

**ACCESS TO DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE FOR THE RURAL POOR: ANALYSIS OF
CURRENT STRATEGIES OF ERADICATION OF RURAL POVERTY IN ASIA**

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ACCESS TO “DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE” FOR THE RURAL POOR: AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STRATEGIES OF ERADICATION OF RURAL POVERTY IN ASIA

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The problem of “access to distributive justice” of the lower strata of the rural population alternatively called the eradication of rural poverty in developing countries have recently assumed a new significance¹. The increased significance of this problem is the result of both the internal historical development of the developing countries as well as changes in their international context. Perception of the significance of this problem, has led to various types of definition of this problem, identification of the causes of lack of access and specification of various alternative strategies of ensuring access and eliminating the obstacle to it. This paper examines first the concept of “distributive justice”, then discusses the historical development of Asian societies which have increased the importance of this problem, and finally critically examines the basis of current strategies of ensuring access, and proposes rudimentary outlines of an alternative strategy.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN FIFTIES

What type of distributive system prevails in a society and to what degree it should be considered just and unjust is critically determined by the developmental stage of a society and the nature of the mechanisms through which political control is acquired and exercised in a society (Lenski, 1966, p. 44). During the colonial period in most of the Asian societies

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when political power was acquired by the colonial rulers through conquest, the concept of justice in the distributive system was naturally tilted in favour of the conquerors and those rural upper classes which were willing to ally with them. At the beginning of colonialism, as the colonial rulers did not possess the extensive administrative machinery to directly control the population and the internal structure of the rural community was intact, colonial rulers only needed the support of the rural upper classes which controlled and administered these communities (Moore, 1965,

p. 354). Thus, the critical problem in the distributive system was how much of the economic surplus should be appropriated by the colonial rulers and how much the upper rural classes should be permitted to retain it and enjoy their traditional power and privileges or expand them. Initially the colonial rulers permitted the retention of the privilege and power of the rural upper classes through the institution of “indirect rule” and, to an extent, incorporated these classes into their system of control.

The process of colonisation of Asian countries, however, unleashed changes which made restricting access to power and resources only to rural elite difficult. These included change in the structure of rural economy from basically subsistence economy to partly market oriented economy, diffusion of new technology which the colonial rulers encouraged to raise rural productivity, the import of manufactured goods from metropolitan countries in colonies which subverted the rural handicraft, and in some countries establishment of plantations which compounded the problem of rural impoverishment and produced a large class of wage labourers. In addition, the introduction of mechanised means of transportation such as railway opened up the hinterlands, increased contacts between the urban and rural population, and the various regions in a society. To consolidate their control and administer the societies which were becoming more complex, the colonial powers created an elaborated administrative and legal system which enabled them to intervene more directly in the rural community.

All these changes led to atrophy of the traditional character of the rural community, emergences of new classes, weakening of traditional controls and shifted the balance of exchange in the distributive system more and more against the rural middle classes. But as this affected the rural productivity as well as stability negatively, the colonial rulers extended their, concept of justice to these classes to legitimise their rule and ensure stable framework for productivity. The private ownership of land was legalized, giving full control of their lands to the middle classes. The law and order machinery was extended to rural areas, providing certain degree of protection to the rural middle classes from the excesses of the rural elite. Cooperative and other local institutions were introduced to make the middle classess self-reliant. In certain areas, social services such as schools, dispensary, etc. were provided. However, as the rural lower strata was generally integrated into the

traditional rural structure, and does not pose a political or economic problem, the concept of justice in the distributive system was not, in practice, extended to them².

The movements for independence from colonialism led mostly by the urban political and intellectual elite and occasionally supported by the rural upper and middle classes and the effects of the Second World War brought about the end of colonialism and put into power regimes in Asian countries which were oriented to build a nation state, introduce liberal democratic institutions on the pattern of the West and intervene, to a limited extent, in the economy and society through planning to seek certain changes in it. Their primary interests in the rural areas were basically three:

- a). to increase rural productivity technical means to feed the urban as earn foreign exchange through crops;
- b). to reconstruct the declining rural community on a new basis to ensure a certain degree of stable framework for maintaining productive processes, keep the various social elements of the rural community in harmonious relations and prevent the polarisation of classes in the village. This objective became more critical for those Asian countries where rural insurgency has become a threat immediately after the Second World War;
- c). gain legitimacy of their political power with the rural middle class which constituted a large population of the voters in the rural areas and therefore were their key constituency. To achieve all the three goals the regimes in power sought to win the support of the rural middle class, and weaken the hold of the feudal lords in the rural areas. This they attempted to achieve through changes in the land tenure system including fixing ceiling on ownership of land, abolition of tenancy,

To achieve all the three goals the regimes in power sought to win the support of the rural middle class, and weaken the hold of the feudal lords in the rural areas. This they attempted to achieve through changes in the land tenure system including fixing ceiling on ownership of land, abolition of tenancy, etc. Further, most of the Asian governments instituted programmes of community development which simultaneously attempted to reconstruct rural community, raise productivity and

extend certain facilities to rural areas such as schools, dispensaries, road, bridges, for the benefit of these classes.

