility, and a long term boondoggle to try to get such figures.

Largely under stimulus from international organizations concerned with technical aid, however, a movement was launched to gather facts on land tenure; and slowly but steadily the reports have been accumulating. In some countries reasonably complete censuses exist; in others a sampling of the areas. In the last five years numerous syntheses have brought this information together. There are still discrepancies in the comparability of the data, but there is no doubt about the existence of a sizable body of data for whoever cares to interpret it either by country or comparatively.

Along with concern for land tenure which lies at the core of all land reform, correlative studies have been undertaken on land use, tenancy or tenure relationships, productivity, and (lagging far behind) farm income. With the array of these formidable platoons of data, it is possible to develop a major research synthesis; yet the ever more rapid accumulation of material has made such a synthesis either staggering, unappealing or both to the few individuals sufficiently steeped in the subject to be able to attempt it. What we propose in this review is to summarize the synthetic statements by area, country, and then by topical focus insofar as we can obtain access to them (many syntheses are classified and many of the most perceptive observations are obscured by bureaucratic *caveats*). In this process we shall comment upon the studies in progress, explaining their orientation and the themes they profess to be exploring; and finally to indicate what appears to be the general "research drift" insofar as any clearcut pattern is discernible.

With the accumulation of data, surprisingly enough, generalizations continue to proliferate and hypotheses to linger, despite the contradictions between many. This situation may be due to two prime factors: 1) certain ideological and nationalistic *a priori* biases; and 2) the interdisciplinary character of the research components. Land reform is here understood more or less as defined by the signatories of the Punta del Este charter and hence includes both these factors. On the one hand it has both economic and politico-social dimensions. The subject is thus at once interdisciplinary from the research viewpoint; and it has fostered studies from virtually all the social sciences which are difficult to interrelate.

On the other hand it is largely a triumph of bilingual ambiguity that the Punta del Este language was unanimously approved. Almost immediately individual countries developed individual interpretations, and it is no longer clear what exactly land reform might really imply in the way of concrete change. It is perhaps not too great a distortion of interpretation to state that in the minds of most Latin Americans land reform has signified a moral obligation to redress the wrongs caused by certain "feudal" patterns of land tenure and owner-

cultivator relationships which they shared as a common heritage from colonial times to a greater or less degree. Nevertheless as Carroll (1965: 3) states: "It is impossible to participate in any discussion with Latin American colleagues without feeling the intensity of conviction on this issue. However, even a near-consensus of what social justice means in the context of development has not yet emerged and is presently one of the most controversial issues of professional debate." North Americans generally do not participate in this concept and tend to regard land reform as a type of amelioration of the socio-economic situation of the rural area, but with considerations of increased productivity foremost and social redress very much a secondary aspect.

With this bias more or less clearly stated it is possible to discuss concepts that constitute the crux of land reform research with certain objectivity whether the data be presented from the North American or the Latin American source. While some of the prewar studies may have been highly objective in orientation, there is almost always a bias in the orientation of studies subsequent to 1950 inclining towards or against the likelihood and desirability of land redistribution. Whether this be explicit or implicit in the tendentious language of the text, the bias is usually unmistakable. One cannot point to a single comparative summary of Latin American land reform that is objective to date. This situation derives partially from the fact that much of the research on land reform has been motivated and financed by action-oriented programs. On the question of how impartial the social scientist in action programs can be, Jorge A. Ochoa de Eguileor (Gilberti, et al: 114) quotes Malcolm McDonald, director of CIRA: "Al investigador que tiene conciencia social, fuertemente afectado por lo que él ve diariamente en América Latina, le digo que *no hay* (y subraya el no hay) incompatibilidad entre su posición como investigador científico y una participación mas activa en esta batalla . . . Yo no veo ninguna razón por la que un investigador no puede meterse completamente en el río humano que es esta lucha, y al mismo tiempo retener o aun aumentar su eficacia como científico e investigador." The UN reports which consistently summarize developments every two years on a world-wide basis have shown ample awareness of this bias, but even in the latest report the organizational loyalty overrides a thoroughly impartial treatment of the case studies of land reform successes and failures in recent Latin American history. Similar clouding mars the more inaccessible reports of AID and various (US and Latin American) government evaluations. Independent evaluations from scholars have been notably rare. Perhaps the reports of the Land Tenure Center at Wisconsin, particularly those which document the give-and-take in round table papers, reflect the closest approaches to objectivity in treating land tenure; and these are usually restricted to case studies in one country.

The second distinctive feature of land reform studies is the degree to which

they reflect strong interdisciplinary interests. Originally conceived to be the area of the human geographer, the field has gradually attracted the attention of the agricultural economist and anthropologist. More recently and with more fanfare the development-economist, political scientist, and legal specialist, aided in some cases by the historian, have directed their research interest to land reform. While each discipline has tended to mark for itself a certain area of research in which it claims competence, the individual study tends to and usually is obliged to assert claims or generalizations based upon data from other disciplines. Thus many of the anthropological contributions which are microcosmic views aimed at analyzing the *modus vivendi* and values of the peasant tend to show a section of the agrarian spectrum in depth. The agricultural economist may survey farm management or crop patterns with basic concern for productivity and income or he may sample "typical" holdings. He usually zeroes in quicker on quantitative indices or inequalities than the anthropologist, but does not grasp as well the qualitative, oftentimes motivational, aspects of a given ecological man-land situation.

Even among anthropologists and sociologists there is a tendency to disagree on the emphasis to be placed on the structural aspects of the agrarian social analysis. It is often asserted to the degree of being one of the common-places of agrarian reform that the macro structure inherited from colonial times of *hacendado*-administrator-*peon* (or *campesino*) is the overriding institutional obstacle to progress in Latin America; that it is responsible for the corresponding "traditional" value systems of upper and lower groups. Or is it the Hispano-Catholic world-view which produces the hierarchical structure? The battle rages often on the issue of whether the typical Latin American micro-community (which is the nucleus of agrarian reform) actually has a structure and if such a structure is worth preserving or adapting to changes. There is little consensus on the definition of the characteristics of a Latin American peasantry, when the source field studies are paraded in review.

At the refreshing distance of the development economist the broad outlines appear less blurred, and his approach sweeps aside regional and even national differences that prevent agreement among the sociologists and anthropologists as he concerns himself with the basic questions that need an answer "to move ahead." With that phenomena does agrarian reform correlate? What is its effect on productivity, for example? How about a cost-benefit ratio so that one can quantify the total project cost of agrarian reform over say 30 to 40 years? These projections are bedevilled by the problem of correlating the potential effect of land reform on overall employment. Even if productivity initially dips with land reform, can land redistribution and accessory practices absorb the threatening urban swell and hence help shore up the slow-moving

industrial front? Is it worth some sacrifice? Will the process be more effective, more rapid, more humane with labor or capital intensive farm technology?

By now the types of expertise furnished by the political scientist and legal adviser suggest themselves, and the implications of changing the whole relationship of the power to the land tenure structure become obvious. The nature of the institutions and their history, the coalitions of forces and parties and trends of politics over the years become important. Here, as in many other aspects the historian can and does make a substantial contribution. Finally, the geographer, who like his subject matter had staked out a frontier in agrarian reform, returns to the contemporary study in the role of expert on colonization, transportation, and spontaneous settlement.

This does not exhaust the interdisciplinary roster, as the various agricultural technicians have made and make significant contributions in defining limits of productivity, land and water use, conservation and crop patterns which are ultimately incorporated into one or another synthetic report.

The tremendous quantity and diversity of material that has been written on land reform in Latin America since 1950 and in ever-increasing amounts since 1960 makes it imperative to review some of the more salient aspects, since the overall picture of a plethora of studies and reports at different levels, with different foci and with different biases can bemuddle the most keen and perserverant analyst.

#### THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS

Certain basic theoretical issues that orient the entire research objective should be discussed first. The most basic is the desirability of agrarian reform itself. In more precise terms, what are the preconditions for agrarian reform? Is there a ratio of tolerance in unequal land distribution which cannot be passed? Does land reform ever effectively develop its own momentum or is it always related to broader political developments? Whether these type questions are raised and subsequently investigated depends much upon whether the research is action-oriented. To an agency, such as the UN or the Pan American Union, which carries a policy commitment to encourage the adoption of agrarian reform programs and assist in their implementation, it is unlikely that such studies will be undertaken. Other more conservatively oriented agencies such as international banks may sponsor research on precisely these topics.

Certain key issues seem to be at the basis of the land reform study: 1) whether it is indeed a means of securing more equitable income distribution; 2) whether it can absorb rural under-employment; and 3) whether its prime function is economic, political, or social with all the implications of whichever

order of priorities emerges. Answers to these questions are assumed in many studies, but in others they may emerge as the object of inquiry. Until now no single study has been concerned mainly with one of these major theoretical issues. They are usually presented in short articles such as that of Raup (1964), certain concluding observations such as those of Erasmus (1964), or in the contrasting hypotheses of Pearse (1964) and the CEPAL (1963) study.

The issues posed are roughly as follows: On equitable redistribution and its permanency, Raup concludes (Raup: 9): "Without this feature (workable schemes for supervised credit) land reform can become little more than an episodic redistribution of wealth, shorn of the dynamic influence that credit can introduce." This position on agrarian reform (with or without the *caveat* of credit) characterizes the "hard look" of many economists. Quite clearly, the political scientist, historian or sociologist might be more impressed with the "episodic redistribution of wealth" and its political and social consequences. One might speculate on how long to the economist is the duration of an "episode."

The general argument of whether forced or voluntary production actually results in higher productivity is summed up by Raup (Raup: 13–14):

Difficulties in securing farm products of uniform and high quality from a multitude of small peasant-type producers have led some economists to conclude that the task is impossible in many underdeveloped countries. Attention has shifted to estate and plantation-type units or to variations of large-scale collective-type forms of farm organization.

These centrally directed units can organize masses of unskilled rural labor into reasonably efficient production cadres. In backward areas, where managerial talent is scarce, these units economize on management. There are thus strong reasons why they have tended to emerge early in the histories of agricultural development of a wide variety of countries, including the United States, India, and the Soviet Union. Plantations or collective farms conserve scarce managerial skills, permit labor supervision on a mass basis, and make possible the achievement of acceptable levels of product, quality, and standardization. These are impressive short-run accomplishments. But these gains have been acquired at a high price in many countries. Plantations and other large scale units have seldom contributed to the development of quality in the human labor resource. And, they have conspicuously failed to promote the development of intensive animal agriculture. By inhibiting the development of widespread networks of agricultural education, extension, credit and marketing services, they have perpetuated an agricultural structure made up of a small modern sector using high skills, and a large primitive sector of native production.

In this economist's point of view land reform is seen as a measure to develop the social capital, the human labor resource, and is echoed by Erasmus as one of the yardsticks for his evaluation of land reform in three countries (Erasmus: 1964).

