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POPULATION POLICY AND RURAL REFORM IN CHINA, 1977-1984:
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERDEPENDENCY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

VOLUME I

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Blanche Tyrene White, B.A., M.A.

*****

The Ohio State University
1985

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Since 1977, the People's Republic of China has been charting a policy course which, in terms of both substance and style, represents an abrupt rupture with the immediate past. Replacing the Cultural Revolution decade stress on radical egalitarianism and local self-sufficiency are policies which seek to generate economic growth through direct reliance on material incentives and the encouragement of individual entrepreneurship, and also, through a purposeful fostering of diversification, specialization, and interdependence throughout the economy. Replacing the earlier policy style of political mobilization and mass campaigns is one which puts much greater emphasis on orderliness and regularized administration as a means of effecting policy goals. For China's rural populace, this shift in policy substance and style meant a dramatic change in the organization of economic and social activities at the local level, as national leaders actively sought to increase local autonomy and restructure rural administration.

Paralleling earlier reform efforts, China's leaders have had to grapple once again with the perennial problem
of implementing selective decentralization measures, while maintaining or strengthening control in other areas. In addition, the reformist leadership has had to respond flexibly to what were perceived to be undesirable effects or consequences of reforms which had been initiated, without further impairing or impeding the overall reform process. And finally, reformers have had to muster all of their accumulated political skills in order to outmaneuver political opponents and build a stable, deeply-rooted coalition of support.

How has this reform package been implemented in China's rural sector, and, in attempting to cope with its implementation, what impact has the process had on rural local-level organization and leadership, and ultimately, on the content of the reform programs themselves?

The attempt to understand the policy process and its impact in post-Mao China has inspired much of recent scholarship on contemporary China, as analysts watch the unfolding of the reform process which is still underway. This thesis seeks to build on this foundation by focusing on a manageable subset of rural policies, one that is at the heart of the reform process and one that highlights the dilemmas posed by conflict, competition and complexity in the policy process.

Specifically, this analysis will examine in detail the implementation of China's one-child-per-couple
population policy against the backdrop of a tandem process of rural economic and structural reforms. Although not restricted to the rural sector, achieving the objectives of China's population policy depends on strict rural compliance, and thus, an overwhelming amount of central-level attention has been given to the problem of rural implementation and enforcement. More fundamentally, the control of population growth is seen as the keystone on which the prospects for rural development, economic prosperity and national modernization ultimately depend. And as a policy implementation problem, the size of the subject population and the nature and scope of behavior modification required under the policy make it one of the most ambitious programs ever devised, and thus, one of the most difficult to implement. Moreover, the collectivist rationale and tight regulation required in this area stands in sharp contrast to the decollectivist and deregulatory thrust of rural economic reforms, raising key questions about the capacity of local-level personnel and administrative structures -- also targets of reform -- to cope with these centrifugal tendencies.
Until recent years, the study of policy implementation was largely the territory of American policy analysts. Often motivated by a desire to explain why the "Great Society" programs of the Johnson Administration fell far short of expectations or failed outright, scholars were able to build a persuasive case that it was not necessarily the policy idea or concept which was at fault, but rather, the many pitfalls in the implementation process. Thus, for example, the Pressman and Wildavsky study of Oakland and the Economic Development Administration demonstrated in dramatic and elaborate fashion the complexity of steering a program through each step of the implementation process, even when there is a reasonably clear statement of program goals and wide-spread consensus on the desirability of the program.

Although the implementation literature abounds with insights into the American policy process, bureaucratic politics and intergovernmental relations, one can reasonably question the applicability of this analytical framework to the Chinese scene. The distance between Washington and Beijing, or Oakland and Wuhan, is measured in more than just miles, and the mainstream policy
implementation literature is decidedly parochial in its orientation. Where the implementation process has been viewed as the independent variable which explains the outcome of program initiatives, however, the findings have been sufficiently generic as to be applicable to a wide range of socio-politico-economic contexts. Although each political system will vary in its specifics, generic problems such as lack of bureaucratic coordination, the "complexity of joint action," inadequate resources and weak lines of communication will have a high explanatory value in any setting, and certainly do in contemporary China. Thus, there would seem to be no question as to the utility of the "implementation perspective" for understanding how gaps develop between program goals and outcomes.

The dilemma arises when we turn the problem around and ask instead the more intriguing question of "what the forces that produce policy do to implementation." When the implementation process becomes the dependent variable, to be explained in terms of regime type, elite structure, or organizational capacity, to cite only a few possibilities, one is immediately struck by the extent to which the implementation literature is "system-bound." Three examples will serve to demonstrate. First, studies assume the existence of certain critical systemic or structural
characteristics, namely: 1) a federal system, and more particularly the specific type of federalism that exists in the United States; 2) a pluralist, liberal democratic political system, one which provides opportunities for the articulation of diverse political interests and assumes a responsive and responsible national government; and 3) a stable, firmly institutionalized governmental structure and civil bureaucracy which is both highly specialized and professional.  

Second, these assumed structural characteristics inform the analysts' understanding of the nature of the policy process, and serve to delineate the stages of that process. Thus, to isolate the start of the policy implementation stage, Pressman and Wildavsky tell us that, "Legislation has to be passed and funds committed before implementation takes place to secure the predicted outcome." Similarly, Walter Williams, in discussing the role of the federal government in administering social programs, states:  

"Congress passes a law. The big decision has been made. Implementation responsibilities then pass to the social agency. This is the federal government's chosen vehicle for putting decisions in place."  

Thus, the formal passage of enabling legislation marks the transition from policy formulation to implementation. Following this strict construction, one would search in
vain for the start of the implementation process in China.

Third, the literature on policy implementation is overwhelmingly devoted to the study of various social programs — health, welfare, education, housing and employment programs, to cite the most common ones. Although a substantial amount of research has also been done on the enforcement of regulatory policies such as pollution control and civil rights, and the implementation of judicial decisions, most general works on policy implementation draw on insights gained from studies of federal attempts to deliver social goods and services. In China, on the other hand, the predominant focus of elite attention, and thus, scholarly analysis has been the crafting of economic policies compatible with elite goals.

Positing these and other aspects of the American political and policy context as given, policy analysts have focused increasingly on the implementing agency, organization, or bureaucracy as the key to understanding and improving implementation. The problem has, to a large degree, been reduced to the issue of organizational control and management, containment of bureaucratic discretion, or forging intra-agency consensus and commitment. Richard Elmore, for example, examines the implications for policy implementation of four different models of organizational process: 1) the systems
management model, where implementation failures are seen as resulting from "lapses of planning, specification, and control;"^5 2) the bureaucratic process model, in which the control of bureaucratic discretion and routine is stressed, and implementation failures result from "a failure on the part of policy-makers to understand the actual conditions under which social services are delivered,"^6 or "the persistence of bureaucratic routines;" 3) the organizational development model, which stresses the importance of group consensus and commitment, in which implementation failures result from "a lack of consensus and commitment among implementors,"^7 and 4) the conflict and bargaining model, in which "the outcomes of implementa­tion are temporarily bargained solutions," and thus, "success or failure . . . is largely a relative notion, determined by one's position in the process."^8 Although each of these models represents a theoretical (i.e. non-system bound) perspective on organizational dynamics and their consequences for the policy process, they nevertheless share certain implicit assumptions about the nature of the political and socio-economic environment in which they operate, assumptions which reflect once again the Western, liberal democratic origins of policy analysis.\textsuperscript{29}

Given the built-in bias of the implementation framework of analysis, it is not surprising that its explicit
application in widely divergent political, economic and socio-cultural contexts requires not only a fundamental reassessment of the variables which affect the implementation process, but also a reconceptualization of what constitutes policy implementation. Yet comparativists who study the developing world or communist regimes have been, until very recently, disinclined to tackle this intellectual task. Because the reasons for this disinclination shed so much light on the problems of adapting the policy implementation framework to different settings, they deserve elaboration here.

Looking first at the developing world, the most fundamental reason for the lack of attention given to the problems of policy implementation has undoubtedly been the belief that this issue pales in comparison to larger questions of how to achieve and sustain a stable, legitimate political order and how to design a balanced long-term strategy for economic growth and development. While Western policy analysts in the 1970s sought explanations for the failure of social programs purposely designed to redistribute goods and services in favor of the poor, scholars looking at the Third World sought explanations for why it was improbable, if not inconceivable, that such policy decisions would be made in the first place. While Western policy analysts had the relative leisure to probe in detail a specific programmatic process from "start" to
"finish," observers of developing countries were absorbed in the attempt to order and understand the structure of variables which worked to constrain, facilitate, or otherwise affect the developmental process. Thus, concern over pitfalls in the policy implementation process were subsumed in the much broader "political economy of development" framework, which placed primary emphasis on the political prerequisites or correlates of economic development.  

Under this framework, attention was generally concentrated on the politics of the policy formulation process and the consequences, political and economic, of implementing key economic policies. What happened in between was more than a residual issue, but explanations for the gap between intentions and outcomes were attributed to problems more fundamental than the implementation process per se. Thus, policy failures and stagnation in the developmental process were attributed to obstacles posed by powerful elites at the local or national levels, the absence or weakness of participatory channels for the poor, or the influence of external actors over domestic political and economic processes, to cite a few examples. Solutions to such problems are to be found not in the transient issues of how to better design and implement a particular program, but rather, through the realignment of political power in favor of the disadvantaged via more
fundamental reform efforts or revolution.\(^3\text{5}\)

In addition, because of its wholistic approach to the developmental process, the political economy framework necessarily assumes interdependence among the economic, social, and political factors that give rise to a particular developmental path. Thus, a single developmental measure's effects are important not for their own sake so much as for their impact on the entire developmental process, via their "multiple consequences" for other elements of the process, and through the "interaction of effects" generated by each measure.\(^3\text{6}\) Thus, whereas the policy implementation framework focuses attention on individual programs in relative isolation from other policy areas, the political economy framework assumes the interdependence of all governmental policies and thus, the sterility of any analysis which artificially isolates one from its interaction with others.

Similarly, those who study communist regimes, including China, have also tended to ignore the issue of policy implementation, but for different reasons, one conceptual and one methodological. First, the influence of the totalitarian model of communist politics on our perception of the policy process was stifling for many years.\(^3\text{7}\) Under this model, an autocratic ruler establishes public policy goals in conformity with an all-encompassing ideology, and relies on a highly disciplined communist
party to ensure the translation of these goals into programs of action. With a monopoly of political and economic power, extra-party opposition is easily controlled. Through the common adherence to a single ideology and the organizational imperative of democratic centralism, intra-party dissent is effectively contained. Starting from these premises, the policy process entails little more than the mechanical translation of shared goals into action by a highly motivated and efficient party apparatus. Ironically, this vision approximates that of the systems management model of the policy process, where consensus, motivation and monitoring capabilities are sufficiently strong as to make possible the optimization of policy outcomes.

By the 1970s, of course, the influence of the totalitarian model had declined dramatically, to be replaced by the alternative models of interest group politics, bureaucratic processes, arenas of conflict, and factional politics. Each begins with the assumption of pervasive conflict in communist regimes, including conflict over the ends of, and means to, socialist development. As a result, increased attention was given to the policy process in communist systems, a trend that was dramatically reinforced in the case of China as a result of information revealed during the Cultural Revolution.

With this dramatic evidence of fundamental political and societal cleavages, the "Mao in command" model gave way
to analyses of the Chinese policy process. Attempts were made to understand "policy-making under Mao," the consequences of elite division for public policy, and the politics of the policy process in specific issue areas. At a broader level, political debates, policy shifts and local responses in the rural sector triggered a scholarly exchange concerning what was variously described as a policy "cycle" or policy "oscillations." As with the political economy framework, the "cyclical process" approach to Chinese politics assumes some form and degree of interdependence among programs within a policy sector and the possibility of systematic variation -- substantively, stylistically and temporally -- across policy sectors.

Although these new perspectives on the Chinese policy process were not incompatible with the policy implementation framework, most works were skewed in the direction of central-level policy formulation and policy conflict. This distortion was the product in part of a continued preoccupation with elite-level politics, but just as important, it was the product of technical limitations, namely: 1) no access to the participants in the policy implementation process; 2) little information on the formal or informal channels through which policies were put into action by bureaucratic actors; and 3) the suspect nature of what information there was about any part of the implementation
process, including policy outcomes. In short, the research constraints posed by a closed political system made detailed analyses of policy implementation infeasible.

Despite the distance that had to be bridged in order to adopt the Western-oriented implementation framework to the Chinese political and economic setting, where the characteristics of Third World and communist systems uniquely intersect, several trends began to converge in the late 1970s that facilitated movement in that direction. First, in the West, earlier conceptualizations of implementation as an analytically distinguishable stage of the policy process began to give way to a more fluid notion of "evolutionary implementation." Writing in 1979, Aaron Wildavsky no longer felt bound by the meticulously delineated concept of implementation set forth in the first edition of the Oakland study six years earlier. At that time, a distinction was made between a policy, "a hypothesis containing initial conditions and predicted consequences," a program, which "signifies the conversion of a hypothesis into governmental action," and implementation, "the degree to which the predicted consequences... take place." These components work together as follows:

"Policies imply theories. Whether stated explicitly or not, policies point to a chain of causation between initial conditions and future consequences. If X, then Y. Policies become programs when, by authoritative action, the initial conditions are created X now exists.
Programs make the theories operational by forging the first link in the causal chain connecting actions to objectives. Given X, we act to obtain Y. Implementation, then, is the ability to forge subsequent links in the causal chain so as to obtain the desired results."50

Having established this sequential process, however, the authors immediately concede that they "oversimplify...

In the midst of action the distinction between the initial conditions and the subsequent chain of causality begins to erode."51

By 1979, this caveat had become the point of departure for a different conceptualization of implementation, one much more flexible, and thus, more amenable to cross-national applications:

"Implementation is evolution. Since it takes place in a world we never made, we are usually right in the middle of the process, with events having occurred before and (we hope) continuing afterward. At each point we must cope with new circumstances that allow us to actualize different potentials in whatever policy ideas we are implementing. When we act to implement a policy, we change it. When we vary the amount or type of resource inputs, we also intend to alter outputs, even if only to put them back on the track where they were once supposed to be. In this way, the policy theory is transformed to produce different results. As we learn from experience what is feasible or preferable, we correct errors. To the degree that these corrections make a difference at all, they change our policy ideas as well as the policy outcomes, because the idea is embodied in the action..."52

In short, the conclusion is that implementation "will always be evolutionary; it will inevitably reformulate as well as carry out policy."53  In deemphasizing the
importance of formal procedures (e.g., "legislation is passed, funds are allocated by Congress") and definitional boundaries, what is sacrificed in conceptual precision is compensated for in broadened analytical utility. Moreover, implied in this conceptualization is the potentiality of horizontal evolution -- the transformation of one policy idea and policy process as a result of the transformation of another -- as well as vertical evolution.

A second trend in the implementation literature has been to focus on the irreducible discretion of local-level implementors at the point of program delivery or enforcement. Thus, Michael Lipsky's article, "Standing the Study of Policy Implementation on Its Head,"54 argues:

"There are many contexts in which the latitude of those charged with carrying out policy is so substantial that studies of implementation should be turned on their heads. In these cases, policy is effectively 'made' by the people who implement it. Where considerable discretion characterizes the jobs of people who implement public agency activities, people make policy in hidden concert with others in similar positions through their patterned responses to the situations and circumstances in which they find themselves...

Rather than considering them at the end of a policy 'chain,' the policy deliverers would instead be seen as primary actors for whom the others in the policy arena affect and provide the context in which they make discretionary judgments. In contrast to other approaches to policy implementation, this would be appropriate where the hierarchy of influence over policy is not congruent with the hierarchy of authority in the organization, and where the elements of the policy process are not so closely linked as to warrant saying that they are part of the same policy 'system.'"55 (emphasis added)
Writing over a decade later, Walter Williams elaborates on the crucial role of these "street-level bureaucrats," noting that local-level discretion "is both unavoidable and essential," threatening to hierarchical control but necessary on the ground.

This shift of emphasis away from formal organizational structures to the characteristics and behavior of individuals at the bottom of the system who deal personally and directly with program clients also goes far toward enhancing the applicability of the implementation framework to other settings, particularly developing countries that are predominantly rural, loosely organized at the local level, and dependent on non-professionals to link government agencies with program clients. The utility of this focus is illustrated by the extent to which generalizations about the behavior of "street-level bureaucrats" charged with delivering social programs in the United States can be applied to "village-level bureaucrats" in developing countries. For example, Walter Williams notes that:

"The discretionary judgments by front-line professionals about particular services and how they will be delivered to those served are among the most powerful determinants of government policy. This does not mean these people themselves are all-powerful. The literature on street-level bureaucracy usually shows these professionals struggling, often desperately, to cope with excessive demands from above (rules, the immediate bosses) and..."
below (those served). 'They' may use discretion just to survive, but use it they do."58

He goes on to state that "street-level bureaucrats,"

"...who scholars keep saying have great amounts of irreducible discretion, perceive themselves as the most powerless organizational actors in the institutional game. They see themselves in a most beleaguered position trapped between regulations and bosses above and difficult clients below."59

One would look in vain in the literature on Chinese politics for any more succinct statement of the dilemma faced by local-level rural cadres in that very different political context.

This focus on local-level discretion led to a third trend in the Western implementation literature -- namely, a distinction between macro- and micro-level implementation,60 which Paul Berman explains as follows:

"Implementing national policy thus consists of not one but two classes of problems. The federal government must execute its policy so as to influence local delivery organizations to behave in desired ways; we call this the macro implementation problem. In response to federal actions, the local organizations have to devise and carry out their own internal policies; we call this the micro-implementation problem...

...Whereas the institutional setting for micro-implementation is a local delivery organization, the institutional setting for macro-implementation is an entire policy sector, spanning federal to local levels."61

For Berman, problems with macro-implementation revolve around four sets of factors: "goal discrepancies, influence and authority differentials, resource
deficiencies, and communications difficulties among organizations." As difficult as these are to contend with, however, their resolution in no way guarantees alignment of policy goals and outcomes, since the "pivotal step" of micro-implementation must still be taken.

Berman stresses that the act of a local unit to adopt a program in line with national policy signals not the end of the implementation struggle, but in a very real way, its beginning. At the local level, a complex, three-phase process is yet to be traversed. Phase one is referred to as "mobilization," during which local officials, through a "mixture of political and bureaucratic activities," plan for the execution of the program and generate support for it within the organization. Phase two is termed "deliverer implementation," which, to be effective, must be characterized by "mutual adaptation between the project and the organizational setting." The key here is that in the process of implementation, both the project and the organization change, and:

"...what happens to a project depends not only on project and organizational characteristics, but also on what happens to the organization because of the project and because of the way the project is implemented." (emphasis added)

This dynamic interdependence between program and organization makes possible an infinite number of local-level permutations on both the implementation process and its
outcome.

Finally, phase three is the "institutionalization" of local practices, i.e., making them "a routinized part of the local delivery system." Here again, a three-part process is necessary:

"First, institutionalization involves at least one and perhaps a cycle of decisions by managers to routinize the implemented practice so that it becomes incorporated into organizational procedures... Second, these decisions are similar to the adoption decision in the sense that they turn on local bureaucratic and political considerations. Third, these authoritative decisions by local managers are, like everything else in the complex world of implementation, not self-executing; they too must be carried out by deliverers.

We have come full cycle. The phases of the local process of change... are not nearly as neat or linear or discrete as analysts might like."66

In short, what happens between the formulation of policy at the national level and its adoption by local units is only half the implementation story, and not necessarily the most important, or most complex half. Even the best-designed and best-executed national program, having navigated a sea of implementation obstacles at the macro-level, may get mired in the mud at the micro-level.

These shifts of emphasis in the mainstream policy implementation literature -- evolutionary implementation, local-level discretion, micro-implementation -- have been paralleled by increased attention to the policy implementation process by those who study the developing world.
Without rejecting the broader concerns of the political economy perspective or the role of international factors in shaping domestic policy decisions, some scholars began to examine systematically, not just why certain policy decisions were made, but also what happened to them after they were made.

The best example of this effort is Merilee Grindle's edited volume, *The Politics of Policy Implementation in the Third World*, which attempts to build on the insights of country specialists to generalize about the policy implementation process in the Third World. The Grindle volume rests on the premise that because of differences in the characteristics of the political systems of the United States and Western Europe and the Third World, characteristics which constitute the context for implementation, the study of policy implementation may be even more important in the latter than in the former. Specifically, because mechanisms which allow for the resolution of political conflict in the populace during the policy formulation stage are generally much more in evidence in the West than in the Third World, more political conflict is left to be resolved during the implementation process, where "a large portion of individual and collective demand making, the representation of interests, and the emergence and resolution of conflict occurs." Thus, national-level interest aggregating structures such as political parties, group
associations or lobbies are less important than the more informal and personalized mechanisms of influence closer to the point of program delivery. Moreover, because so much is left to be resolved at lower levels, problems of manageability are multiplied and even harder to rectify.

Compounding the problem is the tendency of Third World regimes, particularly in the aftermath of structural and/or leadership changes, to launch broad-scale reform initiatives which: 1) contain multiple and competing policy objectives, 2) overtax available political, economic and administrative resources, because they are so poorly planned, 3) engender substantial amounts of political conflict throughout the system. Such major reform efforts are motivated not only by the desire to spur development and induce rapid change, but also by the perceived need on the part of new leaders to discredit the former leadership and its policies as complete failures, a compulsion which Albert Hirschman terms "fracasomania." Thus, to ensure political, and frequently, ideological distancing from the previous leadership, incremental changes which might compromise the new leadership are rejected in favor of fundamental reforms. The policy problem then becomes how to manage the simultaneous implementation of numerous economic and social programs in an environment of scarcity.
A key aspect of this environment of scarcity is the relative weakness of administrative structures in predominantly rural societies. The frequent failure of civil bureaucracies to penetrate effectively to the local or village level, combined with low levels of professionalism on the part of administrative personnel, makes administrative policy a critical component of any reform effort. Thus, policy changes are often accompanied by decisions to centralize or decentralize administrative control, weed out political opposition within the bureaucracy, or otherwise alter the bureaucratic apparatus. Although such administrative changes are viewed as essential to the success of other reform programs, the disruption of the same administrative structures charged with implementing new economic and social policies requires a level of political skill and degree of central control not often found in the Third World context.

**Policy Implementation in Contemporary China**

Despite the mitigating influence of a highly centralized governmental structure and a deeply penetrating communist party, recent scholarship on the People's Republic of China suggests that the problems of control in the policy implementation process are profound in this
setting as well, and that many of those problems and the constraints on their resolution bear striking similarity to those of the non-communist developing world. This may be particularly true of the rural sector, where China's peasants, despite decades of political mobilization, remain only loosely connected to the political Center, and where power and authority, despite the organizational penetration of the party and the state, continues to be highly personalized.

Any careful specification of shared implementation problems and identification of China's unique characteristics, however, was hostage to the removal of the technical obstacle of no research access. With the normalization of Sino-American relations in 1979, this obstacle was partially lifted, allowing some field research access just as new agricultural policies, the foundation of the modernization effort, were introduced across the countryside. With Western researchers given limited access to China's interior just as reform programs were launched in every policy sector, a unique opportunity to examine the implementation process presented itself, resulting in the first major effort to explicitly apply the policy implementation framework to the Chinese setting. That effort, which came together in a 1983 conference, highlighted both the similarities and differences between China and other industrialized or developing political systems with
respect to the factors which influence the implementation process. The similarities include: 1) the critical importance of sustained elite commitment and its capacity to shape the political and administrative context; 2) the problem of poor planning and the resultant "unanticipated consequences" of implementation; 3) the dilemmas posed by the simultaneous launching of multiple policy initiatives with competing goals which draw on the same scarce pool of political, economic and administrative resources.75

More instructive was the identification of unique aspects of both the post-Mao Chinese policy process and the socio-political system in which it occurs. Four of these aspects merit attention here. First, with respect to the policy process, both the content of policy and the style of implementation evolved over time as the reformist leadership of Deng Xiaoping strengthened its political position and mobilized mass-level support. Thus, as the policy shifted from reliance on collective organization and incentives to individual entrepreneurship and market forces, mobilizational techniques were modified or abandoned in favor of an administrative style of implementation. This general shift in style was consciously nurtured by the Center, but the specific characteristics of the new policy style were the result of mutual adaptation between policy content, administrative capabilities, and the political environment.76
Second, in order to solidify the position of the Deng coalition and thwart the opponents of reform, critical organizational and personnel changes were essential. Thus, even while substantive reform programs were being launched, the organs charged with their implementation were being created, modified or overhauled and their personnel subject to review. Although the creation of new bureaucracies is a standard technique for effecting the implementation of public programs, it typically occurs at the beginning of the implementation process, not in midstream. In China, however, political imperatives and policy evolution necessitated an ongoing process of organizational change. Although it is clear that the central elite initiated key organizational and personnel changes which were seen as prerequisites to the implementation of reform policies in the economic and social sector, once the process got underway at lower levels, it quickly became difficult to discern whether organizational changes facilitated policy implementation or vice versa. Although each policy area had its unique characteristics, in most cases the outcome was the result of some degree of mutual adaptation between policy content and organizational context, not one or the other.

Third, David M. Lampton has stressed the peculiar organizational complexity of the Chinese system. Calling it a "fragmented and cellular polity," he reminds us that
concepts such as "system" (xitong), "unit" (danwei), "independent kingdoms" (duli wangguo), and "mothers-in-law" (popo)

"...define the conceptual and organizational space in which all policies are implemented. These words and phrases denote the limits which each actor views as principal constraints on his/her behavior. The multiplicity of organizational and territorial players, their prerogatives, information flows, the way in which budgets are allocated, and careers are structured, all impede the implementation of policies that cut broad swaths across China's territorial and organizational map."79

As in other systems, cross-cutting cleavages result from the intersection of functionally and geographically defined organizations, and each bureaucratic actor is intent on preserving or expanding its own turf. Unlike other systems, however, mechanisms for vertical and lateral communication, within and between units, are weak or non-existent. Moreover, as a result of decades of political upheaval, information which is communicated to all relevant organs is likely to be distorted and unreliable at best. As a result, the creation of inter-agency fora has been used as an important remedy to problems of coordination and monitoring.80

A fourth characteristic of the Chinese setting -- one which is derived from and complements the problem of organizational complexity -- is the key role of informal channels in the policy process. Specifically, personalized networks and patron-client relations bridge the gaps in
communication and coordination resulting from the Leninist organizational structure. Though not unique to China, the importance of these networks or informal personal relations to the functioning of the Chinese political system grew dramatically as a result of the organizational collapse and chaos of the Cultural Revolution. Although the precise nature of their operation is difficult to track, it is clear that they can be very effective in facilitating, impeding or distorting for personal gain the implementation of public programs.

Although these and other research findings have contributed greatly to our understanding of policy implementation in contemporary China, they have also highlighted the unique aspects of the implementation process in different policy sectors, reaffirming the importance of content and context in shaping the implementation process for each policy or specific program. They have also raised a second-order set of research questions and demonstrated the relevance of the more recent developments in the Western and Third World implementation literature outlined previously. The purpose of this dissertation is to bring together these diverse strands of research on the policy implementation process in Western and Third World settings, and to build on the foundation of scholarship concerning the specific nature of the policy implementation process in China, by focusing on a relatively narrow slice of China's
post-Mao rural reform program in much greater detail.

In focusing on the implementation of the "one-child-per-couple" population policy, in a context of simultaneous rural agricultural and structural reforms, it is possible to concentrate on three key themes which emerge from the literature reviewed in this introduction. First is the theme of evolutionary implementation, with all its implications for a dynamic and ongoing policy process. Here the key question is: To what extent is the changing content of a policy the result of calculated changes initiated at the Center, versus the product of a concatenation of contextual variables -- structural, economic, attitudinal -- which inexorably constrain the implementation process, and thereby modify the policy idea? In the case to be examined here, are changes over time in the content of population policy attributable to new formulations of the policy problem at the Center, or to the impact of the changing rural context for implementation? If some combination of these two processes was at work, how did they interact to influence the outcome of policy implementation?

The second theme is policy interdependence, defined here in its most general form as the mutual influence of policies on one another. The central questions are: In what way, and to what extent, is the process of implementing one policy influenced by the simultaneous
implementation of others? If each implementation process is characterized by dynamic evolution, how is that evolutionary process influenced by other evolving policy processes? If both vertical and horizontal evolution are at work, how can we distinguish analytically the two types of influence and their consequences for policy outcomes and the political system? Again, in the case at hand, what changes in the context and implementation of population policy were the result of adaptations to "static" characteristics of the rural environment, and what changes were necessitated by the individual or combined impact of rural economic and structural reforms?

The third theme is local-level implementation which, as used here with reference to the rural Chinese context, refers to the commune or township level and below. The central questions are: How important are local-level implementation activities relative to the entire implementation process? Are these local-level actions best characterized as the beginning or the end of the implementation process? What range of discretion exists for local-level implementors, how is it used, and what is its effect on policy outcomes? How do the characteristics of the political system and the policy environment affect the discretionary powers of local-level implementors? And most importantly, how do the phenomena of evolutionary implementation and policy interdependence affect the
actions of local-level implementors, their immediate policy environment, and their use of discretion? In this case, how much influence do commune, brigade and team cadres have over the implementation of population policy? How do they use discretionary power and why? How do local cadres respond to, or contribute to, changes in policy content or implementation activities? And finally, how do local cadres cope with the competing demands of population policy, agricultural policy, and structural reform, and how do their coping behaviors affect the implementation of each?

In short, this dissertation begins with three working hypotheses: 1) that in the process of implementation, the policy content, implementation style, and organizational and environmental context are all subject to evolutionary changes; 2) that the implementation of major developmental reforms gives rise to special problems due to the inter-dependence of reform programs and the phenomenon of horizontal evolution; and 3) that the critical point in the implementation of China's rural policies is at the local level, where the programs to be implemented and the responsibility for implementing them come together in the hands of commune, village and team cadres. Ultimately, understanding implementation means understanding how these "village-level bureaucrats" translate directives into action.
Scope of Study

In order to address the three themes of evolutionary implementation, policy interdependence and local-level implementation, the scope of this study must necessarily be broad. First, the concept of evolutionary implementation requires that the analysis not exclude central-level activities traditionally referred to as the policy formulation process. If the "start" of the implementation process cannot be analytically demarcated, then limiting our focus by examining the policy process at only certain levels of the system (e.g., the provincial or county level and below) can only distort this study's findings. Second, it is also necessary to examine the implementation process over a period of time sufficiently extended to allow for evolutionary changes to occur. Thus, this study will trace the policy process for China's population policy for national to village levels, across the eight-year period of 1977-1984.

Third, to understand the implications of policy interdependence for the policy implementation process, the study must not be confined to a single policy or program. Thus, in addition to examining the implementation of population policy, we will also look at the simultaneously evolving rural economic and structural reforms and the "interaction
of effects" across policy sectors at the local-level. However, because 1) it is impossible to deal fully with all aspects of the rural reform program within the scope of this dissertation, and 2) the primary concern here is the consequences for the implementation process of burdening local-level implementors and administrative structures with multiple, high priority initiatives, we will examine only the two centerpieces of the reform program -- 1) the agricultural responsibility system, which altered the organization of rural agriculture by devolving production responsibilities and control of land to households and individuals, and 2) the reform of the rural administrative structure, which entailed the abolition of the commune system and the separation of political and economic organs and powers at the commune (township) and village (production brigade) levels.

Finally, the only geographic limitation on this study is that it is confined to China's rural sector. Because of limitations on research access and the data base (see the discussion of sources and research methods below), generalized findings on the dynamics of local-level policy implementation must draw on all available information and not be confined to a specific locality or region. Obviously, this does not eliminate the problems of bias and distortion in the data base, but since all sources are subject to this problem, the assumption here is that it is better to be
inclusive than exclusive, drawing on reports from all regions with a critical eye and a healthy skepticism. Although this study draws heavily on information from one commune -- Hua Shan -- where detailed interviewing was undertaken, much of that information becomes meaningful only when considered in light of reports from other localities. Thus, information on Hua Shan is woven into the fabric of each chapter as a means of supporting, challenging or qualifying other materials and building a more comprehensive portrait of local-level implementation.

Sources and Methods

As previously noted, this study is based on a variety of sources, all of which have inherent limitations. Written materials include: 1) National, regional and local Chinese newspaper and media reports; 2) Chinese and English-language books, scholarly and popular, on specific aspects of rural policy; 3) Chinese-language almanacs, yearbooks and encyclopedias; and 4) academic and professional journals published by Chinese universities and/or governmental units. Most of the primary materials used in this thesis are available in various libraries outside of China, while the remainder are in the author's possession. Secondary materials include translated media reports and the published articles or manuscripts of Western scholars.
Although some of these sources have only become available in recent years, the methodological problems they pose vary little from those described by Michel Oksenberg in 1969 with reference to Chinese press reports. The two most important are undoubtedly the problems of "deliberate distortion" and "unintentional inaccuracy." The problem of distortion is particularly acute with respect to the media, where political control ensures the party line will be propagated. This data problem has not disappeared in recent years, though the increased volume and detail of reports from non-model localities has helped to illuminate the characteristics of "average" or "mediocre" units.

Although "deliberate distortion" is a problem with each type of primary material used in this thesis, the more serious problem for printed materials is that of "unintentional inaccuracy." Books, research reports and academic journals have proliferated in recent years, along with attempts at statistical sampling and survey methods. Most such studies conducted in the rural sector suffer more or less from the following problems: 1) where serious attempts are made at representative sampling (not often the case), flawed sampling techniques are used; 2) survey questions are biased and leading; 3) interview methods introduce bias into the responses; 4) findings are knowingly or unintentionally distorted to support a particular point; 5) published reports omit information essential to interpreting the
findings that are reported. Because of these severe limitations on the quality of data, they must be used with great caution, and statistical information should generally be treated as ordinal-level, not interval-level data. Taken together, however, they can be suggestive of trends in attitude, behavior and performance, and are an important supplement to media reports. Moreover, because of the critical function which work conferences and meetings serve in the Chinese policy process, journal articles which record summary reports or key speeches at these fora can be particularly valuable. In short, although all information reported must be approached skeptically, the quality and value of qualitative materials in books and journal articles generally exceeds that of quantitative reports.

Complementing these written materials is an extensive set of interviews which were conducted in three phases during two extended periods of research in Wuhan, Hubei Province. During the first research period, from February - December 1982, two phases of interviewing occurred. From March through May, interviews were conducted with commune, brigade and team cadres in Hua Shan Commune, a suburban Wuhan commune in close proximity to the host institution, Wuhan University. During this period of field interviewing the author worked
with Professor Chen Chung-min of Ohio State University's Department of Anthropology, whose research topic overlapped that of this study. This arrangement was the result of the inability of our hosts to provide two separate field sites, and to Professor Chen's subsequent invitation to combine research efforts.* Thus, we collaborated on a general research outline and interview protocol, but the conduct of the interviews in the field was done almost entirely by Professor Chen. Information from these interview files is used in this thesis with the permission of Professor Chen. In all, twenty interview days were arranged during this period (no overnight visits were permitted), all of which were spent with commune-level cadres and representatives of the Foreign Affairs Office of Wuhan University in attendance. Neither the research site or the procedures and format for interviews were selected by the interviewers, although some choice was granted concerning brigades and enterprises which were visited during this period.

*I remain enormously indebted to Professor Chen for this gracious and costly invitation. Not only did I benefit greatly from the data gained during this period, and the on-site training he gave in the conduct of field work, I was able to build on this foundation and take advantage of the environment of good will he had worked hard to establish when I returned for subsequent interviews in the fall. Thus, his influence on this study goes far beyond the initial period of field work.
During October and November, 1982, a second phase of interviewing at Hua Shan was conducted by the author independently. A total of eight days of interviews were held, seven at four different brigades, and one at the commune level. The brigades to be visited were selected initially by commune cadres, but in response to my request to visit a rice-producing brigade which had implemented the household contracting form of the agricultural responsibility system (baogan dao hu), one scheduled brigade was substituted with another fitting this description. Thus, seven of Hua Shan's nineteen brigades were visited altogether in 1982, where brigade Party secretaries, brigade leaders, women's leaders and occasionally, accountants were interviewed. At the commune level, those responsible for family planning work -- the head of the Women's Federation and the family planning cadre -- were also interviewed.