Defined within the framework of interests of national elite in rural productivity, rural stability and political legitimacy, the distributive justice at this stage of the historical development of Asian societies meant ensuring access to various opportunities to the rural middle class. As the lower rural classes, the small farmers, the tenants and the labourers, at this stage were relatively small in number, unorganised and dependent on the middle and upper class patrons, their share in the national pie had not become a critical national political problem.

This perception of the problem of access oriented to the rural middle class was further reinforced by the international context of the cold war between the two super powers following the end of Second World War. The Western powers led by the United States actively sought to prevent the spread of communism in Asian countries which it was diagnosed could be checked by increasing rural productivity, stabilizing rural community and democratising it. This decisively cast the dice in favour of the strengthening of rural middle classes considered to be the bastion of stability and democracy. These common interests of the United States and those of the national elite in several Asian countries coincided and reinforced each other in creating a just distributive system with the rural middle class as its main beneficiaries⁴.

Compatibility of interests of most of the national elites in Asian countries and that of the United State led to an active role of the latter in supporting in fifties with financial and technical assistance, the rural development programmes in Asia, generally called community development. They were aimed at greater productivity, greater community solidarity and cooperation, “democratisation” of rural institutions, and modernization of attitudes, beliefs, and values of the rural people (Tinker, 1961, pp. 309-322).

These programmes, however, in general were not successful in achieving their goals for several reasons. First, the significance attached to rural development in overall development planning was marginal. Influenced by the earlier models of

development, the urban oriented Asian elites placed greater emphasis on industrial development which it believed was the quickest road to development, considered synonymous to economic growth. It is expected that industrialization would result eventually in absorbing surplus rural population and raising the marginal productivity of agriculture. This approach, it was hoped, would eventually distribute the benefits of economic growth “evenly” as, to an extent, happened in the West. All these expectations were bit realised — partly because the contemporary conditions in which the Asian countries were following the earlier models were different from those in which these models were evolved. Further, the land reform measures proposed to weaken the hold of the landlord were either not legislated by landlord-dominated national and provincial legislatures or were not implemented due to various obstacles. Finally, the attempts to build a cooperative rural community founded on the rock of an inegalitarian and rigid social structure of many Asian societies (Bendix, 1964, pp.291-292).

EMERGENCE OF RURAL PROLFARIATE AND PROBLEM OF RURAL POVERTY

Failure of the rural development policies in the mid-fifties and early sixties in many Asian countries to strengthen rural middle class and through it increase rural productivity, stability, and community solidarity, occurred at a time when several other forces were seriously disrupting the traditional social structure of the rural community. The traditional rural social structure was maintained by a vertical patron-client relationship which consisted of a set of reciprocal obligations between the patrons as individual or as a class and clients as individuals and a class. These obligations were generally diffused encompassing social, economic and political aspects of rural life (Scot, 1972, pp.8-10; Breman, 1974, Ch.4). The patron-client relationship were usually strengthened when they occurred within the kinship matrix and created a diffuse bond of relationship transforming merely a predominantly asymmetrical and vertical social complex into what is called a rural community. This community of sentiments and social bonds emerged more frequently in situations where internal economic inequalities and social stratification were not too sharp and factional strifes were not too frequent. The internal strength of this community and patron-client relationship was sustained by the subsistence character of rural economy and marginal intervention of the state in the affairs of the rural community.

The strength of the bonds of rural community started weakening with the advent of colonialism and the changes which it brought about (Scot, 1972, P. 18). The efforts of the national regime to retain, strengthen, and modernize this community failed in the face of the increasing intervention of the state in local affairs, Incorporation of the rural community in larger administrative framework, increasing incorporation of rural economy into the matrix of market economy (Befu, 1967, p.615-619).

