

APPENDIX G

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION: THE INTEGRATION OF INQUIRY AND GUIDANCE

by

DAVID I. STEINBERG

A. Introduction

Critical to the development of a national research system is the continuous adaptation and creation of new plant strains suitable to a particular environment. Equally important is the capacity of a nation to translate research results into production, consumption, and income for the population. The Korean case represents a remarkably successful melding of research and extension. It is, however, based on a system so goal-oriented at every bureaucratic level that, not surprisingly, the attainment of targets becomes both a matter of pride and bureaucratic survival. Bureaucratic enthusiasm is sometimes transformed into involuted pressure to achieve--goals are created that the system itself cannot safely reach, each level striving to achieve targets that are sometimes unrealistic, resulting in costly errors at local and even national levels. It can lead to manipulation of statistics as the bureaucracy yields to the temptation of always indicating progress, higher yields, or larger exports. Only when dire, usually external, factors intervene can a decline be shown.

B. Administrative Centralism

Centralism is the hallmark of the Korean bureaucracy. The power of the Seoul administration is felt through an integrated system of regional and local pressure points having their nexus in the capital. The main bureaucratic mechanism of central control of the periphery is the Ministry of Home Affairs. It not only commands the police throughout the nation but, as there are no elected local officials, appoints the governors of the nine provinces, the 147 gun (county) chiefs and the more than 1,300 myon (district) heads. Its responsibility includes the Sae-maul Movement, which is ubiquitous. Real power throughout Korea rests with that Ministry; it is the central focus for the rural population in the gun. The gun capital, the primary market town of the area, is the head of both administration and market activity. The gun chief is the coordinator of all development programs (except education) and is held personally responsible for all activities within that area. This personalized power and responsibility is so pervasive that the under-achievement of targets within the gun or even the occurrence of a national disaster such as a forest fire (which he is supposed to prevent) can cause his summary expulsion. Someone personally must bear responsibility for error or failure in Korea; it is at the heart of the political and bureaucratic culture and profoundly affects policy and performance.

The gun chief coordinates the work of most agencies (except education, the military, and the judiciary) within his territory. He is thus in intimate contact with all other ministries with local programs in his gun. These other ministries have their own hierarchical command structures down to the myon in some cases, but at the gun level close cooperation with the