One additional interview, granted in December, 1982, was held with two officials of the Hong Shan District Family Planning Office, a suburban district of Wuhan composed of twelve communes which ring the city, five urban neighborhoods, and three state farms. The day-long interview, which was held at Wuhan University, was conducted with a deputy director and an office staff member, both women, again in the presence of university officials.
The third phase of interviewing occurred between February and June, 1984. During this period, I interviewed independently for an additional thirteen days at Hua Shan, beginning only five weeks after its formal change from Hua Shan Commune to Hua Shan Township. Because of this structural change, a new set of township government officials received me and accompanied me to the villages (brigades). Four days of interviews were spent with township-level officials and nine days were spent at the brigade/village level. During this phase, township officials granted my request to visit specific localities, decisions I made based on the limited information available about each brigade. Thus, return trips were made to three brigades I had visited in the fall of 1982, each of which had responded in different ways to the population control program and the agricultural reforms underway at that time. At each locale, at least one of the cadres present had been present for the 1982 interview, and all of the women's leaders were still in their posts. Five additional brigades were also visited, some selected based on size, others based on distance from the commune center or type of collective enterprises, and one because it had the worst family planning record in the commune. Since a request to commune and township officials for a breakdown by brigade on collective per capita income for the three preceding years, population size, amount of arable land
and productivity levels was repeatedly turned down, no better basis for choosing interview sites was available.

In addition to interviews at Hua Shan Township, one-day interviews were held with family planning officials at the provincial, municipal and district levels, all of them conducted at Wuhan University. For Hong Shan District, the two women interviewed in 1982 returned for the follow-up in 1984. At the municipal level, the director of the Wuhan Family Planning Commission and one section chief (kezhang), both women, were interviewed. Representing the Hubei Provincial Family Planning Commission were a bureau chief (chuzhang) and a section head (kezheng). Supplementing these interviews were several hours of interviews conducted with family planning officials from four counties in Hubei Province. This opportunity was made possible due to the convocation of a large training class for county-level family planning cadres at Wuhan University. The four interviewees were selected by faculty members associated with the Population Research Group of the Economics Department of Wuhan University who were quite familiar with my research project and the class members. However, the small number interviewed and the relatively short period of time allotted was due to constraints on my access to the training class participants.
Thus, altogether twelve of Hua Shan's nineteen brigades were visited, and interviews were conducted at every sub-national level of the family planning apparatus save the prefecture. In each case, a loose interview protocol was adhered to, one which covered a range of topics but permitted the conversation to be steered into areas where the interviewee seemed more knowledgeable or forthcoming. Interviews were not tape-recorded for fear of inhibiting the responses; instead, notes were taken by the interviewer and later transcribed in full.

Taken together, these interviews provided a wealth of information not only about Hua Shan Commune and the Hubei family planning bureaucracy, but also about the implementation process generically. Obviously, however, the data base does have its limits. Beyond the problem of no choice over research sites, no access to other communes (this request was repeatedly refused), and the requirement that officials be provided topical summaries of interview questions in advance, all severe limitations by Western standards, two other methodological problems must be noted.

First is the problem of bias in the sample. Only government and Party cadres were interviewed, individuals who, even if inclined to be open and forthcoming with non-Chinese researchers (which is not always the case), are unlikely to do so because of the personal and political risk.
Second is the problem of data reliability, about which it is difficult to generalize. Since systematic tests of data reliability were impossible to perform and "independent" verification techniques nonexistent, ad hoc methods were used when the situation permitted. For example, statistics reported by district- and municipal-level family planning officials, as well as descriptions of bureaucratic processes and functions and policy problems, could be at least partially verified by repeat questioning at the next higher bureaucratic level. Only when there were follow-up interviews, however, could minor discrepancies and unusual statistical patterns not immediately detected by the interviewer be clarified or explained.

The worst problems emerged at the commune and brigade levels, of course, where the follow-up interview was the most important method of checking for discrepancies. Where this was not possible, judgments of reliability had to be made depending on such tangible and intangible factors as whether or not specific figures were cited as opposed to approximates, or the general attitude and knowledgeability of the interviewee. In a few cases where such problems were serious, offers of follow-up interviews were declined in favor of a new interview site.

On the topic of family planning, only very sensitive topics such as late-term abortions, the use of coercion, and female infanticide posed serious problems. The use of
coercion and the occurrence of female infanticide were categorically denied by commune and higher-level officials, and figures for abortions and third births were sometimes shaved. Nevertheless, because of continued access to the commune-level family planning cadre in 1984, many discrepancies at that level were uncovered and resolved. Although it is impossible to verify each specific statistic, the trends and problem areas are unmistakable.

Finally, the problem of miscommunication and misunderstanding, on the part of both the interviewer and interviewee, must be noted. Beyond the general problems of the researcher carrying cultural and political biases and preconceived images into the field and the disruptive effect of his/her presence on the interviewee, interview data may be distorted because of literal inability to communicate, a problem most likely to occur where 1) the interviewee's local dialect is unfathomable to the researcher, and 2) the interviewee is illiterate. In such circumstances, neither the questions nor the answers make a great deal of sense to the parties to the interview, and both become reliant on commune cadres to act as intermediaries. Compared to the total number of interviews conducted, however, such instances were rare.

Despite the serious methodological problems with both written and interview materials, taken together and used
judiciously, they constitute one of the most detailed sets of data compiled to date. Because the goal of this study is to understand the dynamic policy implementation process and the structure of variables which affect its course and its outcome, not to measure it, the data base available is entirely adequate for the task, and for a "closed" political system, unusually rich.

The dissertation is organized in three parts. The first part, consisting of chapters two and three, examines the evolution of national policy on population control and rural reform between 1977 and 1984. Thus, chapter two sets the context by discussing the rural reform program as it unfolded during this period, and its local-level consequences for cadre behavior, administrative procedures and other policy initiatives. Chapter three then charts the evolution of population policy against this rural backdrop. The second part, consisting of chapters four, five and six, is a detailed examination of the process of implementing the "one-child-per-couple" population policy in the rural sector. Chapter four deals with the organizational and incentive structures created to enforce the policy, chapter five discusses the deficiencies in these structures and other obstacles to the successful implementation of policy, and chapter six examines how both policy content and style underwent change as "solutions" were crafted to cope with
implementation problems. In part three, the themes of
 evolutionary implementation, policy interdependence, and local-level politics and implementation are explored in light of the preceding discussion. Thus, chapter seven focuses on the "micro-implementation" issue and the role of the "peasant-cadre" in the policy process. Chapter eight then returns to the inseparable concepts of evolutionary implementation and policy interdependence and the way in which these phenomena and the Chinese political system interact. In conclusion, chapter nine will consider the issue of policy performance -- how to evaluate policy outcomes -- in the Chinese context.
ENDNOTES


4. In addition to numerous articles which have appeared in recent issues of The China Quarterly, Asian Survey, Modern China, The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs, the Journal of Asian Studies and other scholarly journals, three major conferences have been held in the U.S. since 1983 which focused on various aspects of the Chinese reform process, namely: 1) the Workshop on Studies in Policy Implementation in the Post-Mao Era, sponsored by the Joint Committee on Chinese Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council and the Mershon Center, Columbus, Ohio, 20-24 June 1983; 2) Conference on "To Reform the Chinese Political Order," also sponsored by the Joint Committee on Chinese Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, Harwichport, Massachusetts, 18-23 June 1984; 3) the Conference on The Political Economy of Reform in Post-Mao China, Harvard University, 1983.

6. For a very brief outline of the best of these studies, and a rejection of the post-liberal heresy" of "skepticism about the intellectual foundations of liberal reform," see Bardach, Implementation Game, 1-8.

7. Pressman and Wildavsky, Implementation.


10. See Williams, Implementation Perspective, 12-20, for an elaboration of "the tenets of the implementation perspective" in the U.S. context.


26. Ibid., 204, 212.

27. Ibid., 212.

28. Ibid., 222.

29. The most blatant example of this problem can be found in the assumptions about individual motivation and behavior underlying the "organizational development" model. Referring to the work of Chris Argyris in this area, Richard Elmore notes that this model begins with the proposition that a fundamental contradiction exists between the behaviors required of adults in and out of the workplace:

"On the outside, adults are defined as people who are self-motivating, responsible for their own actions, and honest about emotions and values. Inside organizations, adults are expected to exhibit dependency and passivity toward their superiors, they resort to indirection and avoid taking responsibility as individuals, and they are forced to submerge emotions and values." (Elmore, p. 210).

Although this dichotomy may be applicable in Western settings, students of Chinese culture would point to the description of intra-organizational behavior, with its focus on dependency and subordination of personal to group needs, as a closer proximate of the Chinese concept of "adult behavior," in and out of the workplace, than that of the "self-motivating," "responsible" and "honest" individual. On Chinese culture and

30. For a review of this literature, see Samuel P. Huntington and J. I. Domínguez, "Political Development," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, Handbook of Political Science, Volume 3 (Boston: Addison-Wesley, 1976), chapter one.


35. For a concise summary of the intellectual dichotomy between the advocates of reform and revolution, see R. William Liddle, "The National Political Economy of Rural Development in Southeast Asia: A Conference Proposal," unpublished manuscript. He contrasts the "mainstream," reform-oriented work of Francine Frankel with the Marxist, revolutionary alternative of Peter Evans (pp. 1-4).


44. Chang, Power and Policy in China.


49. Pressman and Wildavsky, Implementation, xx-xxi.

50. Ibid., xxi.

51. Ibid.

52. Majone and Wildavsky, "Implementation as Evolution (1979)," in Pressman and Wildavsky, Implementation, 190-91.

53. Ibid., 194.


55. Ibid.

56. The term is that of Michael Lipsky. See Lipsky, Street-Level Bureaucracy.

57. Williams, Implementation Perspective, 16.

58. Ibid., 17.

59. Ibid., 64.


61. Ibid., 164.
62. Ibid., 166.
63. Ibid., 176-77.
64. Ibid., 172.
65. Ibid., 173.
66. Ibid., 178-79.
69. Ibid., 15.
70. Ibid., 18.
74. The Workshop on "Studies in Policy Implementation in the Post-Mao Era" was sponsored by the Joint Committee on Chinese Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council and the Mershon Center, Columbus, Ohio, 20-24 June 1983. For a summary report of the Workshop, see Paul Schroeder, "Policy Implementation in Post-Mao China," Mershon Center Quarterly Report, vol. 8, no. 3 (Winter 1983).
76. Ibid.

79. Ibid., 18-19.

80. Ibid.


86. Ibid., 594.

87. The first research period, from February-December 1982, was sponsored by the Ohio State University-Wuhan University Exchange Program. The second, from September 1983 - June 1984 was conducted as a Graduate Fellow in the National Program for Advance Study and Research in China, Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, National Academy of Sciences.

Emerging out of the ashes of the Cultural Revolution, the singular compelling goal of achieving modernization by the year 2000 has served as the focus of political and economic activity for China's post-Mao leadership. Undergirding the entire modernization process has been the reform of China's system of rural organization, a reform that is comprehensive in scope and far-reaching in impact. Comprised of several distinct policy programs, the agricultural reform process has been marked by the staged introduction of economic, organizational and structural changes designed to transform the rural scene and modernize the agricultural sector. It has also served as the political bellwether and economic prerequisite for many other reformist goals.

The 1978 decision to embark on this exceedingly ambitious modernization program was made by a transition leadership during a period of great political uncertainty. This combination of weakened central authority and major policy initiatives is generally seen by policy analysts to be a prescription for failure on a grand scale and a scenario to be avoided at all costs.
For those who observe the policy process in developing countries, however, the scenario is a familiar one, as is the resultant host of implementation problems and frequent policy failures which flow from it. Although these negative consequences are easily observable and obviously linked to design flaws and structural weaknesses in the system, more difficult to explain is the seeming compulsion of weakened regimes to acquire self-inflicted wounds by launching grandiose schemes. Albert Hirschman offers an elegant answer to this riddle, attributing this behavior pattern to a paradox rooted in the dynamic of the socio-political system structure. Stable, strong socio-political systems give rise to a style of policy-making which Hirschman refers to as "coping," with policy-makers willingly operating within an accepted set of system "constraints" to ensure personal security and system maintenance. Thus according to Hirschman:

"...it is precisely when, in this manner, the state is at its strongest that its managers will have and give the impression that they are just coping, that is, forever handling the matters that somehow require immediate attention without pursuing any grand design...

On the contrary, when control weakens and the existing social and political structures are under serious attack, then the state, challenged to adapt the old order to new circumstances or to build a new order, is more likely to engage in a spate of autonomous policymaking. Such action is then likely to lead to a host of new problems with which the authorities will have to cope so that in a period of state-initiated
structural change, both aspects of policy-making are apt to come to the fore." (emphasis added)

Thus, weakened political systems and the resultant diminution of structural impediments mean loosened policy-making constraints and greater room for maneuver. Under such circumstances, "autonomous" policy-making occurs, in which leaders have a greater opportunity to redefine regime goals, choose policy priorities, and launch "grand designs." In the process, a new set of constraints will evolve which gradually limit again the range of policy autonomy, pushing policy-makers back toward a "coping" style.  

This formulation can usefully be applied to the Chinese context, making allowances for the narrowed range of tolerance for systemic turbulence characteristic of communist regimes. Specifically, Hirschman defines a "weak" state as one in which "the existing social and political structures are under serious attack." In communist states, however, the penetration of the Communist Party into all social and political structures serves to ensure the basic stability, if not legitimacy, of those structures, hence maintaining a strong state. Thus, a strict interpretation of Hirschman's definition would lead us to define as weak only those communist systems in which the control of the Communist Party was under serious threat, a crisis of revolutionary proportions in which the
struggle for political power is the focus of activity. Under such circumstances, the relationship between regime characteristics and policy style becomes a moot point.

Thus, the notion of a weak communist regime must be redefined to account for the relatively lower levels of tolerance for systemic imbalances. For example, the period of uncertainty surrounding a decision on leadership succession is a time of perceived weakness and political crisis in communist regimes. In China, the sense of weakness and insecurity is greatly exacerbated by a cultural imperative toward order and stability and a widely perceived link between central-level political conflict and social disorder.

Thus, in the wake of Mao's death and the arrest of the "Gang of Four" in 1976, the Chinese leadership in 1977 was severely weakened, even while its central political and social structures stood virtually unchallenged. As Hirschman would predict, out of this weakness came the revival of a "grand design" to achieve the modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology and national defense.

Having achieved a minimal consensus on the shared goal of modernization, the task of specifying program goals and the means to attain them fell to the reformist coalition, led by Deng Xiaoping, which gradually emerged
from the political succession struggle. This group chose to target the agricultural sector as top priority for reform, while simultaneously launching an assault on the political supporters and beneficiaries of the Cultural Revolution. Just as in the 1950's, debate on the content of agricultural policy served as a barometer for elite conflict, with all actors cognizant of its far-reaching implications for other policy areas and their personal political futures.

At the same time, agricultural policy and the political debate surrounding it also served as the environmental context for other policy initiatives. Although policy analysts always describe policy environments as fluid, subject to changes based on the amount of intervention by relevant actors, the degree of elite commitment, the amount of allocative resources, etc., this is fluidity of a very narrow sort, and does little to capture the essence of the Chinese policy problem. Given the propensity of China's leaders to launch comprehensive, system-wide reform programs which are vaguely defined and poorly planned, administrators down the line must attempt to cope with several policy initiatives simultaneously and come to terms with the inevitable inconsistencies and contradictions among them. As central leaders
begin to establish priorities and elaborate program goals, adjustments are made throughout the system as attention, resources, and conflict are concentrated on what seems to be the highest priority program of the moment, thereby altering the policy environment for other reform programs. More importantly, as the reformist coalition gains strength by overcoming political obstacles at the Center, the content of each separate policy continues to evolve, thereby altering the policy environment for each program and its relationship to all other programs. In short, because of the ongoing process of policy formulation across a broad range of policy areas, the environment for policy implementation is in a constant state of change, as administrators adapt to new directives relating to specific programs for which they are responsible and cope with the consequences for "their" programs of changes in another sector of the policy matrix.

Focusing on the case to be considered here, the evolution of China's agricultural policy between 1977 and 1984 is a policy implementation story in its own right, but it also constituted a critical element of the policy environment for the simultaneously evolving population policy. It is the relationship between these two policies, and the implications of their tandem evolution for the policy implementation process that I wish to explore. This
chapter will treat the evolution of agricultural policy primarily as a contextual variable, or in other words, the backdrop for implementing population policy. By first examining both the formulation and implementation of agricultural policy, we may then proceed to a detailed analysis of the relationship between agricultural and population policy at each stage of the policy process. Thus, below I will examine the two aspects of rural reform most significant for the implementation of population policy -- the staged institution of the responsibility system for agricultural production and the reform of the commune structure of rural management. After outlining the national policy-making process for both components of rural reform, detailed attention will be given to the implementation process and its consequences at the local level.


Between late 1976 and 1982, the evolution of rural economic policy proceeded in three distinct stages. First, the period up to December 1978 was characterized by the effort to contain proponents of rural radicalization. Led by Hua Guofeng and Chen Yonggui, these leaders sought to expand on the Maoist agricultural legacy by
embracing the Dazhai model of agricultural organization, stressing higher levels of collectivization and reduced scope for market forces and private economic activities.\textsuperscript{13} Although this line was pushed by Hua at the December 1976 Second National Conference for the Study of Dazhai in Agriculture, the return of Deng Xiaoping to power in mid-1977 marked the start of a counter-offensive, the first goal of which was to contain any further efforts at radicalization. Thus, in the spring of 1978, press reports began to stress the "sovereignty of the production team" (shengchanduide zizhuquan) as a counterpoint to calls for brigade-level collectivization.\textsuperscript{14} This set in motion two trends, one of reducing the arbitrary appropriation of team-level resources by brigades and communes, and another of moving away from the brigade as the basic accounting unit and breaking up production teams which had been forced to merge together (bing dui).\textsuperscript{15} Thus, between 1976 and 1980 the total number of production teams that operated as basic accounting units increased from approximately 4.709 million to 5.389 million.\textsuperscript{16}

The Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978 marked the shift from a goal of containing Dazhai-style agricultural policy to initiating key reforms which would be the first steps toward decollectivization. In addition to reaffirming the sovereign rights
of the production team and the right of households to work private plots and engage in family sidelines, draft documents adopted at the plenum also sanctioned a devolution of responsibility to "small groups" or "work groups" composed of several households within a single team.\textsuperscript{17} These groups would contract with the production unit to perform a specific task or meet a set output quota. Rewards could be linked, as in the past, to the team's collective work point system, or be linked directly to group output (\textit{lianxi chanliang jisuan baochou}).\textsuperscript{18}

Thus, throughout 1979 and into 1980, local-level units began to experiment with various forms of responsibility systems while central leaders debated the range of acceptable types. At issue was whether or not to allow individual and household contracting, which had been severely criticized when it was first experimented with in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{19} Between the December 1978 Third Plenum and the end of 1980, substantial progress was made on this issue. First, David Zweig has pointed out that between December 1978 and September 1979, the time of the Fourth Plenum, the proscription of household quotas and division of land to individuals was removed from the draft document on agriculture. Instead, these systems were allowable for certain types of sideline production and for remote, poverty-stricken areas.\textsuperscript{20} Second, after the consolidation
of the reform coalition and the removal of the "whatever faction" in early 1980, a work conference on agriculture was held in September which gave limited sanction to what was already occurring -- the adoption of household and individual quota systems and the more radical household contract system.21

The distinctions between these systems were critical ones, and the subject of great debate among politicians and economists.22 The group "quota" system (baochan dao zu) retained unified team management and the work point system of compensation. Thus, for example, where teams were subdivided to work groups, each was given responsibility for a certain amount of land and a certain production quota. Each laborer within the group continued to earn work points, the value of which was based on the total value of team production. All produce was to be turned over to the team for unified management, and distribution of income was also handled by the team. Incentives were introduced through a differential bonus system, based on the amount of above-quota production turned over by each group. Thus, laborers with the same work point standard in different groups received the same income for meeting production quotas. Differentials were based only on above-quota bonuses, all other things being equal. In short, the work point system was not fundamentally altered; rather, with only minor adjustments, it devolved to the work group.23
The household quota system (baochan dao hu), though it came in several variants, differed little in principle from the group quota system just described. Unified management by the team remained, and work point systems remained in force. Thus, in most cases, the total income of each household was dependent on the average work point value for the team, which was calculated on the basis of total team production and the total number of work points earned by peasants. What was different was the further devolution of responsibility to the household and the division of land on the basis of household size and labor capacity. Although collective ownership and unified team management remained in force, the system of household quotas was a de facto rejection of collective agriculture and thus, highly controversial.24

The greatest uproar, however, was reserved for the system of "household contracting" with "fixed levies" (baogan dao hu) or "all-round contracts" (da bao gan). With the introduction of the contract system, unified team management and the allotment of work points came to an end. Households were made responsible for supplying agricultural inputs and were obligated to meet all contractual obligations for state and collective production, for which they received a guaranteed price. After meeting additional obligations for state taxes, local welfare and accumulation
funds and other expenses, all additional production output and the income it generated was their own. In short, only the veneer of collective land ownership remained to separate household contracts from private farming (dan gan), as many opponents were quick to point out.

Nevertheless, by late 1980 Central Document No. 75 had sanctioned this as an acceptable form of responsibility system for poor, backward areas where collectivization had produced more cynicism than economic growth, ushering in the third stage of implementation of the agricultural responsibility system.

Thus, throughout 1981 localities were encouraged to implement forms of the responsibility system which were appropriate to their own level of economic development, namely, household quotas or contracts for backward areas, group quotas for average areas, and specialized contracts (zhuanye chengbao) for suburban, highly collectivized areas. With such an unusual amount of leeway given to local officials, and with central policy clearly in a state of flux, two centrifugal tendencies began to occur, one conservative, the other radical. In many areas, local officials reacted cautiously by arbitrarily disallowing household quotas or contracts. In other localities, peasant enthusiasm for household contracts outstripped the bounds of national policy and set in motion a trend
toward dismantling all collective assets (see below). These mounting problems in 1981 kept reformers on the defensive until the spring of 1982, by which time the pressure for wholesale acceptance for household contracts was growing.

That acceptance came in late July 1982, when a Renmin Ribao article gave prominent attention to a Jiangxi Province report on local experience with da bao gan (comprehensive contracts). With this breakthrough, it soon became acceptable to introduce household contracts even in the relatively wealthy suburban districts that had thus far resisted the decollectivization trend. This advance in policy was firmly articulated by Wan Li, head of the State Agricultural Commission, in November 1982. In a speech given at a joint session of the conference of agricultural secretaries and conference on rural ideological and political work, he stated:

"As to the suburban areas of some large cities and some regions where the economy is particularly developed, the current operation forms which are in conformity with the conditions of local production forces or which the masses do not need to be changed can remain unchanged; but if the masses demand the exercising of the contract system of linking output with payment, this demand should no longer be held back. We should genuinely show respect for the will of the masses. The masses should have the right to make the decisions according to the local conditions. We should adhere to the mass line." (emphasis added).
Thus, throughout the fall and winter of 1982-83, areas that had lagged behind in implementing da bao gan began to do so, paving the way for increased stress on specialization and commercialization in 1983. That stress would be sanctioned by Central Document No. 1 (1983), which encouraged the development of specialized households and cooperatives, reduced restrictions on peasant supply and marketing activities, and sanctioned the hiring of labor on a small scale. With the adoption and implementation of this document, central-level debate on the overall orientation of agricultural policy was ended, though there continued to be differences of opinion over specific reform proposals.

As policy content evolved during the years 1977-83, policy implementation became a never-ending process of responding to instructions emanating from the Center which were specific about overall policy orientation but intentionally vague as to specific measures to follow at the local level. As a result, the policy implementation process became first and foremost a policy interpretation process, with cadres at each administrative level making choices on whether to sanction the application of the agricultural responsibility system in their area, what type of agricultural responsibility system was appropriate for local conditions, and how, specifically to set it up.
Moreover, with each policy decision that was made, cadres were making critical personal and political choices, aligning themselves with reform proponents, opponents, or middle-roaders above and below them. Thus, though the evolution of policy content at the center progressively narrowed the range of acceptable policy choices for cadres down the line, the perceived scope of political and personal risk attached to each choice was much slower to narrow. Only in the second half of 1982 did that risk begin to diminish, by which time a host of implementation problems had surfaced, grown to dangerous proportions, and been slowly brought under control.\(^{32}\)

Before examining in some detail the problems resulting from the staged implementation of the responsibility system, it is useful to first examine the complex arrangements involved in putting various forms of the responsibility system into effect at the production brigade and team levels. To illustrate this process, several examples from Hua Shan Commune, covering the period 1980-83, are outlined below.\(^{33}\) As a suburban commune, Hua Shan stands as a good example of how the responsibility system was implemented in more or less orderly stages over a period of three years. Although there were undoubtedly more problems in the implementation process than were revealed by local cadres who were interviewed, the consistency with
which cadres in different brigades described the implementation process lends credence to the assertion that major implementation pitfalls were generally avoided and that, relative to other localities the process was a smooth one.

II. Local-Level Implementation of the Responsibility System: Examples from Hua Shan

According to Hua Shan Commune officials interviewed in the spring of 1982, the responsibility system was introduced to the area in a limited fashion in June 1980. By mutual consent of commune, brigade and team officials, a team was selected from Hua Shan Brigade to experiment with the reform. Specifically, the system of lianchan dao lao (production quotas to the individual), was introduced, found to be successful, and sanctioned for adoption by other teams throughout the commune. By March 1982, two additional types of responsibility systems were being used in the area, namely: 1) specialized contracts linking payment to output (zhuanye chengbao lianchan jichou), and 2) task rates with payment on a quota system (xiaoduan baogong, ding e ding chou). Of Hua Shan's 179 production teams, 161 were operating under individual quotas or specialized contracts, while the remaining 18 teams, all with highly developed collective sectors, used only task
Also according to commune officials, the household contract system (da bao gan or bao gan dao hu) had not been implemented at that time.

After the spring planting and harvest, however, and following the unequivocal national level sanction given to da bao gan during July 1982, many of Hua Shan's brigades and teams shifted to individual or household contracts, the most radical, decollectivized form of the responsibility system. When questioned in October about the suitability of this form of responsibility system for a suburban commune with a well-developed collective economy and a relatively high standard of living, a commune official answered straightforwardly that Hua Shan might be rich compared to backward rural areas, but it was poor compared to the city. Thus, da bao gan was appropriate for Hua Shan's conditions. This response, of course, echoed the tone of newspaper articles published during the summer which noted approvingly the application of da bao gan in suburban areas. Thus, whereas the commune deputy director interviewed in the spring placed great emphasis on the maintenance of unified management and distribution, by the autumn of 1982 another commune official stressed the superiority of da bao gan over other forms of the responsibility system, which he said still resembled too closely the "iron rice bowl."
Nevertheless, not all teams shifted to da bao gan in the summer of 1982. Some brigades waited until the pressure mounted in early 1983 before being persuaded to shift to household contracts (see below).\textsuperscript{42} In short, the implementation of various forms of the responsibility system was only partially controlled by commune or higher-level cadres. Responding to higher-level signals in 1980 and again in 1982, commune cadres gave sanction to a range of alternative forms of the responsibility system, and in 1980, were involved in selecting and monitoring teams in various brigades which served as experimental sites.\textsuperscript{43}

Within those parameters, however, a great deal of discretion was left to brigade and team cadres to decide which system was most appropriate for each locality. The result was a patchwork quilt of systems in force in 1981 and 1982, overlaid by another patchwork layer of variants of each particular system. Below, examples from several Hua Shan brigades are outlined to illustrate: 1) the evolutionary implementation process between 1980 and 1983; 2) the complex procedures generated to put the reform into effect, and 3) the differential response of each brigade to the reforms. All information is derived from interviews with brigade Party secretaries or brigade leaders conducted during 1982 and 1984.
1. Sequential but uneven implementation. As noted above, Hua Shan Commune officials insisted that the implementation of the responsibility system began in Hua Shan Brigade in June 1980, where the No. 6 team was selected through mutual consent of team, brigade and commune officials as an experimental site. According to brigade cadres, however, the first reforms were introduced as early as 1978, though they were limited to the use of task rates (xiaoduan baogong), and the division of teams into work groups (fenzu zuo ye). Nevertheless, based on interviews conducted at twelve of Hua Shan's nineteen brigades, it is clear that most brigades instituted some form of responsibility system in 1980 or 1981. Only one brigade for which information is available failed to introduce the responsibility system prior to 1982.

Three forms of responsibility system were introduced in the spring of 1980; 1) division of the team into work groups, while retaining the work point system of unified distribution (fenzu zuoye, bulianchan jichou); 2) production quotas to the group, linking income to output (baochan dao zu); and 3) individual production quotas, linking income to output (lianchan dao lao). Of these three, the first represented the least departure from
team-level collective agriculture, while the latter, because of its assignment of quotas to individual laborers, was the most controversial at that time. Thus, it was this system of individual quotas which commune officials noted as the first one to be implemented in experimental form in 1980.

Where these systems were introduced, however, only certain teams within each brigade adopted the system, while others continued to operate as usual. Thus, for example, in Yan Jiang, a vegetable producing brigade, four of its teams divided into work groups in 1980 while the other four did not. The latter group was made up of two teams which had been administratively merged until 1975, at which time they each split into two teams, creating four smaller teams only one-half to two-thirds the size of the other four. Apparently, it was decided that these teams were too small to benefit from further division.

Similarly, in Lian He Brigade, eight of its ten teams adopted individual production quotas in 1980, one adopted the work group system, and one implemented only the task rate system. The two deviant cases were again attributed to the small size of the teams and the very small amount of available land per capita and per laborer. However, a close look at average available land per
capita and per laborer for each team reveals the land availability for team one, which did not implement individual quotas in 1980, and teams three, four and seven, which did, varies by the insignificant margin of not more than fifteen hundredths of a mu per laborer. (See Table 1). When pressed to explain, the brigade Party secretary continued to stress the small amount of land available, but added that these two teams wanted to move more slowly toward change. Interestingly, one of the cautious teams was also the secretary's home village.

A third case is that of Hua Shan Brigade, where two teams were selected to implement the responsibility system in 1980. Team four implemented the group quota system, while team sixteen implemented the individual quota system. According to brigade cadres, team four was selected because of its large size and its relatively high average of available land per laborer. Indeed, based on statistics given for all nineteen teams in Hua Shan, team four has the largest population, the largest total acreage, the largest average acreage per laborer. As for the selection of team sixteen to implement the individual quota system (lianchan dao lao), brigade cadres offered the surprising answer that the "conditions for individuality" (getide tiaojian) were good there because land had been fairly evenly divided among families in this team before
### Table 1.

**Population, Acreage and Laborers per Team in Lian He Brigade, Hua Shan Commune**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Total Laborers</th>
<th>Agricultural Laborers</th>
<th>Total Acreage</th>
<th>Acreage per capita</th>
<th>Acreage per Laborer</th>
<th>Acreage per Agr. Laborer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>1.500</td>
<td>5.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>.432</td>
<td>1.086</td>
<td>5.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>.593</td>
<td>1.522</td>
<td>6.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>1.509</td>
<td>8.050</td>
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<tr>
<td>5)</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>1.904</td>
<td>4.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.888</td>
<td>2.262</td>
<td>7.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.750</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>3.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8)</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1.038</td>
<td>2.615</td>
<td>5.913</td>
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<tr>
<td>9)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>.900</td>
<td>2.250</td>
<td>12.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td>1.653</td>
<td>4.089</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aIncludes commune and brigade enterprise workers.

liberation, and thus, it was an easy task to divide it back to the laborers thirty years later.\(^{55}\)

In this staggered fashion, the responsibility system was introduced to various teams and brigades in 1980. By 1981, brigades such as Hua Shan began to expand the number of teams adopting lianchan dao lao, while in other brigades, 1981 reforms were limited to a division into work groups (fenzu zuo ye) without linking income to output.\(^{57}\) By 1982, all brigades and teams had adopted some form of the responsibility system, with the vast majority working with individual or group production quotas, but there remained important differences across brigades as to the amount of change local cadres and peasants were willing to accept. Nevertheless, even while some brigades continued to resist group or individual production quotas, others responded to new signals emanating from the Center by introducing the household or individual contract system (bao gan dao hu, bao gan dao lao).

According to Hua Shan Commune officials interviewed in the fall of 1982, dao bao gan (comprehensive contracts) was first introduced in the area in August 1982.\(^{58}\) With one exception, interviews conducted at the brigade level confirm that the shift to da bao gan occurred during the second half of 1982 or before spring planting in 1983.\(^{59}\)
The exception is Hua Shan Brigade, where cadres interviewed in November 1982 claimed that the entire brigade had switched to da bao gan early in 1982. If so, Hua Shan may have served, as it did in 1980, as the experimental point for da bao gan, though commune officials did not indicate this during the spring 1982 interviews.

Nevertheless, the real breakthrough for da bao gan came in August 1982, when several other brigades shifted to individual or household contracts. The remainder shifted to this system in 1983, at which time the uniform designation of "family contract responsibility system" (jiating chengbao zerenzhi) was adopted. According to cadres in one brigade which had not shifted to da bao gan in the fall of 1982, after studying the issue the decision had been made by November of that year for all brigades to shift to da bao gan in 1983. Thus, by early 1983, the push for conformity emanating from the central government caught up with Hua Shan, leaving local cadres no recourse but to implement household contracts. With this shift in early 1983, the organization of agricultural production returned to a commune-wide uniformity not present since 1980.

2. Grassroots implementation of different forms of the responsibility system. To illustrate the scope of
change and procedural complexity involved in the implementa-
tion of the responsibility system, two cases will be
recounted here.

Team No. 1 of Lian He Brigade provides an example of
the agricultural organization and distribution process
under the group quota system (bao chan dao zu). Team
one is a rice-growing village with 100 mu of paddy fields.
In 1982, the population of 181 included 68 laborers, 50
of whom worked in brigade or commune enterprises. The
remaining 18 were agricultural laborers. Team one
divided into three groups in 1981, each of which contained
approximately the same number and mix of agricultural
laborers and brigade and commune enterprise workers. The
small differences within each group were accounted for in
the production contracts for which each group was made
accountable.

As can be seen in Table 2, each group contract
specified the amount of investment for which the team was
responsible, the number of work points to be earned if all
production quotas were met, and the total production quota
for various collective and state needs. All these figures
were based on the amount of land for which each group was
made responsible, and the quality of that land. To ensure
that each group had approximately the same mix of quality
land, all team acreage was classified as one of three
grades and divided among the groups proportionately.

Table 2. Contracts in force for Team No. 1, Lian He Brigade, in 1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group #</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team investment</td>
<td>1042 yuan</td>
<td>1022 yuan</td>
<td>1018 yuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work points</td>
<td>39075</td>
<td>38325</td>
<td>36300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State quota</td>
<td>2874 jin</td>
<td>2711 jin</td>
<td>2606 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve seed</td>
<td>3126 jin</td>
<td>3066 jin</td>
<td>2904 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(liuzhong)</td>
<td>(collective)</td>
<td>(collective)</td>
<td>(collective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder (siliao)</td>
<td>3360 jin</td>
<td>3420 jin</td>
<td>3000 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(collective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency grain reserve (jidong) (collective)</td>
<td>450 jin</td>
<td>430 jin</td>
<td>410 jin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine the exact acreage to be apportioned to each group, a set mathematical formula was followed. First, it was decided here that brigade and commune enterprise workers would be allotted small portions of land to till as a means of providing their own subsistence grain. Specifically, each was to receive 30 percent of the allotment given to agricultural laborers. To determine the exact acreage due each laborer, the average acreage per laborer was calculated (100 mu / 68 laborers) to be 1.47 mu. This average then became the base figure for calculating the amount to be allotted to each enterprise worker. Since they were to receive 30% of the average, each was apportioned 0.441 mu of land (1.47 x 0.3). With each of the 50 enterprise workers allotted 0.441 mu, for a total of 22.05 mu (0.441 x 50), the total acreage remaining to
be divided among the agricultural laborers was approximately 78 mu, or 4.33 mu per laborer. Having determined in this fashion the allotment for each category of laborer, total group acreage can be calculated based on the exact laborer composition of the group.

The method of calculating group and individual compensation was no less complicated. Assuming the group met the designated targets, the full number of work points would be earned by the group, the value of which would be based on the sale value of grain, pigs or other commodities, minus deductions for collective service, cadre bonuses and other expenses. For above-quota production, sixty percent of the market value would be returned to the group, while the remaining forty percent would be retained by the team. Thus, total group income varied depending on its total productivity.