Thomas Carroll (1964) refers to inequitable distribution of incomes, un-economic spending, and lack of reinvestment in the land as consequences of overall gross maldistribution of lands from evidence based on the censuses and special studies. There are, however, arguments that can justify a high imbalance of land-holding with more equitable income distribution. Certainly there are productivity arguments that could be brought to bear to soften the accusation that maldistribution of land is an unmitigated course. Carroll (1965: 22) himself best sums up the arguments and evidence on this problem: "It is by now obvious that agricultural investment, without drastic changes in land tenure, yields below-optimum results and is likely to aggravate social tensions. It should also be realized that income distribution *per se* without an appropriate investment policy to go with it and new structures to absorb it, is likely to lead to a disappointing economic performance."

Another theoretical point raised by Raup (Raup: 14) is the proper "size of the farm and the land tenure system appropriate to its support." He indicates that some progress has been made from the original ethnocentric position wherein economic size was considered a technical concept. He refers to Hirschman's redefinition in economic terms of economic size being relative to normal profits and efficient foreign supply, but concludes, "The economic size of the farm is not only an economic concept, it is a cultural concept as well. *It cannot be interpreted without reference to the total setting in which economic activity occurs.*" (Italics mine.) This point (feliculously made by the economist) should be remembered in the following summaries where figures on farm size are cited *ad nauseam* to demonstrate this or that degree of inequality without the slightest reference to the significance of "an economic farm size."

Related to the theoretical implications of changes in tenure status (tenancy and sub-tenancy) Raup (Raup: 13) develops the thesis that the "land tenure reform that will best serve these needs (output increasing forms of agricultural technology) is the one that will give the maximum incentive for increased output to the largest percentage of the agricultural labor force. Large scale, heavily mechanized units do not seem suited to this task (nor as he points out later, does one characterized by several levels of sub-tenancy). Small scale units, intensively worked by a literate and skilled labor force having a direct interest in high output and good husbandry are the ones indicated."

Closely related to this position of the higher output, the higher the number of small producers, is the hypothesis cited by Erven Long (Long: 115) relating a type of land tenure system to stability. "*A system of owner-operated farms of such size as to require family labor only would contribute the maximum toward political and social stability.*" This thesis applied to Latin America has received partial endorsement from Erasmus (1964) and Nelson (1964) as being validated in their independent evaluations of the three recent Latin

American land reform programs. The regions of small, family-owned and operated farms appeared to produce a socially stable situation. It is supported in a number of United States government reports on programs in these countries.

Perhaps the most balanced judgment on the economic farm is that of Dorner, new head of the Wisconsin Land Tenure Center (1964:253): "Historical circumstances and developments may make family farms in one area feasible, while under other circumstances family farms may be a complete failure . . . The main point is that it is quite useless to reason from such general systems as family farming, collective agriculture, cooperative farming, etc . . . There is no reason to believe that countries need to end up with either one system or the other. There is room for and indeed need for diversity . . . The important point is to determine the possibilities for fruitful action within the present circumstances. On these complex issues we cannot trust too far our individual or even collective imagination. We need to maintain a constant check and contact with experience."

Other issues of a more properly political nature such as the real, ideal, and legal definition of the concept of "private property" in Latin America; its role in the power struggle between the private and public sector as well as within those sectors still requires definition. The research of Charles Anderson on national reactions to land reform and recent comparative legal research should soon shed some light on this subject. Study of the growing number of agrarian reform institutions should be undertaken to show their relative stature in government. The use of the term "revolution" in various contexts has recently become significant in Latin American land reform analyses. Carroll (1965: 16) has this to say:

The concept of revolution, of course, has been frightfully muddled in current literature and in policy statements on the Alliance for Progress. With either "peaceful revolutions" or the "revolution of expectations" there is a tendency, especially among American writers, to identify any large change as revolutionary . . . By and large Latin American writers have been more consistent in reserving for this term the connotation it normally carries: a sudden, drastic, and violent shift in the economic base of power with a re-structuring of social hierarchy. Thus, while for some the revolution implies a dangerous, bloody, and undesirable phenomenon, for others it is the essential condition for breaking the vicious circle of the status quo and a means toward power balance more suitable for development.

We have introduced just a few of the more frequent hypotheses that are discussed in land reform studies. It will be obvious in the subsequent review and discussion that hypotheses developed in the hothouse of one academic discipline, depend upon flowering (or demonstration) in the fields of another, a situation which makes for confusion. In these and similar situations, Long's well-phrased warning is timely (Long: 44). "Many causes interact to bring



about the consequences noted and usually little is done analytically to disentangle these causes so as to assess their individual net contributions to the observed effects. Some gross inferences give full and free play to the analyst's personal convictions which often provide him with the major premise of his ultimate judgment."

The crux of the difference in theoretical orientation between the several authorities lies in whether they conceive of the reform as a means or an end. Quite clearly Carroll (1965: 19) is thinking of the agrarian reform as an "end" when he states the objectives of agrarian reform as the attainment of "new rural institutions as vehicles of development . . . the incorporation of the new peasantry (or rural workers) into a participating and meaningful power group in the national hierarchy." Other experts without expressly saying so, operate on the assumption that agrarian reform is really a "means," a continuing process of readapting the agrarian structure to accommodate to the social tensions and economic pressures that are constantly changing. Perhaps closest to expressing this view is Chevalier (1965: 38) in referring to the flexibility of the Mexican *ejidos*.

#### OVERALL LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

The principal international agency responsible for land reform studies has been the United Nations, and through the years, 1954 to the present, it has chronicled the developments in this field throughout the world. After a brief review of the successive United Nations reports on Latin America, we shall shift our focus to a few of the principal generalists on Latin American land reform representing somewhat varied points of view.

In the United Nations first Report on Progress in Land Reform (1954) there are figures for land distribution representative of most areas of the world. It is clear that there are two patterns of land distribution for the "developed countries." In one at least 50 percent of farm area is in holdings of over 1,000 acres with no *minifundios*. In this category are the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. The other pattern shows a high incidence of small farms (at least a third of the holdings under two hectares) and the greatest percent of farm area falling under the 1,000 acre size holding. This is the characteristic pattern for Europe.

Puerto Rico represented a combination of the two with a pattern of *minifundios* (52.3 percent of farms under nine acres) and 41 percent of the farm area in holdings of over 260 acres (no higher acreage holdings are given). The few Latin American countries reporting (Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, and Cuba) showed an "underdeveloped" pattern of both a high degree of *minifundios* and a high concentration of large estates. The report (UN: 1954:

283–5) concluded: “In Latin America, although the defects in the agrarian structure of several reporting countries admittedly prevent social and agricultural progress, the need for reform policies in the interest of the landless, small and medium farmers is only now beginning to gain recognition . . . Thus a review of progress suggests that the need for further progress is most evident in the countries of Latin America . . . and in the Middle East.”

In the United Nations Second Report (1956), Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru replied for the first time. The summation in the 1956 report refers to little progress in land reform legislation with most emphasis on increasing production and ancillary measures such as credit and extension. The third United Nations Report (1962) is based, in addition to questionnaires to governments, on case studies in certain countries, information from special United Nations agencies and reports of other research agencies. Finally, the basic generalization is stated (UN: 1962:2):

“The agricultural pattern of most Latin American countries is characterized by very large properties, *latifundia*, on the one hand and minute properties, *minifundia*, on the other. *Latifundia* are often extensively used ranches, while others are rented or sharecropped under conditions exacting to the tenants or sharecroppers. The indigenous population, especially in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, has been forced on to the high plateau, where they endeavor to farm very limited and poor marginal land.”

In discussing agricultural productivity and output, the same review (UN: 1962:4) “emphasizes the lack of adequate information for a satisfactory treatment of the output and productivity changes brought about by land reform, but emphasizes that the problems involved are vital.” Land reform has affected employment wages, and living conditions as follows: “In Mexico, the comprehensive agrarian reform has helped to absorb underemployed labor.” In Cuba it is reported that diversified farming has removed considerable seasonal unemployment while in Bolivia and Venezuela wage workers have benefited from direct redistribution of land (UN: 1962:4).

Under land reform and economic development, the United Nations Report for 1962 (UN: 1962: 8–9) found that “Time series of an aggregative type permitting comparison of national output before and after land reform are rarely if ever available, while cross-section comparisons tend to be inconclusive . . . Since in many of the countries referred to, especially those near the top of the list for overall per capita growth, there has been a many-sided energetic push toward higher economic development, the dangers are obvious of using a simple cause-and-effect analysis which takes land reform as the point of departure.”

The 1963 report of the World Social Situation by the United Nations also reviewed agrarian reform research in Latin America in a broader context. The

generalizations reached by the United Nations World Social Situation 1963 Report is summarized in rather alarming totals:

<i>Size of Farms (Hectares)</i>	<i>Percentage of Farms</i>	<i>Percentage of Land Area</i>
0–20	72.6	3.7
20–100	18.0	8.4
100–1,000	7.9	23.0
Over 1,000	1.5	64.9
Total	100.0	100.0

The above chart was originally published by Carroll (1961:165) and entitled "Estimated percentage distribution of land holdings in Latin America, around 1950." In the 1963 Report on the World Social Situation the "estimated" was not mentioned. The same figures were subsequently cited by Chonchol (1965) with reference to an ILO report. It is worth noting that the most authoritative compilations of the agrarian censuses for Latin American countries in the Institute of Interamerican Statistics (1957) and the UCLA Statistical Abstracts (1963) reveal the fragmentary state of the tabulated data from the several 1950 censuses, leaving one with the impression that very much would have had to be "estimated."

The following generalized statements are then made: (UN: 1963: 131–3): "The small holdings are intensively cultivated, but can hardly afford their owners subsistence, let alone a surplus for the market . . . The very large holdings are not intensively cultivated and include large areas of land held idle for speculative purposes.

"The most urgent demands for land distribution come from the most densely populated rural areas, in which there is not enough land to give each family a plot of economic size.

"Land in most of the countries is over-valued in relation to the income that is derived from it, partly because of the traditional prestige of land ownership, partly because of its usefulness as a hedge against inflation."

The above harvest of generalizations may be readily challenged from various points of view, marshalling case study evidence and either regional or national statistics. On the other hand there is an element of truth at which they are aimed, and which careful research should be designed to reveal. This depends upon answers to such questions as what is an economically viable holding, given a certain technology and ecological base; and these in turn devolve upon studies of what has been sufficient and what is adequate now in Latin American countries. Attempts to brush aside all cultivation patterns as *minifundio* or *latifundio* do not lead us to meaningful conclusions upon which a constructive agrarian reform program can be based.