The earlier attempts at rural development aimed at stability, productivity, and strengthening of the rural community in Asia, however took a new direction under the influence of two factors. First, the rural population together with total population of these countries started increasing rapidly, a trend which became very marked in the mid-sixties. This confronted most Asian countries with a serious problem of food shortage, increase in food imports and consequent heavy burden on foreign exchange. This elevated the problem of rural productivity to a higher level of priority than the goals of land reforms and building a stable community. Coincidentally a breakthrough occurred in the mix-sixties in the form of high yielding varieties of rice and wheat which promised to meet the problem of food shortage, if their potential was fully utilized.

To realise the full potential of high yield varieties, most Asian governments concentrated on their widest possible diffusion through provision of subsidized inputs, credit, and irrigation facilities. The earlier attempts at tenurial and other social changes became less important issues which in any case most governments found it difficult to implement. In this context the problem of ensuring justice to the lower strata of the rural society continued to be of less importance and less crucial.

The combined effects of diffusion of high yielding varieties and increase in population had complex and different effects on the traditional rural community in various Asian countries. However, some common trends which emerged are discernible.

The Green Revolution accelerated the pace of incorporation of the rural economy into the market economy, of conversion of communal social relationship into more and more impersonal and purely economic relationships (Hansen, 1975, UNRISD, 1974, pp.24-26; Emrich, 1975). In some parts of Asia, it increased the pace of mechanisation of agriculture which resulted into increasing the number of unemployed and under-employed labourers, tenants and share croppers. Further, as profitability of land increased, the urban classes, the merchants the civil servants, etc. started buying or investing in land which, together with migration of some landlords to urban areas, increased the number of absentee landlords who were not part of the local communal matrix and therefore felt no social obligations to the displaced tenants or labourers. Similar consequences flowed from the “modernization” of the traditional landlord class which became market-oriented and urban-oriented in their style of living and social behaviour, although it still lived in the villages.

Rapid increase in population further accelerated the weakening of traditional bonds. With multiplication of labourers, tenants, and peasants seeking employment or renting of land, the increased supply depressed their wages, their share in crops and raised the rent of land. This worsened the situation further for these classes as simultaneously the traditional community bonds and patron-clients relationship weakened leaving them to sustain themselves both in normal times and during times of crisis. Further, these conditions were pushing them out of their traditional community in search for jobs and land to other villages and to the urban areas. Erosion of traditional ties, breakdown of community bonds, emergence of a free floating rural proletariat by itself would have constituted a “distributive problem” if there were no spillover effects of these changes on the national economy and society and on the interests of the national elites. Some of these spillover negative effects are noted below.

First, migration of part of this rural proletariat in some countries enlarged the size of the urban unemployed and dispossessed, threatening the property and security of the urban middle and upper classes through the participation of the former in political riots, thefts and robberies. The national elite could solve this problem either through greater investment in the security apparatus of the country or

through keeping the rural proletariat in the village. But this proletariat could be kept in the village only if their conditions could be at least ameliorated. Otherwise if forced to remain in the village it could disrupt the rural stability and consequently rural production. This could have high cost for the national elite as this could disrupt the supply of raw material for industry and food for the urban population, depress the demand for manufactured goods, and hence the profits of commercial and industrial classes. In countries in which the agricultural raw material was exported, the disruption of rural production could affect the earning of foreign exchange to import technology and consumer goods required mostly by the urban upper classes.

Second, the emergence of this unattached, free floating class, whose loyalty to the traditional order has been eroded, though at present unorganised, could become amenable to the appeal of radical ideologies and was therefore a potential threat to the existing distributive system. In two areas in India, and Pakistan, in fact, this amenability of the rural proletariat to radical ideologies to an extent has been documented (Frankel and Vorys, 1972). The national elite could not be oblivious of this potential especially in countries where certain radical elements have taken up arms to overthrow the regimes. Further, the success of peasant based revolution in China, and widespread peasant insurgency in Indo-China has increased the apprehension of the urban national elite. Hence, the concern of the urban elite to seek rural stability through integration of the rural dispossessed to the rural community and general society and through ensuring "access to distributive justice" to the rural poor and ameliorating their conditions.

Due to the emergence of the above mentioned problems, the rich industrial countries also shared the concern of Asian national elite in tackling the problem of poverty in general and rural poverty in particular. The leading industrial countries had keen interest in ensuring general political stability as well as rural stability in the less developed countries in order to ensure an orderly and gradual process of development to succeed, and prevent the overthrow of the regimes of these countries politically sympathetic, if not allied, to them. The industrialized countries, both Asian and Western, had also vested economic interest in political stability in poor countries, as instability in these countries could in some case disrupt the supply of raw material needed for the industries of the rich countries and continued poverty

would limit the effective demand for their manufactured products in the less developed countries.