Within the group, however, each laborer is compensated based on the amount of labor time contributed, not individual production (anzhao shijian ding baochou). Thus, for example, each laborer may receive one work point for each hour worked. The cumulative total of work points earned then becomes the basis for distribution within the group. The more work points earned, the larger the reward, whether or not that labor time is linked directly to increased productivity.
Herein lies the criticism of baochan dao zu as a more sophisticated form of the "iron rice bowl." Rather than production teams assuming collective responsibility for gains or losses and distributing rewards and penalties evenly, groups became the operative unit. Although the system did take a step forward by tying group income to group output, intra-group differentials among laborers still went unrewarded (or unpunished). It was precisely this problem that da bao gan was designed to resolve.

Both individual (bao gan dao lao) and household (bao gan dao hu) contracts with fixed levies were operating in Hua Shan by the fall of 1982. Household contracts were employed in Hua Shan Brigade, while Dong Gang, a vegetable-growing brigade, opted for bao gan dao lao. Officials in each brigade argued that given the prevailing local conditions, the form they had adopted was the simplest and best. Hua Shan's brigade leader argued that under individual contracts, "the distribution process is too loaded down with trivial details" (fenpei tai fansuole), and that the household system was necessary to ensure that everyone could produce enough food for their own consumption. Because Dong Gang is a vegetable producing brigade, families cannot avoid having to purchase grain for their own use. Thus, division of land to the laborer only does not compromise a household's ability to
feed itself.

Looking in detail at Hua Shan's household contract system, the far-reaching significance of this reform step is unmistakable. Under this system, collective distribution based on work points is wholly abandoned and full responsibility for apportioned land devolves to the peasant household, along with increased discretionary authority over the utilization of the contracted land. Collective ownership and the sanctity of the state plan remain intact, but beyond these parameters, the scope of autonomous decision-making by the household is greatly expanded, and with it, the burden of risk.

Implementing the household contract system requires first that provision is made for each family's personal sustenance. To ensure that each household can feed itself, a portion of the fields is set aside to be distributed as "grain-ration fields" (kouliang tian) on a per capita basis. Within each team, this is done by first calculating the average acreage per capita, then multiplying by thirty percent. Thus, if the average acreage per person was one mu, the portion to be allotted as "grain-ration land" would be 0.30 mu per capita.

The difference between the total team acreage and the amount of "grain-ration land" is the "labor land" (laoli tian) which is divided to each agricultural
laborer on the basis of his or her previous work point standard. That standard was said to vary in Hua Shan Brigade from 8.5 to 10 points for men, and from 7 to 8.5 points for women, translating into a maximum spread of thirty percent between male and female "labor land" allotments. Brigade and team cadres, in addition to the "grain-ration allotment," received one-half the "labor land" allotment given to the male or female laborer of equivalent work point standard in the teams where they reside. Table 3 provides a breakdown by team of the amount of land distributed as "grain-ration land" and the average amount of "labor land" per agricultural laborer. As can be seen, inter-team differentials with respect to population, acreage and worker composition result in a maximum spread of almost two to one for "grain-ration land" and more than three to one for average "labor land." Although differences in land quality could serve to mitigate or exacerbate these quantitative differences, such data is unavailable.

Having arrived at land allotments for each individual in this way, the total land allotment for each household can be determined. The next step is the actual division of land, which is first classified into three grades, depending on the historical productivity levels of the land. Each household is entitled to receive the same
Table 3.
The Division of Land Under Da Bao Gan in Each Team of Hai Shan Brigade (1982)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Acreage Divided to Household</th>
<th>&quot;Grain Ration Land&quot; per person ((B \div A) \times .30)</th>
<th>Total &quot;Grain-Ration Land&quot; Acreage ((C \times A))</th>
<th>Total &quot;Labor-Land&quot; Acreage ((B - D))</th>
<th>Number of Agricultural Laborers</th>
<th>Average &quot;Labor Land&quot; per Agricultural Laborer ((E \div F))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>59.50</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td>32.76</td>
<td>76.24</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.315</td>
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<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>.265</td>
<td>59.10</td>
<td>117.90</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>223</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>67.03</td>
<td>155.97</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>119</td>
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<td>81.35</td>
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<td>207</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>49.47</td>
<td>115.53</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1.627</td>
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<td>110</td>
<td>.183</td>
<td>32.94</td>
<td>77.06</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1.510</td>
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<td>19)</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>.291</td>
<td>20.37</td>
<td>47.63</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.969</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total: 2923 | 2979 mu | .244 mu | 713.21 mu | 1665.79 | 894 | 1.861 (brigade average)

Source: Interview Files, 1982.11.2, p. 2; 1982.11.4, Appendix
proportion of each grade land, which requires additional
detailed calculations based on the total allotment to
which each household is entitled. Again using the example
of team five, the total acreage is 169 mu, with 110 mu
grade one land, 40 mu grade two, and 19 mu grade three,
for a proportion of 65:24:11. Thus, a household entitled
to 10 mu of contracted land theoretically should receive
precisely 6.5 mu of grade one land, 2.4 mu of grade two
land, and 1.1 mu of grade three land. In fact, of course,
such precision was impossible to achieve, and was
compensated for by contractual adjustments which increased
or lowered household obligations appropriately.

With each piece of land identified by size and
quality on a piece of paper, peasants draw lots randomly
(chouqian) to select the pieces they will work. As they
go through successive rounds, those who choose lots larger
or of better quality than the remaining allotment due them
must return the lot and choose again. In this way, the
team seeks to approximate as closely as possible the
exact land composition due each household. Even under
the best of circumstances, however, small discrepancies
undoubtedly remain. Although contractual obligations
can be adjusted to compensate for these landholding
differences, personal income differentials resulting from
the value of sideline or above-quota production derived
from a unit of land may still occur.

Having divided the land to each household, a contract is signed specifying the total state production quota and the amount to be turned over to the team for collective purposes such as emergency grain reserves and support for elderly dependents. The state purchase price for grain is known in advance. In 1982, Hua Shan peasants received 12 yuan per 100 jin of within-quota rice and 18 yuan per 100 jin for above-quota sales. Prices for pigs and other commodities were similarly set.

Beyond the production obligations to the team and state, each household was responsible for paying the agricultural tax of four yuan per mu, and contributing 3 yuan per mu to the collective accumulation fund. All agricultural inputs were the responsibility of each household as well. It was estimated that in 1982 an average of 15 yuan was invested in each mu of land. According to brigade statistics, the result of shifting to household contracts was a near doubling of per capita collective income in 1982, which rose to 300 yuan from the 1981 level of 161 yuan.68

3. Cadre resistance to the responsibility system. The responsibility system was not welcomed equally by all of Hua Shan's brigades and teams. Although no information is available concerning mass resistance among the
peasantry, interviews with cadres in 1982 and 1984 reveal clear attitudinal differences among brigade cadres. Two examples will illustrate.

First, commune officials interviewed in 1984 noted that when all brigades shifted to da bao gan in 1983, investigations revealed that two brigades had previously failed to implement any form of the responsibility system except on paper. The two brigades, Chun He and Qing Feng, had done no more than formally divide the team into work groups without tying income to output. As a result, production levels for these two brigades fell in 1982, compared with improved performance in all other brigades. Indeed, when an interview was conducted at Chun He in May 1982, cadres admitted to having implemented the work group system without linking income to output, and further admitted that only two teams had actually been divided into groups. For the remaining twelve, the team was the group. Asked why they preferred this system, cadres noted the relatively well developed industrial base of the locality, which comprised 50% of total brigade output value. They also argued that the level of agricultural production value was already high, and thus, expressed doubt about the utility of the responsibility system. Most revealing of all, the brigade leader admitted that the cadres there were
conservative, and did not want to stray too far from the old system. When the breakthrough for da bao gan occurred late in the year, this conservatism became a political liability, leading to an investigation and criticism.

The case of Lian He is less dramatic, but probably more representative. In the fall of 1982, when other brigades had begun to shift to da bao gan, Lian He continued to implement the individual and group quota systems. Besides indicating a reluctance to shift to another form (da bao gan) in mid-year, brigade cadres also stated that they did not see the benefits of da bao gan, compared to lianchan dao zu. Asked about plans for 1983, they indicated that teams with relatively large amounts of land and higher production quotas might shift to da bao gan, but that land-scarce teams probably would not. Yet when a second visit to Lian He took place in March 1984, the new Party secretary, formerly the brigade leader, said that the entire brigade had shifted to da bao gan in 1983. Reminded of the earlier argument that da bao gan was inappropriate for teams with small acreage, he said that after studying Central Document No. 1 (1983), the brigade cadres came to see that da bao gan would be beneficial even under those circumstances because it would help in developing a "diversified economy"
In short, because the 1983 policy document addressed precisely this issue of implementing da bao gan in suburban areas with high man-to-land ratios, the justification for local-level resistance crumbled.

Thus, in Hua Shan, as elsewhere, the process of implementing the responsibility system was an extremely complex one. While policy content at the national level continued to evolve, local units struggled to adapt, unable to keep up with the pace of central-level change and unable to monitor the growing number of grass roots permutations on each acceptable responsibility system type. Within communes and brigades, the array of systems in effect and the complexity of the procedures necessary to smoothly implement and maintain them were enough to overwhelm even the most diligent of cadres. And finally, with the benefits of further change unclear and undemonstrated and the headaches resulting from reforms already in effect not fully relieved, many cadres responded with skepticism and footdragging while others threw up their hands in despair.

III. The Impact of Agricultural Reforms at the Local Level: A National View

During 1981 and 1982, China's central leaders simultaneously waged an offensive battle to radicalize
agricultural policy and a rear-guard defense to contain
the destabilizing effects of their "success." At the
heart of the problem was local-level leadership, which was
both a cause and a consequence of what Thomas Bernstein
has dubbed the "disintegrative tendencies" in rural
communes. On the one hand, the abdication of cadre
responsibilities in order to pursue individual economic
interests was an important cause of the collapse of
collective services and dispersion of assets which occurred
in many localities. In other cases, however, cadres
who initially sought to maintain order gave up in the face
of peasant indifference or opposition to their authority,
or out of opposition to what were perceived to be
"retrogressive" reforms.

Although these dramatic cases of more or less complete
breakdown of local-level leadership merit close attention,
they should not obscure the more common phenomenon of
basically responsible cadres left paralyzed by confusing
signals and an uncertain policy and political environment.
This paralysis was the result of several factors at
consecutive points in the policy chain. First, confusing
signals emanated from the Center concerning the content of
policy, the result of central-level debate on the scope
and speed of reform. Second, authorities from the
provincial to the county level, many of whom were
unconvinced about, or opposed to, policy changes, were torn between the different administrative styles implied by the competing central-level demands of allowing maximum policy flexibility at the local level (embodied in the principle of *yin di zhi yi*, i.e., suiting policy measures to local conditions), while maintaining political and social order and ensuring the viability of the planned economy.\(^7^9\)

Leaving aside the problem of outright opposition to the reforms and intentional sabotage, middle-level cadres who genuinely sought to mediate between these two goals found the fine line between the legitimate exercise of local autonomy and the illegitimate breakdown of local order a difficult one to discern. Forced to choose, many erred on the side of administrative fiat to ensure stability, a comfortable and deeply engrained habit.\(^8^0\)

Third, grassroots cadres at the commune, brigade and team levels, unaccustomed to their new-found decision-making autonomy and well aware of the on-going policy debate at higher levels, were dependent on the system of political communication, oral and verbal, for signals on how to proceed. Yet that system had, in the past, been geared to instructing local cadres on how to proceed, not educating them. As the scope of policy change began to outstrip the skills and understanding of local cadres, increasingly it was instruction and guidance that was
needed. A July 1981 Renmin Ribao editorial raised this issue:

"A major problem which has now cropped up is that some grassroots cadres do not sufficiently understand the party's current policies; therefore, they are not energetic in implementing them. Since the introduction of various forms of the production responsibility systems in the countryside, a great change has taken place in the forms and content of the cadres' work. There should also be great changes in their work methods, but many comrades are accustomed to running production by means of administrative orders. They are not good at taking the mass line, nor do they know how to manage the economy by economic means. There is a small number of cadres who are divorced from the masses and whose incorrect work style has harmed the interests of the collective and commune members. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen education among grassroots cadres and assist them in raising their ideological level and understanding of policies, in correcting their work style and improving their work methods. In the past, the higher-level party committees often assigned a lot of work to the basic-level cadres while providing little education for them. They gave them a lot of assignments but spent little time discussing policies and methods with them. They set a lot of demands on them while providing little specific help for them."\(^{81}\) (emphasis added)

In short, many local cadres, in addition to having political misgivings, literally did not know how to be a cadre under the new conditions. For example, a Hebei Ribao article by the party provincial rural work department noted that "around two-thirds of the basic-level cadres do not understand or know how to do management and control work."\(^{82}\) Extensive training was prescribed, in order that "within one or two years each and every production team or
production unit will have several backbone cadres who are versed in management and control." And in March 1981, a Renmin Ribao commentator's article stated frankly:

"More than six months have elapsed since the document [Central Document No. 75 [1980] on agricultural work] was issued. However, it has not been made known to some basic-level cadres and people in the countryside. Some cadres and people have heard of the document, but they lack a unified or complete understanding of it."

To solve this problem, the article called for another round of study and discussion groups for cadres.

Cadre training might solve the long-term deficiencies in local leadership, but it failed to redress existing problems resulting from the implementation of the responsibility system. Throughout 1981 and 1982, newspaper articles catalogued these problems, insisting they were the consequence of poor leadership, not inherent deficiencies in the controversial reforms. Particularly where the household contract system was adopted, cadres themselves were apportioned land to till, and given production quotas to meet. Collective subsidies for administrative work were reduced proportionately, depending on the administrative level where they worked. In Hua Shan, for example, brigade and team cadres usually received fifty to one hundred percent of the land allotment given to standard laborers. For brigade cadres, half their salary was still to be derived from collective funds,
based on the average income of a brigade enterprise worker. In many localities, however, no subsidies were allotted after da bao gan was implemented, leaving local cadres with little incentive to attend to administrative tasks when their "responsibility fields" need attention.

Whether the result of ignorance, neglect, or willful sabotage, the disruption of local leadership stability combined with the environment of uncertainty resulting from 1) the evolutionary policy process, and, 2) confusion and resistance in the middle layers of the bureaucracy, triggered three types of negative consequences. First was poor implementation and mismanagement of the responsibility system contracts. Second, collective economic functions were weakened or destroyed. Third, collective social services were undermined due to a lack of funds and support.

1. Poor implementation and mismanagement of the responsibility system contracts. In 1981 and 1982, many localities began to shift to the individual or household forms of the responsibility system without the benefit of a binding contract. In such cases, land was apportioned and production quotas were assigned orally, but no written contract was drawn up specifying the mutual obligations of the household and the team. As a Renmin Ribao
commentator put it in March 1981:

"When output quotas began to be fixed on a household basis, a few commune members in some areas breached their contracts, failed to fulfill their task of selling and delivering their products to the state or the collective or left their farmland uncultivated and went out to engage in trade in order to make money. This happened because the obligations, rights and interests of the production team and the contracting household were not explicitly defined and there was no formal procedure to follow (such as in signing a contract)."90

Two months later, a second article confirmed that the concept of a binding economic contract specifying the obligations of each party was one not easily transmitted to rural collectives. Calling it a "new branch of knowledge" for rural cadres, localities were urged to adopt economic contracts, and more importantly, live up to them:

"Economic contracts are binding over the parties concerned. Before signing them, they must be carefully discussed by the masses; once they are signed, they should be solemnly carried out. Of course, this does not mean that everything will go off without a hitch after contracts are signed. Much work has yet to be done before they can be realized... On the one hand, contractors should try hard to realize everything stipulated in the contracts and on the other hand, various supplies clearly stipulated in the contracts such as improved varieties of seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, and so on, should be provided in good time. Realization of the contracts is the best way to safeguard the solemnity of contracts."92 (emphasis added)

Indeed, adoption of contracts proved to be much less of a problem than their "realization," with peasants and cadres
alike "breaching" or "willfully changing" written agreements.93

The problem of peasant refusal to turn over their production to the state had been one of the prime motivations for employing a written contract system.94 The contract was to serve as a guarantee of peasant rights, obligations and income, but it was also necessary to fill the void left by the reduction of administrative mechanisms for the extraction of rural surplus production. The effort to convince peasants of the binding nature of these agreements, however, was undermined by the contempt with which cadres treated them, cancelling or altering them at will.95 To remedy this problem, "economic arbitration groups" were called for, and failing that, the court system was to be employed. For example, Secretary Wang Dongxing of Shanxi province, interviewed in June 1981, commented:

"Whether their harvest is good or poor, units cannot casually cancel their contracts. Units with a greater drop in production may adopt the method of averaging or appropriately lowering their quotas. People receiving rewards should receive the amount stipulated in the contracts. Individuals without proper grounds for not fulfilling their contracts and who cannot be reasoned with must be handed over to the people's court for a ruling and we must not let them get away with it."96 (emphasis added)

The unresolved problem, of course, was how to get cadres who themselves violated economic contracts to accept the
concept of legal accountability and pursue such cases in court.97

2. Collective economic functions and assets. As the agricultural reforms moved inexorably toward decollectivization and household contracting, only the principles of collective land ownership and unified management separated da bao gan from the much-decried system of private farming (fentian dangan).98 Thus, reformers were most particularly sensitive to abuse of landholding privileges and the breakdown of collective economic functions.

Under the terms of the individual or household contract system, peasants were given the right to use a certain portion of land and were obligated to fulfill contractual production quotas. They did not receive ownership of the land, nor did they have the right to buy or sell land. Before 1983, they were also generally barred from transferring land to other households.99 Despite these restrictions, such abuses did occur, provoking a lengthy discussion in People's Daily of the regulations prohibiting the renting, buying, selling, or transfer of land.100 Nevertheless, one investigation of the suburban areas of Tianjin Municipality found that between 1979 and 1981, 2080 mu of land was rented or sold in that area alone, generating an illegal income of ten millian yuan.101
More critical was the illegal encroachment on farm-
land as peasants and cadres began to build houses or
other structures on their "responsibility fields" or other
collectively-held land. Although national figures on
lost acreage are unknown, an investigation of the Beijing
rural suburban districts found that over 24,000 mu of land
had been illegally occupied and built upon, of which only
570 mu had been returned to its former status at the time
the report was written. In Fujian, a separate
investigation revealed that in a single prefecture 15,829
"illegal" homes had been built. To stem this tide,
regulations were issued in late 1982 forbidding any
further encroachment on arable land and creating local-
level organs to oversee construction and rural planning.

Collective enterprises and the maintenance of public
works also suffered. In some areas collective assets
(such as farm animals and machinery) were "divided or
taken away," while elsewhere they were destroyed or
"demolished." At the same time, public works,
irrigation projects and other collective functions were
mismanaged or at a standstill, and financial accounting
work was "in confusion," with "nobody to straighten it
out." In short, unified management suffered greatly as
peasants and cadres pursued their individual economic
interests and allowed collective functions to disintegrate.
3. The breakdown in collective social services.

Paralleling the disruption of the economic sector was the weakening or collapse of key social services managed at the brigade and team levels. This negative consequence of reform grew out of two interrelated trends. First, the push to reduce peasant burdens, eliminate the posts of all non-productive personnel and reduce collective payrolls led many localities to sharply cut the number of local-level cadres, including those needed for rural social services. In other areas, personnel were nominally retained in their jobs, but they failed to receive the promised subsidies for work time given to the collective. In still other areas, local personnel freely abandoned collective work to engage in more lucrative work on their own "responsibility fields" or in sideline activities.

Second, the shift away from unified team distribution made it more difficult to maintain collective welfare and accumulation funds, which were one source of work subsidies. This problem was exacerbated by the failure of many households to make the contractually stipulated contributions to these funds. Moreover, the reduction of funds was paralleled by increased demand on them. This was particularly true for the welfare fund, which was to be used to provide the financial rewards for those who complied with population policy and agreed to have only one child.
The push to reduce personnel and the strain on collective resources, combined with the growing emphasis on household wealth as opposed to collective prosperity, was most directly felt in four areas of social policy. First, rural education was damaged from two angles. In some areas, families removed their children from schools to engage in agricultural work and lucrative sidelines. Elsewhere, schools were closed altogether due to a lack of support for teacher subsidies. Moreover, decisions on school closings were not confined to the village level. In Liaoning, for example, provincial authorities issued a directive on eliminating poverty in Chaoyang Prefecture which contained the provision:

"The number of people-run school teachers in this prefecture must be reduced by over 50 percent in 5 years to temporarily ease the burden of commune members, staff and workers..."

In short, "reducing peasant burdens" became the rationale for eliminating teacher subsidies and closing classrooms, particularly in poverty-stricken areas.

Second, collective health plans and barefoot doctors were also affected. As early as 1979, Jiang Yizhen, then Minister of Public Health, argued for the retention of cooperative medical services and support for barefoot doctors. Calling them "an important grassroots force of public health workers," he argued that they were not "non-productive personnel," and that cooperative medical
service could not be equated with "egalitarianism and indiscriminate requisition." 119

Third, care for the elderly, the infirmed, and the "five-guarantee households" (wubao hu) 120 was adversely affected. Especially with the implementation of da bao gan, under which each household produced its own food and had minimal obligations to the team, those who had previously been dependent on collective distribution and subsidies found themselves neglected, or worse still, irrationally expected to meet their own needs through work on their newly apportioned "responsibility field." Even where the elderly continued to receive cash subsidies to purchase grain and other necessities, they were sometimes "contracted out" to commune members who were paid to help them with daily activities too strenuous to be managed alone, but often neglected to do so. 121

Finally, family planning work was greatly affected by the rural reforms. To anticipate the discussion in the following chapters, family planning was directly affected in several ways, three of which can be mentioned here. First, like other cadres, women's leaders at the brigade and team levels were given "responsibility fields" to till and were eager to profit from them. As a result, many neglected family planning work, or dealt with it only sporadically. 122 Second, the push to reduce
nonproductive personnel also affected family planning workers, leaving them without subsidies for their work and without recognition from their leaders. According to a report from Shanxi Province, this combination of factors had by early 1982 led to a "paralyzed state" for over half the brigade and team-level family planning workers in the province and two-thirds of the propaganda workers. Third, with the drop in the collective welfare fund, localities were short of funds to pay the promised rewards for single-child households, one of the few incentives available for truly voluntary compliance with the policy.

In sum, implementation of the responsibility system has far reaching consequences for every aspect of rural organization. Although some were undoubtedly anticipated, others were not, and attempts to redress them in villages and teams were impeded by the evolving content of policy at the Center. Moreover, changes in economic organization were followed by a push for structural reforms, which were viewed as: 1) essential for the consolidation of economic reforms already instituted, and 2) the necessary correlate for those yet to come.
IV. The Abolition of the Commune Structure

On November 23, 1983, a Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) article announced that by the end of 1984, the work of universally establishing township (xiang) governments in the rural areas would be basically complete. This process of abolishing the people's commune system and refuting the principle of "the integration of government administration with commune management" (zhengshe heyi) ranked second only to the adoption of the agricultural responsibility system in the importance attached to it for the reform and development of China's agricultural sector. These two rural reforms, one economic, one structural, and both highly political, evolved in tandem after 1978. Implementation of the responsibility system served as a mechanism propelling forward the process of dismantling the commune system of rural management.

Once heralded for its advantages for rural economic development, the commune system and its underlying principle of merging administrative and economic work has been thoroughly reviewed since 1978 and found flawed in several ways. First, it is argued that the commune system has infringed on the autonomous rights of the production team. This has occurred in two ways. First, because the commune
system had the effect of merging economic and governmental organs, it was impossible to establish limits to the economic powers of government officials, and conversely, to specify what powers should flow to economic organs. The result was the "indiscriminate transfer" of team resources with little or no compensation. Second, the commune system led to unnecessary financial burdens on the peasants. Because the financial organs of government were inseparable from economic enterprises and finances, accurate book-keeping was made impossible. As a result, administrative cadres could easily siphon off a part of net income due to be distributed to workers in order to meet the costs of health care, irrigation works maintenance, or their own salaries.

The second major criticism leveled against the commune system concerns its impact on the Communist Party, which was at the center of the merged political/economic structure. With no clear division of authority, all power flowed to the Party secretary, who alone could make decisions on all details of administration and production. This bureaucratic approach to work, divorced from a knowledge of actual conditions, is said to have impeded the development of the rural areas and undermined the work of the Party. Internal Party affairs were ignored as leaders became preoccupied with routine matters.
Third, the fusion of Party, government and enterprise work is said to have inhibited the development of "scientific management techniques." In other words, the failure to divide responsibilities undermined the potential for specialization and acquisition of technical knowledge by cadres in any of these sectors. The result was often incompetent or arbitrary decision-making by cadres with no vested interest in the enterprises they managed.\textsuperscript{130}

Fourth, the commune system with its three-tier system of ownership is now judged not to be conducive to the development and expansion of cooperative economic relations. Rather than promoting economic integration and expansion, the commune system of administrative divisions and levels of ownership suppressed the potential for the development of horizontal and vertical integration of the economy, as well as economic specialization.\textsuperscript{131}

Fifth, the overconcentration of power to oversee political, economic and governmental work threatened the development of socialist democracy. With no effective measures to check those who monopolized power, the arbitrary use and abuse of power was bound to occur, undermining the democratic rights of the masses.\textsuperscript{132}

Thus, a thorough critique of the commune system found it to be an impediment to the conduct of political and Party work, state administration, and economic development.
With reform policies in all three sectors well underway by 1982, the Constitution adopted in December of that year formally reestablished the township governments, limiting the people's commune to the economic sector. The goals of this administrative reform mirrored the criticisms outlined above. They were: 1) to increase team- and village-level autonomy; 2) to improve the work of local Party organs; 3) to promote the adoption of scientific management techniques and the acquisition of technical skills; 4) to promote vertical and horizontal integration of the economy, and 5) to promote the development of socialist democracy. Three additional goals must be added, two substantive, one procedural. The first was a reduction in the total staff size of local organs. The second was an infusion of younger and better educated personnel into the ranks of local cadres. The third goal was to effect a smooth, orderly transition from commune to township, taking local conditions into consideration when determining the pace, scope, and form of change.

Determined to avoid a repetition of the 1957-58 experience when communes made their dramatic appearance, national leaders such as Peng Zhen consistently stressed the delicacy of giving structure and form to the principle of separating government administration from commune management, warned against undue haste and called for
local conditions to be taken into account. A model for reform soon emerged, however, based on the experimental sites in Sichuan Province. It called for the establishment of agricultural cooperatives to replace production teams and abolition of the commune and brigade. Under this model, agricultural producers' cooperatives operate as independent accounting units responsible for fulfilling state plans. All other production decisions, such as how to handle excess production, distribute profits, manage sideline industries, and whether or not to participate in multi-unit cooperatives, fall within the autonomous rights of the cooperative. Brigades are transformed into administrative villages whose organs are the extension of new commune-level structures. Here, governmental administration is to be handled by the xiang, or township offices. Civil affairs, legal work, public security, culture and education and family planning are among the administrative tasks to be handled by the township government. Each village (brigade) mirrors this organization by assigning personnel to these areas.

The Party apparatus, under these new arrangements, is to confine itself to self-management and the proper role of leading political, educational and organizational work, carrying out Party policies, and examining and approving township economic development plans. Once again, these
activities extend to the villages and teams.

Just as Party work was to be structurally separated from routine government administration, so the economic sector was to have its own organization. Not surprisingly, however, it is this corner of the triangle of structural reform that has proved most controversial. Specifically, the debate over the proper economic structure has been linked to debate over the responsibility system.\(^{140}\) As support has shifted to the da bao gan system of individual or family responsibility for land and quotas, and the development of individual and sideline activities and commercial enterprises has been encouraged, the new economic structures developed since 1981 have come under increasing criticism as hollow reforms that merely reinforce the old, unsuitable commune-style economic relationships. That is, new economic organs frequently continue to be coterminous with administrative zones, thereby impeding the development of rural enterprises across local or regional boundaries.\(^{141}\)

Generally, economic activities have been separated from Party and government work by creating an umbrella organization which integrates all commune- or brigade-run enterprises. This organization typically is called a joint agro-industrial-commercial corporation (or cooperative) or an economic management committee.\(^{142}\) Its
purpose is to coordinate and integrate commune or village economic activities by overseeing management, enforcing contracts, carrying out state plans, and providing technical support and services to individual or cooperative economic ventures. The integration function can be limited to the horizontal linkage of economic departments and their constituent enterprises at one administrative level (e.g., the former commune-level enterprises). More frequently, it extends to the vertical integration of all enterprises formally operated by the brigades and commune.143

Beneath the economic committee or joint corporation, specialized companies are established to coordinate one area of production activities. The degree of specialization varies. Companies may be divided simply into agricultural, industrial and commercial spheres, or be further divided into specific areas of production, such as animal husbandry or forestry in the agricultural sector.144 At this level, companies are to be service organizations (fuwu gongsi), providing technical assistance to individuals and enterprises and overseeing state and local production plans. Thus, these companies are managerial and service arms of the parent organization, the "agro-industrial-commercial joint corporation" or "economic management committee" of the township.
Enterprises enter into production contracts with the appropriate company, which must oversee and enforce the terms of the contract.

Thus, as Chart 1 shows, the post-reform rural structure consists of three parallel organizations, each with its own separate functions to perform. In fact, the structural relationships are better reflected by Chart 2, which shows the hierarchical relationships that continue to be operative. The organizational dilemma now faced by national leaders is how to institutionalize a separation of powers and responsibilities while simultaneously providing for an overlap in jurisdiction.

The joint corporation or economic management committee is responsible for managing constituent enterprises, organizing production and marketing activities, and overseeing contracts. The township government, in turn, must oversee the implementation of state economic plans and engage in long-range economic planning for the township. This requires close coordination with the economic organization, which is subordinate to township plans and directives. As the local unit of government, the township serves as the extension of state bureaucracies in such areas as culture and education, public security, civil and legal affairs and family planning. Finally, it also oversees financial work and manages the budget.\textsuperscript{145}
### Chart 1.

**Post-Reform Separation of Powers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Committee</th>
<th>Township Government</th>
<th>Economic Management Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement Party line, policies</td>
<td>Civil and legal work</td>
<td>Direct management of commune enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee township work</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Carry out state plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party discipline and inspection</td>
<td>Health and family planning</td>
<td>Enforce economic contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political work, organization, propaganda</td>
<td>Town construction</td>
<td>Encourage specialization, promote scientific techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Township economic work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finance and accounting work</td>
<td>Manage commune-level companies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 2.

Post-Reform Structural Relationship between Committees

**Party Committee**

Secretary plus deputies, members
Overall responsibility for Party, government and economic work

**Township Government**

Government head plus deputies (1-3)
Local organ of state government, day-to-day responsibility for government and economic work

**Economic Committee**

Director plus deputies
Manage companies, commune enterprises, daily economic work
The Party committee, in addition to its responsibilities for self-management, political work, and organization and propaganda activities, continues to play its leading role in all sectors. Its task is to "implement the Party line, principles and policies" and to "discuss and decide all important questions of township work." In short, no important question of economic or governmental policy is outside the jurisdiction of the Party.

What, then, are the limits of autonomous power for the township government and the economic organization? At what point does Party oversight become "commandism" and "arbitrary decision-making?" What decisions are the prerogative of the township, and what authority rests with the economic organization? These are the issues which have been under debate, even as the reform is underway. To illustrate further the complexity of these problems, it is useful to look more closely at one example of the process and outcome of commune reform, the case of Hua Shan.

V. The Case of Hua Shan Commune

A. Commune structure and personnel. Prior to January 1984, Hua Shan Commune was supervised by a Commune Management Committee, staffed with a director and five
vice-directors (see Chart 3). In turn, each vice-director was responsible for supervising the work of more specialized "groups" (zu), covering administrative and production work. One deputy was in charge of the commune office, the education group, and the civil and legal affairs group, overseeing the work of 12 people. The remaining four deputies and 33 staffers were all involved in production work. One was in charge of animal husbandry and fishery (xumu shuichan), an economic management group (jingying guanli), and a diversified economy group (duozhong jingying) with a total of eight technicians (jishuyuan). The second oversaw a forestry and special products group with four technicians, and an agricultural machinery, water and electricity group, with a group leader and three technicians. The third deputy was in charge of only one group, industry. This group was somewhat larger and more specialized, with a group leader, two deputy group leaders, two staff members (ganshi), two technicians and an accountant, for a total of eight. The fifth deputy oversaw two groups, the first an agriculture group with four technicians, and the second a vegetable group with three technicians sent by the municipal vegetable company.  

Under this system, the commune director also served as deputy Party secretary, thus embodying the fusion of
Chart 3.

Structure and Organization of Hua Shan Commune, pre-1984

Party Committee

Secretary

Deputy Secretary \(\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\:\\}
political and economic functions within the village. As director of the Management Committee, he also oversaw the economic work of the commune, including the operation of the 21 commune-run enterprises.\textsuperscript{148}

The organization of Hua Shan's nineteen brigades mirrored the commune structure (see Chart 4). Here, the brigade management committee was composed of a brigade leader, two or more deputies, including a deputy for "women's work," an accountant, and often a technician or other committee members. Some brigades included the Party secretary as a member of the management committee.\textsuperscript{149} The branch Party committee typically consisted of the Secretary, the brigade leader and a third member. Together, the Party committee and the management committee members were responsible for the conduct of all political, economic and administrative work at this level. Responsibilities were divided among the cadres who, except for the women's leader, were almost invariably male. Nevertheless, preponderant power and authority in the brigades flowed to two people — the Party secretary and the brigade leader.

Production teams were managed by a skeleton crew of three, though prior to 1979 many teams had five or more cadres. By 1982, most teams had only a team leader, women's leader and accountant, supported by the team
Chart 4.

Structure and Organization of Brigades and Teams in Hua Shan Commune, pre-1984

Brigade:          Party Committee          Management Committee

Secretary *

Brigade leader ———(concurrent)—— Brigade leader

Committee members (1-3)*

*(may or may not be brigade cadres)

Team:            Party cell          Team management committee

3 members (may or may not be team cadres)

Team leader

Women's leader

Accountant

Committee members
through work points for labor and supplemental points for administrative work. With the spread of household contracts and da bao gan in the fall of 1982, these cadres were allotted plots of land to farm, though they continued to receive small subsidies for administrative work. 

B. Structural reform in Hua Shan. The transition to Hua Shan Township began in November 1983. After a month of "study and preparation," 90 representatives to Hua Shan's People's Congress were selected. On average, each 300 residents elected one representative. Simultaneously, three representatives to the Hong Shan District Congress were elected by direct vote. 

On January 16, 1984 Hua Shan Township was formally established. In February, the 90 representatives convened at the headquarters building of Hua Shan for two days. The first day was once again spent in "study and preparation" for the elections to be held the second day. The township government head and three deputies were elected first, based on their "experience" and "ability." 

The new head of the township, formerly director of the Commune Management Committee and deputy Party secretary, now oversees the work of three deputies whose administrative tasks are divided as follows: 1) legal affairs (sifa), civil affairs (minzheng), education,
external/foreign affairs, and office work; 2) finance (caizheng), planning, town construction (chengzhen jianshe), and energy work; 3) health and family planning work. The first deputy has five "assistants" (zhuliyuan) under him, as does the second. The third, the only female, has two assistants (see Chart 5).

Responsibility for the commune's economic functions were vested in a new organization -- the Hua Shan Economic Management Committee. The director of this committee was nominated by the newly elected township government head and his nomination was ratified by the township Congress representatives. In theory, if less than one-half of the 90 representatives support this candidate, he cannot be elected. In fact, the chance of substantial opposition is remote, since an agreeable candidate will have been chosen prior to the nomination process.

Under the director are three deputy directors who are responsible for oversight of six newly created companies (gongsi) and two stations (zhan). Each of these eight units has a manager or station head appointed by the committee director, in consultation with the township head. In turn, each manager or station head has from one to six deputy managers and assistants (see Chart 6). The first deputy is in charge of four specialized companies -- agriculture, forestry and special products, vegetables,
Chart 5.

Post-reform Township Government Structure in Hua Shan

Township Head
(xiangzhang)

Deputy head
Work unit:
  2 secretaries (mishu)
education group head
education group deputy head
ducation group assistants (2)
education group accountant
civil affairs cadre
legal affairs cadre
Total personnel: 9

Deputy head
Work unit:
Town construction cadre
Town construction assistants (2)
Financial work cadre
Accountant
Energy work assistant
Total personnel: 6

Deputy head
Work unit includes:
  Public health assistant
  Family planning assistant
Total personnel: 2

Total township personnel: 21
Chart 6.