The Pan American Union summation, "Tipología socioeconomica de los países latinoamericanos," after briefly setting the characteristics of *minifundio* and *latifundio*, states (1963: 152): "es imposible establecer una comparación entre los países de América Latina en lo que respecta a la importancia del *minifundio* y *latifundio* debido a la diferencia de clasificaciones estadísticas y a veces a las unidades métricas utilizadas." Nevertheless the authors wrestled with the data, using 1,000 hectares as minimum to a *latifundio* and five as the maximum of a *minifundio*. This procedure left them with a rather confused picture, which did not correlate well with the other indices used in the study to demonstrate the relative degree of socio-economic advance of different countries. Quite clearly the manipulation of other dimensions would have given a different pattern (a 500 hectare limit would seem adequate to define lower limits of *latifundio*). Had the researchers used a balance derived, perhaps, from the average of the European indices, the *minifundio-latifundio* ratio may have been more meaningful than the presentation of a simple balance sheet for each.

Few studies deal with land tenure distribution by holdings without discussing the close interrelationship of holding size with form of tenancy. Efforts at comparison here have been even less successful, since there is indeed a major classificatory problem in determining what is owner-operated. One of the principal problems is the extent to which title is recognized by the census takers. The complications of various forms of share-cropping and tenant farming make the definition of "renter" hazy and difficult to compare. (See the Interamerican Statistical Institute report on Latin American agrarian censuses.)

The most recent United Nations summary (UN: 1965: Ad. 2, 9) fortunately indicates that the UN and CIDA (Comité Interamericana de Desarrollo Agrícola) have oriented recent research in more specific directions: "For each district within each country it is estimated the holding sizes which, given the predominant local soils and climate, represented respectively less than enough, just enough and more than enough to keep a normal family occupied." In addition to being about three times as copious as the earlier reports, the 1965 United Nations Report is far richer in specific country detail and discussion than in generalizations across the board. While the authors of this exemplary report were directing their attention specifically to the United Nations and specialized agencies to help them bring their resources of research and experience to bear on agrarian problems, the independent scholar will find the summary indispensable and not a little new material introduced for the first time. A comparative chart on legislation covering land distribution for 13 countries eliminates what has proved a burdensome task for researchers since inception of interest in the subject, and quickly presents the essential comparative aspects of a most complex and rapidly growing subject.

The "seasoning" of the United Nations land reform chronicle over the decade of documentation is reflected in the research recommendations of the 1965 report. In introducing the concluding chapter of its report, entitled "The Impact of Land Reform on Economic and Social Development," the report says (UN: 1965: 3–5): "the general scarcity of relevant information on the effects of land reform measures encountered in the attempts to collect data for the attached paper suggests that very little progress has been made in evaluating the results of land reform programs . . ." After remarking that countries with older land reform measures should undertake more thorough reappraisals and critical assessments, it states "Since so many of the effects of land reform lie in long-term changes in community structures, class relations and popular attitudes, a full assessment requires not only the collection of the most easily measured quantitative data through administrative channels, *but also more intensive research in depth by qualified social scientists.*" (Italics added.) Further it listed as one of a series of five needs for immediate attention in land reform work, "the need evidenced by the accompanying report for objective and continuous assessment of what is being achieved as a result of land reform measures that have been and are being taken; it is a matter of determining not only whether they are reaching their objectives, but also whether those objectives are still appropriate or whether they stand in need of revision and improvement . . . parallel with the provision of technical assistance, continuing study and research are called for to help provide answers to questions that arise in the course of land reform planning and implementation."

If the anonymous board of United Nations scholars have become more cautious over the years on the ability to generalize on land reform, individual experts continue to plough the rather polemical furrow of overstatement. One of the outstanding authorities in the field is Thomas Carroll, and his recent (1964) summation reveals a rather forthright diagnosis.

On *latifundio-minifundio* Carroll (1964: 89) states: "While there are notable exceptions, the *hacienda* system is inefficient both on the individual and national levels. Output per man and per land is low. . . . The large holdings pre-empt most of the good land, squeezing the *minifundistas* into the hills or onto poorer land." On *minifundios*: "Three-fourths or more of all farms in Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic and Haiti are under five hectares. Their possessors lack *not only land* [italics mine] but other productive resources."

In the above conclusions one is inclined to assume that five hectares is an abysmally small holding. Detailed field evidence exists in at least three countries on forms of land use to indicate that most Latin American farmers (certainly those without traction animals—and in many ecological areas traction is out of the question) cannot cultivate more than five hectares without

hiring help from other families (Plan Regional Para el Desarrollo del Sur del Peru/PS/B/8-11: Consejo de Bienestar Rural: Schaedel, 1962).

Carroll generalizes on the Latin American peasant (1964: 91ff): "In general one can say that the typical Latin American farmer is either a non-owning cultivator who has no stake in the land he tills, no security, and little hope, or a *minifundista* with a small plot of land and little else. The concentration of landed property is the main cause for inequality of income distribution in Latin American agriculture . . . The situation varies somewhat, from country to country, but on the whole, about 90 per cent of the farm land is held by less than 10 per cent of the farm owners . . . Not only do the many millions of subsistence farmers make little or no contribution to the economy, but even the salaried farm workers are unemployed or underemployed during long periods."

Again, we may accuse Carroll of overstatement, insofar as peasant holdings account for Haiti's entire coffee crop and a reasonably large share of the sugar, its principal dollar earnings. Anthropological studies in several countries show that, however miniscule the operation, cash transactions take place and the peasant is often the prime supplier of foodstuffs to the urban area. The fact is that in many regions of Latin America the underemployed subsistence farmer or one of his adult sons often "doubles in brass" as the 100-200 day laborer.

The treatment of land reform by Carroll and the earlier UN group reports are not criticized as incorrect in the basic position that there is an urgent need for land reform in Latin American countries. The question is simply raised of whether they have not cited evidence selectively, where other evidence (not in line with their conclusions) was available; and whether they have not tended to concentrate rather exclusively on a certain manner of presentation emphasizing certain topics, but not discussing others. Doubtless the present program of CIDA, which Carroll directs in part, with its three-phased operation will encompass all aspects of the land reform situation. The first cycle of studies has been completed and at this writing all are in press (CIDA reports). They have been carried out in countries where no land reform of consequence has been undertaken. On these reports, Pearse (1964) and the 1965 UN report have commented briefly. This type study should provide a better understanding of the *interrelationships* between land tenure, form of tenancy, productivity, capitalization and income as well as other data on motivations, aspirations, and tendencies over the 1950-60 decade that have been lacking in the larger censuses.

A second spate of studies on countries with agrarian reform programs in operation has been started by CIDA. It is hoped that these studies may provide: 1) a contrast to the previous ones; and 2) indicate the real pluses and

minuses of agrarian reform, both economically and socio-politically. These studies will be on Mexico, Venezuela and Bolivia. The final phase of the CIDA plan encompasses studies on the other countries not so far included, which, with the exception of Uruguay and Paraguay, will be confined to Central America and the Caribbean.

The thesis of Chonchol, representing one school of Latin American thought, presented in a recent summation on tenure and expansion in Latin America (1965), is that the reform of the agrarian structure must be integrated with industrialization in the urban area and with the economic integration of Latin American foreign commerce. In presenting his argument he repeats the standard generalizations about inequalities of land tenure, citing the same overall figures of the UN report on the World Social Situation which were based on a mimeographed report of Oscar Delgado and which we reproduced earlier. Chonchol (Chonchol: 10) waives analysis on a country or regional basis, stating that the data "are monotonously similar for all of the Latin American countries." This statement, even to the neophyte in agrarian reform studies, would be patently absurd in comparing Haiti, Argentina and Peru.

A second attempt to generalize for Latin America gets Chonchol into similar difficulties. After stating the most important limitation, "There are important differences depending upon the amount of land available in each (country), the demographic pressure on the agricultural land, the types of agriculture, the historical evolution of the system of tenancy, etc," he concludes "Nevertheless in almost all countries, as mentioned earlier, the relative concentration of land in the hands of a few people is extraordinarily high." The extreme position taken by Chonchol on land concentration is evidenced by his evaluation of the role of the plantation (which he identifies as a kind of large modern property) as negative in its utilization of employment (*qua* seasonal) and land (*qua* export crops). Most authorities (T. Lynn Smith, Erven Long and possibly even Carroll) consider the commercial enterprise an economic unit, and even the agrarian reform protagonists in Venezuela defend the sugar properties as well-run and equitable undertakings. There is also an important difference to be made between the traditional plantation and the modern commercial enterprise (Mintz: 1963).

Chonchol takes the opposite view from Raup by emphasizing the negative effects produced by land concentration. It has four consequences: 1) unequal distribution of income; 2) social stratification; 3) inequality of opportunity (class rigidity); 4) stagnation of agriculture. This presentation leaves the impression that removing the cause will remedy the evil. Quite clearly the instances of land reform programs already implemented give us ample case studies to disprove each of these cause and effect points.

Moving on to a description of the stratification phenomenon, Chonchol

states the present situation: "In short, it may be stated that, within the expanses of Latin America, opportunities for social advance are restricted to the minimum, and that under the present agrarian structure actual 'castes' co-exist without being integrated and with very different opportunities . . . it is not possible to move further without a profound change in the present relationship between the social groups." Again, regrettably Chonchol makes no reference to a difference between the agrarian situation in Mexico, Venezuela, and Bolivia and that of Ecuador, Guatemala and El Salvador. This summary would have been refreshingly helpful, if somewhat overstated, in 1945 or even 1950; but with the pace of agrarian reform movements in the 1950–60 decade one can scarcely defend the omission of references to obvious change and the significant variations within the Latin American pattern.

The most recent published summary statement to appear is the book length anthology of T. Lynn Smith (1965). Smith's introduction suffers from the distinguished sociologist's bias on the policies to be applied which derive from his association with land reform programs as adviser over the past three decades. One could hardly expect otherwise, yet the compilation of views, background indicators of the need for and objectives of agrarian reform constitute a helpful, synthetic guide to the researcher, interested in the philosophy of Latin American land reform and its development. Smith's own philosophy, based upon the desirability of a strong middle-class, managing family-owned and operated farms, pervades the work. His selection of other Latin American authors tends strongly to the Democratic Christian view of land reform (particularly in Brazil and Colombia where he has worked most). Although the anthology has statements from the left as well as official government positions, it lacks any attempt at analyzing the pronouncements as against the realities and foregoes even a commentary on such attempts as Hirschman's in Colombia with which the author must have great familiarity.

One of the more analytical recent summaries of land reform research is by Pompeu Accioly Borges, FAO representative in Brazil (1962). His study is distinguished by an awareness of the fact that agrarian reform programs in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Cuba have modified the 1950 agricultural census figures; that Argentina and Uruguay represent special cases in the panorama of maldistributed land. He has an admirable precautionary statement, prior to embarking upon a comparative statistical analysis of the prevailing agrarian structures in Latin America. Of his sources he says "son las obras de alcance y altura que aborden la materia desde un punto de vista dinamico y objetivo. La mayoría de ellas se limitan a descripciones meramente cualitativas, de puro impresionismo; raramente se encuadran en el ambito de la sociología económica y, lo que es peor, no siempre corresponden a la realidad, puesto que se refieren



a situaciones ya superadas en el proceso evolutivo." Few Latin American studies escape this criticism, yet most are cited and quoted uncritically.