A CRITIQUE OF THE CURRENT STRATEGY OF ERADICATION OF RURAL POVERTY

As noted earlier, the strategies of rural development, whether aimed at increasing productivity, or strengthening the rural community or integrating the rural poor into the rural community and larger society derive their rationale from a cluster of factors. Among these factors the nature of power structure and regime in a country, international political context, and the nature of problems flowing from the changes in structure of rural community are the three primary and critical determinants of these strategies. These strategies, in general, have not succeeded as they were based on an inadequate assessment of the forces affecting the process of development of Asian societies; they have been basically retro-active and defensive as they attempted to solve a problem only when it had become critical and a source of threat to the national and international system rather than pro-active, anticipating the problem and acting effectively to solve it at a time when this could be done effectively. Finally, they have either avoided significant transformation of institutional framework and sought to contain a problem within it or used the rhetoric of transformation without effectively implementing it.

The current dominant approach to the problem of the rural poverty of “access to distributive justice for the rural poor” as advocated by the World Bank, some of the international organizations and several Asian countries suffered from the same weaknesses as the old approaches to rural development. Indeed, there are marginal changes and deviations from the old approaches forced by the new situation of multiplying rural proletariat, increasing rural poverty and agrarian unrest, with their threatening implications for the social order. These changes and deviations are reflected in a greater concern with the eradication of rural poverty. The World Bank has in fact equated rural development with eradication of rural poverty (World Bank, 1975, p.3). It has also declared that it was “attempting to deepen” its lending in the rural sector as a part of a programme intended to help lower income producers to become more productive (World Bank, 1975, p.60). There is widespread acknowledgment by international organisation and Asian governments for

institutional reforms in certain areas without which the poor cannot be reached and provided access to distributive justice. In some Asian countries apparently extensive land reforms are being proposed and partly implemented. There is a greater realisation of the need to streamline the administrative system to ensure effective delivery of certain inputs such as credit, fertiliser, seeds to the rural poor, etc. There is a new stress on participation of the rural population in decisions affecting their existence. To stimulate such participation as well as mobilise the rural poor to benefit from the programmes devised for them, creation and strengthening of rural organizations is being proposed. Some of the Asian countries are attempting to create a new system of cooperatives linked to other local government institutions, which, it is expected, ensure access of resources to the poor which they previously did not have.

The new approach to rural development is given a much broader scope and meaning than the previous approaches. It attempts to make rural development a broader concept, more than agricultural development or economic development of rural areas. As it is supposedly rooted in the concept of “unified approach to development”, it is being called Integrated Rural Development. This approach tends to be more sensitive to the external linkages to various aspects of rural community and seeks to manipulate them in more concerted ways to produce the desired effect. Consequently there is emphasis on regional development and growth center.

The new approach attempts to directly affect the rural poverty by creating special programmes for the benefit of the rural poor such as public works programmes which generate employment for the rural labour. In some Asian countries where more land is available in less congested regions, the rural poor are persuaded to settle on new lands. Other Asian countries have created special administrative authorities to deal specifically with the problem of rural poverty.

In spite of these new elements in this approach, a critical analysis of its contents and the forces which have shaped it would suggest that it is essentially defensive and retro—active, incremental and administrative, and consequently unlikely to succeed to effectively and permanently eradicate the problem of rural poverty.

Its defensive and retro-active character has been to an extent already brought out. The concern for eradication of poverty has emerged because it is perceived to be threat to the existing distributive system at national and international level. Because it is defensive, it is reformist or status quo oriented substituting dependence of the poor on now collapsing traditional patron-client relations with dependence on state welfare machinery and bureaucracy. Its basic thrust is to “integrate” the poor to the existing order rather than seek alternative ways of development of the society which maximises the potentialities of all members of the society and consequently accelerate its total development. As basically it diagnoses poverty essentially as a product of the peculiar characteristics of the poor, the “culture of poverty”, and not as a product of the power structures of the national and international societies and development policies flowing from them, it seeks to reach the poor to mitigate poverty rather than change the poverty producing power structures and development policies. Further, it avoids, as reflected in a policy statement of the World Bank, a serious confrontation with the problem of inequality which is highly correlated with poverty by placing emphasis”.... on raising output and incomes rather than simply redistributing current incomes and existing assets... .“(1975, p.17).