Hua Shan's Post-reform Economic Management Structure

--------------------------- Director ---------------------------

Deputy Director

Agricultural Company:
  Manager
  3 Assistants

Forestry and Special Products Company:
  Manager
  3 Assistants

Vegetable Company:
  (Manager)a
  2 Assistants
  2 Assistants from Wuhan Company

Agricultural Machinery, Water, Electricity Company:
  Manager
  3 Assistants

(Total personnel: 16)

Industrial Company:
  Manager
  2 Deputy Managers
  12 Assistants

(Total personnel: 15)

Deputy Director

Agro-technical Station:
  (Station head)a
  7 Assistantsb

Diversified Economy Management Station:
  Station head
  Assistant

(Total Personnel: 10)

Deputy Director

Animal and Aquatic Products Company:
  (Manager)a
  Deputy Manager
  3 Assistants

Agricultural Trade Company
  (Manager)a
  Deputy Manager
  Assistant

Committee Office:
  Director
  Statistician

(Total Personnel: 8)

Deputy Director

Committee Office:
  Director
  Statistician

(Total Personnel: 8)

^Parentheses indicate job is concurrently held by deputy director.

bPersonnel with concurrent jobs as company staff and station members.
and agricultural machinery, water and electricity. Each has a manager and four assistants. In the case of the vegetable company, however, two of the assistants were sent by the Wuhan Municipal Vegetable Company to assist in the production and marketing of vegetables.

The second deputy is in charge of two stations. The agrotechnical station (nongye jishu tuiguang zhan) has a deputy station head (fuzhanzhang) and seven assistants drawn from the specialized companies for agriculture, forestry, vegetables and animal husbandry. The station is physically located at the township headquarters building, and apparently is an advisory body with no managerial role. The diversified economy management station (duozhong jingying zhan) has a station head and one assistant to oversee the development of industrial and sideline enterprises at all levels of the system -- commune, brigade and team. Evidently, this station is more concerned with assisting individuals or groups in establishing such side-lines, rather than commune- or brigade-run enterprises. Responsibility for the latter is vested in the industrial company. 

The third deputy oversees the work of two companies and an office. The animal husbandry company has a manager, a deputy and three assistants. The agricultural trade company has a deputy manager and one assistant. Finally,
the office has a director and a "statistician" for bookkeeping and other business.

The director of the Economic Management Committee directly heads the industrial company. In February 1984, when the company was newly created, he also held the post of company manager, with one deputy, two assistants and an accountant. By June, a separate manager had been appointed, as well as a second deputy. Moreover, total personnel had expanded to fifteen, with the additional members drawn from commune factories where they had been accountants, technicians or engaged in financial work. The increasing size of the industrial company suggests its growing prestige relative to the other companies, where no such changes occurred.

The Economic Management Committee, under the new structural format, is subordinate to the Township Government Committee. Asked in February about the discretionary authority of the director, a township official noted that for routine and small decisions, the director can operate independently. For major decisions affecting the township, however, the director must first consult with the government before acting. By mid-May, three months later, the same official gave a much neater response to a similar question, calling the relationship between the government and the economic management
committee that of the "leader and the led" (lingdao he beilingdao).  

The companies under the Economic Management Committee were established by the collective, not by individual investors. The startup funds came from state and collective monies. In February 1984, officials were unable to be specific in describing the functions of the newly created companies, but they did stress that they were service organizations, not production units. Their function was to provide service and assistance to cooperative and collective enterprises, officials stressed. Such services might range from the procurement of machinery or fertilizer to the dispatch of a veterinarian or even the provision of labor for hire. After three months, more emphasis was placed on the role of companies in overseeing production, and in the supply and marketing process, undoubtedly reflecting increased national attention to commodity production and circulation.

The Hua Shan Party Committee consists of seven members, down from fifteen before the reform. In addition to the Secretary, the committee members oversee the areas of discipline and inspection, propaganda and education work, organization, and mass organizations such as the Women's Federation, the Peasants' Association and the Youth League. Beyond these specific tasks, Party
officials are responsible for the implementation of Party policy and oversight of all local administrative and economic work. Routine affairs are to be handled by the township and economic committees, but the Party committee remains the ultimate decision-making authority.

Beneath the township, production brigades have been converted into villages. In Hua Shan, the 1984 reform did not affect the territorial dimensions of the unit, whose nineteen brigades remained as administrative villages under its jurisdiction. Nor did village sizes undergo any change, though there was some fluctuation within brigades as teams occasionally split or merged.163

The new village-level organization was described by a township official as follows. The Brigade Management Committee was replaced by a Villagers' Committee (cunmin weiyuanhui). The committee is led by a village head (cunzhang) and usually three deputies. The deputies are in charge of three village subcommittees: 1) the culture, health, education and family planning committee, to be headed by a female; 2) the public security (zhibao) committee; 3) the civil affairs and mediation (tiaogai) committee. The latter two committees theoretically can be headed by either a man or a woman, but in practice are headed by males.164 The membership of these two committees is drawn from team representatives. Villages
continue to have a Party committee with at least three members -- secretary, village head, and a deputy for political and organizational work (see Chart 7).

As reported in other localities, Hua Shan's villages also retain economic organs, in the form of "cooperative economic committees." These committees, as described by township officials, continue to oversee brigade-run enterprises and the overall economic development of the brigade and constituent teams. The retention of such committees, however, may indicate resistance to vertical integration of the economy based on production sectors. Rather than make brigade and team enterprises responsible to township-level committees through production contracts, the village-level intermediary organs continue to exist, and along with them, village control of subordinate economic units.

Thus, formal village organizational lines have been redrawn to reflect the changes above, names have been changed to emphasize the altered structural relationships. A close look at several Hua Shan villages, however, raises fundamental questions about how much has really changed. At this level, where political, governmental and economic authority traditionally have been fused in the roles of Party secretary and brigade leader, and formal committees have been of secondary importance, it is not surprising
## Chart 7.

### Village Post-reform Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Committee</th>
<th>Villager's Committee</th>
<th>Cooperative Economic Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village head</td>
<td>(concurrent)</td>
<td>Village head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee member(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy head for public security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy head for civil affairs and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy head for culture, education, health and family planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accountant/statistician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Committee member(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that the current reforms were loosely adopted and loosely adhered to.

One village, for example, admitted that the Villagers' Committee and the Party Committee were the only two committees in the village. Economic work was handled by them, not a separate economic committee. In a second village, the membership of the Villagers' Committee and the Economic Management Committee is exactly the same, further testimony to the continued fusion of power at the village level. On the other hand, officials here did note the presence of two subcommittees, one for family planning and one for public security, both of which include team representatives. In this respect, the village comes closer to matching the model described by township officials than do other brigades where no such subcommittees were mentioned. Yet another variant exists at a third village, where the Cooperative Economic Committee exists separately from the nine-man Villagers' Committee, but among its seven members are the village head and two deputies. In this case, however, team leaders are included on the committee. Nevertheless, officials noted that the committees only meet as needed (suishi), implying a relaxed approach to the role and function of all village-level committees.

With respect to the vertical relationship between village organs and township or team-level organs, village
leaders indicated little change as a result of the reforms. Asked what difference the reform meant to his village, one Party secretary spoke abstractly about the benefits of the separation of politics and economics, but gave no concrete response concerning the village. The village leader, however, who had heard the response of the Party secretary, candidly said that the reform had made no difference in his work relationship with township officials above and teams below. In a second brigade, responses by the Party secretary and the village leader were also divergent, with the Party secretary again speaking of abstract principles and the village leader noting no difference between the commune and the township in terms of his work. At a third site, the Party secretary himself said that the commune reform meant no change in the relationship between the village and the township above or the teams below.

Neither was any substantial change noted in the economic sector. Asked to describe the relationship between the economic committees of the township and village, one village leader described it as "direct leadership" (zhijie lingdao). He went on to note that starting an enterprise at the village level required the approval of the township authorities. The township economic committee can also advise that the village start a particular type of sideline industry. Below, the teams
must coordinate with the village in the same way if they wish to start sideline enterprise. The Party secretary of another village mirrored this response by concentrating on the responsibility of the villages to fulfill township economic plans rather than any autonomous or semi-autonomous activity on the part of the villages.

If commune reform had little impact on the villages, it had even less impact on the teams, now renamed village small groups (cun xiaozu). As before, the small groups have a leader and two deputies, one for "women's work" and one for bookkeeping and accounting. The accountant is now referred to as a "statistician" (tongjiyuan). There are exceptions to this pattern, however. At least two villages were economizing further by reducing the number of cadres in the small groups. In one of these villages, three of its four small groups had only two cadres, with the woman in charge of family planning and women's work doubling as a statistician. In the fourth group there remained three cadres. Village leaders attributed this to the willingness of the fourth group to support three cadres, versus the reluctance of the three other groups to do so. However, since 1983, team cadre salaries have been paid by the brigade in Hua Shan, eliminating the direct burden to the group. In this village, it may be the relatively low salary level of
80 yuan per year for statisticians that makes the job undesirable, given the increasing opportunities for other types of work. Elsewhere, cadre salaries for statistician were as high as 35 yuan per month, or 420 yuan per year.175

In a second village, only two of its eleven small groups continued to have three cadres in 1984. Five groups reduced the number to two, eliminating the job of statistician, and four groups now have only a group leader. Here, village leaders, not team leaders, decided to make the reductions as a response to the request of peasants to reduce their burdens. Since the reductions first occurred in 1983, when villages began to pay team cadre salaries, village leaders may have taken the opportunity to reduce village expenses under the guise of responding to peasant demands. Irrespective of the rationale, team cadre reductions were correlated with the population size of the teams.176

The organization of village small groups, then, has been far less affected by the commune reform than by the economic changes brought about by da bao gan and the campaign to reduce peasant burdens and eliminate unnecessary personnel. In the economic sector, some small group heads may hold formal membership on the village economic committee, but decisions on village-run enterprises continue to be made at higher levels, while at the team
level, emphasis is placed on becoming a "specialized" or "key" household. Designation as a specialized or key household is automatic if a peasant meets township-set production levels for particular items. In practice, peasants frequently must borrow money to make the investment necessary to become a zhuan ye hu. These funds usually come from the brigade accumulation fund or the township finance department, which puts officials at these levels in a position to decide who can and cannot develop their specialty sidelines. Those wishing to develop a joint enterprise may be subject to the same economic levers, in addition to the requirement of village approval of the project.

In short, economic reforms, particularly the use of production contracts which reduce the extent to which villages can indiscriminately siphon off team resources, have thus far had a much greater impact on township-village-team relations than have organizational reforms. Outside these household contracts, key economic decisions are still made by village leaders, with or without the participation of small group leaders in the decision-making process. For the single peasant household, it is still a network of individuals that is critical to its economic future, not formal organizations. For the small group as a whole, it is still the village leadership which has the
authority to sanction any proposed group-run enterprises. Since that leadership dominates all village-level committees, the formal distinction between the Villagers' Committee and the Economic Committee can hardly be meaningful.

Thus, the goals which spurred the implementation of commune reform -- the separation of politics and economics, enhancing the autonomy of production teams, encouraging specialization of tasks, integration of the economy, removing Party officials from roles as routine managers -- are threatened fundamentally. Structural reforms have been carried out efficiently, in accordance with local conditions and with no apparent local disruptions. Yet the functions these new structures are designed to perform continue to be the charge of local cadres who have long-established patterns of interaction and continue to play multiple roles in the system. In short, the current debates over the proper form new rural organs should take sidesteps this more fundamental issue -- how to get old cadres to operate by new township rules.

China's leadership, of course, recognizes that an infusion of younger, better educated, competent cadres throughout the country is essential to its reform efforts. Though progress has been made in this area, there is continued resistance in the middle levels of the
bureaucracy, where individuals with local support networks cling tenaciously to their jobs. In the rural areas, some local leaders posed a major obstacle to the implementation of economic reforms which undercut their power and authority, but ultimately acquiesced under governmental and Party pressure. Others delighted in abandoning administrative tasks to pursue new economic opportunities. To counter both of these tendencies, an attempt was made to convince local cadres that holding political or administrative posts would not preclude economic entrepreneurship on their part. Indeed, local cadres were encouraged to "take the lead" in becoming "key households" or "specialized households," setting up peasant-run cooperative enterprises and engaging in commerce and transport. Cadres were also reassured that the rural reforms did not imply a reduction of their responsibility, authority and power, though the way in which it was exercised might be altered. Anticipating an ever-expanding rural economy and the institutionalization of governmental organs, the need for competent personnel would be increasingly great.

Faced with a fait accompli as da bao gan was almost universally implemented between 1982 and 1983, recalcitrant cadres apparently were persuaded of the merits of this argument or the futility of opposition. The result,
ironically, appears to have been a stabilization of rural leadership, as leaders in Beijing sought to end the phenomenon of "paralysis" among local leaders and persuade those who remained in their jobs of the merits of rural reform. This relatively conservative approach to rural bureaucrats, as opposed to urban, is inextricably linked to the capacity of these individuals to influence directly the implementation of the reforms. A Beijing leadership which had staked its political survival on the success of the responsibility system and other reforms could ill afford a mass exodus of long-standing authority figures in the rural areas. With peasant enthusiasm on the rise, and a combination of pressure and reassurance emanating from above, however, local cadres were caught in a political vise that left few options but to cooperate.

In this way, major disruptions were avoided in the rural areas, productivity increased, and apparently, most local cadres kept their jobs if they so desired. With the expansion of the reform effort under the guidelines of Central Documents # 1 of 1983 and 1984, however, new charges were levied against local cadres seeking more subtle ways to control the activities within their jurisdictions. Most charges fall into the category of unwarranted or illegal intrusion by political or governmental authorities into the rural economic sphere.
Despite these deviant practices, which were vehemently denounced in the press, China's leaders have continued to placate rural cadres who now fear for their jobs under the township reforms. Haunted by memories of the excesses of 1957-59, a great premium has been placed on maintaining stability during the transfer from commune to township government, including "stability of the ranks of rural cadres." A June 1982 Xinhua commentary, for example, cautioned about the need to avoid hasty action and to carry out commune reform in a "well-guided, planned and orderly way and after adequate preparation." It also took great pains to reassure local cadres as to their future:

"Separation of government administration from commune management will inevitably affect the jobs of some cadres. However, it is believed that the organization will make proper arrangements for their placement. The people will not forget those cadres who have worked for a long time in their interests. The party will no doubt provide opportunities for these cadres to make continued contributions to building the new rural areas according to their strong points. Now some cadres disregard the overall interests and deal with questions narrowly. As a result, they are in low spirits and lack sufficient morale, causing an adverse effect on the current work. This kind of attitude is harmful to the people and to the cadres themselves. It should be quickly corrected. The vast majority of our rural cadres have worked for a long time at the forefront of rural work. They have forged close ties with the masses, waged arduous struggle, worked hard and sometimes had to bear blame. Their work has been done in a down-to-earth way... we cannot ignore the hard efforts of the vast number of grassroots cadres in rural areas."
Thus, once again Beijing found itself seeking accommodation with veteran rural cadres in order to introduce reforms which they perceived as threatening. However, that sense of threat was hardly diminished by the increasing emphasis on promoting younger, better educated cadres to positions of leadership. This was to be accomplished by 1) subjecting local leaders to qualifying examinations; 2) holding elections at the village and township levels; and 3) instituting a salary system whereby local cadres drew collective subsidies only during their tenure in office, with no guarantee of lifetime tenure.193

In this instance, it was the central leadership that was caught in a vise of contradictory goals. On the one hand, it was essential to eliminate arbitrary decision-making and the overconcentration of power that was characteristic of the commune system. It was precisely this problem, of course, that the commune structural reform is designed to overcome. By 1) identifying separate roles for Party, township and economic officials, and 2) creating new structures to institutionalize these roles, national leaders hope to define clearly the scope of power and authority of local cadres, and establish the limits to the exercise of that power.

On the other hand, it was also essential to avoid
any disruption of the rural economy. The maintenance of order could best be achieved by local leadership cooperation and stability. The joint pursuit of these dual goals precluded a major overhaul of rural cadres, and the third goal of keeping the number of cadres to a minimum ruled out the addition of large numbers of new cadres. In the end, a compromise effort was made to teach existing cadres new rules while beginning to infuse new talent with the proper age and educational credentials. For Hua Shan, the result was leadership continuity at the township level and structural continuity at the village level. In both cases, the short-term prospects for achieving the goal of separating governmental and economic functions were dim.

Conclusions

As central-level policy evolved along an unsteady but progressive path between 1978 and 1984, program implementors at the local level -- village and team cadres -- sought to cope with the uncertainty, confusion and fear generated by the reform process. Implementation was "a moving target," with the definition of goals, and thus, the criteria for measuring successful implementation constantly changing. Under the best of
circumstances, the policy implementation process is fraught with obstacles and difficulties, as Pressman and Wildavsky have so elaborately demonstrated. Such optimal conditions obviously were absent in the case of China's rural reform process. Given: 1) the evolutionary nature of the reform content, 2) the scope of change envisioned, 3) the bureaucratic resistance to reform, and 4) the limitations on local-level leadership resources, what is instructive about this case is not what went wrong but what did not. Specifically, conservative opponents ultimately were not able to thwart the reform process, villages did not dissolve into anarchy and chaos, the planned economy did not disintegrate and agricultural achievements were impressive. These obstacles, and lesser ones, were eventually contained sufficiently so as not to pose a fundamental threat to policy goals.

This containment was effected through the combination of an "autonomous" policy-making style with a "coping" style — namely, pushing through new reform initiatives until resistance weakened and crumbled, while simultaneously coping with the crises created by those same initiatives. In the interim period between the emergence and the containment of such obstacles, however, they did impede a smooth implementation process at the local level, inspire remedial measures at the Center, and
frustrate bureaucrats in the middle. As a 1982 Renmin Ribao Editorial so aptly noted:

"Before any correct policy of the central authorities can be turned into actual action by millions of people, it must go through numerous intermediate links. It is thus inevitably influenced and affected in some way. For example, the time for implementing the production responsibility system which started the action of millions of households was short (if calculated separately, several months were usually used in each county) and preliminary discussion was not sufficient. The masses immediately responded to the call whereas the leadership lagged behind. Under these circumstances, some problems were bound to occur."

Remedial measures take time to formulate, however, and no matter how well crafted, must move through the same "intermediate links," where they are often diluted or delayed en route. As a result, policy implementation problems follow a cycle of their own, growing and festering before being brought under control.

Moreover, problems resulting from one set of policy initiatives are difficult to isolate from other policy areas. This is particularly true of China's rural sector, where the bureaucratic structure from the county to the production team level can be equated to a narrowing funnel, with a full range of policy responsibilities devolving to fewer individuals at each level. At the county level, a degree of task specialization remains with cadres assigned to local representative offices of each central level bureaucracy. However, at the brigade (village) level,
which serves as the basic unit for the provision of collective services, the Party secretary, brigade leader, and several deputies are responsible for every aspect of political, economic and social policy. It is here that the burden of implementation is greatest and the contradictions among program goals most apparent. It is also here that the fewest resources are available to cope with implementation problems. And finally, it is also here that it is most difficult to align personal interests and official duties, since local cadres are, after all, local peasants.

Thus, within their self-contained area of administration, local cadres are most sensitive to the burden of multiple policy initiatives and their interdependent impact at the local level. Again, under the best of circumstances, the smooth management of multiple programs is an arduous task. When, as was the case with post-Mao rural reforms, personal and professional stakes are high and confusion reigns, the containment of implementation problems becomes much more problematic.

Furthermore, if the implementation of rural reform is seen not as the policy problem, but the backdrop for another major policy initiative, the scope of the problem confronting implementors increases geometrically. Specifically, the evolution of rural reform was paralleled by
the evolution of China's population policy, the success of which hinged on strict rural compliance. Thus, at precisely the time that deregulatory rural reforms had provoked confusion and leadership instability in the rural sector, population goals demanded tight regulation of child-bearing behavior. This brought enormous pressure to bear on local cadres at precisely the time they were least equipped to handle it. Implementation was not just one moving target, but several.
ENDNOTES


4. Ibid.

5. Although Hirschman does not pursue the point, his formulation suggests the existence, or at least, potentiality of a policy cycle arising from the interaction of policy-making styles and systemic constraints. If this interpretation is correct, then it is quite compatible with the views of those who have argued for the existence of a policy cycle in China. For the most elaborate exposition of the systemic bases of China's policy cycle, see G. William Skinner and Edwin A. Winkler, "Compliance Succession in Rural Communist China: A Cyclical Theory," in Amitai Etzioni, ed., A Sociological Reader in Complex Organizations, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 410-38.

6. Obviously, this penetration does not preclude charismatic leaders from purposely destabilizing the political system by engineering an attack on the Party and State apparatus, as Mao Zedong did in China in 1966.


11. The cause of this propensity to launch radical reforms which are later subject to retrenchment or reversal is a matter of some debate among China scholars. Perhaps the best summary of this literature can be found in Andrew J. Nathan, "Policy Oscillations in the People's Republic of China: A Critique," China Quarterly 68 (December 1976): 720-33. More recently, Lucian Pye has attributed this "pattern of compulsive initiatives followed by paralysis" to the "practice of reserving policy initiation for the topmost leaders, who are expected to act out of inspiration rather than in response to bureaucratically defined problems." See Pye, The Dynamics of Factions, 156-68. Quotes are from pages 166 and 156, respectively.


17. Ibid., 17.

18. Ibid.


20. Ibid., 10-11.

21. Ibid., 17.

22. For a full description of each type of responsibility system, see Zhan and Liu, Zhongguode Nongye, 17-26; Zhao Wenxin, Yang Zhonghao, Wang Nengdian and Others, eds., Zenyang Gaohao Nongye Shengchan Zerenzhhi (How to Handle Well the Agricultural Production Responsibility System) (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, 1982); Zhang Yujun, Wang Nengdian and Song Guizhi, Qiantan


29. This is confirmed by the case study of suburban Hua Shan Commune, outlined in Section III of this chapter.


31. See Renmin Ribao, 10 April 1983, for a complete text of the document.

32. Bernstein, "Reforming China's Agriculture," 30-64.

33. For a complete profile of Hua Shan and a discussion of interview methods and conditions, see Chapter One.

34. For a complete discussion of the process of implementing the responsibility system in Hua Shan Commune, see Chung-min Chen and Owen Hagovsky, "Agricultural Responsibility System: An Irresponsible Retreat or a Responsible Readjustment?" (Paper prepared for the Workshop on "Studies in Policy Implementation in the Post-Mao Era," sponsored by the Joint Committee on Chinese Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council and the Mershon Center, Columbus, Ohio, 20-24 June 1983), 16-27.

35. Other forms of the responsibility system, such as baochan daozu, were also introduced. Ibid., 22-27.


37. Ibid.

38. Interview File, 1982.10.8, p. 11.


41. Interview File, 1982.10.8, p. 10.
One example is Lian He Brigade, where cadres interviewed in the fall of 1982 remained unconvinced of the suitability of da bao gan to the area. Interviewed again in the winter of 1984, however, they stated that after the issuance of Central Document No. 1 (1983), they were persuaded of the merit of da bao gan. The entire brigade made the shift in the spring of 1983, coinciding with the issuance of the document. Interview Files 1982.10.28, p. 4; 1984.3.13, p. 5.


Ibid., 17.

Interview Files, 1982.10.8, p. 9; 1982.11.9, p. 5.

Interview File, 1984.3.6, p. 10.


Interview File, 1982.4.27, p. 7.

Interview File, 1982.10.26, pp. 1, 11.


Interview File, 1982.10.26, p. 11.

It should be noted that this account given by brigade cadres in the fall of 1982 differs somewhat from the description of the process given by commune cadres in the spring. Specifically, commune cadres indicated that only team number 6 was selected as an experimental site in the spring of 1980, whereas brigade cadres said that two teams, numbers four and six, implemented the responsibility system at that time. For the commune-level account, see Chen and Hagovsky, "Agricultural Responsibility System," 17. The brigade-level account is based on Interview File, 1982.11.2, p. 10.


Ibid., 2.

Ibid., 10.

Ibid.
57. Interview File, 1982.5.16, p. 2.
58. Interview File, 1982.10.8, p. 10.
61. The control of commune officials in 1982 may have been diminished, compared to 1980. Evidence of this is the case of Hou Shan Brigade, where two teams experimented with da bao gan in the spring of 1982 before the entire brigade shifted later in the year. There is no evidence to suggest that commune officials had any influence in the decision to experiment in the spring. Interview File, 1984.3.20, p. 4.
62. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 10.
63. Ibid.
64. The discussion of Lian He Brigade is based on information gained in three days of interviews in 1982 and 1984. Interview File, 1982.10.26, pp. 11-13; 1982.10.28, pp. 1-5.
65. Interview File, 1982.11.4, p. 5.
67. Interview File, 1982.11.4, p. 10.
69. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 10; 1984.3.20, p. 12.
70. Interview File, 1982.5.16, p. 1.
71. Interview File, 1982.5.16, p. 2.
73. Interview File, 1982.10.28, p. 4.
74. Interview File, 1984.3.13, p. 5.
75. Bernstein, "Reforming China's Agriculture," 50.

76. Ibid., 50-55.


78. See, for example, the Ningxia Ribao report that "many grassroots leadership groups are in a paralyzed or semi-paralyzed state...." Ningxia Ribao, 8 April 1982, in FBIS, 30 April 1982, T2.


83. Ibid.

84. As reported by Xinhua, 2 March 1981, in FBIS, 3 March 1981, L23.


87. Interview File, 1982.11.4, p. 10.

88. This was particularly true for cadres classified as "non-productive personnel" (feishengchan renyuan). Thus, while some cadres were able to acquire responsibility fields and simultaneously receive a full salary from the collective, others, such as family planning cadres, were disallowed collective subsidies altogether. See Hebei Provincial Service, 9 September 1981, in FBIS, 22 September 1981, R2-3; on family planning cadres, see Liang Naizhong, "Nongye Shengchan Zerenzhì yu Renkou Kongzhi" (The Agricultural Production Responsibility System and Population Control), Xibei Renkou (Northwest Population), 1982, no. 2: 3.

89. On these and other implementation problems, see Bernstein, "Reforming China's Agriculture," 48-64.


92. Ibid.


97. Indeed, given the historical deemphasis on formal legal proceedings, it is not at all clear whether court decisions would be accepted as legitimate.
98. For a delineation of the differences between da bao gan and private farming, see Zhao, Yang and Wang, *Zenyang Gaohao Nongye Shengchan Zerenzhi*, 11-113.


104. Ibid.

105. Ibid., IV-106-07.


109. Ibid.

110. Thus, for example, the Minister of Public Health was obliged to publicly argue the case for the retention of barefoot doctors on collective payrolls. Beijing Domestic Service, 6 February 1979, in *FBIS*, 12 February 1979, E15. See also *Renmin Ribao*, 9 September 1981, which noted that households without
school children were "unwilling to pay for keeping up the distribution of allowances to teachers in schools run by the local people." FBIS, 9 September 1981, K9.

111. This was particularly true for family planning cadres. Zhang Yongchen and Cao Jingchun, "Shengchan Zerenzhi Yu Kongzhi Nongcun Renkou Zengzhang" (The Production Responsibility System and the Control of the Increase in Rural Population), Renkou yu Jingji (Population and Economics), 1982, no. 1: 13.


114. See Chapter 4 for a discussion of the incentive system for compliance with the one-child policy.


116. Sun Daren, "Ruqi Wancheng Puji Chudeng Jiaoyu Renwu" (Complete on Schedule the Task of Universal Primary Education), Shaanxi Jiaoyu Bao (Shaanxi Education Paper), 1 April 1984, p. 1.


119. Ibid.

120. The five guarantees are: food, clothing, fuel, housing, and burial expenses.


123. Ibid.
124. Ibid.
125. Ibid.
135. Peng Zhen, "Guanyu Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Xianfa Xingai Caoande Baogao" (Report on the Draft Revision of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China), Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Xianfa, 1982, p. 87. Wan Li also stressed that "we must avoid indiscriminate practice and reckless mass action in the reform of the commune institutions; instead, we should carry out reform in communes where conditions are ripe one after another. Even in the same county, we should
not demand that reform measures be the same in different communes." See Wan Li, "Further Develop the new Phase of Agriculture which has already been Opened Up," Renmin Ribao, 23 December 1982, in FBIS, 4 January 1983, K10.


148. Ibid., 3.

149. Interview Files, 1982.11.9, p. 3; 1982.10.26, p. 3.


153. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 2.


159. Interview Files, 1984.2.21, p. 3; 1984.5.14, p. 11.

160. See, for example, Zhongguo Nongmin Bao, 6 March 1984 and 6 May 1984; see also Central Document No. 1 (1984), Section 4, Renmin Ribao, 12 June 1984.

161. Interview Files, 1984.2.21, p. 4; 1984.5.14, p. 3.

162. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 4.


164. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 4.


166. Interview File, 1984.3.13, p. 3.
177. Hua Shan Township's 1984 targets for designation as a specialized or key household were adopted in March 1984. They are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Area</th>
<th>Specialized Household Minimum sale to state</th>
<th>Key Household Minimum sale to state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) grain</td>
<td>10,000 jin</td>
<td>5000 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) vegetables</td>
<td>100,000 jin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) pigs</td>
<td>15 head</td>
<td>5 head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) piglets</td>
<td>100 head</td>
<td>50 head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) oxen</td>
<td>5 head</td>
<td>3 head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) fish</td>
<td>2500 jin</td>
<td>1500 jin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) fruit</td>
<td>10,000 jin</td>
<td>5000 jin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimum production level:

8) chickens 300 100
9) ducks 300 100
10) geese 100 50

180. Ibid., sections III and IV.


183. Wan Li, "Developing Rural Commodity Production," Beijing Review, vol. 27, no. 9, 27 February 1984: 16-21, 25, see p. 18; Zhongguo Nongmin Bao, 24 April 1984, p. 1, headlines an article about the head of a specialized household, a Party member, who transformed the village after becoming a cadre. In Hua Shan, officials noted that cadres were encouraged to take the lead in developing sideline enterprises (Interview File, 1984.5.14, p. 11). It was estimated that 15-20% of Hua Shan's specialized households are Party members and/or local cadres (Interview File, 1984.6.15, p. 2).


186. For a full examination of cadre resistance to rural reform and the political pressures brought to bear by the Beijing leadership, see Thomas P. Bernstein, "Reforming China's Agriculture," 30-47.

187. Numerous cases of misuse of cadre powers have been reported in the media. See, for example, Renmin Ribao, 4 June 1984, p. 4; Zhongguo Nongmin Bao, 20 March 1984, p. 1; Zhongguo Nongmin Bao, 22 February 1984, p. 1; Anhui Ribao, 28 February 1984, p. 1; Exi Bao, 19 May 1984, p. 1; Sichuan Nongmin, 27 May 1984, p. 1.


192. Ibid., K4.


In September of 1980, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party took the unprecedented step of publishing an "Open Letter" to all Party and Youth League members, calling on them to take the lead in the drive to control population growth. The population program, which limited most couples to one child, allowed a second birth on a case-by-case basis where special circumstances warranted, and prohibited third or more births, constituted one of the most ambitious regulatory policies China had undertaken. It required a large percentage of the population to alter its behavior in very personal, intimate ways. Verbal compliance and passive acceptance at the group or mass level had to give way to active involvement in family planning by a multitude of discrete individuals, the number of whom was growing at a rapid rate. Moreover, because 79% of the population was rural, meeting the stated goal of holding population to 1.2 billion by 2000 hinged on the capacity of the regime to make the vast majority of child-bearing age couples throughout the countryside refrain from having a second or additional
child for the duration of their child-bearing years. In turn, the fate of the "Four Modernizations" and with it, the legitimacy of the reformist coalition, hinged on the success of this strict population control policy.

During the previous three decades of socialist development, China's economy had suffered the ill effects of unbridled population growth, as evidenced by a number of figures released by the Chinese showing substantial gains in absolute terms, but per capita declines. Among them: 1) Grain production increased at an average annual rate of 2.3% between 1957 and 1978, but per capita consumption increased only slightly, from 306 to 318 kilograms. 2) Urban housing space has been increased by 493 million square meters, but per capita housing is down from 4.5 square meters in the early 1950s to 3.6 in 1983; 3) From 1952-1977, the annual increase in fixed assets allowed creation of two million new jobs annually, but since 1966, 16 million have been entering the work force annually; 4) Between 1953 and 1978, 58% of the annual increase in commodity production was absorbed by population growth; 5) Perhaps most distressing of all, arable land per capita fell from .2 hectares in 1949 to .1 hectares in 1983, an amount less than one-third the world average.

Thus a leadership that had hung its hat on the promise of improving the livelihood of Chinese citizens
could see all too clearly the implications of failing to clamp down on population growth. Given the weight of their concerns, it seemed a small but necessary step to move from "encouraging" only one child per couple to "promoting" and "advocating" it. In practice, however, the policy distance traveled between 1978 and 1984 was great. The pressure on rural couples rose dramatically, threatening long-held views on, and motives for, childbearing that were incompatible with a one-child household. The decentralized regulatory process that had worked well previously was now strained by demands for new regulations, and more importantly, the resources to enforce them. The administrative apparatus and technical delivery system that had been adequate for less ambitious family planning goals was now strained under the weight of strict quotas and increasing demand for contraceptive services. And finally, these problems were compounded by the very success of the agricultural responsibility system, which had a negative impact on the enforcement of population control.

Although China's leadership acknowledged that a successful population policy was the cornerstone of its modernization effort, its implementation posed several dilemmas. Foremost among them was the disjuncture between long- and short-term priorities. The control of population growth was the unquestioned prerequisite for the long-term success of the Four Modernizations, even among
those who were concerned over the severity of the one-child policy. As important as this goal was, however, the short-term goal of transforming rural economic structures was of much higher priority. Because the agrarian reform program represented not just a policy debate but also the focus of elite struggle, it was on this issue that political resources were mobilized and expended. Taking their cues from the Center, provincial and local Party leaders left family planning work, as much as possible, to female comrades who had always been responsible for this aspect of "women's work," while they concentrated their attention on a rapidly changing rural environment. Only after the "Open Letter" signalled the importance being attached to family planning by central Party leaders did local cadres reassess the priority of this work.

By that time, however, a second dilemma, not unanticipated, had become apparent -- namely, the economic and organizational consequences of agricultural reforms were detrimental to the conduct of a strict regulatory policy of any type, particularly population control. At precisely the time when a demographic crisis loomed, deregulatory policies were underway which had polarized rural communities. Advocates and opponents of rural reform coalesced in their opposition to family planning, however, with pro-reform elements blaming "leftists" for the one-child policy, while opponents blamed the "rightists" and
their neo-Malthusian population theories for the draconian policy. Thus, from 1981 on, central policy-makers groped for a strategy to deal with a changing rural context and local opposition or indifference. The result was a combined emphasis on "mobilization" to achieve short-term goals and "regularization" for long-term stability in family planning work. Below, the evolution of China's population policy is examined in detail.

I. The Evolution of Population Policy: Background

The early history of China's population policy has been examined thoroughly elsewhere. Briefly, the 1950s and 1960s were characterized by an uneven emphasis on population control, reflecting elite conflict and theoretical confusion in this area. During the years 1953-1957, the general direction of China's population policy was to advocate family planning, propagate the use of birth control, and relax restrictions on abortion. Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai, in 1954 and 1956, respectively, went on record stressing Party "endorsement" (zancheng) of birth control, in order to "protect women and children and bring up and educate our younger generation in a way conducive to the health and prosperity of the nation...." By 1957, Mao Zedong, despite earlier statements to the contrary, also spoke of the need for a "ten-year programme for family
planning". Shortly thereafter, however, the theoretical rationale for such a policy, developed by Ma Yinchu in his "New Population Theory", came under attack as inspired by Malthusianism.

Thus, just as a strong leadership consensus in favor of family planning had begun to emerge, it was eroded by the leftist thrust of the Great Leap Forward. In some circles, concern for overpopulation was replaced by a fear of manpower shortages, as the full potential of China's masses was to be unleashed. By 1962, however, when the worst of the post-Great Leap economic crisis was over, the birth rate began to rise once again, recovering from a drop during the previous two years that was accompanied by a dramatic rise in mortality rates (see Table 4). Under the guidelines of the State Council "Directive on Conscientiously Promoting Family Planning", committees on childbearing formed in the 1950s were reactivated, research efforts on contraceptives were intensified, and more cadres were trained to give family planning guidance and counseling. In addition, in 1964 a Family Planning Office was created under the State Council, and similar offices were established at the provincial and municipal levels, creating the bureaucratic network necessary to implement a voluntary family planning policy. Lastly, the mid-1960s saw the creation of mobile medical teams that were sent to the countryside to educate peasants on
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birth control techniques, propagate the need for reduced fertility rates, and provide birth control services.

As in 1958, these activities were disrupted in 1966 by another political cataclysm, the Cultural Revolution. Like most other offices, family planning offices ceased to function and their personnel were dismissed. The policy itself, however, emerged relatively unscathed.