He states further the problems of comparing "farm enterprises," wherein several national census boards omitted the *minifundio*, thereby skewing the overall figures considerably. Other aspects, such as classes of tenancy, land exploitation and ownership criteria are similarly difficult to compare because of lack of uniformity in census criteria.

His point on the undercalculation of exploitable land is particularly well-taken, and can be vouchsafed by anyone with field experience in cadastral surveys in Latin America. It leads him to cast strong doubts on the figure of one-third of Latin America as being occupied by agricultural enterprise. It is certainly a far cry from the usual glib generalizations about "overpopulated" and "underpopulated" rural areas to find out that we really have little accurate basis for assessing any kind of density figures in many countries of Latin America. The systematic, natural resource inventory studies now being conducted by the Pan American Union and sponsored in similar fashion by AID with inter-departmental support may take years to complete before we can begin to talk about overall agricultural densities.

Application of the property concentration index of Carrado Gini is another contribution of Accioly to land reform analysis, in Latin America which makes possible a rapid and meaningful comparison of the Latin American countries with other countries. Where Accioly joins the other land reform authorities in hasty conclusions is in attributing magic significance to five hectares as the "break-even" point on subsistence, as he states that (Accioly: 653) 30 percent of the Latin American landholders had parcels of less than five hectares, "Que, dado el nivel tecnologico predominante en casi la totalidad de la region, constiuyen autenticos minifundios, incapaces de proveer a la subsistencia del campesino y su familia." As pointed out previously: 1) the average Latin American peasant family cannot in the immediate future handle more than five hectares; and 2) that depending upon the crop, the income from two or even one hectare is above subsistence standards. A far more realistic "break-even" point for subsistence would be one and a half hectares. In pointing the accusing finger at the *minifundio* phenomenon as a basic cause of agricultural stagnation, and in defining five hectares as the upper limit of *minifundio*, Accioly closes the door on attempting its gradual elimination, which he later recommends, and he conveniently shuts his usually perceptive eye on the European and Asiatic experiences with small holdings.

Another topic upon which Accioly draws blanks is analyzing land tenure comparatively. Here he fell into the trap against which he warned at the outset by using the data on land tenancy, which to date is completely uncomparable, to

demonstrate evolutionary models of more productive tenure types. He would like to consider rented farms as a progressive form over owner-operated and sharecropping in that order, with the collectives and mixed systems left dangling. Clearly the panoramic picture of Latin America in land tenancy presents a series of spectra according to region or a particular country; and even tenancy systems within a country are in most cases imperfectly understood at present. This topic is one for which tools of analysis are badly needed if useful comparison are to be one day made. As Patch and Dandler-Hanbart (1964) note, many observers with a smattering of information on tenancy arrangements in one region content themselves with having mastered the subject and project their *ad hoc* "classification" on the other countries, failing to remark on the lack of fit.

One of the observations on tenancy by Accioly that sharecropping of the type called "aparcería" is "regressive and feudal" should be balanced against a thorough understanding of the type of *aparcería* and of the reciprocal obligations involved. In recent years in Andean countries it is the landlords and administrators of *latifundios* who have found it difficult to divest themselves of their sharecroppers, who have been operating on this basis over several generations, in order to convert to commercial farming. In a way the system (at least in a transitional stage) functions so as to protect the cultivator's right to subsistence plot or herd and a roof over his head. Where the tenant's rights are not recognized, the more ruthless system of sale and foreclosure (as witnessed in Nicaragua) results in outright dispossession.

Still another area of concern which is poorly understood is the situation and magnitude of squatters. This is related to the earlier question of inadequate or non-existent cadastral surveys and brings out the importance of the fact that most Latin American governments do not really have a clear idea of the extension and boundaries of government property. The struggles over the legitimization of titles in Colombia illustrates the indefinite status and impermanence of the private property concept.

In Haiti the proportion of individuals with titles to lands was ridiculously small; the state plays the role of landlord or tax collector indifferently. Here as elsewhere the state benefits from an indefinite status of property rights, since it acts as arbiter and its arbitrary action gives it power. Many Latin American countries witness the successive seizure and release of public lands as administrations succeed each other. In these tempestuous circumstances the squatters breed and multiply. The conservative allegation is not without truth that in a number of Latin American countries the state is the largest landholder and that by disentangling its cadastral and property rights and divesting itself of claims, it might advance toward a more equitable land reform program without invading the private sector *per se*.

Accioly arrives at several conclusions in his study which are similar to those of Chonchol and Carroll, but his final point goes further, for he refers to the reforms already achieved (Accioly: 665): "Los pocos países latino-americanos que llegaron realizar su reforma agraria se beneficiaron mucho de ella, a pesar de los errores cometidos. Si en algunos casos la reforma agraria no determinó inmediato aumento de la producción agrícola, por lo menos actuó como instrumento de mayor justicia social y de transferencia del poder político de la clase latifundista en favor de las clases populares campesinas, lo que es siempre un hecho saludable."

#### COMPARATIVE COUNTRY STUDIES: MEXICO, BOLIVIA, VENEZUELA

It is interesting to contrast two recent studies on completed agrarian reform programs, that of Lowry Nelson (1964) and Charles Erasmus (1964). The former used the available documentary data, while the latter was able to make a comparative field survey in the three countries. The basic difference in orientation of the two social scientists might predispose the reader in advance as to what to expect. Lowry's treatment is much more sympathetic to the purposes of land reform and more tolerant of the means (in many cases meaning egregious blunders) by which the goals were attained. In setting the stage for analyzing present accomplishments, Nelson (1964:9) perhaps oversimplifies: "Finally we may justifiably speak of a *dismal dichotomy* or series of dichotomies, which set the stage for agrarian reform. There are the landed few and the landless many . . . the upper elite (proud, educated, inheritors of the national patrimony, carriers of the world tradition) and the lower masses (illiterate and disinherited and hopeless)." Leaning heavily on Mendieta y Nuñez, Fernandez y Fernandez and Whetten, Nelson gives a good rapid summary of the complex Mexican experience, concluding with Mendieta that the benefits have been largely civic in the enfranchisement of an independent peasantry. He extends this to Bolivia, saying (Nelson: 1964, 90): "The economic benefits nationally may be debatable but there can be no doubt that the change from *peón* to proprietor wrought changes in the structure of rural society and in the moral of the campesino." Unfortunately, Nelson lacked adequate documentation on the Venezuelan experience, and indeed the few sources cited on Bolivia do not adequately justify the author's claim (Nelson: 1964: 2) about the "growing bibliography on reports and observations on the results of the Bolivian and Venezuelan experiences."

In his three-country field evaluation, Erasmus described his focus as two-fold, the land distribution and rural development (through investment in social overhead capital and social welfare). Both of these were to be viewed as having two dimensions: 1) direct economic benefits, and 2) indirect social

effects. While Nelson's summary suffers from the lack of specific awareness of the countries involved, Erasmus' may perhaps suffer from the abundance of instances cited to prove this or that point. Nonetheless, the generalizations are made, which as he observes, "have heuristic value by raising questions and doubts in the mind of other investigators." We feel that they do more than that.

In breaking down the subject, he deals first with structural differences. Land distribution has been much more significant in Bolivia and Mexico than in Venezuela in terms of total lands affected. This is not demonstrated statistically, but it appears to be borne out by numerous observations, and forms the subject for a future suggested topic of research. Another important distinction between the Venezuelan and the other two land reforms is that the conception of land development via colonization is incorporated into the Venezuelan idea of land reform, whereas in Bolivia the idea of colonization is quite distinct, and land reform is confined to meaning redistribution of land already under cultivation. *Ejidors* were found to be largely equivalent in size in Mexico, but the parcel size varied from under five to more than thirty hectares. With regard to the problem of "consolidation" of land reform holdings, Erasmus finds that the abuses of selling *mejoras* or improvements on inalienable parcels and "share-cropping in reverse" are more common in Mexico and Venezuela where communities are less homogeneous than they are in Bolivia. The lowlands in Venezuela are seen as more important than they are yet in Bolivia. Yet in both countries Erasmus finds, "Despite the general unpopularity of the lowland areas among highlanders, many of the most land hungry are moving down." The pattern of spatial mobility is greatest in Venezuela which also is seen as having a higher percentage of abandonment of parcels than either Mexico or Bolivia. In terms of settlement, the Bolivian *ex-haciendas* most nearly approximate what Erasmus calls natural communities, while the Mexican *ejidos* tend to be most diverse, incorporating at times inhabitants from as many as ten different communities. The Venezuelan *asentamiento* is somewhere in between.

Comparing farm organizations, Erasmus finds most similarity between the strong Bolivian and Venezuelan syndicates of peasant farmers. The Bolivian organization is stronger at state levels and boasts a militia, while the Venezuelan federation is stronger at the national level and has a smaller governing body. The Mexican organization is considered rather diffuse. In evaluating the power situation, Erasmus observes that at present the gains peasants have made from below over the central state power run the risk of being vitiated by the threat of loss of power from a politically dominated union, imposing its will over the grass roots leaders.

Erasmus finds important public conscience in Venezuela and "a spirit of

equality in interpersonal relations in Venezuela that surpasses anything I have encountered in Latin America." This feature of the Venezuelan ambience is tied up with the adoption of a widespread "competitive consumption" pattern in Venezuela versus a more conservative retention of the "ceremonial consumption" pattern associated with the fiesta cycle in Mexico and Bolivia. He finds the *convite* disappearing as commercial agriculture grows in Venezuela.

Certain main themes run through Erasmus' study. Mere redistribution of the land has had two effects, neither of them economic: 1) it has provided the basis for an enhanced social status for the peasant, and 2) it has permitted enfranchisement of the sector of the population that can be expected to maintain a conservative, stable "pull" at the ballot boxes. In one of the most important generalizations Erasmus states: "Peasants are generally conservative and the very nature of farming makes it hard for them to identify as a proletariat. Land owning peasants are minor landlords who occasionally employ outside labor, occasionally work for others, and at least once a year are merchants."

Without taking a stand on the imperious necessity for redistribution in the economic sense, Erasmus holds that the problem of redistribution affecting production needs further study. At present there is a widespread consensus that some production decrease, although temporary, must be expected. He attributes lowered productivity following redistribution to three basic factors: lack of incentive, lack of managerial skills, and lack of credit. In a final résumé of the three country study Erasmus attacks the labor intensive orientation of the Venezuelan program, concluding that Latin America which still enjoys a relatively "underpopulated" position in the world would do well to mechanize farm production before the population pressures increase."

#### INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY STUDIES

The countries with functioning land reform programs make a separate group from those which are barely beginning or have only passed legislation, and they will be considered first.