Consistent with its basic premises, the current approach is essentially administrative and therefore seemingly “apolitical”. It seeks to establish a direct link between the administrative bureaucracy and the rural poor apparently to mobilise the latter to ensure their access to new inputs which are supposed to enhance their productive capacity and raise their income. It ignores the contradictions between the privileged position of the bureaucracy and eradication of poverty, and the possibility that any organization of the poor dependent for its support from the bureaucracy is likely to be dominated by the latter. Assuming that the bureaucracy is disposed to act against its own interests, the approach does not suggest how it can mobilize the poor in face of the opposition from the powerful and antagonistic interests in the rural community, with which occasionally the local bureaucracy is allied, and whose hold on the rural economic and power structure would weaken if the rural poors were effectively organized. The World Bank prescription that “in many countries, avoiding opposition from powerful and influential sections of the rural community is essential if the progranme (for eradication of poverty) is not to be subverted”(1975, p.40) is

essentially an evasion to face the stark reality that local power structure in many countries are frequently inimical to the eradication of poverty and inputs meant for the poor are appropriated by the powerful and the rich blocking the access of the poor to the “distributive justice”. The approach fails to see that effective organisations of the rural poor would be opposed by the powerful interests in the rural areas as this could curtail their power (Cohn, 1955; Alexander, 1973). This apparently “apolitical approach”, therefore, in reality turns out to be political in the sense that it tends to perpetuate or fortify the existing power structure at the local level and fails to suggest measures for altering it.

The administrative character of the dominant approach is also revealed by the dichotomy, implicit in it between the developers and those to be developed; the former presumably moved by the altruistic motivation and professional ethics, possessing superior insights about development of society, technical skills, and working towards improvement of the poor, while the latter presumably resist to change the values, attitudes and beliefs incompatible with improving their own lot. Consequently, the approach proposes “education” and “re-education” of the poor which in fact amounts to conditioning them to accept their integration into the structure of poverty producing societies with marginal modifications in their conditions.

After the failure of the community development approach to reconstruct a democratic rural community, and technicals approach of Green Revolution to raise agricultural productivity in a way that it could eradicate rural poverty, the marginally modified current approach does not have better prospects of succeeding for the reasons analysed above. If rural poverty is not merely to be mitigated temporarily but to be eradicated permanently, then a new strategy needs to be evolved based on different premises. A few of the structural elements of such a strategy are outlined below⁵.

1. The starting point for a new rural development strategy must be the broadening of the concept of development prevalent during the fifties and sixties which primarily sought economic development for the benefits of the few to include the maximization of potentialities of all the members of the society. Such a concept

should include not only the fulfilment of the basic needs of all members of a society but should also generate what Maslow calls meta-motivation for fulfilling higher and meta-needs of serving the collective and altruistic goals (Maslow, 1969; Rehman, 1976). The broader concept of development seeks harmony between human efforts for control over nature and preservation of the ecosystem (Another Development, 1975, p.35). Finally, such a concept should aim for man's control over the conditions of his existence leading to termination of asymmetrical dependency. If this approach to development is accepted then rural development could be viewed as a process which leads to a rise in the capacity of the rural people to control their ecological, social economic and political environments in a way that such control leads to wider distribution of its benefits enabling the rural people to meet their basic as well as meta needs, and live in harmony with their ecological environments. Such a concept of rural development would require abandoning the efforts to integrate the rural poor into poverty producing societies seeking to meet only their minimum material needs temporarily and fail to provide an environment in which their full potentialities could be realised. It would further require adopting, evolving, developing indigenous and appropriate technologies which enable rural people to live and function in relatively harmonious social groups and communities as well as control their bio-physical environment without disrupting harmony with it or destroying it.

2. A second premise on which a new strategy should be built is the acceptance of the fact that political power is the critical determinant of the size of share of different groups in a distributive system (Lenski, 1966), and all efforts to change the distributive system in favour of the poor would fail unless the structure of power is changed in a society. The Asian rural poor in the past have not benefited from the fruits of rural development programmes because they lacked such political power (Inayatullah, 1974). To accept this premise would require abandoning the administrative approach to rural development and seek changes, in the international, national and local power structures so that rural poor could assume control over conditions of their existence. The changes in power structure are difficult to bring about through planned action unless they are accompanied by changes in the internal and external conditions of a society — the conditions which support a given power structure. Planned action, however, could accelerate the pace of this process and make the transition to a new power structure less painful.