It was only in the 1970s that a sustained family planning program was put into effect. In February 1970, a national family planning work conference was convened, at which Zhou Enlai reaffirmed the need to "pay attention to family planning." In July, speaking to a full session of the Military Control Commission of the Ministry of Health, he went a step further by placing family planning within the scope of state planning, adding that it was "not a health question, but a planning question."

The family planning rationale, linking population control to overall state planning, paved the way for including population control targets in state planning. Thus, beginning with the Fourth Five-Year Plan of 1971-75, targets for reduced rates of population growth were included.

In 1972, Hebei Province was the site of another family planning work conference which laid the foundation for the creation of the State Council Leading Group on Family Planning. According to Hubei Province officials,
a provincial meeting was also held that year, followed by the creation of a provincial Leading Small Group for Family Planning. Presumably, a similar procedure was followed by other provinces. At the same time, "people's government family planning offices" were established at the provincial and municipal levels under the authority of Central Document No. 36, thereby formally separating family planning from the Health Department bureaucracy. This structural change reinforced the shifting rationale for population control. Though the health and well-being of women and children continued to be of concern, family planning was now seen as integrally linked with the overall state planning.

Beginning in 1971, the policy adopted by China's leaders was summed up in the slogan "late, sparse and few." "Late" had a dual meaning, implying late marriage and late childbirth. "Sparse" referred to spacing children at appropriate intervals, preferably three or four years. "Few", obviously, meant fewer births per couple. Implementation was made possible by expanding the organizational network for family planning, and improving the supply and distribution of contraceptive devices and services. Making contraceptives available was critical to policy efforts; thus, in 1974 a circular was issued making contraceptive supplies free of charge. Additionally, some localities established standards for an
acceptable number of children per couple. In Hubei, for example, 1972 meetings led to a consensus that workers should propagate a two-child family in urban areas and a maximum of three children for rural couples. Elsewhere, regulations were adopted which penalized those with excessive births by refusing food rations for a fourth child, or disallowing loans for overburdened families.

The overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976 added fuel to the family planning push, with population control numbering among the many policy areas supposedly sabotaged by the "gang." These charges are belied, however, by the consistent drop in the rate of population growth from 1968 on (See Table 4). At most, the political orientations of the "gang" diminished the speed of fertility reduction; the trend itself was consistent. Clearly, the family planning efforts of the 1970s had an impact on reducing birth rates.

II. Population Policy in Contemporary China: "Three, Two or One?" Phase I, 1978-September 1980

Between 1978 and 1980, the definition of what constituted an excessive number of births changed frequently, dropping from four to three, and ultimately, two. In 1979, the slogan was "one is best, at most two," but the focus of the campaign increasingly was on encouraging only one child
per couple and halting third births. This shift from voluntarism to mandated population control began in earnest in 1978, beginning with the inclusion of family planning in the 1978 Constitution. Also in 1978, the first meeting of the State Council's Leading Group for Family Planning was held. Held in June and chaired by Chen Muhua, the conference advocated the "36-character policy" -- namely, "Party secretary in command" (shuji guashuai), "entire Party get to work" (quandang dongshou), "propaganda and education" (xuanchuan jiaoyu), "models lead the way" (dianxing yinlu), "strengthen scientific research" (jiaqiang keyan), "improve skills" (tigao jishu), "carry out measures" (cuoshi luoshi), "mass movements" (cunzhong yundong), "persevere" (chi zhi yi hong). In simpler terms, these phrases suggest preparation for a major assault on the population problem by 1) relying on Party cadres to take the lead in implementation, 2) stepping up all types of propaganda activities, including publicizing model individuals or units, and 3) improving the technical competency of medical personnel and the expertise of family planning workers.

This conference was followed by a flurry of activity at the provincial level, with conferences in November and December in Hunan, Yunnan, Jiangsu, Guizhou, Fujian, and presumably, other provinces as well. In each case, summary reports of the conference called for more attention
to family planning work in order to achieve the "Four Modernizations" and the 1980 national goal of a population growth rate of one percent. The report from Hunan noted that the ten-year outline plan passed by the Fifth National People's Congress set a population goal of reducing the growth rate to 9 per 1000 population by 1985. All provinces noted achievements thus far in their areas and called for strengthened Party leadership. They also urged that efforts be given toward improving technical measures for birth control.

Also in November 1978, the first National Conference on Population Theory was held in Beijing to lay the groundwork for a more stringent population policy. With instructions and encouragement from Chen Muhua, the 171 delegates discussed the relationship between population policy and the achievement of the Four Modernizations. The conference report identified three points of consensus among the deputies. First, it was agreed that population growth should be linked to "the development of material wealth." Only by controlling rates of population growth could a sufficient surplus wealth be generated to rapidly develop the national economy. Second, it was not enough to agree on the need to plan population growth. Specific policies would have to be adopted, and in particular, current policies reinforcing high birth rates had to be changed. In rural areas, for example, the policy of allotting grain
on a per capita basis irrespective of household size had to be reconsidered. Third, the population specialists called for propaganda and education to overcome lingering "old-fashioned ideas" concerning the preference for males over females. Attributing these old ideas to economic factors, the report called for the adoption of "necessary economic measures" and the propagation of family planning. Thus, by the end of 1978, China's leaders had paved the way for an increasingly radical population policy. Not only had a theoretical basis for strict population control been established, one that theorists would expound upon at great length over the next few years, but that economic rationale also provided the justification for the use of economic measures for enforcement.

From January 4-18, 1979, just after the landmark Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee held in December 1978, a family planning conference was held in Beijing. With seventy family planning cadres in attendance, this was the first work conference to outline more specific guidelines for family planning work. A January 26 Xinhua report on the meeting advocated the following specific policies: 1) "encourage each couple to have only one child if possible, two at the most, with a period of three or more years between them;" 2) "commend" those who have only one child, and impose "financial measures" to
"restrain" those with three or more children; 3) formulate "policies on educated young people settling in the countryside, on workers' benefits, on labor insurance, on the assignment of dormitories in urban areas, on the building of housing in rural areas, on private plots and on the allocation of food grain... in favor of planned parenthood;" 4) place emphasis on prevention through propagating the use of birth control; and 5) improve social welfare work to ensure the well-being of the elderly.

Finally, close attention was given to the issue of improving the quality level of birth control supplies and medical procedures. At this early date, what would later be referred to as a "technical responsibility system" was outlined:

"There must be rewards as well as punishments to be determined by the quality of the medical and public health personnel's birth control techniques. Rewards must be given to those who have had no mishap after handling 10,000 cases, while it is necessary to criticize and educate those who are irresponsible. We must train technical personnel and evaluate their work. Those who are unqualified should improve themselves within a specified period. It is essential to do a good job in producing and supplying birth control drugs and devices, strengthen the leadership over scientific research work and actively study how to manufacture highly effective, safe, convenient and economic birth control drugs and devices." 38 (emphasis added)

This emphasis on medical quality underlined what must have been great concern over the capacity of the system to cope with the projected massive increase in the number of birth
control procedures annually. By calling for punishment and criticism of irresponsible cadres, family planning leaders indirectly pointed to the existence of this problem on a wide scale. Unless quality levels could be improved dramatically so as to ensure the health and safety of those who complied with national policy, efforts at persuasion were bound to fail. This would mean large investments of manpower and money to train additional cadres, improve the skills of existing cadres, and improve the quality, supply and distribution of birth control supplies, particularly in rural areas.

Thus it was that the first conflict emerged between evolving rural economic policies and population policy. Beginning with the return of Deng Xiaoping to China's leadership ranks in July 1977, two themes began to emerge that would ultimately overtake and denigrate the Dazhai model of rural development and weaken the position of then Chairman Hua Guofeng. The first was the need to recognize the sovereignty of the production team, and the second was a call for reducing peasant burdens by minimizing the number of non-productive personnel (feishengchan renyuan).

By early 1979, the emphasis on reducing the number of brigade- and team-level personnel posed a sufficient threat to rural cooperative health care services to provoke a Beijing broadcast quoting the Minister of Public Health, Jiang Yizhen, on the role of medical personnel in rural
areas. The broadcast, noting that letters were flowing in to *People's Daily* on this matter, took issue with charges that medical personnel were non-productive:

"In some localities, people want to abolish barefoot doctors on the grounds that they are non-productive personnel. Is this viewpoint correct? In answer, Comrade Jiang Yizhen said: The barefoot doctors are part-time peasant-doctors. They should not be viewed as non-productive personnel because they treat and prevent diseases and at the same time take part in collecting, growing and making herb medicines and do other farm work."

Calling the barefoot doctors "an important grassroots force of public health workers," Jiang advocated increased training for these personnel and promised "limited subsidies" to health workers in brigades and teams with "financial difficulties." Thus, the combined voices of family planning and public health workers sought to preserve and strengthen the ranks of local health cadres, and at state expense, if necessary.

Throughout 1979 and 1980, the dual foci of population work continued to be the complimentary realms of theory and practice. As noted above, the rationale for an increasingly strict population control program was no longer couched in terms of the welfare of women and children, but rather, in terms of collective economic and social welfare. It was argued that an imbalance between material and human production threatened to impede China's advance toward modernization. Therefore, family size, like other areas of
production, had to be included in central planning, so as to maintain a balance between human reproduction and economic development. Because of high birth rates during the 1950s and 1960s, China faced the start of another baby boom which would place an unbearable burden on an already taxed economy and doom the "Four Modernizations" to failure.

While this argument surfaced continually in the press and mass media, demographers, policy planners and theorists sought to ground the argument in the writings of Marx and Engels and defend themselves from attack as proponents of Malthusianism. Clearly, the prerequisite for a scholarly debate on the "socialist law of production" was to eliminate the threat of political attack for erroneous views. This was accomplished in 1979, when Ma Yinchu and his population theories were rehabilitated. Attacked as a Malthusian in the 1960s, Ma's theory was the forerunner of current policies, arguing the need for coordinating population growth and economic development, and calling for administrative measures to enforce population control.

With the most threatening political cloud removed, theorists began to develop more fully the theoretical basis for population planning in a socialist society. The articles which began to appear in population journals in 1980 all introduced the same fundamental concept, based on a quote from Engels:
"According to the materialistic conception, the decisive factor in history is, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a two-fold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools requisite thereto; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species."46

From this came the call to "simultaneously grasp two kinds of production" (liangzhong shengchan yiqi zhua), a phrase quickly adopted as a rallying slogan for the new policy.

For theorists, the dilemma was how to reconcile the "Marxist" notion of "two kinds of production" with the rejection of a Malthusian-style general law of population. By including human reproduction within the scope of social production, one could easily deduce the desirability, even necessity of including population growth and development within the scope of socialist planning. However, the control of population growth, as called for in Malthus' theories, was explicitly rejected as a self-serving device to sustain the position of an exploitative bourgeoisie in capitalist systems. This critique of Malthus was a key element in arguing the desirability of a large population in China. Since human beings were producers, they could only serve to further enrich a socialist state.

Such views are now criticized as simplistic and narrow-minded. As Liu Zheng states:
"The rapid increase in the natural growth rate since the founding of the People's Republic only tells us what one may expect in the way of population development in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country once its revolution succeeds. It does not prove that constant and rapid population growth constitutes an objective law of population development in a socialist system. Such an assumption would lead, and has led, to conscious or unconscious denial of the necessity of controlling population growth."^50

Liu goes on to argue that, as a result of the technological advances that occurred in capitalist society, demand for labor power has fallen -- "a situation that applies to socialist production as well as to capitalist production." Thus, whether a large population size is "good" or not can only be determined in relationship to current economic capacity.

While theorists continued the debate on the meaning of writings by Marx and Engels on the subject of population growth, policy planners and propagandists concentrated on a different rationale for the family planning push, one far more personal than Marxist philosophy. To buttress the argument that the linkage between economic growth and population growth could no longer be ignored, on June 28, 1979, Xinhua released information on the costs of child-rearing in rural areas, towns and cities. It was estimated that to raise a child to age 16, with a primary and middle school education, the cost of 1600
yuan in rural areas, 4800 yuan in towns, and 6900 yuan in cities, or an average of 2200 yuan per child. Thus, the cost of an additional 10 million people would total 22.2 billion yuan, a sizeable drain on state resources.

During this same period, the results of provincial- and municipal-level conferences began to surface in the form of local regulations on population policy which reflected shifting national guidelines. In essence, the regulations specified a number of material incentives and economic sanctions to be used to encourage one-child couples and discourage third or additional births. Based on regulations released for Anhui and Hunan Provinces, it is clear that the focus of concern was on reducing dramatically the number of couples having a third child or more. While families who had a second child would not receive the bonuses due to one-child families, neither would they suffer economic sanctions.

Specifically, couples who signed "only-child certificates" (dusheng zinu zheng) were entitled to receive: 1) annual sums of 30 to 60 yuan as a bonus for the care of the child, 2) priority in health care, hospitalization, entrance to nursery school, kindergarten and eventual job placement for the child; and 3) adult grain rations, extra housing space and extra portions of private plot for the child. In addition, Anhui,
recognizing the traditional preference for male offspring, included provisions designed to make the prospect of a single female child more attractive — namely, a difference of one yuan in the monthly bonus (5 yuan per month for males, 6 for females), and priority for two-daughter households in job placement. Hunan authorities dealt with another prevalent concern — retirement support — by requiring urban work units to give a 5% increase in the retirement income of both husband and wife, and by requiring rural units to support retired peasants a standard of living equal to the local average.

Sanctions were to become effective for the birth of a third child six months after the promulgation of the regulations, thus pressuring those already pregnant for the third time to abort the pregnancy. Besides losing 5% of their income for 14 years, parents of a third or additional child would be: 1) ineligible for cooperative health care, liable for all medical expenses associated with pregnancy and post-natal care, and ineligible for pregnancy leave wages; 2) denied extra housing space, private plot, or ration coupons for many commodities; and 3) required to pay a "negotiated" grain price for the child until 14 years of age.
In the advent of the promulgation of these regulations, and the pronouncement by Hua of population growth goals at the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in June 1979, the push for local-level compliance heated up substantially. Provinces publicly discussed population figures from previous years and goals for the future, and advocated a step-up of family planning activities to meet 1979's goals. A second population theory conference was held to discuss population planning and policy as well as theory and a December meeting attended by the various heads of family planning offices across China discussed plans for 1980 and 1981. At the latter, Chen Muhua stressed the necessity for "grasping both population control and production simultaneously," a phrase that would become increasingly prominent over the next several years as the embodiment of the theoretical basis for centrally planned population growth.

In early 1980, a number of population scenarios developed by China's scientific community were released publicly to illustrate the implications of unchecked population growth. These initial projections showed that if the 1979 average fertility rate of 2.3 children per child-bearing age woman was maintained, the population would top 1.2 billion in 2000 and still be 1.119 billion
in 2080. If fertility rates were reduced to only one child per couple by 1985, however, the total for 2000 would be under 1.05 billion, and would drop to 613 million by 2060 if maintained. Although these projections were later revised, they provided the statistical support for advocacy of a one-child program. A February 11, 1980 Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) editorial stressed the importance of population goals for the development program and noted that stress had to be put on rural family planning if they were to be met. Moreover, emphasis was placed on meeting the 1980 and 1981 population growth rate goals of 10 per 1000 and 8 per 1000, respectively, and dropping to 5 per 1000 by 1985.

Clearly, 1980 was a time of increasing pressure at the local level to conform with national guidelines. Numerous provincial-level family planning meetings were held extolling the virtues of the one-child program and exhorting cadres to integrate family planning work with their other tasks. In addition, cases of cadres having excessive children were published, stressing the consequences (e.g., demotion, sterilization) of failing to comply. Finally, localities began to publicly question the reasons for their shortcomings in this policy area and their problems with implementation.
The Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress, held in August-September 1980, formally embraced the one-child program, but failed to pass a family planning law. Such a law was drafted by the Family Planning Office under the State Council and was submitted for discussion by the Commission on Legislative Affairs of the Fifth National People's Congress. According to a report by Peng Zhen, vice-chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, the draft went through several revisions between June 1979 and September 1980, and was originally scheduled to be submitted for approval at the Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in September of 1980. In explaining why it was not submitted, Peng noted some "unresolved problems" remained and that "the draft is not the result of consensus of all quarters..." Thus, despite Hua Guofeng's articulation of specific national population goals at the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in June of 1979 -- an annual population growth rate of 10 per 1000 in 1979, dropping to 5 per 1000 by 1985 -- enough disagreement remained over the appropriate means to this end that the law was still postponed a year later, and indeed, has yet to be passed.

A number of factors probably contributed to the failure to adopt a family planning law. First, according
to a Xinhua report in July 1979 during the 2nd Session of the Fifth NPC, the draft law included specific regulations concerning the rewards to be given to single-child families in both urban and rural settings. Such specificity would have required localities with widely differing economic and demographic conditions to adopt uniform regulations, even if inappropriate to local circumstances. Thus, at an October 1979 meeting at which relevant officials within the State Council discussed the proposed family planning law, a report from the Guizhou Party Committee called for a flexible policy which would, for example, set minority population policy based on local conditions.

Second, the imposition of a national law which specified the obligations of localities to provide special incentives for single-child couples, while making no provision for financial compensation, could hardly have been welcomed by delegates to the NPC sessions. As early as 1980, a report from Guangdong Province referred to "the impossibility of implementing this policy of rewards and punishment due to a lack of funds."

This issue was also discussed at the October 1979 State Council meeting. According to Li Xiuzhen, then deputy director of the State Council's Family Planning Leading Small Group, the deputy premiers participating agreed
that the State Council should allot "some funds" (yibufen qian) for the purpose of providing rewards to single-child families. The issue was not resolved, however, but held over for "additional study." In short, while it was easy to agree in principle to state subsidization of family planning incentive program costs, the politics of budgetary allocations precluded any immediate solution. Under these circumstances, some central leaders may have concluded that the simpler solution was to allow provincial regulations to stand, thereby forfeiting legal responsibility for the monies required for implementation.

Third, there continued to be numerous concerns about the imposition of a one-child policy, if not outright opposition. In addition to the theoretical debates underway as to the appropriateness of a strict population control policy in a socialist state, new debates were flaring over the impact of the drastic program. Most prominent were concerns about 1) an "ageing" of the population (laohua), 2) a reduction in the labor force and eligible military recruits, and 3) increasing numbers of elderly people dependent on state welfare subsidies. Although such arguments were countered in the press, they continued to provide a concrete rationale for all who opposed the stringency of the one-child program.
Finally, elite politics may have contributed to the failure to pass a family planning law. Between the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December of 1978 and the Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in September 1980, Deng Xiaoping and his fellow reformers were busy undermining their conservative opposition, led by Hua Guofeng. Although it is not known the extent to which these groups were divided on the specific issue of population policy, we may surmise that conservatives such as Hua, Li Xiannian and Ye Jianying were less enthused about the drastic one-child program than, for example, Zhao Ziyang, who had presided over the model Sichuan programs as First Party Secretary before being promoted to vice-premier in April 1980. Nevertheless, if the proposed family planning law fell victim to factional politics, it most likely occurred by default. With battles being waged over the broad direction of China's economic policy and the composition of the next generation of leaders, population policy was hardly the issue on which to expend political capital. With key actors occupied elsewhere, then, the debate over the family planning law may have been a draw.

Despite the failure to adopt the law, Hua Guofeng made a strong statement calling for a "crash drive" to limit population growth to 1.2 billion by the year 2000.
Noting that instances of compulsion had occurred, Hua stressed that such tactics were impermissible and called for reliance on "publicity and persuasion" to implement the policy. To back up this State Council pronouncement, on September 25, 1980, Renmin Ribao prominently featured an "Open Letter" (gongkai xin) to all Party and Communist Youth League members from the Party Central Committee. The letter called on all Party cadres and Youth League members to take the lead in advocating one-child families. It briefly reviewed the history of population growth since 1940, stressed the economic constraints which increasing population size place on the economy, and addressed and dismissed concerns that promotion of one-child families would lead to an ageing of the population and a diminishing work force. Additionally, the "Open Letter" assured readers that there would be a gradual improvement in social insurance plans for the elderly, and chastized those who clung to the "feudal" idea that male offspring were preferable to female. It called for a number of "special considerations" for only-child families, and increased research on eugenics and contraceptives. It stated vaguely that people with "practical problems" could be allowed a second child, and that minorities were free to choose whether or not to adopt birth control techniques.
Finally, cadres were exhorted to rely on patient persuasion and education to enforce the policy, and not to use coercion to gain compliance.

This unusual tactic of issuing an Open Letter climaxed an ongoing publicity campaign against cadres and Party members who ignored or personally violated local family planning regulations. By taking this approach, it was possible to cut across all geographic, bureaucratic and functional boundaries by compelling Party officials at every level to organize study sessions and propagate the contents of the "Open Letter." In addition, the timing of the letter assured that newly mobilized Party members and local cadres would be able to take advantage of the post-harvest and Spring Festival slack agricultural periods to implement the regulations.

With the publication of the "Open Letter," China's one child per couple population policy was basically in place. It would be modified marginally in 1982 and 1983, in response to a changing rural environment. Although the "Open Letter" made no mention of the particular problem of rural enforcement of the one-child policy, such concerns became increasingly prominent in speeches and press reports during 1981. As organizational and economic structures underwent dramatic change in 1981 and 1982, cadres responsible for the implementation of population
policy were unable to adapt easily. The result was a period of local experimentation with new techniques of enforcement, ended only in 1982 with the issuance of new central regulations.


In late 1980, a national forum for family planning cadres was held, and a Xinhua press release noted that representatives of the State Agricultural Commission were in attendance. By early January 1981, at a national conference for family planning propaganda, Wang Renzhong, head of the Party Central Committee Propaganda Department and Secretary of the Central Secretariat, was calling for increased emphasis on work in rural areas. It was at this conference that Deng Xiaoping put his personal imprimatur on the policy, addressing the meeting and urging increased publicity.

Apparently, national leaders were gearing up for a "damage-limiting" program for the years 1981 and 1982. By the end of 1980, agricultural responsibility systems had been introduced which divided production teams into work groups and paved the way for more radical reforms in 1982. Although the more radical forms of responsibility systems -- individual and household contracts -- were
still a year away from official sanction on a broad scale, Sichuan Province began experimenting with household contracts as early as 1980. The reformist leadership of Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang was clearly intent on orchestrating the shift to household production, but central- and local-level resistance was strong. Moreover, in some localities local cadres went overboard, dividing up all land and assets and abandoning their cadre posts.

Thus, cadres charged with implementing the "one-child" policy faced a two-fold dilemma. Demographic projections indicated that 1981 and 1982 would be peak years for the birth rate, a situation which would be aggravated by the new marriage law which effectively lowered the marriage age. Thus, in January 1981, Chen Muhua conceded that she and Deng Xiaoping had discussed the "anticipated rise in the population growth rate in 1981 and 1982." Because of this, a major campaign had to be waged just to minimize the impact of this naturally-occurring phenomenon. In particular, strenuous efforts had to be made to eliminate the occurrence of third births, while reducing the percentage of second births. In turn, the success of that effort depended on the compliance of the rural population. At the same time, however, cadres at and below the county level were
thoroughly occupied with the rapidly evolving agricultural reform policies, and peasants newly released from collective management were even less amenable to central directives on family planning.

Thus, a major propaganda effort was launched, aimed at explaining the impact of unchecked population growth. A joint statement issued by the Ministry of Propaganda and the State Family Planning Leading Small Group on December 25, 1980, published in Renkou Yanjiu (Population Research), outlined the educational and propaganda problems to be tackled. In addition, the statement acknowledged continued concerns in some quarters about available labor power and military manpower in the future, and discussed the issue of the male-female population ratio. While pointing out that a perfectly balanced ratio was not to be expected, readers were warned of the possibility of female infanticide in areas where the idea of "the superiority of men over women" (zhongnan qingnu) prevailed.

As the Spring Festival neared, media attention to family planning continued to increase, topped by a Renmin Ribao editorial on January 27, 1981. For the first time, this article dealt with the theoretical issues which had been simmering among experts since 1979. It stated defensively that "we are not at all preaching the
pessimistic view that 'too many people cause the peril.' After a discussion of the impact of population growth for China's natural resources, it was added:

"In working out national statistics, we are certainly not preaching the reactionary Malthusian population theory. Quite on the contrary [sic], we have aimed at upholding the Marxist population theory." With this editorial, the debate on the Marxist underpinnings of China's population policy was effectively ended, although theorists would continue to expound on Marxist population theory within the bounds of scholarly journals.

The editorial also gave indication of slippage at local levels, where leadership for family planning was poor or non-existent. Lack of attention to family planning and failure to coordinate the concerned departments was viewed as the cause of "simplified and rigid practices and coercive orders." To solve this problem, Party committees at the county level and above were urged to "grasp the work at least four times a year," while those below the county were to give it constant attention.

Interestingly, the editorial did not address the issue of the impact of rural reforms on family planning work, perhaps due to the continued debate surrounding the limits of these reforms. Elsewhere, however, concerns
were already being voiced about the impact of various forms of the responsibility system on child-bearing preferences. As early as October 1980, the summary report of Beijing Municipality's second discussion meeting on population theory expressed the concern that the implementation of the production responsibility system to the household and other measures might stimulate (ciji) more rural births.

A series of press reports out of Guangdong in early 1981 reveal much about the difficulties encountered at the local level and the negative impact of rural reforms. Faced with a poor showing for family planning work in 1980, provincial leaders convened several meetings to discuss their problems. At a work conference held in May, poor performance in achieving family planning goals was attributed to three factors:

1. Conditions have changed since the rural areas instituted the production responsibility system. Some cadres stress that there are many difficulties and fail to see the favorable conditions; ideologically they waver and lack sufficient confidence.

2. Certain cadres and masses erroneously hold that universally advocating that each couple should have only one child is the result of leftist influence, and dare not implement it with firmness.

3. Work patterns and methods are unable to keep abreast of the new situation."
These points summed up neatly the interrelated problems which would confront local-level family planning cadres for the next two years. First, resistance to the policy remained strong, not only among the peasants, but also among cadres at all levels. If the policy could not be overturned on theoretical grounds as influenced by reactionary Malthusian ideas, then perhaps it could be tagged as the product of leftist influence. For rural cadres in particular, the adoption of increasingly liberal agricultural policies must have seemed incompatible with such a severe state policy on population control. It may have been hoped that once agricultural policies had stabilized, and national-level reformers had secured their power base, population policy would also become less strict.

In the meantime, provincial leaders faced two types of problems among cadres charged with implementing the policy. On the one hand, the introduction of the responsibility system made rural enforcement more difficult and village cadres less inclined, or able to cooperate. On the other hand, localities improvising new tactics to monitor family planning did not necessarily receive the support of departmental or Party cadres at higher levels. In Guangdong, for example, cadres who failed to support the use of "mass pacts" at the local level were told they
"must enthusiastically support this measure and should not arbitrarily negate it; still less should they arbitrarily stigmatize it as an 'indigenous policy.'" Clearly, specialized cadres objected to the adoption of measures unauthorized by provincial and local regulations.

Although the nature of these "mass pacts" was not explained in the Guangdong radio report, it probably was one of many variants of "family planning contracts" that would appear during 1981 and 1982. One of the earliest reports on such a measure was submitted to the Third National Symposium of Population Science, held in Beijing in February 1981. Published as part of the Symposium report in October 1981, this report from Mianju County, Sichuan Province, told of its experience with "dual contracts" (shuangbao hetong) for agricultural production and family planning. In this county, production teams had been divided into work groups in 1980, with production quotas contracted to each group (baochan dao zu). Family planning quotas were included in the production contracts signed by the group, making the group as a whole accountable for meeting collective birth quotas. Here, thirty percent of the total contracted compensation for production work was contingent on fulfilling the family planning quota while seventy percent was allotted for agricultural production. Thus, full compensation could only be
gained by meeting both quotas. Opposition to this method was said to have been overcome by education and propaganda.

This approach to implementation did not receive national sanction until late in the summer of 1981. The State Family Planning Commission, established in March, met for its first plenary session on May 31, 1981. It was followed in June by a national meeting held in Hefei, presided over by Liu Qingshan, deputy director of the State Family Planning Commission. Although press releases on both meetings were brief, both stressed the need to concentrate on work in rural areas. In addition, at the national meeting, Liu "conveyed the guidelines of the recent plenary session of the State Family Planning Commission and of the meeting of its Party organization."

Although the specific nature of the guidelines was not reported, the appearance of a Renmin Ribao article on June 16 which reported on reform model Chu Xian Prefecture's experience with "dual contracts" suggests strongly that official approval of this enforcement technique was given at the first plenary meeting of the State Family Planning Commission. The article discussed the implementation of household quotas (baochan dao hu) and household contracts (baogan dao hu) in the
area and its consequences for family planning work. In addition to adopting family planning contracts, a "cadre post responsibility system" (ganbu gangwei zerenzhi) was established to hold cadres accountable for performance in this area.

The intent of this article was most probably twofold. First, the article served to forewarn and instruct family planning cadres concerning new rural conditions, and sanction the use of dual contracts. Second, and more importantly, at a time when baogan dao hu had yet to receive official sanction, this People's Daily report acknowledged its operation in Anhui in a positive way. Moreover, in outlining a means by which to carry out family planning work under such conditions, it implied that the agricultural reforms would become increasingly widespread. Thus, the report also may have served the broader political interests of reformers still seeking to overcome resistance to the household contract responsibility system. In fact, it is quite possible that the headlining of this article on "dual contracts" was chosen at this time for the double entendre of that phrase. To family planning cadres, shuang bao implied the linking of production and family planning responsibilities in a single contract. For agricultural cadres, however, shuang bao was a shorthand form for baochan dao hu
and baogan dao hu, both of which were still highly controversial at that time.

In August, a Renmin Ribao reporter's commentary elaborated on the new conditions arising after implementation of the responsibility system. Noting its effects on family planning and rural education, the reporter reviewed the measures adopted in Anhui and elsewhere, explained the "dual contract" system, and called for "clear, principled regulations" to guide the formulation of localized population control measures.

Finally, in October, a front-page editorial got to the heart of the matter:

"What deserves attention is that as a result of the implementation of the various forms of the production responsibility system in the countryside, some peasants may say: 'We have taken responsibility for the land and there is no need for you to bother about our childbirth.' So they want to have more children."

The editorial called for patient ideological work to overcome the influence of "remnant feudal ideas" and to explain that"'it is not the party but the objective conditions that do not permit us to have more children.'" It also called for contracts that linked production and family planning targets.

By the end of the year, concern over rural conditions reached a peak, as the tug-of-war over agricultural
reforms continued to adversely affect family planning work. Thus, at the Fourth Session of the Fifth National People's Congress held in December, alarms were sounded by many deputies who faced severe obstacles in this area. Their complaints of 1) little or no effort made by local cadres, 2) lack of funds for rewards and failure to enforce penalties, and 3) inadequate contraceptive supplies had been heard throughout the year, along with mounting concern over incidents of violence and sabotage, namely, the unauthorized removal of intrauterine devices.

In early 1982, increasing attention was given to inadequate leadership in family planning work, a problem worsening with the spread of household contracting. In January, Chen Muhua warned against a "laissez-faire attitude" among "leading cadres," reflecting a growing concern over the "laxity" or "paralysis" of local organs in rural areas.

In February 1982, a lengthy Renmin Ribao article by Xu Xuehan noted that "some comrades think that the birth control task can easily be fulfilled if we relax the regulations and allow peasants to have two children," and that "at present, people seem cold and indifferent to family planning work." To change this situation, Xu argued the need for: 1) extensive propaganda; 2) increased numbers of local-level family planning and
technical cadres; 3) a birth control responsibility system; and 4) a family planning law. On the question of priority for having a second child, Xu noted the disparity in local regulations on this point, admitting that "the stipulations in certain places are a little bit stricter than in others." He called for setting the childbearing quota at 1.5 children per family, which he felt would "be acceptable for the great majority of peasants." Such a move, of course, would be tantamount to allowing almost all who had a single female child a second birth.

To cope with the deteriorating conditions for the enforcement of the one-child program in the rural areas, Central Directive Number 11 was adopted in February and made public, in summary form, in March. This document reiterated basic policy -- one child per couple, a second child permitted only under special circumstances, absolutely prohibit third or additional births -- but included additional instructions in light of the new context for implementation and research reports from the previous year. First, the document stresses that where educational efforts failed, economic penalties should be enforced. Conversely, incentive plans should be maintained to encourage compliance with the policy. In rural areas, the document approved the practice of linking
family planning to production contracts, noting that some areas gave reduced production quotas and additional land to single-child couples. It also pointed to the use of a cadres' job responsibility system as an effective measure in linking family planning with production goals.

Importantly, the document explicitly sanctioned provincial and local governments to develop regulations suited to local conditions.

Mirroring the increased attention eugenics had received in 1981, the directive called for the creation of "eugenic counseling departments" to "persuade those who have hereditary diseases to sterilize themselves." In addition, it called for strengthening the family planning administrative apparatus. According to a Wuhan family planning official, the document stipulated that in future, all family planning offices should be called family planning commissions to promote the development of a uniform bureaucratic organization. They were also elevated to the level of a "high-ranking office" (gāo bànjì).

The directive also emphasized the need to improve the quality and supply of contraceptive drugs and the quality of medical personnel performing contraceptive procedures. In 1981, increasing complaints had been lodged against the performance of the Health Ministry,
leading to a State Council decision in May 1981 on improving medical management."

Finally, unlike the "Open Letter" of 1980, the directive said:

"Although the policy toward the national minorities may be appropriately relaxed according to actual situations, family planning must also be encouraged among the national minorities." 144

This subtly-worded policy shift came in the aftermath of an October 1981 national symposium on minority nationality population issues. A note on this conference in Xibei Renkou (Northwest Population) indicated that the majority of those in attendance felt that "some districts possibly (keneng) should carry out population control (kongzhi renkou) toward minority nationalities in the same way as for the Han nationality, some districts possibly should appropriately develop the population (shidangde fazhan renkou)." 145 In short, having registered rising population growth rates for 1980 and 1981 with little prospect for improvement in 1982, many minority populations also began to feel the squeeze.

From August 10-16, 1982, a national family planning work conference was held in Beijing. Although no new directives resulted, this important meeting laid the groundwork for a significant shift in strategy later in
the year. A summary report of the conference listed eight points to be attended to in improving work. First among them was propaganda work in the countryside. Although propaganda and education had been an integral part of family planning policy from the beginning, this report specified several areas of family planning that should be "popularized" (puji): family planning policy, birth control knowledge, elementary knowledge of physiology and hygiene, and eugenics. In addition, the report advocated the creation of family planning propaganda guidance stations (jihua shengyu zhidaozhan) at the county level, and called on the medical departments (yiwu bumen) to develop a training plan that would result in each commune having two to three medical technicians of high quality. Although still ambiguous at this point, the increasing focus at this meeting on the related efforts of propaganda and technical work presaged what was to come -- a Family Planning Propaganda Month which would combine talk with action.

IV. The High Tide of Sterilization: Phase III, September 1982 through 1983

Encouraged by Premier Zhao Ziyang's declaration in August 1982 that family planning was "a fundamental state policy," and faced with census reports documenting
an increased population growth rate in 1981, national leaders convened a Family Planning Propaganda Work Meeting in November. This meeting planned for a National Family Planning Propaganda Month that would extend from January 1, 1983 through Spring Festival in February. All concerned departments were to be mobilized and work teams formed to propagate family planning, especially among the rural population. At exactly the same time, Chengdu hosted a national conference on contraceptive supplies, attended by representatives of the State Family Planning Commission, the State Pharmaceutical Administration and the Ministry of Chemical Industry.

The thrust of the month-long propaganda effort was made clear by Qian Xinzhong, director of the State Family Planning Commission, in his remarks to the meeting. Calling on all departments to mobilize for propaganda work and train cadres, he added:

"At the same time, form family planning technical work teams composed of some medical personnel of senior ability who perform operations well to, on the one hand, propagate, and on the other hand, carry out permanent birth control measures [on those with] two or more births (jinxing ertai yishangde yongyuanxingde jieyu cuoshi). If operations are performed, and performed very well, this is propaganda in actual operation (shiji xingdongde xuanchuan)."
This focus was confirmed in early 1983, when Qian commented in a *Beijing Review* article:

"Voluntary sterilization for either men or women is advocated among couples of child-bearing ages who have given birth to two children." 155

At about the same time, an article by State Family Planning Commission member Xing Peng in *Renkou Yanjiu* (Population Research) stressed the experience of Shifang County, Sichuan Province, in "calling for" (haozhao) all couples with two children to undergo sterilization. In this way, 96% of all couples with two or more children had had sterilizations by the end of 1980, and the county achieved a "multiple birth rate" (duotai lu) of zero in 1981.