Mexico: The Mexican experience, being the oldest by almost half a century, has naturally the largest bibliography. Although there is increasing concern about origins and first stirrings, (Paul Friederich is doing studies now, tracing from its regional origins the Mexican land reform movement in Chiapas) the recent research on Mexican land reform has stressed the three phase breakdown: pre-Cardenas regime, the Cardenas administration, 1934-40, and post-Cardenas.

The earliest thoroughgoing account in English by Simpson was followed by Whetten's appraisal during the 1940's, and both can serve as benchmarks for a rapid check-up of a complicated series of developments leading to the present period. Chevalier (1965) rather neatly summarizes recent trends as

well as current research on the Mexican land reform movement, using Moises de la Peña, Mendieta y Nuñez, Silva Hertzog, his own research and studies (Chevalier, 1959, 1961) and an important unpublished thesis by Gutelman (1961).

The chief points of Chevalier are: the Mexican land reform has not been an economic success in the sense of bettering the standard of living of the average peasant. He cites figures to show that even the land distribution panorama is far from equitable more than 50 years afterwards (3,500,000 hectares are estimated to be in private agricultural *latifundios*; another 60,000,000 are in large ranches; 82.5 percent of all holdings occupy only 13.5 percent of the total cultivatable land; and 439,000 proprietors own less than one hectare of land). On psychological, political and social grounds, however, the reform has been successful.

He cites the increasing political force of the CNC (Confederación Nacional Campesina) which includes powerful representatives from some of the not too typical, larger irrigated *ejido* holdings. He agrees with recent economists' estimates that agricultural wages have probably declined, but states that the situation is not yet critical since, although the total number of *ejidatarios* plus those with pending claims (*derechos a salvo*) amounts to over 3,000,000, the United States can absorb the migratory labor which needs to supplement farm earnings.

Chevalier concludes that the remarkable stability attained in rural Mexico is due in large part to the alleviation of the social tension which the revised *ejido* type agrarian structure produced, and which can be seen in aggravated form in Peru. He warns, however, that *ejidal* flexibility must increase if the other aspects heretofore providing outlets for excess rural employment (industrialization, emigration, and irrigation) remain constant. Similar to Chevalier's summary in synthetic content and equally competent, but focusing exclusively on tenure problems is the Price (1964) report.

Current applied research on land reform is being carried out at the Centro de Economía Agrícola at Chapingo and the Centro de Investigaciones Agrarias. Efforts of several technical aid agencies and some Foundation support are being recruited and coordinated to organize an experimental agricultural center in Mexico which should become a center for research on Latin American land reform.

Bolivia: The Bolivian experience, inaugurated rather precipitously in 1953, is next in seniority, if one excludes the early abortive experience in Venezuela during the Gallegos-Betancourt administrations. Despite the interest aroused in the Bolivian revolution and its immediate consequences, few accounts exist of exactly what took place; and even after over a decade of developments there are not many reliable data upon which to base an evaluation.

Patch has reported consistently in American Universities Field Staff bulletins on Bolivian developments since the time of his doctoral thesis which was an analysis of the origins of the reform movement in Ucareña in the Cochabamba region. He remains one of the few sources, and continues his interest through work with the Wisconsin Land Tenure Center. The 1963 field studies of Heath and Erasmus sponsored by the Wisconsin Land Tenure Center on Bolivia provided some recent case study and survey material but have not yet been satisfactorily integrated into a national evaluation. Heath and Ezell recently completed additional anthropological field studies in Bolivia.

Ferragut's 1963 summary stands as probably the best short statement of the accomplishments and defects of the Bolivian experience in quantitative terms. His key points with which the Heath and Erasmus studies are in substantial agreement are: 1) the Bolivian reform had the positive effect of freeing and enfranchising the peasantry and, however great the defects in economic results, this political one was critical and irreversible; 2) the general effect on production seems to have been a drastic reduction in the first few years, followed by a gradual recouping (although the figures for the last eight years are quite ambiguous); 3) holdings appear to have been generally pretty thoroughly redistributed and without compensation; 4) this re-distribution did not affect Indian communal holdings; and it is estimated that these constituted one-third of the total holdings; 5) the ideal overhead costs of agrarian reform were incompatible with the Bolivian national budget and hence the reform was largely administered on an *ad hoc* basis (particularly at the outset); 6) there are still only small investments in agricultural services (extension, credit and other infrastructural services such as housing and water supply, although some impressive quantitative gains on rural educational attendance have been recorded in the 1950–60 decade; 7) the main governmental trend since the stabilization period (1956–57) has been, as in Mexico, investment in colonization and roads to bring new lands into cultivation.

Patch (1960) reported on some qualitative effects of land reform on the *campesino* who is adopting *mestizo* norms and developing acquisitive attitudes, bringing him into fuller participation in the money economy. Erasmus (1964) cautions that this is a very gradual process. New studies in applied research in Bolivia will probably be forthcoming from the Wisconsin Land Tenure Center and CIDA. They will be aimed at studying deficiencies in extension, research, and agricultural education. In addition, CIDA in all likelihood will be involved shortly in an evaluation project of the agrarian reform in Bolivia similar to the project just agreed upon for Venezuela.

Cuba: Pre-revolutionary Cuba was investigated by Lowry Nelson (1952), and during the early stages of the revolution the American Universities Field Staff

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gave some attention to reporting on the agrarian reform. Since then the main first hand research has been by Gutelman (1963) who recently spent 22 months in Cuba (1963–64) and will be reporting soon in *Etudes Rurales*. The United Nations Economic and Social Council report (UN: 1965: 178–181) sums up the situation since the reform which underwent drastic shifts in a few years' time.

The Cuban land reform has undergone three basic stages since Castro's takeover. The first consisted of a land division into 60 percent private farms and 40 percent state farms. Of these the small farmers were grouped in state-directed associations, with the latter group divided into collectives, known as "cane cooperatives," and mixed farms and ranches, known as "*granjas del pueblo*," or state farms. By May, 1962 the collectives were transformed into state farms, the accounting system was centralized, and there were sharp declines in production. Defects in organization, administration, and the diversification policy were blamed. At the end of 1963 a second land reform law was passed; the state-owned sector increased to encompass 70 percent of all lands, including all properties of over 67 hectares; the accounting system was regionalized and a Stakhanovite system of bonuses was instituted for industrious workers. Optimistic estimates indicate that agricultural prices have been raised from 68 to 83 percent of cost, indicating in one year a sizable decrease in subsidy.

Apparently the most drastic transformation in Latin American agrarian structure has occurred in Cuba, but until Gutelman's latest reports are made available, documentation is insufficient to permit discernment of developments and how they may affect the hypotheses and projections on land reform in Latin America.

Venezuela: The antecedents to land reform date from the Lopez Contreras administration, and the first few years of developments of the recent land reform inaugurated under Betancourt in 1959 are summarized in Paul Taylor (1960) and Penn and Shuster (1963). Much data, not yet adequately synthesized, has been published by the Instituto Agrario Nacional (IAN) and other Venezuelan sources.

A preliminary comparison of the 1950 and 1961 censuses for the agricultural sector reveal some interesting overall shifts (a 1956 agricultural census could not be correlated). Of the total number of economically active rural population in 1950, 53 percent were listed as *trabajadores por su propia cuenta*, of which small proprietors and squatters probably occupied almost a third of this sector; renters, somewhat more than one sixth; and the remainder were sharecroppers. Agricultural workers constituted a larger group than the various types of peasant just enumerated. By 1961 (two years after the agrarian



reform was underway) the picture had changed. The "self-employed" group became the largest single component in the agricultural sector, climbing from 42 to 51 percent of the total economically active rural population. The "employed" group barely maintained its position. There was a significant increase in the number of small proprietors, a consequent decrease in the number of large proprietors. Surprisingly the number of "family helpers" decreased over the eleven year period. Presumably unmarried farm helpers either migrated to the cities for work or more of the teenagers attended school on a regular basis in 1961. Among the peasant group the largest increase was in squatters. Since the census was taken only two years after land reform had been inaugurated, many properties listed as occupied were to be eventually legally transferred to the owner-squatters. The number of "renters" decreased; sharecropping increased; but the total amount of land rented and sharecropped decreased. (Schaedel: 1964.)

Although the direct effects of land reform on Venezuelan agricultural production requires a more thoroughgoing analysis of the total crop production panorama for the 1955–1965 period, the citation of Saco (UN 1965: 83) aptly summarizes the overall picture: "The reported increase in the growth in agriculture's contribution to the gross material product from 4.5 per cent per annum during the period 1951–1959 to 7.7 per cent per annum in 1959–1962 must owe a good deal to the distribution of 1.5 million hectares of land during the latter period and to the high level of state investment which went with it. The Venezuelan government spent an average of \$750 per family in settling farmers on government land; while on private lands the average was \$1,800 (UN: 1965: 21).

Developments from 1962 to 1965 have indicated the following new trends: There has been a steady increase in the percentage of private land acquired by the Instituto Agrario Nacional (IAN), which indicates among other factors, the cost of incorporating public lands has been high.

Petitions for land have tapered off since 1959 and the figure remains at about 90,000 of which c. 60,000 have been acted upon. Total farm families potentially affectable by the reform are estimated at 218,000. Many of these are in the "occupant" category and recent emphasis has been placed on "regularizing" these situations. More requests have not been forthcoming for other reasons, such as retention of paternalistic patterns (Erasmus: 1964), and the question merits further investigation.

Since the 1959–61 period there has been a shift in emphasis away from organizing settlements on a cooperative-collective basis. This shift derives in part from unsatisfactory experiences and also from following recommendations of Israeli advisors who favored family-owned and operated farms for this moment in time in Venezuela. The expediency moves of the 1959–61 period

resulted in uneconomic distribution of *asentamientos*, making the problem of furnishing new settlements with basic services exceedingly cumbersome and costly. Present (since 1962) government efforts stress coordination of ministerial efforts and there is an overall trend toward consolidating the *asentamientos* into regional groups. In the past 40 per cent of the settlements were new communities of less than 50 persons. New settlements are likely to average nearer 500.

Settlement planning schools, farmer training schools, an elaborate supervised credit program, as well as other infrastructural programs, have been developed under local conditions in Venezuela to implement the reform. At no time in its history has rural Venezuela been in such a ferment of change. The rural area is a thriving laboratory of various forms of experimentation in land reform settlement, contrasting the readaptation of old, traditional farm enterprises with completely new settlements with newly associated community groups from outside areas under a variety of tenancy and holding patterns. The large FCV, the national community development program of CORDIPLAN (Central Office for Coordination and Planning) and numerous private and ecclesiastical agencies have been playing a direct role in organizing the new land reform communities to assume new responsibilities. This wealth of case material of successes, partial successes, and failures in rural Venezuela with its regional and ethnic variables should provide important data for determining modes and rates of change among rural people in other parts of Latin America and indeed throughout the world.