Simultaneously, changes in power structure has to occur with transformation of institutions which are based on this power structure as well as sustain it. This would include transformation of institution of property in a way that it does not prevent access to means of production to the large segment of a society. This could lead to further erosion of vertical patron-client relationship and emergence of horizontal bonds among the poor. The transformation of institution of private property may not be easy in countries where the traditional patrons control large share of the productive resources and are capable of destroying the independent organizations of the poor through the use of physical force exercised through their organized employees as well and where they have the support of the state apparatus. Under these circumstances, the organizations of the poor may have to engage in defensive struggle to preserve themselves. This could mean developing cohesive bonds among the poor, supporting each other in times of crises, settling disputes and feuds internally without referring to legal and bureaucratic system.

The institutional transformation for the benefits of the rural poor could be facilitated if the state apparatus including bureaucracy, legislative institutions, legal system, educational system, could be simultaneously transformed through political action. As bureaucracy, national and local constitutes the most powerful group in most Asian countries it needs to be transformed in a way that it is stripped off its privileged position and weakened as a power group, becoming amenable to and instrumental in the institutional transformation of poverty producing societies in the desired direction. This obviously cannot be achieved through mere "retraining" of the civil servants but would require a fundamental transformation of the bureaucratic machinery including changes in the recruitment and selection criteria as well as generating a commitment to the transformation of the society and eroding the prevailing status quo or reformist orientation.

3. As power structure is rarely changed by those whose interests are linked to it, it could be changed only by the collective action of the poor; therefore a third element in the strategy of rural development should be the inculcation of critical awareness among the rural poor of the forces which shape the existing structure of poverty producing societies, creation of self-reliant organizations of the poor, which engage in a political struggle to transform the existing power structure and its

institutional manifestations. Obviously, this is not an easy process as the dominant ideologies diffused through the educational system, mass media, as well as the existential experiences of the poor condition them to believe that their fate cannot be altered and their actions are inefficacious. Such beliefs can be altered only if the poor could organise themselves, engage in a struggle to change their lot against the opposing forces and discover their individual and collective power.

As analyses in previous section show, de-stabilisation of the rural community has freed the poor from traditional dependency bonds in most Asian countries but this has not created among them the unity and organization which could help them alter their environments. There is not evidence that such organisation could be created through planned action by those whose power and privilege they seek to curtail, and government sponsored groups and organizations would be poor substitute for them. Therefore, the poor in every poverty producing society has to become self-reliant and find within themselves the power, energy, skills, to organise themselves. These resources are more likely to become available to the poor when those among them who are relatively more advanced in critical awareness cannot be co-opted or retained in the existing power structure, or factional strifes within the power elite throw some of them out the power structure disposing them to opt for the organization of the poor. To become fully self-reliant the organisations of the poor need to sever dependency relationship with the state machinery when it works to their disadvantage, developing mutual cohesive bonds and supporting each other in times of crisis. However, the experiences of developing self-reliant autonomous organisation of rural people in some Asian countries indicate that it is indeed a difficult process (Bandopadhyay, 1974: Breman, 1974). This is especially true for creating such organisation in those societies which in the process of their development have created on the one hand an efficient system of control placed at the disposal of a small political minority and on the other a multitude of atomised individuals and fragmented and weak social groups.

4. A fourth premise of the, new strategy should be to take into account the effects of international forces which affect the generation, perpetuation, aggravation, and elimination of poverty, and control them in a way that they support and sustain the total development of poverty producing societies. In this

regard it should not be assumed that interests of the different countries at various stages of material and technological advancement are always compatible (Another Development, 1975,p.65). Nor it should necessarily be assumed that international concern for eradication of poverty necessarily is oriented to raising the level of collective development of the poor countries. In fact, as being increasingly realised, the contemporary structure of international relations perpetuates dependence of the poor countries on the rich countries and produces uneven and bimodal patterns of development in which both affluence and poverty increase (Chase—Dunn, 1975). Recently efforts are underway to reconstruct a New International Economic Order (NIEO) which if successful could mitigate the negative effects of international environments on the process of development of the poor countries. However, it is uncertain whether the NIEO would be implemented in the face of opposition of some rich countries. It is still more uncertain whether the change in the structure of international environment in the desired direction would necessarily lead to the adoption at national level new strategies of development oriented to collective development of the poverty producing Asian societies, and whether resources made available to the poor countries through restructuring of international order would be used for the benefits of all members of these societies. Consequently if eradication of rural poverty is to be ensured, diffusion of power has to occur simultaneously at international and national levels.

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