Thus, Family Planning Propaganda Month was a peak mobilization period. According to a *Xinhua* report, "1.37 million propaganda workers" and "over 138,000 medical workers" were trained in fourteen provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions to carry out the month's activities, and in ten such regions, 226,000 sterilizations were performed between December 1982 and January 10, 1983. By the end of February, "incomplete statistics" indicated that 8.86 million "birth control operations" had been performed nationally, a figure which presumably encompasses sterilizations, abortions, and the
insertion of intra-uterine devices. Although the total number of sterilizations performed during Family Planning Propaganda Month is unclear, the significance of this new shift in emphasis is made clear by statistics from Hubei Province. In Hubei, one million sterilizations occurred during 1983 alone, comprising one-third of the cumulative provincial total of 3,020,000. Thus, faced with a hostile rural population, a continuing problem with eliminating third or more births, and a high incidence of abortion, family planning officials concluded that over the long-term, "persuading" all those with two or more children to undergo sterilization was the cheapest, most effective alternative available.

An issue left unresolved during 1982 and 1983 was the particular conditions under which couples would be allotted a second child. Although any specific instructions that might have been contained in Central Document Number 11 have not been made public, a Beijing Review article authored by State Family Planning Commission director Qian Xinzhong noted three typical cases in which a second birth would be allowed:

"1) the firstborn is a nonhereditary disabled and cannot become a normal member of the labor force; 2) in reorganized families, one spouse has a child by his or her first marriage and the other side is married for the first time; 3) those who had not borne children but became
pregnant after adopting other people's children."\textsuperscript{160}

However, each province was free to elaborate on those provisions in accordance with local concerns. Thus, regulations for Jilin Province identified these three categories plus a fourth: minority nationality couples could have a second child as well. Several additional categories were also under consideration in late 1982, similar to those adopted by Hubei Province under the guidelines of Central Document Number 37, issued in the fall of 1982. Under Hubei's regulations, the following circumstances would also permit the allocation of a second birth: 1) a married couple in which each party was an only child; 2) one party is the third generation only child; 3) the husband moves to the home of his wife, who must be an only child; 4) disabled veterans; 5) a man whose brother(s) cannot bear children; and 6) returned overseas Chinese. Clearly, the addition of these numerous provisions was designed to address the continuing concern over care for the elderly and the burden of only children in supporting them. With increased emphasis being placed on sterilization for those with two or more children and "remedial measures" for those with unplanned pregnancies, the expected drop in the total number of unplanned births would more than compensate for an
increased number of second births within these restricted categories.

Elsewhere, localities devised a different method for allocating second births. In Mian County, Shaanxi Province, for example, county officials divided localities into three grades based on per capita arable land, amount of surplus labor power, and overall level of local development. On that basis, in 1981 each grade was allotted a certain number of second births. In grade one, the number equalled 2.4% of those with only one child, and in grade 2, only 5%. In grade three areas, however, where per capita arable land exceeded 2 mu and cultural, health and economic conditions were relatively backward, 70% of all one-child couples were allotted a second birth. Thus, although central guidelines were set forth in 1982, substantial leeway remained at the local level to adopt specific measures to suit local conditions. This local-level complexity probably accounts for the continued failure to enact a family planning law in 1983, despite its continued advocacy by Qian Xinzhong.

After the frenzied activity of 1982, culminating with the propaganda and sterilization campaign in early 1983, the remainder of the year was relatively calm. No new central directives on family planning were issued. Instead, this was a period during which efforts were made
to sustain and regularize family planning work. Reports out of Guangdong during 1983 suggest that a policy of compulsory sterilization was implemented throughout the year in an effort to meet provincial population quotas. Elsewhere, continued efforts were made in the "three popularization" drive and stress was placed on Hu Yaobang's call to make family planning a fundamental state policy.

These efforts were summed up by Qian Xinzhong in 1983 as "taking three things as the main" (yi san wei zhu), namely: 1) propaganda and education, 2) birth control; and 3) regularization (jìngchánghuá). On the latter point, he stressed the need for "systematized work" in order to consolidate and improve family planning work. In addition, he stressed the importance of organization, noting the system of family planning commissions from the county level up, specialized (zhuanzhi) personnel at each commune, "family planning brigade leaders" at the village level, and family planning propagandists (xuanchuanyuan) at the team level.

This extensive and effective organization for implementing population policy had been carefully developed between 1979 and 1982. During 1982, a difficult period had been weathered, when for a time it appeared the system was collapsing at the village and team levels under the influence of the responsibility system. Just as stability
was basically restored in early 1983, however, a new
dilemma was posed by the decision to abolish the commune
system and reestablish township governments. The
implementation of this structural reform would once
again alter the context for implementation and pose new
organizational problems in the countryside.

Reports on the abolition of the commune system began
to circulate in 1981 and the decision to disavow this
centerpiece of Maoist policy was formalized in the
Constitution adopted in December 1982. Prior to that
time, the issue of commune reform surfaced at the August
1982 National Family Planning Work Conference. A summary
report of the conference indicated that family planning
should fall within the scope of political power of town-
ships and villages. As the commune structural reform
was implemented more widely in 1983, new organizational
issues arose which were addressed by Central Document
Number 7 of January 1984.

Although this document was not published, press
reports indicate that key organizational issues were
addressed. At the national conference of provincial,
municipal and autonomous region family planning directors
convened in late February to discuss the new directives,
delegates stressed: "In the process of rural structural
reform, further perfect the family planning organizational
structures, and strengthen the cadre force." In addition, a training period was called for to enhance the work ability of those cadres. A report from Hebei Province on a telephone conference held in early April further specified that all townships, neighborhoods, large factories and enterprises "must establish family planning commissions" and that villages "must establish family planning leading samll groups." 

Thus, family planning work became the province of township governments that were required to recruit and train staff members for family planning offices. In areas where communes were divided into two or more townships, however, the split necessitated the recruitment of additional cadres for this work and the appropriation of funds for their salaries. As we shall see below, the inability or unwillingness of local units to fund additional family planning cadres resulted in a frequent failure to staff the newly created positions.

A second organizational issue concerned the relationship between the family planning bureaucracy and the public health bureaucracy. In March and May, the State Family Planning Commission and the Ministry of Health issued joint circulars calling for increased cooperation between the two bureaucracies on family planning-related matters, particularly in training birth control technical
teams. The second circular, issued on May 28, dealt specifically with the problem of "technical guidance work" (jishu zhidaogongzuo) and called for a number of specific measures to be adopted. First, medical and health care units (yiliao baojian danwei) at the county level and above were to establish a family planning section (ke) and set aside a certain number of beds for this purpose. Second, commune/township hospitals were instructed to have not less than one or two doctors or medics responsible for "all types of birth control operations." Significantly, the circular added:

"Hereafter, family planning departments can not transfer technicians from health departments, but must separately establish technical ranks."

To improve the quality of these workers, each was to undergo training and examination in order to be certified. After the expense and dislocations incurred by the mobilization of medical workers during the 1983 and 1984 Spring Festival periods, health officials were clearly ready to be relieved of this difficult and costly chore.

In addition, the circular echoed Central Document Number 7 in reaffirming the emphasis on sterilization for those with two or more children, based on "the principle of voluntarism." It also called for an end to the practice of setting quotas for operations to be passed
down to lower units. Instead, units were to realistically arrange the number of operations so as to "avoid the bad consequences of excessive concentration" of procedures. Finally, eugenics was to be promoted through the creation of outpatient clinics to examine couples prior to marriage.

Thus, having survived the two critical years of 1982 and 1983, central leaders took the opportunity to re-evaluate the organizational apparatus for implementing population control policy. Although thousands of workers could be mobilized for campaigns during short periods, dependence on other units was not conducive to the long-term regularization of family planning work. With central-level attention focused increasingly on the issue of state-wide organizational reform, streamlining, and increased efficiency, this was the opportune time for the Health Ministry to ask for relief from the financial and organizational burden of family planning work. For the family planning bureaucracy, the pullout of health workers put it in an even better position to argue for a major organizational expansion at a time when streamlining was the watchword. Based on the case of Hubei Province, where office staff was scheduled to expand from 47 to as many as 80 under the structural reform process, we may conclude that family planning officials successfully pleaded their cases.
V. Conclusions

The relationship between population policy and rural reform became increasingly close and complex between 1978 and 1984. As interdependent components of China's modernization drive, the successful implementation of each was seen as essential to the achievement of reformist goals. However, as the adoption of liberal agricultural reforms became a test of will between contending leadership groups, political priorities required that rural economic policies take precedence over population policy. Ultimately, then, the evolution of population policy can be divided into two distinct stages.

The first stage, which ended with the "Open Letter" of September 25, 1980, covers the period during which population policy evolved from allowing two births per couple to allowing only one, with exceptions for special circumstances. During this period, population policy was viewed as pivotal to the modernization drive. Other reforms were necessary, of course, but increasingly it was stressed that all efforts would come to naught if the impending population crisis was not checked. Thus, changes in certain rural economic policies which conflicted with population policy were advocated, for example, the practice of subsidizing grain rations for households which failed to practice family planning.
Measures such as this one were conducive to both population control and rural reform, and thus, were easily accepted. Thus, during stage one, population control measures and rural reforms evolved in tandem. After September 1980, however, the evolution of agricultural policies was increasingly at odds with the one-child population policy which was now mandated.

September 1980 was also a turning point for rural economic policies. After a rural work conference in September 1980, Central Document Number 75 was adopted, legitimating the spread of more liberal forms of the responsibility system -- baogan dao hu, baochan dao hu -- in remote or backward areas. This was followed in March 1981 with Central Document Number 13, which further enhanced the respectability of household contracts as one type of responsibility system. As discussed in Chapter Two, the consequent shift to the more far-reaching forms of the responsibility system that occurred over the course of the next year and a half traumatized local cadres. Some staunchly opposed the reduction of political and economic power signalled by the reforms, others abdicated their responsibilities out of a sense of frustration and confusion, and still others abandoned their posts for more lucrative household farming.
During this phase of elite contention and local-level confusion, those charged with implementation of population policy struggled to keep up with the rapidly changing rural conditions. Having been eclipsed by agricultural policy as the first priority for policymakers, the second phase of the evolution of population policy was characterized by the struggle to adjust to a fluid, uncertain rural environment. Unable to plan for the advent of the household contract system prior to its sanction by central leaders, family planning officials were unprepared for the rapid shift in that direction beginning in 1981. Thus, the modification of the population control program and the strengthening of the family planning bureaucracy during 1981 and 1982 was directed almost exclusively at improving conditions for implementation in the rural areas. In short, the elaboration of population policy during this second stage was dependent on the evolving content of agricultural policy and its consequences at the local level.

Although the nature of the interdependent relationship between population policy and rural reform can be sorted out rather easily at the national level, the relationship at the local level was far more intricate. For rural cadres, the call for one-child families in the "Open Letter" coincided with the promulgation of Central
Document Number 75 and the limited sanction of household quotas and household contracts. As both documents filtered down to the local level, the discrimination of priorities that was possible at higher levels became lost in the unremitting demands on local cadres to achieve family planning targets and implement radical changes in the collective agricultural process. Failure at either task would undoubtedly leave them open to criticism, despite the contradictions between the two.

Thus, commune and village leaders were caught in a vise of conflicting goals and processes. Achieving the long-term goals of rural reform demanded strict control of population growth. Yet the short-term impact of the implementation of agricultural reforms threatened fundamentally the ability to achieve the one-child policy. At the same time, local acceptance of the one-child policy was dependent, to a degree, on the creation of new economic opportunities under the rural reforms. Only under conditions of increasing prosperity would peasants relinquish their customary desire for two sons. Faced with the dilemmas arising from this reciprocal dependence, local cadres improvised as necessary.

Part II will examine closely the implementation of population policy in an environment of simultaneous rural reform. After outlining the organizational and
incentive structures designed to ensure the successful implementation of the one-child policy (Chapter 4), we will proceed to a detailed look at the obstacles to implementation at the local level and the pivotal role played by rural cadres faced with this demanding policy agenda.
ENDNOTES


3. This goal was formally announced by Hua Guofeng at the Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress, September 1980. See FBIS, 8 September 1980, L10.


8. See, for example, Mao's famous statement that, "It is a very good thing that China has a big population," in Mao Tse-tung, "The Bankruptcy of the Idealist Conception of History," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Volume 4 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1975), 453.


10. Ibid., 61; Liu, Zhongguode Renkou, 15.


12. It should be noted that, as dramatic as the official figure for 1960 is, a report issued by the Committee on Population and Demography of the National Research Council argues that this figure is greatly understated. Whereas the official figures for mortality in 1960 and 1961 are 25.43 and 14.24, respectively, the committee report puts them at 38.8 and 20.5 per 1000. See Ansley J. Coale, Committee on Population and Demography, Rapid Population Change in China, 1952-1982 (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1984), Report no. 27, p. 69.


15. Ibid., 63.


19. Ibid.

20. Liu, Zhongguode Renkou, 23.


29. See, for example, the 11 August 1979 article by Chen Muhua, quoted by Xinhua, 11 August 1979, in FBIS, 16 August 1979, L15-17.


34. See endnote 32.
36. Ibid.
38. FBIS, 31 January 1979, E10.
39. Jurgen Domes, "Notes on Rural Societal Structures in China," 253-67; see also the example of Hubei Province, Hubei Ribao, 10 January 1978, 3.
40. Beijing Domestic Service, 6 February 1979, in FBIS, 12 February 1979, E15.
41. Ibid.
43. See, for example, Xinhua, 11 August 1979, in FBIS, 16 August 1979, L15-17.
44. Xinhua, 13 July 1979, in FBIS, 13 July 1979, L8.
45. Ibid.
47. Xinhua, 22 December 1979, in FBIS, 28 December 1979, L7-9.
48. Though the quote is from Engels, the "concept" of "two kinds of production" is constantly referred to by China's theorists as Marxist. See, for example, Liang,
"Makesi Zhuyide 'Liangzhong Shengchan' Guan," 35-41.

50. Liu, Song, and Others, China's Population, 13.
51. Ibid., 12.
52. Ibid., 14.
53. Xinhua, 8 June 1979, in FBIS, 13 June 1979.
54. If a couple which had been receiving bonus rewards as a one-child family produced a second child, they were required to pay back the bonus monies, but no direct sanctions were levied. See the Anhui Province regulations, FBIS, 20 April 1979, O1-2.
55. FBIS, 20 April 1979, O1-3; FBIS, 26 June 1979, P2-3.
56. FBIS, 26 June 1979, P2-3.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.; FBIS, 20 April 1979, O1-3.
59. The goals set forth by Hua were an annual population growth rate of 10 per 1000 in 1979, dropping to 5 per 1000 by 1985. FBIS, Supplement no. 15, 2 July 1979, 19.


69. See the Xinhua report on Hua Guofeng's comments on family planning in his address to the NPC, FBIS, 8 September 1980, L10; on the failure to pass a family planning law, see Peng Zhen's report to the NPC, FBIS, Supplement no. 76, 23 September 1980, 35.

70. FBIS, Supplement no. 76, 23 September 1980, 35.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. FBIS, Supplement No. 15, 2 July 1979, 19.

74. This was true as of early 1985.


79. See Endnote 46.


84. While there admittedly is no direct evidence to support the claim that these leaders opposed the policy, and in fact, Hua's statements calling for a "crash drive" to control population growth were very strong, it is clear that the policy did engender much opposition among rural cadres and the military, which were key constituencies for these leaders. That opposition may have contributed to the reluctance of these leaders to uniformly impose the one-child limit in the rural sector through passage of a family planning law.


87. Ibid.

88. See, for example, FBIS, 27 June 1980, Q1; FBIS, 25 March 1980, Q1.
89. Reports on study sessions were numerous after September 25. See, for example, Jilin Provincial Service, 1 October 1980, in FBIS, 2 October 1980, S1; Xinhua, 2 October 1980, in FBIS, 3 October 1980, L9; Xinhua, 25 October 1980, in FBIS, 28 October 1980, L6-7; Commentator, "Take Practical Action to Actively Implement the 'Open Letter'," Sichuan Ribao, 17 October 1980, in FBIS, 5 November 1980, Q3-5.

90. FBIS, 16 October 1980, L3-4.


100. Ibid., 2.

101. Ibid., 3.

102. Ibid., 3.

104. Ibid., L18.

105. Ibid., L19.


108. Ibid.


113. See Chapter 2, pp. 87-95.


115. Ibid., P1.


117. Ibid., 189.

118. Ibid.


121. Ibid.


123. Ibid.


128. Ibid.

129. Ibid.


134. Ibid.

135. Ibid.

136. Ibid.

138. Ibid., K5-6.
139. Ibid., K5.
141. FBIS, 15 March 1982, K5.
144. FBIS, 15 March 1982, K3.
148. Ibid.
149. Ibid.


161. Lu Junqing, "Xuexi Zhibiao, Tan Woshengde Ertai Zhengce" (Study the Directives, Discuss Our Province's Policy on Second Births), Renkouxue Kan, 1982, no. 4: 36.

162. Ibid.


166. Ibid.


169. Shuangyang County Party Committee, Shuangyang County Government, "Guanqie 'San wei Zhu' Fangzhen, Kaizhan Chung 'San Wu' Jingsai" (Carry Out the 'Three Mains' Policy, Initiate the 'Three Withouts' Competition), Renkouxue Kan, 1983, no. 5: 14.


175. Ibid.

176. Ibid.


178. Interview File, 1984.6.9, p. 4.


181. Ibid.

182. Ibid.

183. Ibid. For a discussion of the problem of cadre excesses and use of coercion to enforce policy, see Chapter 5.

184. Ibid.

Chapter 4. Organizational and Incentive Structures for Implementing the "One-Child-Per-Couple" Policy

I. Introduction

In preceding chapters, the economic, administrative and population policies that together constitute China's rural reform program have been examined. The simultaneous pursuit of these reforms, with their multiple and sometimes contradictory goals, present local cadres with a complex policy implementation problem, a problem further complicated by the variable peasant response to specific reforms. China's peasants have been particularly resistant to the population policy, with its strict limitations on household size.

This regulatory policy, stressing as it does controlled uniformity in child-bearing behavior, stands in sharp contrast to the general thrust of the economic and administrative reforms. In those areas, the watchwords have been decentralization of decision-making and reduction of administrative oversight. Diversification of households, groups, teams and brigades based on local conditions
(yin di zhi yi) has been encouraged, and those who have attempted to impede such changes have been criticized. As we have seen, the evolutionary implementation of these programs resulted in the disruption of local-level leadership, and had an impact on the administration, funding and maintenance of collective social services such as health care plans, locally-run classrooms, and welfare support systems. In short, the combination of 1) increased local-level autonomy, extending to the household in many decision areas, 2) reduced bureaucratic supervision and 3) the administrative uncertainty to which structural changes gave rise, created a context for the enforcement of population control which was hardly conducive to smooth implementation.

The attempt to enforce family planning, as opposed to advocating it, is never an easy task. To attempt to enforce a policy of "one-child-per-couple" increases geometrically the scope of the problem. To make this effort at strict control in the midst of a reform effort which otherwise decreases the extent of governmental impositions, regulations, and controls is to court disaster. Nevertheless, this is the course China's leaders have chosen, since in their view the alternative is certain disaster in the form of hundreds of millions of additional people consuming scarce national resources,
thereby impeding national development goals.

How has the Chinese leadership chosen to implement this policy? To a degree, the choice of strategies has been constrained by the characteristics of the policy and regime goals. The sustained nature of this program has made the mass campaign strategy inappropriate, although more limited mobilizations have been utilized. Similarly, pure coercion has been rejected as far too costly -- economically, politically, and organizationally -- given that the target population is so large, the time frame so extended, and the incompatibility of this technique and other policy objectives. What has evolved instead is a strategy of regularized, decentralized administration, punctuated by periods of mobilization and the veiled use of economic, and sometimes physical coercion. This strategy has been augmented by a highly touted policy technique in post-Mao China, offering economic incentives for compliance.

How does this strategy translate into a structure of administration capable of penetrating into rural households? This chapter will seek to answer this question by examining 1) the organizational structure and bureaucracy for family planning, and 2) the set of incentives, positive and negative, designed to increase compliance. We will look in detail at the case of Hubei Province, tracing the
family planning structure from province to production team, and outlining the characteristics and responsibilities of staffers at each level. We will also examine the budgetary constraints within which the bureaucracy must operate. Finally, we will look closely at the family planning regulations of Hubei Province and the capacity of the bureaucracy to ensure enforcement.

II. The Family Planning Organization: Structure and Staff

To understand the process of implementing population policy at the commune level and below, it is necessary to first set forth the array of organs and actors involved in that process. Population policy is administered through a functional hierarchy that parallels the governmental structure. The national-level organization which oversees family planning work is the State Family Planning Commission, formally established in 1981. The commission succeeds the State Council Leading Group for Family Planning, formerly headed by Vice-Premier Chen Muhua. Headed in 1982-83 by Qian Xinzhong, former Minister of Public Health, and currently by Wang Wei, this commission is the leading body for formulating policies and regulations. It oversees the work of the State Council Office of Family Planning, which presumably handles
administrative affairs and prepares briefings, statistical materials, and other documents for the commission members. Below this office, every level of governmental administration has a Family Planning Commission (jihua shengyu weiyuanhui) composed of leading government and Party officials, and a Family Planning Office (bangongshi). As at the national level, the commissions succeeded former Family Planning Small Groups under the provisions of Central Document Number 37 of 1982. Beneath the county or district level, communes and townships designate one or more cadres who serve to extend the family planning organization to the local level. Beneath them, women's leaders in brigades and teams are the organizational links to villages and households.

Figure 1 outlines the current structure of the Family Planning bureaucracy from national to local levels for the case of Hua Shan Township (Commune). In this case, between the provincial and township levels, there are two additional administrative layers -- the Wuhan Municipality office and the Hong Shan District (qu) office. For communes outside Wuhan Municipality, the administrative levels are the prefectural (digu) and county (xian) offices.

Below we shall examine in detail the internal structure of the family planning bureaucracy at the
Figure 1. Administrative Organization for Family Planning: The Case of Hubei Province, Hua Shan Township
Hubei provincial level and below. Information cited was obtained through a series of interviews with family planning cadres at every administrative level (with the exception of the prefecture) during three time periods — March-May 1982, October-December 1982, and February-June 1984.

A. Hubei Province. Between 1973 and 1982, family planning work in Hubei Province was conducted by the Provincial Leading Small Group and People's Government Office of Family Planning. In 1982, the Family Planning Commission was established, under the direction of Deputy-Governor Liang Zixiu. According to Wuhan Municipal Family Planning Commission cadres, Liang delegates leadership responsibility to the first Party secretary of Yunyang Prefecture. Far from indicating a lack of interest on the part of Liang, these cadres insist that in delegating the task to someone in such a high position who could devote close attention to the work, Liang was acknowledging the importance of family planning work.

Currently, the provincial Family Planning Commission is divided into three departments (chu), each of which is further divided into sections (ke). Overseeing the work are four directors, one for each division and one
chief director (zheng zhuren) with overall responsibility.
Total personnel numbers 47.

The three departments are: 1) the secretarial
department (mishu); 2) the propaganda and education de­
partment (xuanchuan jiaoyu); and 3) the business
department (yewu). The largest is the secretarial
department, with two department heads, two section chiefs,
and a total staff size of 23. The first section is
responsible for administrative affairs (xingzheng shiwu),
including personnel and finance. The second section
(wenshi) is responsible for general correspondence and
responding to letters from individuals concerning family
planning work. Staff in this section investigate any
unusual cases or complaints and seek to resolve the
problem.

The second department, with a staff size of 13, is
the propaganda and education department. Beneath the
department head are three section chiefs in charge of:
1) propaganda, 2) cadre training, and 3) propaganda
popularization and management. The propaganda section
develops and distributes propaganda materials for family
planning, whereas the propaganda popularization and
management section focuses on the technical aspects of
preparing and disseminating these materials, and
coordinating with the media. The cadre training section
is responsible for the education of family planning cadres in population policy and theory. This can be done through dissemination of educational materials, the convening of local study sessions or meetings, or by arranging for extended instruction for family planning cadres and those in related areas.

The third department, the business department, has two sections. The first, for population forecasting (yuce), statistics and plans (renkou guihua), is responsible for disseminating population goals and gathering statistics to general annual provincial reports. The second section, for scientific research and technology (keyan jishu), is responsible for the supply and distribution of birth control products and technical research in this area. It is also responsible for quality control management (yozhi guanli) in birth control supplies. Apart from the section tasks noted thus far, this section is also responsible for investigations of family planning work and external affairs. Given the range of duties covered, it is surprising that total personnel, including the department head and two section heads, number only seven.

According to officials at this office, reforms were to be instituted in the second half of 1984 that would change the office structure. The new structure would include: 1) an office (bangongshi); 2) the propaganda
department; 3) a planning and finance department; 4) a scientific and technical department; 5) a propaganda guidance center (xuanchuan zhidaozhongxin). The office is also scheduled for a personnel increase, with an upper limit of eighty.

Beneath the provincial level are eight prefectures and six municipalities. No interviews were conducted at the prefectural level, and thus, specific information about the organization and staffing of offices at that level is unavailable. However, prefectures exist at an administrative level equivalent to Wuhan Municipality and, according to municipal family planning officials, prefectural bodies are organized in much the same way as the municipal office, described in detail below.

B. Wuhan Municipality. The history of Wuhan's family planning structure is similar to that outlined above. In 1973 a Leading Small Group and a Family Planning Office were established. The Leading Small Group had thirteen representatives drawn from relevant government bureaus such as health, commerce, civil affairs and public security, as well as Party and mass organizations such as the Peasants' Association, Youth League, and the Women's Federation. Group leader was Deng Gen, brother of Deng Xiaoping, then deputy mayor of Wuhan and currently
an adviser to the Provincial Party Committee. Two deputy
group leaders were from the Health Bureau and Wuhan's
Number Two Hospital. Functions of this group were listed
as: 1) to implement national policy and set local guide-
lines; 2) to research and investigate conditions at lower
levels, and 3) to coordinate the activities of relevant
departments.

Below the Leading Small Group was the Family Planning
Office, established in 1973 within the provincial Health
Bureau as called for in Central Document Number 36 of that
year. The office was given the status of a section,
with a section chief, but it was physically located within
the section for women and children (fuyou ke). Personnel
totalled five, plus two staffers for the section for
women and children. Office tasks were to: 1) give
advice and carry out research (canmo); 2) engage in
propaganda/education work; 3) gather and analyze data and
statistics on population and family planning; 4) train
cadres at all levels (peixun rencai).

In 1982, under the guidelines of Central Document
No. 82, the Family Planning Commission was created and
elevated in status to a high-level office (gao banji)
equivalent to a provincial bureau. As of June 1984,
the commission had a staff of 28, with a director and
three deputies, but changes were expected to result from
the Wuhan Municipal reforms underway at that time.

In June 1984, the Wuhan commission consisted of a Party group and four sections: 1) the secretarial office (mishu shi); 2) the propaganda and education section; 3) the business section; 4) the technology section. The Party group was undergoing change at the time interviews were conducted. The long-term Party group leader is now formally retired, but still works in the office as an adviser (guwen) and participates in meetings. In addition to this person, the Party group included a deputy secretary and three other members, whose tasks included the conduct of political work, organization and propaganda, and oversight of the office cadre responsibility system.

The secretarial office has a staff of ten, including two administrative cadres, a secretary, one in charge of personnel, documents (wenjian) and organizational security, one in charge of mail and the conduct of investigations deriving from complaints therein, a typist and a driver. This office handles all administrative and personnel matters and manages the budget.

The business section is composed of two section heads and three staff members. Its functions were identified as: 1) formulating the area population plan; 2) organizing and managing the implementation of that plan; 3) gathering population statistics; 4) carrying out policy
investigations (zhengce diaocha) and undertaking research. Of the three staff members, two are responsible for statistical work. They compile monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports based on the findings of lower levels and their own research. The third staffer works primarily on managing and implementing annual population plans. Part of this job is to issue cards to all child-bearing age women which note basic information about each woman's child-bearing status, and to keep the cards updated.

The propaganda and education section has three section leaders and two staff members, for a total of five. Tasks include: 1) research on population theory, statistics and other related areas; 2) training cadres down to the township level in semi-annual sessions; 3) the production and distribution of propaganda and education materials; and 4) coordination with media, social scientists, and others to produce materials and conduct educational activities.

The technology section has only a section leader and one assistant. Its function is to oversee the distribution of birth control supplies and insure adequate supplies through the development of annual plans. This section is also responsible for educational activities which explain the necessity for birth control, the range of methods available, and the proper use of different
forms of birth control. This section must also oversee other aspects of "technical policy," such as monitoring the performance of doctors and medics who dispense birth control supplies and conduct medical examinations and birth control procedures.

With this staff of 28, the Wuhan Family Planning Commission administers six city districts, three suburban districts (one rural), and four counties, covering a total population size of 5,948,000 and a geographic area of over 8000 square kilometers. Two counties, Huangpi and Xinzhou, were brought under the jurisdiction of Wuhan Municipality in early 1984. Prior to that time, Wuhan's population was approximately two-thirds urban and one-third rural. With the addition of the two counties, the population is now divided roughly equally between rural and urban areas. Table 5 lists the population size for each county and district.

C. The District and County levels. As noted above, within the jurisdiction of Wuhan Municipality are four counties and three suburban districts. Outside Wuhan Municipality, counties are subordinate to prefectural administrations. Below, we examine this level of administration by examining the organization of the family planning offices for Hong Shan District and four counties.
under prefectural jurisdiction. Data on these units was obtained from interviews with family planning cadres from each administrative unit.

Table 5.
Population of Wuhan Municipality by County and District, 1984 (estimates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Inner City Districts:</td>
<td>2,000,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiang An</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiang Han</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qiao Kou</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanyang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuchang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qingshan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Suburban Districts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Shan</td>
<td>365,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong Xi Hu</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han Nan</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Counties:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuchang</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanyang</td>
<td>460,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huangpi</td>
<td>960,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinzhou</td>
<td>650,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Hong Shan District office was established in 1979. Prior to that time, the District Government, the Health Bureau, and the Office of Women and Children (fuyou suo) jointly managed family planning work. In 1982, the office had only six people to oversee an area with a
population size of 364,200, including more than 63,400 child-bearing age couples (20 to 49 years of age). The staff positions were as follows: director, vice-director, two staff members in charge of propaganda and business (yewu), and two staffers in charge of "daily affairs" (richang shiwu). In June of 1984, the staff size had expanded to nine, with the addition of a typist, an office worker and a driver. In addition, the two "daily affairs" staffers were described as composing a "materials group" (ziliao zu) responsible for work arrangements and investigations. The staff member in charge of business was now identified as a statistician, responsible for compiling statistics from below and generating district reports.

With its current staff size, the Hong Shan office ranks as a medium-size office at this level. Among other district/county units, staff size ranges from five to thirteen.

Parallel to Hong Shan District but outside the jurisdiction of Wuhan are the four county-level offices described below. The first, Shishou County, has a Family Planning Leading Small Group of eleven people. The group discusses major policy issues and sets local regulations.

The County Family Planning Commission is divided into two sections (gu) and one station (zhan). The business section has a section head and two staff members.
This group is responsible for technical work, namely, the provision of birth control supplies, and budget and financial work. The secretarial section has a section head and one assistant in charge of investigations, documents, and gathering and reporting statistics. The propaganda station also has a head and one assistant and is responsible for developing and disseminating propaganda materials. The office has three directors, one of which is female.

Qiqun County also has a Family Planning Leading Small Group, but it is relatively inactive. They occasionally meet to discuss major work tasks, such as a new five-year plan. The Family Planning Commission has a staff of fifteen, with a chief director and three additional directors, each of whom oversee an office section. The first, the personnel and secretarial section (renshi mishu gu), has two accountants and one typist. The second section is for propaganda and has five staffers. Thirdly, the business section has a statistician, a doctor, and a third staff member.

The third case, Songsi County, has a large and active Leading Small Group for Family Planning. With over thirty members, this group meets twice annually, at the beginning and end of each year. Additionally, there are periodic meetings of the office staff and the senior
cadres on the leading group — the Party secretary, the county magistrate (xianzhang) and the deputy county magistrate. These meetings occur seven or eight times a year to hear reports from office personnel on progress toward county family planning goals, or to report on the substance and proceedings of higher level meetings. The Family Planning Commission in Songsi County has nine people. The director oversees the work of the propaganda station and its three staff members, while the deputy director is responsible for the secretarial and business sections, with one and three staffers, respectively.

Finally, Jianli County also has a Leading Small Group composed of twelve people. The group head, also the county Party secretary, is described as old, respected, and attentive to family planning work. The group meets two or three times a year with full membership. Smaller groups meet more often as needed. The Family Planning Commission has ten staff members, including three deputy directors. The director here is the county magistrate, and not counted in the total staff size. The office is divided into two sections and a station. The secretarial section has three staff members, the finance section has two, and the propaganda station also has two.

Thus, with the exception of the continued existence of Family Planning Leading Small Groups, the four county
family planning structures closely resemble that of Hong Shan District. Before moving to the commune/township level, however, it is useful to examine an intermediate administrative level present in the four county cases. Each county is further divided into towns (zhen) and districts (qu), below which are neighborhoods and communes. With the exception of Qichun County, administrative districts have Leading Small Groups and Family Planning Offices (bangongshi). Typically, the Small Groups number three to five people, including a deputy district secretary, deputy district head, and one or more family planning cadres (zhuanzhi ganbu). Qichun County assigns one full-time administrative cadre to oversee family planning work at the district level, but no office exists.

D. Commune/Township Level. Below the district or county level, implementation of family planning policy is the burden primarily of women's leaders at all levels -- commune, brigade and team. At Hua Shan, there were two commune-level cadres directly involved with family planning prior to 1984, the head of the Women's Federation and a staff worker (gangshi). Both women started their jobs in January 1981. Prior to that time, the position of staff worker did not exist.
Both women have job histories that include tenures as brigade Youth League secretary and brigade deputy Party secretary. These women have one and two children, respectively.

With the switch to Hua Shan Township (xiang) in 1984, family planning work was shifted from the Party to the Township Government. Under the direction of the only female deputy township head, the family planning cadre continued in her job. The Women's Federation director, of course, was unaffected by the reform. Health and family planning became one of the three work units under the township government. With only two cadres, it was also the smallest.

In addition to these cadres who directly administer population policy, the commune director (or township head) and Party secretary also play a role. These leaders, particularly the Party secretary, have broad oversight duties in all policy areas. Besides being accountable for the results of population control efforts in the commune, they play an active role by attending meetings on family planning work. Additionally, they allocate and manage locally-generated funds targeted for population control work.
E. Brigade and Team levels. Beneath the commune level are brigade and team cadres. Brigade organization, like the levels above it, consists of both a governmental and Party apparatus. At this level, however, the lines of distinction become quite blurred, a problem which the 1984 reforms did not remedy. In Hua Shan Commune, it was repeatedly asserted that there were two separate brigade organizations -- the Administrative Committee and the Party Committee. Although they maintained two separate heads, the evidence suggests that the Party Committee was actually a subsection of the membership of the Administrative Committee.

Typically, the Brigade Administrative Committee consisted of a brigade leader, three deputy leaders, and one to four additional committee members. All brigade leaders were male, as were most deputies and committee members. However, each committee had a female deputy in charge of women's affairs (funu duizhang) whose major task was to manage family planning work.

The commune reform in 1984 sought to redress this problem by creating three separate village-level committees -- the Villagers' Committee, the Cooperative Economic Management Committee, and the Party Committee. As outlined in Chapter 2, however, the desire to keep the number of cadres to a minimum made overlapping
membership inevitable. In addition, some brigades failed to even make the cosmetic effort to create separate economic committees. Nor was the proposed subcommittee for education, health and family planning taken very seriously. This meant that family planning work continued to be the charge of the brigade women's leader, who now received the title of village deputy head for women's work. Invariably, these women were Party members and frequently members of the village Party committee.

Because these female cadres play such a crucial role in the implementation of population policy, it is useful to study their personal characteristics closely. Table 6 lists the women's leaders of all nineteen brigades as of April 1982, their age, educational level, personal background, and length of time on the job, along with some composite characteristics. As can be seen, the average age of brigade women's leaders is 38, with a median age of 35. On average, each has a middle school education and typically served as a team women's leader prior to her current job. In addition, the average length of job service was five years, beginning in 1977.