CIDA has recently completed arrangements with the government of Venezuela to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the Venezuelan experience. This study should prove of great importance to the progress of land reform research everywhere.

Colombia: The position of research on the land reform in Colombia (as is appropriate for that country) largely focuses on legal aspects of two land reform laws (Nos. 200 and 135) and whether the actual legislation adequately encompasses the complexities of the Colombian agrarian structure over time. Two more or less opposed summaries have been made of the current situation in Colombia (Hirschman, 1965, and Feder, 1963) in addition to a recent impartial overview contained in the UN (1965: 22–31) report. Hirschman describes much of the struggle in Colombia over land tenure as actually concealed improvement, citing Law 200 and certain gains made in fighting between coffee workers in newly opened areas. Feder points out that the colonization history is far from beneficial to the *peón* (Feder: 97–8):

The actual history of new land settlement does not, in most cases, follow this idyllic picture. Settlers are being given (or occupy) virgin land, but they do not receive

any other assistance in terms of credit, farm management advice on soils, crops, seeds, or breeds; there are no schools, hospitals or roads and costs of marketing are exorbitant. Thus they waste the best years of their life in clearing land and in planting crops not adapted to the area, with inadequate equipment and with a minimum of the "conveniences of life." At the end, they sell out to landlords who have capital (say) to stock the land with livestock and earn returns on a very low investment. Thus the foundation of a new agricultural area based on "latifundismo" is created. The history of colonization of Colombia fits this pattern well. It is indeed a cheap colonization for the landlords and at first even for the government. But for a settlement which is to be profitable for the settlers, credit needs are large and immediate investments in the infra-structure can be enormous. Colonization does not contribute to the elimination of the "inequitativa concentración de la propiedad rústica" in traditional farming areas; and hence land reform legislation ought to specify explicitly what rank colonization in virgin lands has in the reform program. Or as an alternative, the priorities ought to be determined in a general agricultural development plan. The use of virgin lands is for the far-away future, one of the great hopes for supplying a vastly increased Latin American population with food, and giving each farmer his piece of land. But under present conditions it is unnecessary: Colombia can supply all the food needed for 20 million Colombians and several million people in LAFTA countries on farms in its traditional farming areas.

Pearse (1964: 16) also remarks on the untimely consequences of Law 200 which, according to evidence from Guzman (1963) and the CIDA study, put in motion "incompatible" forces in the rural area which strained the capabilities of law and order agencies to the point of breakdown. The discussion between Anderson and Hirschman (Land Tenure Center: 4: 1963) on the probable role of INCORA and the labyrinthine sequence of law discussion, promulgation and enforcement in Colombia versus administrative policy and fiscal limitations, gives a good current picture of the Colombian land reform situation, in which for over 30 years little redistribution has taken place by legal means. Feder (1963: 165) sums up the present dilemma:

One ought to be concerned in the light of the country's history of land reform and the obstacles against reform which appeared in its first year of operation, about whether preparation and passage of the law effectively exhausted the ambition to yield to the pressures arising out of the 'injustices' in agriculture, or whether Law 135 is a reflection of a deeply and widely felt conviction that sacrifices by a relatively small number are necessary in the interests of sharply increased progress. In the latter case, rational implementation of land reform is possible. But only rational implementation implies peaceful land reform.

Hirschman concludes that despite the *violencia* which he sees as exaggerated, slow progress toward land tenure change has been made without upsetting the balance of power. He considers INCORA a suspect "Trojan horse"

capable of improving upon or at least undoing the *status quo* (Hirschman: 155). Similar optimism on the future for Colombia is reflected by Phelan (1963).

Ecuador: The situation of Ecuador with respect to agrarian reform is a rather classic recapitulation of the efforts of other countries, and reflects what is probably the slowest process in that direction among the countries with acute "minifundio-latifunditis."

In a recent review by Juan Casals (1963), the overall picture is well summarized. The country-wide panorama of land distribution, while grossly unequal, is appreciably better than the Bolivian situation in 1950. Still there are indications that regional differences may indicate a more extreme inequality in the highland, a situation not clearly indicated in Casals' report. He presents a table of intensity of cultivation which shows 50 percent of the land lies fallow in properties over twenty hectares, whereas 85 percent is the average of land cultivated in holdings of less than five hectares. The complexity of the land tenure arrangements and their interrelationship with labor conditions is also pointed up in Casals' report which does not correlate too well with DeLuca's Glossary (1964). Although Casals (1963: 45) is probably largely correct in assigning most work relationship types to "modalidades anacronicas de trabajo . . . heredadas del feudalismo colonial," it should be noted that a number are adjustments to changing agricultural conditions which merit consideration as transitional types of tenancy. Some brief glimpses of the changes taking place in the Ecuadorean agrarian systems, studied in the recent CIDA project under Baraona, are given by Pearse (1964).

The history of the cacao boom and bust in Ecuador receives a highly significant paragraph, illuminating the history of the little-documented Ecuadorean coast, in Casal's article, where it is cited as a glaring example of commercial agriculture for export without capitalization or reinvestment. He remarks (1963: 47) on a new crop diversity on the coast which has given rise to enterprises "relativamente un poco democratizadas" which is contrary to Paul Taylor's (1960a) prediction. In a concluding section Casals reviews the much touted "directed" colonization scheme of Santo Domingo de los Colorados, and the valuable experiences learned, pointing out that such plans are not recommendable because of the high cost related to number of persons benefited. He suggests the new IDB "oriented colonization" scheme for the coast may be more in line with conclusions based upon lessons of the past.

Few observers on Ecuadorean land tenure problems mention redistribution of highland lands as other than a desideratum but none foresee such action as likely in the immediate future.

Peru: The situation in Peru is not too unlike Ecuador, although the regional

diversity is much greater, and the alternatives for agrarian reform are much more varied. As with Ecuador and Colombia the research emphasis has been to study colonization experiences which emphasize the utilization of new public lands as against research emphasizing redistribution.

The recent land reform law of May, 1964 provoked considerable analysis, but to date there has been no country-wide summing up of the Peruvian land tenure kaleidoscope despite recent large scale regional investigations in various parts of the country and recommendations (see particularly the reports of the Southern Peru plan: PS/B/1-61, 1959 and the Pan American Union survey, 1961).

The micro studies on Peru (of article to book length) are now voluminous and few adequate summaries or even reasonably complete bibliographies exist (Dobyns, 1964). To those familiar with even a part of the literature, it is clear that enormous regional variation exists within the larger zones of the country on work relationships, tenancy forms and property exchange and sale. It is not even inconceivable that some of the regional diversity has its antecedents in variant pre-Colonial forms of tenancy (See Rostworoski and Murra).

With respect to land redistribution, the Plan del Sur recommendation, based upon a number of studies ranging from agronomical to sociological, is cautious (PS/B/8:5):

Desde un punto de vista estrictamente demográfico, parecería que un programa de re-distribución de la tierra podría mejorar la situación, pero solo si la productividad de la tierra puede ser al mismo tiempo aumentada en forma sustancial. La mayoría de las áreas explotadas por las haciendas, si bien revela una distribución escasa de población, no son unidades antieconómicas en sí mismas, simplemente están revelando el empleo deficiente de la tierra, por la falta de aplicación de técnicas modernas de producción. Sería aun más difícil remediar esta falta una vez dividida la tierra en lotes más pequeños. Es también razonable suponer que las áreas dedicadas en la actualidad a la agricultura de subsistencia puedan ser convertidas en más productivas mediante un proceso gradual de despoblación y la consolidación de los lotes en unidades de producción económicamente más eficientes.

In general the report urges staged regional urbanization and improved access to equitable colonization areas rather than re-parcelling in the highlands.

A similar diagnosis was reported in the USOM seminar on agrarian reform (International Cooperation Administration, 1961): "It is estimated that if all the land of the *haciendas*, including public lands, were divided among the small Indian farmers and '*colonos*,' each family would receive no more than one-fifth of a hectare of additional arable land. Thus any drastic land reform program aimed at breaking up large land-holdings would do little to solve the basic problem of over-population. It certainly would reduce total production."

A recent survey of selected material on the agrarian structure of Peru by

Metraux and Gutelman (1963) draws more radical conclusions, pointing to violent *hacienda*-community relations. The practical experiment of Vicos presents material for a completely different approach to land reform (Holmberg: 1960).

The Iowa-Peru project (1962–65) under the direction of John F. Timmons has undertaken a comprehensive program in eighteen fields or topics of agrarian reform. While technical assistance and training form the major objectives of the project, provision in the contract with AID is made for research: "Professional development of the Iowa staff as well as the staff of IRAC (Instituto de Reforma Agraria y Colonización) will be facilitated through the completion and publication of research studies as a basic part of the work program." The emphasis in the Iowa State project is in the fields of agricultural economics, general economics and law with particular emphasis upon production economics and farm management, land economics, banking, economic growth and development, marketing cooperatives, labor economics, credit and agrarian law. Research has been planned in two research areas: studies of a functional character within the national framework and regional area and community studies. This project constitutes one of the most intensive land reform program studies in one country, although the reports which are now appearing should be of interest to all scholars interested in land reform problems.

Chile: Chile, since it was the beneficiary of McBride's early man-land study, has a long history of investigation, relative to other countries; though the quantity of basic studies is not great. It has been the object of one of the earlier "colonization" programs in Latin America (see Parsons: 1964, 53) which has recently been revamped to accommodate and administer the current land reform legislation.

Chile also has been one of the countries where the controversy on evaluating land reform has waged most bitter. A recent unpublished thesis by Sternberg (as cited by Carroll: 1965: 123) and an earlier study by Ramon Astorga (1951) represent the marshaling of evidence leading to the diagnosis that land maldistribution lies at the root of present socio-economic stagnation in rural Chile. Sternberg adduces evidence to relate maldistribution of land to maldistribution of income, indicating lack of reinvestment in land and luxury spending. The United Nations' most recent report states (UN: 1965: Add. 2:12): "A comparison of output and labour input per unit of arable land in Chile by size of area, shows that at present both are significantly higher on the small farms."

James Bray (1960, 1961 and 1964) of the Food Research Institute challenges the position that large holdings are inefficiently run in Chile. He

shows Chilean agricultural production in foodstuffs has been increasing in degree of self-sufficiency. He also states on the basis of very recent research: "I also found that the much-condemned *inquilino* system was coexistent with commercial agriculture, and that economically speaking, *inquilinos* have higher incomes and more security than either subsistence farmers or unskilled urban residents." (Bray: personal communication.)

Leaving the economics to one side, we may refer briefly to the fact that the strongly marked class-distinctions observed by McBride were largely confirmed by Silva (Silva F.: 1960) in Ñuble province and Ratinoff in Aconcagua twenty years later (cited by CEPAL 1963: 35–36). Baraona's study on Putaendo (Baraona: 1961) and Borde and Gongora (1956) reveal the process of parcelization and something of the vicissitudes of the small holder. A *hacienda* study by Cardona in 1963, reported on by Pearse (1964: 15), describes the passing of the *inquilino* system: "Money wages become universal and must be competitive for social skills. Traditional resident labour will be found to be surplus to needs and uneconomic. It will no longer be possible to maintain estate-like distinctions between the labouring and supervisory classes, since special skills will be recruited where special ability is found, and education will be desirable for all. In addition to technical roles, a small bureaucracy and impersonal bureaucratic procedures become necessary to manage the growing technical complexity." In an article to appear in *Land Economics*, Bray refers to a case study showing conversion of the *hacienda* with *inquilinos* to mechanization through parcelization.

Other processes going on in Chile are experiments in directed exploitation of church holdings granted for this purpose. Thiesenhausen (1965: 25) reported recently on the experiment of four reformed *haciendas* in Chile, using three different systems (family farms, collectives, sharecropping-rental) leading to the formation of a multi-purpose cooperative. "The study concludes that colonists will have to either lower their consumption for a time or use available family labor more efficiently if necessary payments are to be met. An alternative which involves less sacrifice, however, is to raise production by more intensive farming." This can be attained only if technical assistance is provided.

Argentina: In a recent volume under the joint authorship of Horacio Gilberti, Aldo Solari, Gino Germani and Jorge A. Ochoa de Equileor (1965), a summation of the Argentine situation with regard to land reform is made. Scholarly consensus seems to be that while Argentine production, land distribution and tenure patterns are much less susceptible to social pressures and marked inequalities, characteristic of the countries to the north, there is room for improvement.

Giberti shows that while owner-operated farms have increased since the

post-war years, thus paralleling a trend noted for the United States, productivity did not proceed apace. He implies that this increase reflects an increase in the extensive ranching pattern, and demonstrates that the smaller agricultural holdings (though not *minifundia*) are the most productive holdings in Argentina. He also indicates that large scale farmers show a preference for mechanized capital investment rather than investment in soil improvement, and that this mechanization has not upped productivity. This is a finding worth nothing when considering the hypothesis, frequently espoused by the economists to solve the Latin American food shortage, that mechanized agriculture correlates with increased productivity.

Solari emphasizes the fact that Argentina still has *minifundios* and, despite their small number compared to other Latin American countries, research shows they have not diminished nor have the social distances between rural classes been reduced. He points out that urbanization can provide an "escape valve" to the rising pressure for only a limited time. On the other hand, USOM Observers (AID: 1961) consider that in Argentina "the natural evolution system is working out very well." Forni (1964) presents the hypothesis for current research, that the motivation produced by an inferior value attributed to manual labor in the agrarian structure, has an adverse effect upon a needed stable rural population and leads to excessive urbanization.

Brazil: The rather extensive recent research on Brazil cannot be reviewed here, but some of the outstanding characteristics that have highlighted this research are worth indicating. More than the other South American countries, Brazil has been dominated by the plantation economy and production for export. The abolition of slavery (only 75 years ago) and the break-up of the plantation system produced a large group of landless, largely migrant or itinerant rural workers whose "rootlessness" and poverty present the prevailing contemporary problem in the agrarian structure. Immigrant colonists have been utilized as in Argentina to develop certain areas, and instructive case histories in colonization are legion. These characteristics are well summarized by de Medina (1964: 88), who also presents a series of sixteen hypotheses for comprehending Brazilian agrarian structure and as subject matter for future research.

Recent studies have focused on the phenomena of the formation of peasant *ligas*, and on the economic aspects of the agrarian situation (by CIDA). The peasant league movement has been well summarized by Galjart (1964). Previous to the CIDA study little field research on the economic aspects of the agrarian situation had been undertaken except as by-products of the anthropological, geographical and sociological studies of Monbeig, Wagley, T. Lynn Smith and H. W. Hutchinson. Sund (1965), who has recently completed research with the CIDA project, complained that secondary data sources were in-



adequate for most agricultural economic analyses. He found that the usual economic measures such as farm size, labor inputs, mechanization, investment, and incentives did not appear to relate significantly to growth.

The CIDA project in Brazil was carried out in cooperation with the Latin American Center for Research in the Social Sciences (Rio de Janeiro) during 1962 and 1963. It consisted of one overall general study of Brazil and eleven case studies in the field. The general study consisted of partial investigations of the following: food production and the demand for agricultural products, production and agricultural income, internal migrations, historico-social aspects of the development of Brazilian agriculture, Brazilian agrarian legislation, analysis of census data referring to agriculture in 1950 and 1960. These studies were based upon publications and unpublished documents of official entities, government statistics and interviews with functionaries and specialists.

The case studies were based upon eleven *municípios*, representing different types of agrarian structure and the various agricultural patterns of the country. Each *município* was studied in a general way, using as a basis the local documentation, economic and agricultural reports, statistics, etc. In addition the census forms of 1960 corresponding to 400 agricultural enterprises in each *município* were analyzed minutely. Intensive interviews with standard interview forms prepared by the Center and CIDA were conducted with twenty proprietors and agricultural workers in each *município*.

The field work was carried out by regional coordinators (one to each of the three zones) who supervised teams of one sociologist, one agronomist and two assistants. The central team in Rio consisted of agricultural economists, sociologists, agronomists, and assistants. Personnel were drawn from CIDA, the Center, and also the cooperating regional universities of Rio Grande do Sul, Minas Gerais, Bahia, and the Institute Joaquim Nabuco in Recife. Sund concluded from his recent study in the Northeast (1965: 29): "Size of farm appeared to be more important than the tenure distinction. Small farms cultivated more of their land, had more capital per hectare, slightly more efficient pasture use, less frequent use of fertilizer, and a higher proportion of farms with only human labor force than large ones. There were no differences in yields per hectare of the various crops, investment or cash expenditures. Small farms generally had higher land values than large ones and tenants lower than owners. The use of an administrator or the type of labor force appeared to have little influence."

Besides the CIDA group, the Land Tenure Center has two scholars working in Brazil, Norman Rask on linear programming, and Kenneth Cann, studying taxation, and rural financial structure.

Other Latin American Countries: In this country by country survey of

recent research, it should be abundantly clear now that almost each country has a unique problem to which researchers gradually gravitate. In the countries so far not discussed this situation also prevails. The key problem in Paraguay, for example, centers on the legitimization of squatters on state lands. In Haiti the problem of title and definition of property rights with respect to the ambiguous allocations of state lands under successive administrations is the crucial area for study (Schaedel: 1962). The archaic rural code which delimits an agrarian structure functioning under military government is also worthy of attention. Squatters and the organization of peasant leagues or federations appear to be the principal problems in Costa Rica and Honduras (Gollás and Alvaro, 1965; UN: 1965, 70–71). In Guatemala the abortive land reform of Arbenz was one of the factors which directly or indirectly has generated the following new movements in the rural area: increased internal migration, reorientation of the local political structure, short term land exploitation and a limited colonization program as a compensatory sequel. (Adams, 1961 and Carroll, 1961). The role of foreign owned agricultural enterprise is characteristically important in Central America in general.

The foregoing summary thus is in accord with the Land Tenure Center's recent conclusion (Land Tenure Center Newsletter, 20:13): "A viable and workable system of land reform for Latin America will have to be worked out in each country, tailored to local institutions and needs and based on considerable description and analysis of local conditions. Such a system can be deduced neither from a theoretical economic model nor from a foreign system such as one of the family farms or collectives." In the 1963 Interamerican Seminar on land reform in Campinas, Timmons (IICA Noticias: 1964) said: "La American Latina es extremadamente heterogenea y no admite generalizaciones en relación con sus problemas y la manera de solucionarlos . . ."

Our concern at the beginning was to indicate the inadequacy of outmoded and hackneyed generalizations about Latin American land reform, since they glossed over significant country and area differences and impeded formulating workable hypotheses for research in any one country. Now, however, we should like to indicate that the wealth of new research experiences, accumulated since 1950 in the different Latin American countries, should be reviewed constantly to determine if certain patterns are discernible or that certain correlations might now be established between tenancy forms, productivity and ecology.

#### LAND REFORM TOPICS:

The general area of land reform has been treated by area and by country. In the process a number of categories into which the subject of land reform is usually divided have been discussed. These have been principally: land tenure, land distribution, and tenancy. Such other topics having to do with the socio-

economic preconditions of land reform have also been reviewed. There are, however, a few topics which by their special nature tend to be dealt with separately. Of these we have arbitrarily segregated: 1) legal and administrative aspects, 2) agricultural organizations of workers or farmers, 3) credit and other aspects of technical assistance (extension, crop research, information diffusion), 4) plantations, and 5) statistical source material and bibliographies.

1) Financial and legal aspects. Two main subdivisions which often become entangled are land reform legislation and taxation. When discussing financing of land reform programs both these topics enter into play. Strangely enough, although there are three and (if one counts Cuba) four land reform programs that have been substantially implemented, there have been few calculations made on the cost, either in lump sum or on a per capita basis. A recent seminar was held in Panama specifically on the theme of financing land reform programs (IICA-CIRA, 1964) in which papers representing the current points of view were discussed. Karst (1964) refers to previous gatherings on comparative Latin American legal matters, and there is a growing interest in North American universities (Tulane, Southern Methodist, and Texas) in Latin American legal operations.

Specific studies of the legal aspects of agrarian reform have engaged the attention of several scholars in recent years, particularly Karst, Thome and Price. Merchan (1965), working with the IIAA regional center in Colombia, recently terminated a comparative study of agrarian reform legislation in Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela. Steel (1964) treated the compensation question in a comparative way and Strasma (1965) has concerned himself with financing of land reform by modifications in the taxation policy. A detailed program has been elaborated by the Iowa Universities group in Peru on financing land reform in that country which might serve as a rallying point for comparative studies in other countries where a land reform program has been or is being undertaken (Thorbeck: 1963).

Although the study encompasses the total range of land reform strategy, it seems appropriate to refer here to the Rand Corporation and Del Fitchett's study which can best be described in his own words:

Applying the technique variously known as 'operations research,' 'cost-effectiveness analysis,' etc., the aim is to compare the economic costs and payoffs of large-scale water development projects, settlement in virgin tropical rainforests, medium-scale irrigation projects and projects to improve the quality and quantity of factors (e.g., seeds, credit, pesticides, fertilizer, etc.) in areas of small-scale agriculture. The results should be of considerable operational significance to those countries with limited development budgets faced with making a choice among several types of projects. (Del Fitchett: Personal communication.)