Just as important is the variance in personal data. First, with ages ranging from 55 to 30, individuals at each extreme may have very different perspectives on
Table 6.
Personal Data on Brigade Women's Leaders in Hua Shan Commune

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brigade</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began brigade women's leader job</th>
<th>Prior work experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Middle a</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Commune member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Commune member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Primary b</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Brigade administrative committee member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Commune member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Team Women's Congress head d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>pre-1975</td>
<td>Team women's cadre e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Brigade orchard manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Senior Middle c</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Team technician and women's leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Team women's leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 38 Primary/Middle 1977

Team women's leader or some cadre experience

a chu zhong, junior middle school
b xiao xue, primary school
c gao zhong, senior middle school
d xiao dui funu daibiaohui juren
e xiao dui funu ganbu
the necessity of limiting couples to a single child. If so, such attitudes could well carry over into the conduct of family planning work, which requires extensive effort on the part of these women.

Second, there is a wide range of variation with respect to educational levels, with two high school graduates, nine middle school graduates, and eight with only an elementary school education. This difference in educational levels could be another important factor affecting family planning work in a number of ways, such as the dissemination of technical information on birth control methods and procedures and the maintenance of accurate records for a variety of family planning targets.

Third, there is a range of variation in the number of years women's leaders have been in the job, spanning three major shifts in population policy: 1) the pre-1978 emphasis on birth control without governmentally imposed limits on family size; 2) the 1978-79 shift to encouraging only one child, accepting two, and discouraging three; 3) the post-1979 limitation of one child per couple. Cadres on the job before 1978 may have more reservations and less enthusiasm for the strict one-child policy than those who began in 1980 after the policy was put into force.
Besides the brigade women's leaders, the brigade Party secretaries and directors also play a role in family planning. On occasion, these cadres attend family planning meetings, or accompany brigade women's leaders on house calls to those in violation of the brigade population plan. More importantly, they make decisions on how to enforce family planning policy within their brigade jurisdictions and share the praise or criticism, often accompanied by rewards or penalties, for brigade performance.

Below the brigade lies the most basic level of organization for family planning, the production team. Unlike the brigade and commune levels, however, teams generally serve as enforcers of regulations set at higher levels. Production teams in Hua Shan typically have three administrative cadres (five if the team is quite large), one of whom is the team women's leader. Of Hua Shan's nineteen brigades, information is available about team women's leaders in eight of those brigades. As shown in Table 7, information for four brigades is based on 1982 interviews, while data on the remaining four brigades was obtained in 1984. Though this lapse in time could introduce bias into the findings, a close look at individual brigade average or median characteristics, as well as the composite data on the two sets of brigades
Table 7.
**Personal Data on Team Women's Leaders in Hua Shan Commune**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Averages:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Junior Primary*</td>
<td>1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Averages:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Middle/primary</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team #</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Year began TWL job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 36 Middle 1981

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Senior primary</td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Averages: 40.5 Middle 1975

---

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 38 Middle/Primary 1979
Table 7. (continued)

### Hua Shan Brigade (1982)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1967</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 38 Primary 1974/5

### Hong Yan Brigade (1982)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 30 1979
Table 7. (continued)

Dong Gang Brigade (1984)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Year began TWL job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages:

- Age: 45 Primary: 1975

*Junior primary indicated approximately three years of education.

shows no consistent pattern of variation. Moreover, all team women's leaders listed in the 1984 group began their jobs in 1982 or earlier, eliminating the possibility that rural reforms since 1982 have substantially altered the team-level leadership composition in these areas.

Based on this limited sample, the composite characteristics of a team women's leader can be drawn. Her average age is 38, also the median age. She has a primary school education and began her job in 1976. Compared to the composite characteristics on brigade women's leaders, average age is the same, but the median age is three years higher. Team women's leaders are
slightly less well educated, but they have been on the job slightly longer than their brigade-level counterparts.

Table 8 looks more closely at age and educational levels. A comparison of the age distribution of brigade and team women's leaders shows that while average age is the same, brigade women's leaders are relatively younger, with 68% below 40, compared to 58% for team women's leaders. At the same time, 10% of team women's leaders are between the ages of 20 and 29, but no brigade women's leaders are under 30. Fully 68% of all brigade women's leaders are between the ages of 30 and 39, compared to 48% of team women's leaders. Finally, 32% of brigade women's leaders are 40 or above, compared to 42% of team women's leaders.

This age distribution pattern can be explained partially by recruitment patterns for the two age groups. Promising young, female middle school graduates tend to be recruited for the job of team women's leader relatively early, often starting their job between the ages of 20 and 25. Brigade women's leaders, frequently recruited from the ranks of team women's leaders, tend to begin their jobs between the ages of 26 and 35. Of the eleven brigade women's leaders in Table 6 who held the post of team women's leader prior to their promotion, only two began their job as brigade women's leader after the age of 35.
Table 8.

A Comparison of Personal Characteristics for a Sample of Brigade Women's Leaders and Team Women's Leaders in Hua Shan Commune

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age 20-29</th>
<th>Age 30-39</th>
<th>Age 40-49</th>
<th>Education Senior</th>
<th>Education Junior</th>
<th>Education Primary</th>
<th>Length of Service (year began)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brigade Women's Leaders</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>0% 2% 63% 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Women's Leaders</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>13% 15% 46% 26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With respect to education, brigade women's leaders are slightly better educated than team women's leaders, who have no senior middle school graduates among them. Of brigade women's leaders 52% have at least a junior middle school education, compared to 46% of team women's leaders. Similarly, 54% of team women's leaders have only a primary school education, compared to 47% of brigade women's leaders. Nevertheless, this difference remains small, and demonstrates that thus far educational attainment has not been an important selection criterion for a brigade women's leader.

Finally, team women's leaders have slightly longer job tenures, with 28% on the job prior to 1970 as compared to only 2% of brigade women's leaders. Length of service could be an important factor in the implementation of family planning in either of two contradictory ways. On the one hand, those who have served the longest may be the most familiar with the duties the post requires, and most knowledgeable in their jobs. On the other hand, team women's leaders who serve for long periods may be subject to the phenomenon of cooption -- that is, becoming so sympathetic to the problems and needs of those they serve that they become defenders of their constituents, not enforcers. Team women's leaders are women who must supervise family, friends and neighbors
in their own villages. Serving in the dual roles of co-worker and regulator may make enforcement especially difficult, particularly when enforcement means abortion.

The team leader is also involved in family planning in the village, although less so than his brigade-level counterpart. The team leader shares responsibility with the team women's leader for the results of family planning efforts. He is also sometimes called upon to assist the team women's leader in house calls on women with unplanned pregnancies to persuade them to abort. Unlike the brigade cadre, however, the team leader is not a policy-maker. Family planning guidelines are set at the commune or brigade levels. Team cadres do have substantial influence over the enforcement of regulations, however, particularly the imposition of economic sanctions.

Another group of actors are the technical cadres at the commune and brigade levels. Altogether, there are 54 barefoot doctors spread among two commune clinics, and the brigade health stations. Of these, 23 have passed qualifying exams to achieve the rank of "country doctor." These individuals form a cadre which trains brigade and team women's leaders in the use of various forms of birth control devices and offers technical guidance. It is still the women's leaders, however, who actually carry out the routine family planning work of
supplying contraceptives and monitoring pregnancies. Commune clinic personnel are responsible only for providing the more technical medical services, namely: 1) guidance as to the most appropriate form of birth control for those with special conditions; 2) conducting medical contraceptives procedures — operations, abortions, insertion of intrauterine devices (IUD); and 3) semi-annual checkups for IUD wearers.

III. Budgeting for Family Planning: The Case of Hubei

The operation of the multi-tier family planning bureaucracy is constrained by a limited budget. According to family planning officials at all levels, the monies budgeted under the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981-85) were inadequate to cover the cost of this work during a period of peak organizational activity. As a result, governmental finance departments were relied upon to bridge the gap between budgeted funds and actual outlays.

The budget for the provincial office totals almost 15,000,000 yuan annually. Of this amount, 800,000 yuan (5%) is retained by the provincial office for the conduct of activities, meetings and other family planning work at the provincial level. Another 3,600,000 yuan (24%) is distributed to lower level offices solely to cover the
cost of birth control supplies of all types. The great bulk of the total, approximately 10,500,000 yuan, is distributed to prefectural and municipal offices as their annual budget. These monies must cover not only the cost of all family planning activities at the lower levels, but also salaries, housing and welfare benefits for cadres at each level. According to provincial officials, the 800,000 yuan provincial-level fund is adequate to cover expenses, but the monies for lower-level units are insufficient. With eight prefectures and six municipalities, the average budget for this level is only 750,000 yuan annually.

Wuhan Municipality receives 600,000 yuan, somewhat less than this average. According to municipal officials, budgetary items include propaganda/education work, cadre training classes, scientific research, funds for medical procedures (shoushu jingfei), and lower-level cadre salaries and support. The last item consumed fifty percent of the total budget. The municipal family planning commission director, too, complained of the inadequacy of this budget, and noted that shortfalls had to be made up by the municipal finance office. To demonstrate the extent of the problem, the official noted that in 1983, 1,000,000 yuan was spent on medical procedures alone, due to the great upsurge in the number
of sterilizations performed that year. Finally, the
director pointed out that the budget for Chongqing was
3,000,000 yuan annually, and that Wuhan's large popu-
lation size required a larger budget. She planned to
ask for a budget of 2,000,000 yuan under the next five-
year plan.

From the municipal budget, 40,000 yuan is apportioned
to Hong Shan District. Here budgetary expenses are divided
into four areas. First, funds for propaganda take one-
fourth of the budget. Second, study expenses (xuexi fei)
account for ten percent. This item includes: 1) study
classes organized by the propaganda department concerning
population theory or related topics; 2) lectures by
demographers or other experts to district or lower-level
officials, or 3) training classes for cadres. As at the
municipal level, 50% of the budget is distributed to
lower levels for salaries, bonuses, and other family
planning work. As part of this amount, 1000 yuan is
allotted to each unit to be used for salaries or other
related work, at the discretion of each local unit. The
remaining 15% of the budget is allocated for living
subsidies and "errand expenses" (chaishi fei). These
funds are used by district office personnel to subsidize
expenses when they go on field assignments and to pay for
transportation costs. The living expense is set at 9 yuan
According to district officials, 40,000 yuan has been the annual budget since 1979, and each year expenses have exceeded the budget by several thousand yuan. Additional funds are drawn from the finance department. Here, too, they hope to get higher funding levels under the new budget.

Outside Wuhan Municipality, county-level units also face financial difficulties. County-level officials revealed that since 1980 their budgetary allotment has been based on a per capita allotment of .22 yuan. Thus, the allotment for Songsi County, with a population of 837,400, was 210,000 yuan in 1983. However, actual expenses totalled 280,000 yuan, exceeding the budget by one-third. At this level, costs for administration, meetings, cadre salaries, training and propaganda activities were said to consume about 30% of the budget. The remaining 70% is spent on birth control procedures of various types. It is at this level that costs for all local medical bills are redeemed by districts or commune/township hospitals and clinics. Table 9 lists the fee schedule for the various procedures performed at the local levels. By far the most expensive is the tubal ligation.
Table 9.

Fee Schedule for Various Birth Control Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Fee (in yuan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IUD Insertion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUD Removal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUD Examination (early)</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induced Abortion (early)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induced Abortion (late)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubal Ligation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasectomy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the commune level, Hua Shan received an allotment of 1000 yuan in 1983. This amount was used primarily for the salary of the full-time family planning cadre, who earns 720 yuan a year. An additional 148 yuan was set aside for cadre bonuses. The remainder presumably was used for other family planning activities. The bulk of commune-level funds came from collective revenues, not the state. In 1983, these funds included 20,000 yuan for rewards and gifts to only children and their parents, plus 3000-4000 yuan for medical procedures or living subsidies for lost work time when such procedures are performed. Beyond this amount, each of the 240 single children of parents who work in commune-run units or enterprises received 150 yuan, for a total of 36,000 yuan. Thus, although state funds cover salaries and the cost of
birth control supplies and procedures, local-level units still bear a financial burden to implement the family planning regulations.

Finally, brigades also exceed their budget for family planning. In one brigade, the 1983 budget was 2000 yuan, but the brigade actually spend 10,000 yuan. Of this, 3120 yuan was spent on health supplements for the 65 single-child households, exceeding the budget by 56% for this regular item alone. In addition, almost 6000 yuan was spent on sterilizations, 63 of which were performed in the second half of 1983. Clearly, brigades, like higher-level units, have no budgetary leeway for such unanticipated expenditures. In this case, the deficit was covered by the brigade welfare fund.

In sum, the family planning offices at every level operate in a state of budgetary scarcity. Though their plight may have been unusually exacerbated by the 1983 push for sterilizations among those under forty with two or more children, the basic shortage of funds is not the result of transitory expenditures. In the case of Hubei, and presumably elsewhere, the allocation of funds under the Sixth Five-Year Plan fell far short of the costs of increasing the percentage of one-child households. Given the heavy responsibility and pressure on family planning cadres to achieve state goals during this period, budgetary
constraints and low salary levels may have affected morale throughout the bureaucracy.

IV. Functions of the Family Planning Bureaucracy

The implementation of population policy entails a number of constituent tasks -- supply and distribution of contraceptives, maintenance of a technical cadre responsible for births and contraceptive procedures, and regulation and oversight of child-bearing age couples. Each of these functions must be performed at each level of the system, with more tasks falling to fewer and fewer staffers as one moves toward the bottom of the family planning hierarchy. As we have seen, local cadres are burdened with a heavy task load across policy sectors, since functionally specialized bureaus above eventually converge at the commune, brigade and team levels. The result is that local cadres face multiple demands on their time and energies, demands which frequently outstrip their physical or organizational capacities. Generally, when choices about priorities must be made, production-related tasks rank first, with social policy coming in a distant second.
Family planning poses a particular problem for local cadres because it is low on their scale of priorities but a high priority national-level item. Moreover, it requires the expenditure of time and energy without substantial remuneration for the effort. This imbalance between effort and reward becomes most acute at the brigade and team levels, where cadres have the thankless task of compelling child-bearing age women who are neighbors, friends or relatives to forego all but one child. Below, we examine the responsibilities which fall to cadres at different levels of the administrative system. We take this perspective, rather than the vertical tracking of each task through multiple administrative layers, in order to understand the full range of responsibilities at each level for each cadre, and the dilemmas posed to local cadres by this burden.

At the provincial level, a staff of 47 oversee and coordinate all areas of family planning work. Duties at this level fall broadly into five categories: 1) propaganda and education; 2) coordination with units above and below through meetings and conferences; 3) conducting on-site investigations of family planning work at the local level; 4) coordinating the supply and distribution of birth control supplies; and 5) compiling statistical reports and records on family planning work.
First, the provincial office is responsible for coordinating major propaganda and educational activities. Such activities can range from mass meetings and ceremonies for model family planning cadres or parents to media statements and public billboards. In addition, provincial officials provide educational opportunities for lower-level cadres on specific areas of family planning work. Finally, perhaps the most extensive activity in this area occurs during Family Planning Propaganda Month, held prior to Spring Festival each year. In 1983, the family planning month received enormous publicity, as provinces held mass meetings and sent out work teams to provide education through plays and films, and medical teams to give lectures and conduct birth control procedures.

Second, provincial officials meet regularly with national-level officials and lower-level units. Each year there is a regular meeting (lihui) at the national level attended by representatives at the provincial level. In addition, special meetings may be called to discuss specific work. At the provincial level, a family planning work conference is held annually during the first or second quarter of the year. Such a meeting was scheduled for Hubei on June 10, 1984. Approximately 200-300 people attend the work conferences, representing...
prefectural, municipal and county-level offices. The purpose is to review 1983's achievements and plan for 1985. The conference typically lasts one week, after which county and municipal officials convene conferences at lower levels. In addition to this annual meeting, informal meetings (zuotanhui) or special topic meetings are sometimes called to discuss policy or some specific aspect of family planning work. On such occasions, cadres directly responsible for that type of work would be invited to attend.

The third task of provincial cadres is to conduct investigations on local-level work. According to Hubei officials, they do not set a specific number of general investigations to be conducted each year, but it ranges from two to four. With respect to statistical reporting, however, two investigations are undertaken each year, covering four municipal neighborhoods and thirty-eight brigades.

The fourth task of the provincial office is to oversee the supply and distribution of contraceptives. The primary job here is to gather reports from lower levels concerning anticipated need for the coming year. On the basis of these requests, the provincial office prepares a report to be submitted to the State Family Planning Commission. In turn, the State Family Planning
Commission coordinates with the State Pharmaceutical Bureau (yiyao zongju) to obtain needed supplies. The Pharmaceutical Bureau then coordinates the production and allocation of needed supplies through the network of pharmaceutical companies at the provincial, municipal and county levels.

The fifth responsibility of the provincial office, and one of the most important, is gathering statistical materials and preparing reports on population statistics. Units beneath the provincial level must compile reports on all major indicators — births, deaths, population growth rates, number of sterilizations, abortions, numbers of first, second or third births, et cetera — and submit them to the provincial family planning commission prior to the fifteenth of each month. They also submit seasonal reports, due by the fifteenth of the first month of each season. In turn, the provincial Family Planning Commission prepares seasonal and mid-year reports to be sent to the national office. Seasonal reports are sent up by the fifteenth of the first month of each season; mid-year reports are due by July 15. As we shall see, this entire reporting system begins at the village level with the reports submitted by rural women's leaders.

The duties of municipal cadres parallel those at the provincial level. Propaganda and educational activities at this level differ little from those at other levels.
However, municipal officials place substantial emphasis on cadre training and education. For example, in 1984 the Wuhan office sponsored a training class at Wuhan University for county-level family planning officials during the semester from February-July 1984. This class of more than fifty cadres was taught by specialists in the university population research group, and cadres were housed at the university.

To coordinate with other units, the Municipal Family Planning Commission participates in, or convenes different types of meetings. First, municipal cadres participate in annual provincial work conferences held during the first half of each year. Second, work report meetings (gongzuo huibao hui) are held quarterly at the municipal level. Attended by representatives of the district- and county-level offices under Wuhan Municipality's jurisdiction, this meeting usually lasts only one day, but occasionally two to three days. At the meeting, reports are heard on the state of family planning work at the local level. Third, the municipal office sometimes convenes an "experience communication meeting" (jingyan jiaoliu hui). Such meetings are held to publicize a model area or a problem-ridden locale. Municipal cadres first go to investigate, then convene a meeting at the locale with representatives of all lower units attending.
Finally, telegrams are used to communicate with one or more units to highlight certain areas of work or isolated problems.

On-site investigations of two types are conducted annually. First, in January of each year, municipal cadres go to selected units for a rather lengthy period of 21 days, or as much as 66 days, to investigate the family planning work of the preceding year. In 1984, for example, cadres went to units in Wuchang County and Huangpi County. The director of the municipal office went to the Wuhan Iron and Steel Works, where she interviewed five women whom she selected herself. Asked about the possibility that such individuals would hesitate to admit any problems with family planning work, the director stressed that they were interviewed individually and strongly encouraged to speak their minds. In the aftermath of these lengthy investigations, city leaders go to these locations for a two to four day follow-up visit.

The second type of investigation is held in July. Cadres spend one to two days at selected sites, including units with both good and bad records. This investigation is designed to evaluate work in the first half of the year and prepare for the second half.
The task of coordinating the distribution of birth control supplies is limited to compiling reports from lower-level units to generate projections of municipal needs for the coming year. These projections are submitted to the provincial office, broken down by type of birth control and even specific brands. After this, it is the State Pharmaceutical Bureau that is responsible for ensuring that the proper supplies are available at municipal supply stations. District-level cadres are then responsible for procuring supplies from the station to be distributed within their administrative jurisdiction.

Statistical reporting is based on investigations such as those cited above and the reports submitted by lower-level units. Monthly reports from districts and counties are due before the tenth of the month. In turn, municipal reports must be compiled and sent to the municipal office by the fifteenth. They also prepare seasonal reports to be submitted to the province office. This seasonal report concerns birth control measures primarily, plus estimates of annual totals for various measures.

Beneath Wuhan Municipality, the Hong Shan District Family Planning Office has a staff of only eight to oversee 12 communes, 3 state farms, and five residential districts with a total of more than 63,400 child-bearing
age couples. The average number of couples per staffer is over 10,500. The duties of this office are only generally defined. Except for Thursdays, when there is political study and business to attend to, most working days are spent going to areas under district jurisdiction to observe and investigate, and carry out propaganda and education work. According to the Women's Federation head in Hua Shan, district personnel come to the commune twice a year to observe conditions there. Apparently, however, there is no clearly defined division of territorial responsibility among the office personnel.

In addition to these visits, district cadres conduct two model investigations each year, one in early March, the second in early August. On each occasion, the district office selects one township, one state farm, and one residential district. The units are selected on a rotational basis, with each one periodically undergoing investigation.

In addition to their periodic visits to selected sites, the staff also responds to requests from local-level cadres to pay a visit. These visits tend to be for propaganda and education, sometimes in private homes where there are "illegitimate" pregnancies, i.e., those outside the birth plan of the locale. Such visits are not always cordial. In line with reports throughout the
country, district cadres admit they encounter resistance from some peasants who have a strong aversion to the policy (fan gan), they are frequently met with arguments, and that peasants try to avoid them by slipping out the back door. In the face of such difficulties, the "nail-like spirit" of the cadres was described by the district cadre: they "keep fighting in spite of setbacks, and patiently answer all questions."

A third major duty of district cadres is to hold meetings with lower-level cadres on the conduct of family planning work. In Hong Shan District, meetings of family planning cadres occur twice a month, each meeting lasting one day. One of the meetings is a "regular meeting" (lihui), at which each unit reports on the local conditions of family planning work. Each unit sends one representative, for a total of 20. At Hua Shan, the representative is the commune staff person for family planning, not the head of the Women's Federation.

The second meeting is a study meeting (xuexi hui) attended by all district office personnel. At this meeting, there is no systematic reporting on local-level family planning work; instead, this meeting focuses on general problems in birth control work.

Finally, the district sometimes convenes a special meeting with wider participation, called a
"specialized-duty cadre meeting" (zhuanzhi ganbu hui). At such meetings, unit family planning representatives are joined by their local Party secretaries, commune directors, or other cadres responsible for family planning efforts to discuss local work. These meetings most likely occur in the advent of new national or provincial guidelines handed down to the district for study.

A fourth duty of the district office is to serve as a distributor of birth control supplies and devices. Based on reports by representatives of each unit under their jurisdiction, the district office draws up an annual plan for the needed amounts and types of birth control supplies. It then reports to the Wuhan Municipality Family Planning Office, which in turn reports to the province, following the procedures outlined above. Municipal pharmaceutical companies provide the necessary supplies on a monthly basis, free of charge, to district family planning cadres, who pick up supplies from local stations and deposit them at the district office. Distribution is handled by lower-level cadres who come to the district office to pick up the supplies and distribute them within their units. Whether significant supply problems occur here, as they have elsewhere, is unknown. District cadres say only that "generally speaking," they don't have supply problems.
A fifth responsibility of district cadres is to compile statistical records on family planning efforts in subordinate units. The following types of information are maintained: total population, age structure and composition, birth, death, and population growth rates, number of child-bearing age couples and the number of children each has, number of first, second, third or more births, number of couples who have signed "only-child certificates" (dusheng zinu zheng), and percentage of child-bearing age couples using various birth control techniques. Most of this information is gained through amalgamating the reports of lower-level cadres which are submitted before the tenth of each month. The exception is information on age structure and composition and household size, which comes from the Public Security Bureau's household registration (hukou) files. This system of reporting, in which brigade tallies are merged into commune-wide tallies, then again merged into district-level statistics, opens the way for inadvertent error or conscious tampering with the data, particularly in view of the material and non-material rewards at stake for responsible cadres.

A final responsibility of the district office with respect to their subordinate units is to set annual birth quotas. The district target is set by the head of the
Women's Federation, family planning office personnel, and other related government and Party cadres, in line with the Wuhan Municipal target. According to district-level cadres, rather than utilizing a strict formula based solely on territorial population size, targets are set based on such specific factors as the number of couples married but childless and the number of newlyweds. The district target is then subdivided to the communes and other units based on similar factors. Ultimately, however, any specific calculations must be reduced to a set number of births per 1000 population, and in the case of Hua Shan Commune, the quota given them for 1982 was 13.5 births per 1000.

To summarize, the district-level office, like those above it, has six major responsibilities vis-a-vis its subordinate units: 1) on-site observation and investigation; 2) visiting localities or homes at the request of lower-level cadres; 3) conducting or participating in meetings on the conduct of family planning work; 4) coordination of the supply and distribution of birth control supplies; 5) compiling family planning records; and 6) designating birth quotas. In outlining these tasks, the interaction between commune-level cadres and the district cadres in the administration of population policy has been noted. The role of commune cadres is
examined more closely below.

1. **On-site observation and investigation.** Commune cadres make scheduled visits to the brigades every three months, or four times a year, to observe the local situation. With nineteen brigades, that is an average of slightly over one field trip per week over the course of a year just to cover the brigades. This does not include trips to commune-run enterprises, commercial units, or the agricultural science team, all of which fall under commune jurisdiction. These periodic visits allow commune cadres to keep abreast of brigade-level conditions, and presumably keep brigade cadres "on their toes" with respect to family planning work. Whether these trips are for rigorous inspection or merely *pro forma* visits, however, is unknown.

2. **Visiting localities or homes on request from brigade cadres.** In case of unauthorized pregnancies, particularly for third births, commune cadres are sometimes called upon to talk with individuals who have been immune to the persuasive efforts of brigade cadres. For example, in November 1982, one Hua Shan brigade had a case of a third pregnancy. Besides visits from the team women's leader and seven or eight visits from the brigade women's leader, commune and district family planning cadres had also been called in. Despite these efforts,
the couple continued to resist.

3. Conducting or participating in family planning meetings. In Hua Shan Commune, a meeting is held once a month to discuss family planning work. The meeting, dubbed a "women's heads meeting" (funu juren hui), is attended by the commune's Women's Federation head, staff person for family planning, all brigade women's leaders, and the commune director and Party secretary. Once every three months, team women's leaders are also included in order to discuss conditions at the team level and future directions in family planning work.

4. Coordinating the supply and distribution of birth control supplies. Here commune cadres play a dual role. First they are responsible for gathering reports from below on needed birth control supplies, and communicating the total amounts to the district office, which arranges for their acquisition. Second, the planned parenthood staff person is responsible for picking up the supplies from the district office once a month and distributing them to the brigade women's leaders. According to Hua Shan's family planning staffer, after picking up the supplies, she delivers them to the various brigades immediately for further distribution.

The commune clinic also maintains a limited amount of birth control supplies. Prior to 1979, the clinic controlled the supply of pills, but since then they have fallen
under the commune's jurisdiction. Interviewees provided two explanations for the shift of jurisdiction. First, because the supply of birth control commodities and all family planning activities fall within the power and authority of the commune (zhiguan) and not the clinic, the commune should have physical control of all birth control supplies, including the pill. Second, the clinic charges fees for its services, whereas birth control supplies are free of charge to users. Thus, it was argued that it was preferable to have all supplies under commune jurisdiction. Despite this jurisdictional conflict, the clinic does retain some supplies for its patients, in addition to providing technical services.

5. Compiling family planning records. Commune cadres, like their district counterparts, are responsible for maintaining accurate records on marriages, births, deaths, abortions, utilization of birth control, numbers of "only-child certificates" issued and other relevant family planning statistics. These data are compiled by the family planning staffer, based upon the reports of brigade women's leaders and perhaps, the periodic investigations of commune cadres.

6. Designating birth quotas. Between 1980 and 1984, each commune in Hong Shan district was given a birth quota annually. This quota is further divided within the
commune, based on the same standard used by the district. Thus, the district quota for Hua Shan in 1982 was 13.5 births per 1000 population. Brigade quotas, and quotas for other units in the commune, are set using the same 13.5 per 1000 standard. Table 10 shows the actual number of births allotted for Hua Shan Commune and each brigade under the 13.5 principle for 1981, 1982 and 1983. As can be seen, the actual allotment for Hua Shan in 1981 exceeded the 13.5 per 1000 ratio, while quotas for 1982 and 1983 fell short of the 413 due the commune. These differences suggest that district cadres do adjust upward or downward the quotas of various units based on local conditions, while being careful to hold the entire district total strictly within the limits set by the Wuhan Municipal Family Planning Office. In this case, the reduction of Hua Shan's 1982 quota by 8% paralleled an 8% reduction in the district quota, dropping from approximately 6500 births in 1981 to 6000 in 1982. In Hua Shan, the result was an allotment of 398 births, which constitutes an allotment of 13 births per 1000. The same number was allotted for 1982. As can be seen in Table 10, however, the actual number of births allotted to Hua Shan units exceeds 400. This apparently is due to the generally accepted principle that all who are twenty-three and having their first child may do so, even if the total
Table 10.

Birth quotas for Hua Shan, its brigades and other commune units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hua Shan:</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quota</th>
<th>#/1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>10.5</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bai Hu</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qing Feng</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong Gang</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yan Jiang</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lian Feng</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wu Qiao</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sai Shan</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He Dong</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qing Tan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan Hu</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Guang</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bai Yang</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Jun</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu Qiao</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lian He</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hua Shan</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chun He</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Yan</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hou Shan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other units:</th>
<th>(e.g. agricultural science team, health clinics, middle schools, department store)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>430 398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
exceeds birth quotas. In 1984, quotas were abandoned in favor of this approach.

In addition to these six tasks, commune cadres are responsible for propaganda and educational activities designed to promote family planning. Basically, these activities take three forms. First, broadcasts are made over public address systems publicizing the importance of population policy. Second, movies and slides that are produced locally are shown once a month. Third, whenever a drama is staged, a way is found to work the theme of family planning into the performance. And finally, visual reminders in the form of printed slogans remind observers of the necessity of having only one child. Taken together, these activities serve to make family planning a theme which permeates the political, cultural and social environment.

The penetration of family planning themes is furthered by activities of brigade cadres whose responsibilities parallel those of the district and commune-level cadres. At the brigade level, the distinction between formal investigations of family planning conditions and informal visits at the request of team cadres is much more blurred. Brigade cadres are closer to their constituents and through their network of team women's leaders are able to monitor the local family
planning situation closely. When cases of unplanned pregnancies occur, brigade cadres are quickly informed and may go directly to talk with the offending couple without any formal request from below to do so.

Brigade women's leaders conduct or participate in a variety of meetings on family planning work. Once a month, brigade women's leaders attend commune-level meetings to discuss their work and study documents. At the brigade, they chair meetings of the Women's Representative Congress which meets twice a month, once with only the brigade committee in attendance, and once with the full membership. Among the agenda items is family planning work. Members study relevant documents and discuss ongoing work and future plans.

In addition to meetings of the Women's Representative Congress, brigade women's leaders chair other meetings as well. According to one brigade women's leader, "general women's meetings" (fu ru dahui) are held periodically. The focus of such meetings is on changing women's thought and attitudes about family planning, not on practical methods for carrying out the work. The number and timing of such meetings is not pre-determined by the brigade women's leaders. Instead, they are convened as the conditions warrant. In one brigade, three were held in 1981. The brigade women's leaders presided over the general meeting
of all women, and the brigade leader and Party branch 115
secretary sometimes attended. In another brigade, monthly meetings are held on "women's conditions" to keep 116
track of pregnancies and birth control information.

One brigade also holds meetings for those who have recently given birth (sheng haizi dahui). Meetings are held in March, June, and December with over 40 people in attendance, including team women's leaders, brigade 117
factory women's leaders, and new mothers. Birth control information is disseminated and discussed, and presumably, 118
infant and child care.

The role played by brigade women's leaders in the supply and distribution process has already been touched on. Brigade women's leaders are responsible for gathering information on the needed quantity of birth control supplies, and reporting it to the commune planned parenthood worker. After collecting the supplies from the district office, this worker distributes them to the brigade women's leaders who, in turn, make rounds to the teams to deliver the supplies. This procedure occurs 119
on a monthly basis. Brigade and team cadres get training on the use of birth control supplies from brigade health workers. The barefoot doctors, in turn, 120
are trained at the commune clinic.
Brigade women's leaders also maintain basic records on family planning. Records are kept on all child-bearing age couples, noting marriages, births, types of birth control being utilized, and abortions. Brigade women's leaders also keep track of the number of couples who have signed only-child certificates, making them eligible for family planning rewards.

Finally, brigade cadres are responsible for setting birth quotas for each team. Having received its quota from the commune level based on the target of 13.5 births per 1000, brigade leaders further divide this quota to the team based on the same principle. Evidently, however, this step is not a mandatory one. Of the five brigades in Hua Shan on which team quota information is available, three subdivide the brigade quota to the constituent teams, and two do not. Explaining this, one brigade women's leader said that in general, no targets in her brigade are given to the teams. Instead, there is a unified brigade plan (dadui tongyi jihua) for births. Because couples usually have a child soon after marriage, she noted, it is better to remain flexible throughout the brigade and allocate birth permits in accordance with the number of newlyweds, rather than a strict ratio.
Whether or not brigades allocate birth quotas to the teams, there is clearly more flexibility at this level than at the commune level in the allocation process. Table 11 shows the 1982 birth quotas by team for two brigades. In general, the pattern is to allot the maximum number of births possible without exceeding the 13.5 per 1000 rule. At this small population size, the difference between one and two births per team can mean an enormous difference in the birth rate, as evidenced by looking at teams 9 and 10 of Dong Gang Brigade. With approximately the same population size, but quotas which vary by one birth, the birth rate in the two teams varies from 8.5 to 17.5 per 1000.

There are some exceptions to the pattern, however. Looking at teams 10 and 11 of Dong Gang, and teams 9 and 19 of Hua Shan, we see that small teams have been granted quotas that exceed the birth rate target, two of them greatly exceeding it. A possible explanation for teams 4 and 7 is that, if allotted only one birth each, their birth ratios would be 7.7 and 7.2 respectively, lower than the 8.5 per 1000 rate which three other teams have. As for Hua Shan's team 19, to lower its quota would mean disallowing any births at all, which would not be a preferable strategy. The remaining three cases cannot be accounted for in this way, and can only be attributed to
Table 11.

Birth Quotas for Individual Teams in Two Hua Shan Brigades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Quota</th>
<th>Birth Quota per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dong Gang:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1408</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hua Shan:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
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special circumstances in those teams (e.g., an allotment for a second birth, more than one newly married couple, or number of pregnancies at the time quotas are drawn up). Although this explanation is speculative, it is supported by repeated comments of brigade women's leaders about making allowances for special circumstances when setting quotas. It is also supported by simple arithmetic. Since there is a quota to be met, and fractions of births cannot be allocated, cadres generally will err on the low side in allocating births. In most cases, the results will be that the sum of the total of births allocated to the team will be less than the number of births allocated to the brigade, and the birth rate will be far lower than that required. In the case of Dong Gang, for example, if all teams were kept within the 13.5 figure, only 13 births would be allocated, and the birth rate would be 9.2 per 1000. Since another birth cannot be allocated to each team, selections must be made based on specific local circumstances.

The hypothesis that certain teams are allotted high birth quotas based on local circumstances, and not on random selection, nepotism or political patronage is supported further by another aspect of the birth allocation process. Looking at Table 11 again, one can see that the total number of births allocated by each of the two brigades is less than the total allotments for the brigade
listed in Table 10. In both these cases, brigade women's leaders explained that several allocations were withheld in case special circumstances developed over the course of the year. Although this may not be their only motive for withholding, it does indicate a perceived necessity for maintaining some flexibility in planning.

Beyond the six responsibilities for cadres outlined above, brigade cadres have an additional one — issuing birth permits. These permits are the sanction of legitimacy for newborns. In theory, these permits are issued to couples who are entitled to bear a child during that year. In Hua Shan, however, these permits are issued after birth. The explanation offered was that by issuing permits after births, not before, they could not be illicitly transferred to another couple, something which the permits expressly prohibit (see Figure 2 for the full text of the birth permit).

At the bottom of the system are team cadres. These individuals carry one step further the duties outlined for higher levels. Team women's leaders are full-time on-site investigators, since they live and work side by side with fellow villagers. These women are in the best position to note at an early date any problems with the birth plan. Since teams in Hua Shan are allocated only a few births per year, planned pregnancies are easy to
Birth card:

Comrade:

Based on the nationally issued population plan targets, combined with the need for late marriage, late birth, and fewer births, it is agreed that you may give birth to a child during the year ___, the quota is valid for this year, and cannot be transferred.