Karst (1964: 309–328) not only includes an excellent summary of the research opportunities on the legal aspects in Latin American land reform, but reviews the general questions that ought to be answered in land reform “across the board.” We have tried to show in this review that some have been at least partially answered in certain countries by recent research. There has, however, been little progress in comparative legal studies that would shed light on contradictory land tenancy and tenure legislation, on the limitations of the property rights of the state *viz a viz* the private holder. The welter of new legislation hardly clarifies what has been a labyrinth of decrees (legislative, executive, and supreme) superseding decrees and *de facto* situations receiving or not receiving legal sanction. All these have characterized the Latin American land tenure scene since (and before) independence. Mexico with the longest experience of land reform and obvious socio-economic results is still vexed with the elaboration of appropriate legal formulae that define the actual and desired tenure relationships. Can other countries profit by this experience or is each country’s legal network so unique that the problem must be resolved only on a country by country basis?

2) Agricultural organizations (syndicates or federations) Adams (1964) and Brunori (1963) have discussed the general situation of rural labor in Latin America. It has also been treated consistently in the United Nations reports, and Carroll (1964) emphasized the potential of organized peasant organizations. Chevalier (1965) and Galjart (1964) remarked on growing movements in Mexico and Brazil. There have, however, been remarkably few specific studies on the farm organizations *per se*. It is largely to the credit of Charles Anderson and the Land Tenure Center that a number of studies are now being undertaken on the major rural organizations in Latin America. Powell (1964) finished a first hand report on the *Federación Campesina Venezolana*, a nationwide group with more than 2,000 locals and two major political subdivisions. Seeberger and Dale Adams are studying the Colombian *Federación Agraria Nacional* (FANAL).

In the fall of 1963 a technical Interamerican meeting for the formation and employment of professionals in rural zones with relation to agrarian reform was held in Caracas, sponsored by the ILO. A number of papers were presented (including that of Brunori) but there was a notable disparity in representation between the “professional” labor ministry people and the syndicate spokesmen. The Venezuelan situation illustrates a point, where the powerful and pervasive FCV was hardly represented while the rather anaemically staffed government agencies supplying technical assistance to rural labor had a full complement of spokesmen. Probably nowhere is lack of coordination so notable as in research on the labor movement. Within the U. S. government, the Department of Labor is methodically producing a series of Latin American

labor codes with oftentimes a valuable introductory section on the social and economic characteristics of the country. This work, largely carried out in a vacuum, could benefit immensely from contact with specialists in the labor field with a first hand knowledge of the application of the labor codes and could certainly avoid duplication of effort by utilizing background summaries already independently compiled by other agencies or individual scholars. In this connection it is worth noting that the AFL-CIO have a representative actively engaged in cooperating with Latin American labor organizations, both urban and rural. Farm federations in the states are anxious to cooperate with "counterpart" organizations in Latin America. The reason for mentioning this situation in a survey of research is to indicate that the farmers' organizations in all likelihood will have to be coped with as prime agencies implementing change in the agrarian structure and may soon assume research sponsoring functions.

3) Credit extension and communication. Credit and other aspects of technical assistance is a large category for studies that are basically slanted at providing the newly settled farmer with facilities for increased productivity. While this is probably the most action-oriented of all the topics so far treated, it has certain purely research characteristics. There is, for example, a large history of case studies on credit to medium and small sized farms in Latin America, mostly carried out under AID (or predecessor agency) auspices, but also sponsored by the United Nations and other agencies. A few of these have been very summarily documented (PS/C Volumes, 1959), but most of them have not been. It is highly important to determine why and under what circumstances agricultural credit has failed or been successful.

Recently Ohio State University has been awarded a contract to study credit on a world-wide scale and a portion of the work will be done in Latin America. The IDB is currently financing a pilot study in Costa Rica on the same subject. Land Tenure Center research has also given the subject some detailed attention (Erven: 1964).

In the field of extension similar attention has been focused recently on the techniques and problems involved in communication. The long history of extension in AID programs in Latin America has also been focused or had its chief impact upon the medium and large scale farmer. In the reappraisal of technical assistance now going on by both AID and the UN the realization has dawned that the target of the programs is the small farmer and he cannot be reached by the county-agent system so effective in rural USA without creating a topheavy agricultural bureaucracy. In seeking a better solution to extension in Latin America various agencies have pooled resources and organized the *Programa Interamericana de Información Popular (P.I.I.P.)*, based in Costa Rica, with the specific goal of improving diffusion of agricultural information. The first Interamerican symposium was held on the "Functions of Dissemina-

tion in Agricultural Development" in October, 1964 (Myren: 1965) in which the general tenor of the research needs are discussed.

4) Plantations. The subject of plantations as a special type of tenure and enterprise which gives rise to particular economic, social and geographical consequences has been treated in the 1956 seminar in Puerto Rico, the results of which together with an ample bibliography were published in Spanish and English by the Pan American Union. Mintz (1963) and Hutchinson (1961) have written more recently to show how the plantation phenomena relate to certain land reform questions. It is interesting in this connection to note that in two recent contrasting hypotheses on social change in Latin America (Pearse, 1964 and CEPAL, 1963) special provision to accommodate the plantation situations had to be made. Pearse found the plantation-derived developments congenial to his thesis, while the CEPAL study was obliged to fence them off as special conditions. While there are many points that might be made, the principal issues seem to be whether or not the plantation system as distinct from the *latifundio-minifundio* gives rise to a rural proletariat. Up to now the data seems to fit for the Caribbean area, but there is considerable variation in the complexion of the rural work force in the mainland regions of both Central and South America in those sectors where the plantation system obtained.

5) Statistical sources and bibliographies. The recent bibliographies of Carroll (1962), the Land Tenure Center and the Latin American Center for Research in the Social Sciences in Brazil give a reasonably good sample of the volume of material appearing on land reform though none is really comprehensive. Carroll has in manuscript an annotated comprehensive bibliography that will be a much needed research tool. The Land Tenure Center cites additional bibliographies (1964: 75).

Various bulletins are published on the census, and many of the agricultural data of the 1960 census reports are being tabulated now (see IASI, *Noticiero*). For base-line reference, figures on Latin American production, consumption and trade are compiled regularly by the Economic Research Service, Foreign Regional Analysis Division, of the Department of Agriculture (USDA/ERS) and most of these sources are regularly recapitulated in the UCLA Statistical Abstracts.

Additional regular reports are published in the Land Tenure Center newsletter and the IICA-CIRA newsletter, *Noticias sobre la reforma agraria*. National sources especially in Venezuela, Mexico, Costa Rica, Chile, and Colombia are numerous and invaluable in following developments in individual countries. The major standard reports are those of the United Nations and the various PAU publications cited in this review.

## RELATIONSHIP OF LAND REFORM TO OTHER RESEARCH:

Clearly, as has been noted sporadically, agrarian reform studies relate to economic development research. There are also close relationships to analyses of demographic trends and immigration and their effect on economic growth (Kuznets: 1965). The focus of any broad gauge study of economic and social development must rapidly converge on the agrarian question and the topic where most of the factors are being weighed for the relative effect on each other is land reform. Sociological hypotheses on the changing (Pearse: 1964) and permeable (CEPAL: 1963) aspects of traditional Latin American society rest upon a careful balancing of the recently accumulating evidence on urbanization, demographic growth and land reform. Land reform is even more crucial to the recent efforts at Latin American socio-economic typologies of Lambert (1963) and the Pan American Union (1963).

Any contemporary analysis of the political dynamics in Latin America has to cope with research on the total rural social spectrum as revealed in recent land reform studies which reflects no longer a single inarticulate, disenfranchised or static "mass." Indeed the definition of "stability" is becoming synonymous with the existence of certain types of peasantry as opposed to a more proletarian type of rural inhabitant. The typically anthropological view of cultural dynamics focusing on innovation, receptivity and acculturation has utilized the case of land reform experience in Latin America as a subject for research only in an exploratory way in the studies of Patch (1961) and Erasmus (1964). If the same fond attention lavished upon the Sun Dance of the Plains Indians were dedicated to land reform and its repercussions, our perception of key factors in change (and even developmental change) might be greatly heightened.

Marshall Wolfe (1964) has treated the ecological aspect in the changing community and settlement patterns which are intimately related to land reform and indeed in some cases are directly produced by it. The role of the "new community," be it *asentamiento* or *ejido* and how it develops provides almost laboratory conditions for the community developer and should also receive attention in studies with control groups from traditional communities. Venezuela offers particularly fine examples and conditions for this type of study.

The more traditional types of research, whether they be in the realm of farm management and income, land use, colonization and man-land relationships, must of necessity encompass the effect of agrarian reform if only as a concept in the thinking of the population studied.

## RÉSUMÉ:

In order that researchers in these large areas may have access to and proper

analytical use of the abundant data accumulating on land reform, there are certain measures that need to be taken. Land reform is one of the "hot" issues in Latin America which has to be kept up to date. The swift, drastic changes of agrarian policy in Iron Curtain countries are well known, but the brief histories of land reform in Venezuela and Cuba show sharp changes even in a matter of months an ignorance of which will profoundly alter an analysis. This points up the need for prompt and objective reporting (and I use the term advisedly) on land reform. In the several international and national newsletters which exist, no single one appears to have primary responsibility. A coordination of agencies for diffusion of reporting information would be most helpful to scholars and administrators alike. Emphasis could be placed on collecting the country by country case studies the documentation of many of which are controlled by action agencies. If responsible officials could be persuaded to adopt the frank, self-critical attitude of Venezuelan officialdom in dealing with their own experiences, it is probable many more case studies would become available.

Cliques tend to grow up around one or another group of social scientists working in this field. There is need for greater interchange of preliminary reports (most of which are never published) between government (national and international) agencies and with the academic community. The numerous seminars and colloquia tend to invite or exclude the same individuals. It would be well to insure representation from the public sector in academic symposia and vice versa. One can hardly expect traditional bureaucratic rivalries to disappear overnight, but he cannot forego the imperative necessity to deplore the situation in a subject which is so much the province of the action-oriented agencies.

In line with the previous statement, the point should be made that less polemicism in land reform and more well-presented documentation for a given line of action is needed. Even a decade ago it was perhaps justifiable to overstate the case for land reform to overcome inertia. Today the need is for dispassionate appraisal of the evidence and as complete and up-to-date a presentation as possible.

Interdisciplinary *awareness* of the dimensions of the land reform topic has been largely achieved. The need is urgent for interdisciplinary *exchange* and the UN world conference on land reform announced for 1966 is a praiseworthy step in this direction. Would it not be advisable to hold regional meetings beforehand to reduce the world meeting to manageable proportions and to allow it to concentrate on levels of comparability where communication might result in effective testing and posing of new hypotheses? The Wisconsin Land Tenure Center has led a fruitful existence and fulfilled an important role in furthering interdisciplinary communication on Latin American land reform, but much more needs to be done. At least seven separate disciplines are busily



at work investigating their own areas of competence with relation to centrally defined problems in land reform. The rapid diffusion of the results of these studies and the necessary summation of the ever increasing number of case studies, censuses and statistical documentation require regular and frequent gatherings of land reform scholars with interdisciplinary interests.

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