[unit affix seal]

Figure 2. Text of birth permit, Hua Shan commune.

monitor, and unplanned pregnancies are difficult to hide. When they occur, team women's leaders are generally the first to become aware of the condition. They typically visit the woman at home in order to persuade or pressure her to abort the pregnancy. If she is not easily persuaded, the team women's leader will chair a meeting which the offender is required to attend, at which the arguments for reducing population growth will be reiterated. Apparently, such meetings require only the attendance of the woman, since requiring her husband to attend would mean forfeiting both their incomes for the day. If the woman continues to resist, the other team cadres will try to persuade other family members of the necessity of abortion, while the brigade women's
leader is called in to work on the expectant mother.

Team women's leaders, in addition to chairing meetings of the type outlined above, participate in meetings held at the brigade and commune levels. Those team women's leaders who are members of the Women's Representative Congress attend brigade- and commune-level meetings periodically, along with other duly elected women. Additionally, the commune Women's Federation head chairs meetings on family planning which team leaders attend once every three months.

At the team level, women's leaders gather information on needed supplies of birth control commodities and communicate that information to the brigade women's leaders. They receive supplies from the brigade women's leader monthly, and distribute them to child-bearing age households.

As for records on family planning and population, team cadres probably maintain raw figures on numbers of births, deaths, marriages, and the utilization of birth control. However, because these cadres are primarily oriented toward agricultural production, not administration, it may be surmised that extensive record-keeping occurs only at higher levels.

Finally, team cadres do not set birth quotas, and probably play only a minor role in deciding which
households receive the allotments. It was consistently said that priority for birth goes to couples who are older and have been married longer, but are still childless. Using these criteria, team-level disputes over birth priority are probably rare, especially since birth permits are issued only after birth. Those who have been married longest and are still childless theoretically have first priority, but in practice, anyone married and childless is eligible on a "first-come first-serve" basis. Even if this process results in a given team exceeding its quota, brigades can still maintain the more important brigade quotas.

V. Incentive Structure for Compliance: The Case of Hubei

As outlined in Chapter 3, the push for one-child couples was accompanied by the issuance of provincial and local-level regulations designed to encourage compliance through the enforcement of a set of incentives and sanctions. With Anhui Province leading the way in 1979, provincial regulations were announced which offered a series of rewards for those who agreed to have only one child, and enforced economic sanctions on those who had a third child. Beginning in 1980, such regulations were revised to penalize those who had unplanned second births.
as well. With the exception of state funding for all family planning-related medical procedures and the provision of birth control supplies free of charge, the burden of enforcement -- material and manpower costs -- fell to the localities. In rural China, production brigades bore responsibility for implementing regulations adopted at higher levels, without state compensation or subsidization. In Chapter 5, we will examine the implications of this decentralized approach for the implementation process. Here, however, we first examine in some detail the regulations for Hubei Province, Wuhan Municipality and ultimately, the brigades of Hua Shan Commune.

On September 27, 1979, Hubei Ribao published "Trial Regulations of Hubei Province for the Implementation of Family Planning" (Hubei Sheng Tuixing Jihua Shengyude Shixing Guiding). An accompanying article noted that the "Trial Regulations" were adopted by a full session of the provincial Revolutionary Committee, a session chaired by Party secretary and Revolutionary Committee deputy Han Ningfu. Prior to that time, the basis for family planning work had been the results of a meeting in Huanggang Prefecture in 1972. At that time, it was agreed to promote a maximum of two children per couple in urban areas and three per couple in rural areas. The trial
regulations, issued as Provincial Document Number 82, consisted of ten articles and were similar in content to those issued by Anhui and Hunan provinces.

At the time of issuance, Article 2 specified that current family planning policy was to advocate late marriage and late birth, and to "promote and encourage one child per couple." At most, couples were permitted two children, with the exception of twins or multiple births resulting from the second pregnancy. For those who opted to have a second child, an interval of at least three years was required between births. Finally, couples married a second time with a total of two children were not permitted a third.

For those who complied with the one-child policy and signed an only-child certificate, a series of preferences were to be granted, outlined in Article 4. First, children were to receive health fees (baojianfei), totaling 30-40 yuan per year in urban areas and 400 work points in rural areas. The health subsidies were to be allocated until the age of 14, but only those who underwent sterilization after the first child would receive the subsidy from the date of birth. Those who "adopted effective measures" and guaranteed not to have a second child would receive the subsidy for ten years, beginning with the child's fourth birthday. Finally, couples with
only one child prior to the issuance of these regulations were made eligible to receive the health subsidy until the child reached the age of fourteen. Single children already fourteen years old would receive the "only-child certificate." Second, single children were guaranteed the standard preference in entering nursery, kindergarten and school, obtaining work as an adult, and entering university, "other things being equal" (tongdeng tiaojian). Third, workers who complied with the only-child policy were to be given an additional five percent in retirement salary, except where such salary already equalled 100% of a worker's pay at the time of retirement. Peasants were to receive a monthly subsidy of 3-5 yuan, in addition to any retirement privileges already in effect under local regulations. Finally, anyone who received the bonuses and later had a second child was required to return the "only-child certificate" and repay the health subsidies received.

The source of funds for implementing this policy was the subject of Article 3 and section 4 of Article 4. Article 3 committed the state to free provision of birth control supplies and services. State and collective workers were to apply to their work unit for compensation. In rural areas, peasants and town residents without work were to receive compensation from family planning
operating funds in that locality. Moreover, rest periods after birth control procedures were to be granted with pay and bonuses were not to be affected. This article concludes by promoting the adoption of birth control measures by men.

All other expenses which result from the provision of rewards for one-child families are to be borne by local units, as Article 4, section 4, points out. In urban areas, unit welfare funds (fuli fei) were to be the source of funds, with the exception of temporary workers, in which case family planning subsidies were drawn from the operating funds of the unit. In rural areas, too, the welfare fund (gongjjin) of brigades and teams was the source of family planning funds. If both parents worked, each unit was to pay half the cost. If one parent was a fulltime worker and the other a commune member, a temporary worker, or without work, the worker's unit was responsible for the one-child rewards. Finally, if the parents worked in two separate provinces, the unit where the child lived was responsible for arranging the subsidies and preferential treatment. In cities and towns, non-working residents received subsidies from family planning operating funds.

Local units were also made responsible for preferential housing allotments in the cities, and grain rations
and private plots in rural areas. Article 5 states that "late marriage" and "single-child" couples "should get preferential consideration" (ying zhaogu) in the distribution of housing. Those with one child should be treated as if they had two children in determining the housing allotment, and those with more than two children were to be allotted space for only a family of four. Finally, "late marriage" couples were to get priority in housing allotments. Commune members were to receive adult grain rations for a single child up to the age of 14, the age at which the child would normally be entitled to such rations, and were to receive private plots and housing allotments equivalent to a family of four.

Article 6 made provision for the elderly who never married, never gave birth, and/or never adopted a child. Workers were to receive 100% of their salary at the time of retirement as their pension and peasants were to be supported at a standard of living above average for that locality. Here, too, local units were responsible for this retirement support.

Having set forth the range of benefits for single-child couples and guaranteed retirement support for the elderly, Article 8 addressed the issue of penalties for non-compliance. At this time, penalties would be levied against those who exceeded two children, with the
exception of cases of twins or multiple births resulting from the second pregnancy. Those who had "excess children" would pay an "excess child fee" (duo zinu fei), consisting of ten percent of the salary of each parent until the child reached the age of fourteen. Workers would have their monthly pay docked, the funds diverted to the unit welfare fund. Peasants would be assessed by the production team during the year-end distribution process, those funds also to be diverted to the team welfare fund. All such penalties were to become effective six months from the date of the publication of the regulations, technically allowing some leeway for those already past the first trimester of pregnancy.

Article 7 addressed a very different problem. Concerned over the tradition of patrilocal marriage and its implications for the success of the one-child campaign, this article promoted matrilocal marriage and called for upholding the equal status of such couples. They were to be given political and economic rights equal to others, and discrimination (gishi) and troublemaking (diaonan) were prohibited. The inclusion of this clause indicates that leaders anticipated the problems they would face, particularly in rural areas, convincing couples with a single daughter to forego additional children.
Articles nine and ten were addressed to those responsible for implementing family planning policy. Article 9 dealt with "technical cadres," medical personnel performing birth control procedures. This section stipulates that upon the approval of a family planning technical small group at the county level or above, those who suffer complications as the result of birth control operations are to be given treatment "actively" (jiji) by the Health Department. Expenses incurred in the process of such treatment are to be handled "in the spirit of Article 3." This apparently implies state compensation, to be applied for through the individual's work unit, or in the case of peasants and unemployed townspeople, compensation from local family planning operating funds. Health cadres are also exhorted to improve infant health care work and to provide treatment to those who are childless and seek to give birth.

Article 10 concludes by calling for rewards, encouragement and recognition of units and individuals who do family planning work well. Those who "wreck" (pohuai) family planning work will be subject to disciplinary measures (jilu chufen) or punished by law (yifa chengchu).

Finally, the regulations conclude with two clauses pertaining to national and local regulations. The first
yields the right to any unit or locality to "formulate necessary additional methods or specific measures in accordance with actual conditions." As we shall see, this carte blanche led to substantial variation across localities, as local leaders drafted or ignored regulations as they wished. Finally, the provincial regulations close with the caveat that with the passage of the State Family Planning Law, its provisions will supercede those of the provincial regulations.

Only days after the publication of the provincial regulations, the Wuhan Municipality Provisional Regulations on Family Planning were issued. On October 10, 1979, Changjiang Ribao published the regulations, comprised of thirteen articles, adopted by the Wuhan Revolutionary Committee. These regulations generally mirrored the provisional regulations, with the exception of the following areas.

First, Article 2 of the municipal regulations dealt with the need to propagate family planning work. All political schools, middle schools, technical middle schools, and universities were to add courses in "puberty, biology and hygiene" (qing chunqi shengli weisheng), late marriage and birth control, and population theory.

Second, Article 8 stressed the importance of marriage registration, denying maternity benefits or compensation
for birth control to those who failed to register. It also prohibited marriage for those studying as apprentices or in school, and called for lengthening the periods of apprenticeship or delaying work and study for those who violated the provision.

Third, Article 11 called for implementation of the family planning card system (kapian zhidu) which would require the presentation of a card with relevant family planning information and a birth permit to the public security office in order to register a child.

Fourth, the municipal regulations vary from provincial stipulations on incentives and sanctions in three areas. First, Article 4 specifies that a 50 yuan bonus and 90 days of rest with pay should be given to anyone who undergoes sterilization (jueyu), and that an appropriate reward should be given to those who adopt comprehensive (zonghe) measures. The article fails to specify what constitutes a comprehensive measure, but since sterilization had been dealt with separately, this probably refers to abortion. These rewards are in addition to the health fees for the child, which is the only monetary reward specified in the provisional regulations. Those regulations call for an annual subsidy of 30-40 yuan for this purpose, whereas the municipal regulations call for a standard of four yuan per month. Finally, municipal
regulations call for economic sanctions against those who have a second child without a three-year interval between births. Such couples were required to forfeit ten percent of their salaries until the child reached the age of three, the monies to be placed in the unit welfare fund. Also, the children would be required to pay for nursery school and kindergarten, and would receive no living subsidy (shenghuo buju).

Fifth, technical cadres who performed 1000 or 10,000 birth control procedures without accidents (shigu) or mistakes (chacuo) were to receive rewards, though the amount was not stipulated. Reward monies were to be drawn from family planning operating funds.

Finally, municipal regulations provided only a two month grace period before penalties would begin to be enforced, whereas the provincial regulations called for a six-month delay. This tightened substantially the grace period during which pregnancies could be brought to term without suffering penalization, undoubtedly leading to many second and third trimester abortions. Like the provincial regulations, however, the municipal regulations closed by giving each district and county the authority to formulate and implement detailed rules and regulations (zhiding shishi xize), and yielding to the provisions of the forthcoming State Family Planning Law.
Both the provincial and municipal regulations were revised a year later in the aftermath of the September 1980 "Open Letter" to Party members calling for only one child per couple. The most significant change apparently was the additional stipulation of penalties to be levied against those who had a second child without approval. In Hubei, such couples would forfeit ten percent of their salaries for seven years.

The second major revision came in the aftermath of Central Document Number 37 in 1982, which stipulated the conditions under which a second child could be permitted. A second child could be planned for: 1) couples whose first child is handicapped and cannot become a full-time laborer as an adult; 2) disabled veterans; 3) couples composed of two only children; 4) the third generation single male offspring whose father and grandfather were also single children; 5) couples in which the male moves to the wife's home; 6) males whose brother(s) cannot bear children; 7) remarried couples, if only one party has a child from the first marriage; 8) women who adopt a child, then become pregnant; 9) overseas Chinese who return to China to live. Finally, in Hubei Province, the minority population is allowed two children per couple, and under special circumstances, it is possible to have a third.
At the commune level, regulations reflected those of the province and municipality, but with added specificity. For example, in 1979, those who had an operation after one child received: 1) 20 yuan from the commune, plus a sewing machine; 2) 50 yuan from the brigade; 3) 15 yuan from the team; 4) ten jin of meat and ten jin of fish; 5) a face basin, glass and towel; 6) a testimonial document; and 7) preference in selecting a site for a home. Women received 101 days rest, and men fifteen days. Perhaps most important, arrangements were made for one of the parents to work at a commune industry. According to commune officials, in 1981 they stopped giving sewing machines and gave a 100 yuan cash bonus instead, along with a padded bed quilt.

Children received the 4 yuan bonus in monthly health subsidy, 600 jin of grain per year (an adult ration), a private plot of 8 square meters, and a double ration of sideline agricultural products such as soybeans, sweet potatoes, lotus and fruit. They also received gifts worth about 20 yuan each at a year-end "glorification meeting" (biaoyanghui). Finally, all medical and school expenses are paid till the age of fourteen. Penalties for non-compliance reflect higher-level regulations -- a ten percent salary deduction for seven years for a second child, fourteen years for a third child. Though these
regulations were supposed to be uniformly implemented, in the next chapter we shall see the extent to which brigades exercised their authority in the adoption and enforcement of commune regulations.

VI. Conclusions

This analysis of the organization of family planning in Hua Shan leads to several conclusions. First, there is no question of the efficacy of the organization for family planning in China. Penetrating hierarchically to the team level, the system is relatively well-designed for both the delivery of family planning services and oversight of child-bearing age couples in a predominantly rural society.

Like all such organizations, however, in practice it is only as good as the people who operate it. In this case, the organization is composed primarily of female cadres who bear heavy responsibility for implementation of the policy. They are the ones who must persist in the daily work of exhorting, monitoring, supplying and reporting. The entire policy delivery system rests upon the uninterrupted activity of these women, who receive small compensation for their efforts.

That they are reinforced in this work by Party cadres at all levels does not alleviate the burden of oversight
which women's leaders bear. Indeed, because women's leaders at each level are accountable to Party branch cadres (a preponderance of whom are male, and all of whose branch secretaries are male) who are in turn accountable to their Party superiors, they face the dual pressures of having their performance evaluated vertically by the family planning apparatus and laterally by the local Party branch. As we shall see, with political and material rewards at stake, Party cadres have a higher stake in the outcome of local family planning efforts than might be assumed at first glance. This fact cannot be lost on women's leaders. At the same time, Party cadres and commune, brigade and team leaders provide the added clout necessary for women's leaders to enforce the one-child stricture. Whereas women's leaders do the footwork necessary for monitoring and regulating child-bearing activity, male leaders provide the undergirding authority necessary for the imposition of restrictions and sanctions. To be successful in this area, then, requires the commitment and consolidated effort of all local leaders. Where family planning efforts have failed, such leadership solidarity is usually lacking.

A second conclusion that can be drawn is that if the strength of the family planning organization is its penetration to each village through utilization of local
personnel, it is also its weakness. Because the responsible personnel are themselves peasants who generally share the concerns and attitudes of fellow villagers on child-rearing, their enthusiasm for the one-child policy may be minimal or non-existent. Because they are not trained family planning professionals, they cannot provide technical or medical advice to child-bearing age couples that might help protect their health and reduce anxieties about contraceptive procedures. Because many are simultaneously regulators and among the regulated, objectivity is inevitably impaired. In short, though the utilization of local-level generalist-type leaders as field personnel for the enforcement of family planning is efficient and cost-saving, the drawbacks of this approach are substantial. When the distinction between enforcers and objects of enforcement breaks down, as it does here, the issue is not whether the regulators will be "captured" or "coopted" by the subject population, but rather, whether the subjects can be coopted as regulators. In this task, the state has been only partially successful.

Third, despite the vertical integration of the family planning organization and the relatively well-defined means and ends of population policy, local enforcers retain substantial autonomy in the formulation and implementation of local regulations. They also make
local decisions on the procedures for enforcement (giving birth quotas to teams or not, for example). The state attributes such differences to the policy of *yin di zhi yi*, or setting policy based on local conditions, within the framework of somewhat broader national guidelines. This explanation masks the structural dilemma faced by higher levels — namely, their own limited ability to compel local leaders to adopt particular regulations or procedures. As will be seen, this weakness is linked directly to the financial autonomy of local units.

Fourth, the economic burden posed by this program far outstrips the budgetary allocation for family planning under the Sixth Five-Year Plan, leaving family planning officials at and above the county level dependent on local governmental financing to offset budgetary deficits. This resource scarcity worked to inhibit the development of a coherent nationwide family planning organization and helped to foster a mobilizational style of implementation even as officials sought to change that style. Moreover, with local governments expected to divert revenues into the family planning network, it is likely that relatively poor, backward areas where birth rates remained high and greater family planning efforts were needed were also the areas where local revenues were most severely limited and demands on them were greatest. Finally, at the village
and team levels, limitations on budgetary allocations from the Center were to be overcome through reliance on collective revenues. Although relieving the state of the financial burden of local-level enforcement and forcing localities to pick up the cost of an unpopular program, the Center still paid a high price -- namely, loss of direct control over financially autonomous villages, many of which failed to meet their monetary obligations.

These issues and others are examined closely in Chapter 5, which discusses the impediments to implementing the one-child policy. Drawing on data from Hua Shan Commune and reports from other localities, the analysis focuses on five factors which pose serious obstacles to China's population policy goals. They are: 1) Traditional values and economic considerations which affect child-bearing preferences; 2) The decentralized regulatory process; 3) Weaknesses in the administrative structure and family planning services delivery system; 4) the agricultural production responsibility system; and 5) commune structural reforms. The interplay of these five factors in an evolving environment of rural reform set the limits to success of China's population control program and account for the shortcomings.
ENDNOTES


2. See Chapter 2, pp. 87-95.

3. See Chapter 2, pp. 100-03.

4. Xinhua, 6 March 1981, in FBIS, 6 March 1981, LI.


7. See Chapter 1 for a discussion of the interview process during these three periods. Here it need only be noted that during the spring of 1982 interviews were conducted with commune and brigade-level family planning cadres. During the fall of 1982, these interviews were continued at the same commune, Hua Shan. In addition, an interview was held with Hong Shan District family planning officials. Between February and June 1984, interviews were again conducted at Hua Shan Commune with commune and brigade officials and a second interview was granted with Hong Shan District officials. In addition, interviews were held with the director of the Wuhan Municipal Family Planning Commission and the deputy director of the Hubei Province Family Planning Commission. Finally, four county-level family planning officials were interviewed.


10. Ibid.

11. Interview File, 1984.6.8, pp. 1,2.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 2.
16. Ibid., p. 3.
17. Interview File, 1984.6.7, p. 3.
19. Ibid., p. 2.
21. Ibid., p. 2.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
29. Ibid., p. 3.
31. Ibid.
33. Interview File, 1984.6.7, p. 3.
34. Interview File, 1984.6.9, p. 2.
35. Ibid., p. 1.
36. Ibid., p. 3.
37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., p. 4

39. Ibid., pp. 2-5.

40. Ibid., p. 3.

41. Interview File, 1982.4.6, p. 7.

42. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 3.

43. Some brigades did not include the Party secretary in the list of personnel on the Administrative Committee, while others volunteered that they were indeed counted in its ranks. In general, the Party Committee consisted of the Secretary, the brigade leader, and one to three other individuals with various responsibilities.

44. Of the total of 57 deputies at the brigade level, 21, or slightly over 1/3, were women. Of those, however, 19 served in posts set aside for women while only two served in other capacities. Interview File, 1982.4.13, pp. 1-8.

45. Of the eight brigades visited or revisited during 1984, only one mentioned the existence of a subcommittee for family planning. Interview File, 1984.3.17, p. 8.


47. Interview File, 1982.5.23, p. 2.

48. The title of "country doctor" is gained by passing a national examination which was instituted in 1981.

49. Interview Files, 1982.4.9, pp. 1-2; 1982.5.21, p. 2.


52. Interview File, 1984.6.8, p. 9.

54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Interview File, 1984.6.6, p. 5.
57. Interview File, 1984.6.9, p. 7.
58. Ibid.
59. Interview File, 1984.6.15, p. 3.
60. Interview File, 1984.2.28, pp. 9-10.
62. Interview File, 1984.6.8, p. 3.
64. Interview File, 1984.6.8, p. 3.
65. Interview File, 1984.6.8, p. 11.
68. Personal contacts at Wuhan University.
69. Interview File, 1984.6.8, p. 3.
70. Interview File, 1984.6.7, p. 4.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., p. 10.
76. Ibid., p. 12.

77. Interview File, 1982.5.21, p. 2.

78. The interviewee indicated there was a vaguely defined notion of division of territory, but that the office was very flexible in designating people to go to an area to investigate. Interview File, 1982.12.1, pp. 1-2.

79. Interview File, 1982.4.6, p. 8.


81. Interview Files 1982.12.1, p. 2; 1982.11.9, p. 10.

82. Interview File, 1982.12.1, p. 11.

83. Ibid.

84. Interview File, 1982.10.14, p. 11.


87. The frequency of these enlarged meetings is unknown. Interview Files, 1982.10.14, p. 11; 1982.12.1, p. 2.


89. Interview File, 1982.12.1, p. 3.

90. This list may not be exhaustive. It is drawn up based on the types of information made available to me by a district-level cadre.


92. On the falsification of population data and other types of statistics, see John Aird, "Recent Demographic Data from China: Problems and Prospects," in Joint Economic Committee, China Under the Four Modernizations, 202-212.


At the time the interview was conducted at the commune clinic, the clinic personnel did not have any birth control pills to dispense. Interview File 1982.4.9, p. 1.
The practice of withholding part of the allotment would help insure that the brigade did not exceed its birth quota, thereby ensuring bonuses and accolades for the cadres.

141. Ibid.

142. Ibid.

143. Ibid.

144. Ibid.

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid.

147. Ibid.

148. Ibid.

149. Ibid.

150. Ibid.

151. Ibid.

152. *Changjiang Ribao*, 10 October 1979, p. 3.

153. Ibid.

154. Ibid.

155. Ibid.

156. Ibid.

157. Ibid.


159. Interview Files, 1984.6.6, p. 4; 1984.6.7, p. 7.

160. Interview File, 1984.6.8, p. 5.


162. Ibid., pp. 4, 11.
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Chapter 5. National Goals and Local Politics: Obstacles to the Implementation of Population Policy

With the "Open Letter" of September 1980 to all Party and Youth League members, China's leadership signalled its intention to enforce the "one-child-per-couple" population control program as national policy. The decision to opt for this draconian solution was reached by national-level decision-makers and demographers who concluded that population control was the requisite condition for any serious attempt at modernization. As such, it was necessary to exercise tight control on the child-bearing age population, particularly in the rural sector, even though the resistance was bound to be enormous.

The burden of enforcement, of course, fell to the family planning bureaucracy and Party officials throughout the system. Ultimately, responsibility devolved to basic-level cadres who were to enforce a set of family planning targets set by higher levels. Although resistance at the local level had been anticipated, the scope of that resistance and the deficiencies of the organizational structure left provincial and central leaders scrambling to improve the system of enforcement. To
compound the problem, rural reforms in 1981 and 1982 altered the rural economic organization, disrupted patterns of local leadership, diverted attention from family planning targets, and reinforced peasant resistance to the one-child policy.

The elaboration and modification of population policy which occurred between 1981 and 1984 was in response to a host of obstacles encountered at the local level. At the heart of the problem, and fully anticipated, were traditional values and child-bearing preferences on the part of China's peasantry. Sons were highly coveted, and the birth and survival of multiple offspring was the best possible form (and almost the only form) of retirement insurance. Such attitudes were not limited to peasants, but rather, were shared by local Party officials and village leaders. This problem, in turn, weakened the organizational apparatus at the most critical point, where village leaders were responsible for monitoring local compliance and enforcing pertinent regulations. Furthermore, attempts to shore up this and other organizational deficiencies were impaired by the evolving agricultural reforms, which kept higher-level bureaucrats struggling to adjust to a changing rural context. These attitudinal, procedural, and organizational obstacles to the implementation of population policy are examined in detail in this chapter.
I. The impact of traditional values on rural childbearing preferences. Since implementing the "one-child-per-couple" program, a campaign has been waged against what is termed "the resurgence of feudal ideas" in the countryside. These "feudal ideas" come in the form of age-old sayings such as "the more children, the more wealth," "regarding men as superior to women," "raise sons to protect against old age," and "carry on the ancestral line." That these ideas remain in contemporary China is indicative of the difficulty of altering traditional values and preferences of a rural populace. More importantly, it is also indicative of the failure of the regime to alter sufficiently the economic environment which fosters them.

A 1981 survey of 15 production brigades in five counties of Hubei Province confirms the importance of traditional values and economic considerations in shaping preferences for household size. Of 728 couples surveyed, only 5% wanted just one child, 51% wanted two children, 28% wanted three and 15% wanted four. In what the author refers to as "hilly districts where traditional ideology is comparatively dense," however, the numbers climb to 27% wanting two or three children, and nearly 72% wanting four. Asked what sex child they prefer,
only 2.2% wanted a girl, 36.7% wanted a boy, and 61.1% were neutral. In hilly districts, however, the number desiring a male soared to 77%. Asked what they would do if the first child was a girl, 61% said they would want another child.

The study concludes that the desire for more children is caused by factors such as the "social economy," "ideology," and "traditional habits." More specifically, 808 people surveyed as to why they wanted additional children responded as follows: additional labor power -- 21%; old age security -- 51%; preserve the ancestral line -- 25%; enjoy the pleasure of children -- 3%. The problem of old age security clearly predominates. This category, taken together with those who cited the desire for additional labor power, drew 70% of all responses, demonstrating the role of economic calculations in determining preferences for household size.5

Another more limited study reinforces these findings. A survey of 50 women in one Jilin Province commune who were pregnant outside the local plan also questioned why these women wanted another child.6 Their answers were: 1) old age insurance -- 20 women, or 40% of the respondents; 2) "more people, more wealth" -- 8 women, or 16%; 3) "sons and daughters double gold" -- 8 women, or 16%; 4) failed methods -- 13 women, or 26%; 5) inadequate
methods -- 1 woman, or 2%. Again concern for old age support looms large in peasant calculations. If categories 2 and 3 are taken as reflecting economic considerations as well, then 72% of the sample have economic reasons undergirding their choice for another child. Moreover, this study suggests that the desire for a second child is not limited to those who have a daughter first. In all, 36% had boys but no girls, and 40% had girls but no boys.7

The influence of the desire to bear more children, particularly sons, is further evidenced by figures on holders of "only-child certificates" and sterilizations in Hua Shan Commune. In October 1982, there were 999 couples with only one child. Of them, only 42 (4%) had undergone sterilizations, and of the 42, only 7 (17%) had girls. Of the total of 999 couples, 876 had signed "only-child certificates," pledging not to have another child.8 This certificate rate of 91%, far above the estimated national average of 42%,9 was achieved by offering short-term, five-year contracts to couples reluctant to sign a permanent agreement. In this way, Hua Shan family planning workers were able to persuade parents of males and females to sign an agreement, and forestall unplanned pregnancies over the short-term.10 It was hoped that after the five-year period, couples with healthy children
of either sex would no longer be inclined to have another child.

In one brigade, of 123 single-child couples, 59 (48%) signed the "only-child certificate," 54 (44%) signed a five-year agreement, and 10 (8%) refused to sign altogether.11 In a second brigade, only the five-year agreement was in force. Of 111 couples, 54 (49%) signed and received the "special status" rewards for their child. The other 57 signed in order to get a birth certificate for the child, and thus did not get the "special status" rewards.12 In a third brigade, however, all 41 single-child couples had either had an operation or signed a five-year contract, but only five of these couples had girls (12%).13 And in a fourth brigade, of the 53 couples with one child, four underwent sterilization procedures after having males, seven signed a long-term certificate (only two of whom had girls), and 25 signed a short-term contract (17 had girls). Of the remaining 13, it was said that "most of them have girls." 14 According to a commune family planning cadre, however, all 81 couples in Hua Shan who had refused to sign by 1982 have female children.15 In short, reluctance to accept having only one child is not confined to those with a daughter, but parents of females are less inclined than parents of males to formally agree to limit themselves to one child.
commune in 1982. Although the per capita income level of this commune is unknown, one of its brigades had the single highest per capita collective distributable income of all brigades in Hong Shan District or the two suburban counties of Wuhan Municipality -- 817 yuan in 1981. In six other communes, some brigades offered retirement incomes. In the five remaining communes in the district, retirement support from the collective was not offered. Hua Shan, with its 1981 per capita income of 209 yuan, more than double the provincial average, was among the latter group.

Besides old age insurance, the need for household labor power is another motivating factor for larger households. To counter the idea that wealth and security are strongly associated with household size, several studies have appeared recently. Their authors argue that one-child families have higher per capita incomes from collective distribution than multi-child families. A close look at one such study, however, reveals that such conclusions have more to do with household size and labor power than whether or not it is a one-child household.

This study of Xiu Hui Commune in Shandong Province compares mean commune statistics on household size, labor power, and income with mean figures for only-child households (see Table 12). Here, one-child households clearly
In explaining the situation in Hua Shan, cadres consistently alluded to the influence of the "feudal idea" of regarding men as superior to women (zhong nan qing nu), reiterating the line that has appeared so often in the press. But is the desire for more children, and particularly, more male children, the product of old ideas, or of contemporary economic realities? We already have seen survey evidence demonstrating the importance of economic factors in setting preferences for household size. Although the utility of these survey results admittedly is quite limited, they do suggest that concern for old age security is the single most important factor motivating the desire for additional children, particularly males. This reflects on contemporary economic and social reality -- the absence of a universal or even widespread system of support for the elderly across the countryside. Although some areas do provide monthly payments or old age homes, this service is provided through local initiative and local funds. As a result, social insurance or homes for the elderly are provided where there is enough money to do so, leaving those in less well endowed villages who may be the most needy to fend for themselves.

Of the 12 communes in Hong Shan District, where Hua Shan is located, only one had a retirement home run by the
Table 12.
Comparing Mean Statistics for Xiu Hui Commune, Zhang Qiu County, Shandong, with Mean Statistics for Only-Child Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commune</th>
<th>Only-Child Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># people per household</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor power per household</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># persons supported by each laborer</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981 collective per capita income (yuan)</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981 per capita income from family sidelines (yuan)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total per capita income (yuan)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>240.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total households with per capita income over 500 yuan</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

have higher per capita incomes, but to what is that attributable, childbearing restraint or total household size and labor power? In this case, single-child households are on average slightly larger than the commune average, despite having a single-child couple in the household. More importantly, average household labor power is also higher. We can conclude only that there is a relationship between labor power and income, since average labor power for the commune is 69% of that for single-child households, and income is 65%. Thus, a study which seeks to argue for the economic advantages of having only one child actually substantiates peasant assumptions that, over the long-term, more children are desirable because they bring more labor power to the household.23

Not only do peasants remain unconvinced that smaller households generate higher incomes, they also question the argument that females are as economically desirable as males. Traditionally, daughters contributed little or nothing to the family coffers, and left the household upon marriage. While they make a substantial contribution in contemporary China, that contribution still shifts to their husband's household at marriage. Moreover, rural wage-earning policies discriminate against women. Where the work point system remains in force, women
typically receive only 70 to 80% of what their male counterparts earn. Where land has been contracted to the household, allotments are based on the number of people in the household. Although this eliminates inequalities in the short-term, over the long-term single women will leave the household, while men will bring a wife into it. Thus, females remain less valuable economically than males.

Moreover, in some cases, the land allotment process itself discriminates against women by linking the size of an individual's allotment to his/her previous work point standard. Since male laborers typically earned 20 to 30% more in work points per day under the old system, this method of distribution entitles them to 20 to 30% more contracted land. In one team in Hua Shan Commune, those who had previously earned 10 work points a day got 3.36 mu, 9 points got 3 mu, 8 points got 2.69 mu, and so on (for a full discussion of this process, see section 4).

The combined weight of traditional values and economic realities, then, is creating strong pressures for more offspring, and especially, more sons. This contradiction between policy and preference has manifest itself in four ways. First, the percentage of "illicit," i.e., unplanned births remains significant. In 1981, the results of a national survey indicated that 28% of all
births that year were third or higher-order births, and an additional 25% were second births. Looking only at the rural population, the multiple-birth rate was 31% in 1981, compared to 1.7% in the urban sector. Moreover, whereas 88% of all births in the urban areas were first births, the figure was only 42% for the rural sector.

Statistics for Hubei Province through 1983 give an even clearer picture. As shown in Table 13, Hubei Province made steady progress in reducing the percentage of unplanned births between 1980 and 1983. Given the enormous amount of effort spent on this problem, however, what is remarkable is the exceedingly slow pace at which progress is occurring. Moreover, improvement in the single-child rate has been achieved almost solely as a result of the reduction in the multiple-birth rate. The percentage of second births, planned and unplanned, has been basically stable.

That the persistence of a relatively high rate of unplanned births is attributable to traditional values is borne out by further evidence from Hubei. First, of the total number of single-child rural couples, only 40% have signed the one-child certificate, committing themselves to have no additional children. According to a Hubei family planning official, the majority of those who failed to sign have a female child. Second, Hubei's
worst case of multiple births in 1983 was in Guanji County, where 4500 women who had already given birth to two females had a third child. All were hoping to bear a son and were willing to risk the consequences of violating national policy and provincial regulations.

Table 13.

Statistics on First, Second and Multiple Births in Hubei Province as a Percentage of Total Births, 1980-1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>First Births as % of Total</th>
<th>Second Births as % of Total</th>
<th>Third or Additional Births as % of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The example of Guangji County is also indicative of a second consequence of the contradiction between policy and preference -- namely, cadre opposition or acquiescence. In Guangji County, cadres sympathetic to the "plight" of those with two girls failed to enforce the economic penalties for having a third child, thus encouraging others to follow suit. Similarly, Wuhan family planning officials noted that cadres are frequently "of one heart" (tongxin) with the peasants, and thus, fail to enforce
local regulations. In other cases, cadres themselves demonstrate their opposition to the policy by supporting wives or family members in their desire to have a son. In 1983 in Hua Shan, a young village Party secretary with a single female child underwent criticism before finally agreeing to his wife's abortion during the fifth month of pregnancy. This was said to be the only local case of late-term abortion that year. And in another brigade with the worst family planning record in 1983, the problem was attributed in part to the decision of a team women's leader to have a second child, fostering the general rumor that it was acceptable policy to have two children.

Third, child-bearing age women have come under enormous pressure to give birth to a male child first. When they have failed to do so, many have faced abuse by husbands and family members who vent their frustration over the one-child stricture on the defenseless mother. Such actions are said to result from the remnant influence of "feudal ideas" in the countryside and are officially prohibited.

Even more disturbing has been the upsurge in the reported number of cases of female infanticide, the fourth and most painful consequence of the collision of
modern policy with traditional social and economic imperatives. Although the full extent of the problem is unknown, the decision to publicize widely cases that were uncovered suggests a widespread social problem. Underscoring its concern over this phenomenon, Renmin Ribao, in April 1983, published birth statistics collected in two Anhui Province counties which demonstrated a strong bias toward male births. Statistics for four communes in Huaiyuan County show the number of male births as a percentage of the total ranging from 57.5 to 62.4%. In 3 brigades, the discrepancy between males and females is even higher, with males constituting 77.8 to 90% of all births. Although these figures conceivably could be the result of a naturally occurring pattern of births, two additional cases suggest that it is not. The report notes that one team in the same county had 40 cases of female infanticide in 1980 and 1981. In the first three months of 1981, one brigade recorded 8 births, 3 of which were healthy boys, and five girls. According to the report, of the five girls, three were drowned and two were abandoned. Although the number of reported cases of this kind has been small, many more probably go undetected, particularly cases of infant death.
through neglect or abandonment. The Chinese press has been vocal in denouncing such behavior, but the phenomenon continues.

Thus, despite the enormous propaganda effort undertaken to make the one-child policy more palatable to rural China, may still cling tenaciously to traditional child-bearing preferences and values. Although there is as yet no longitudinal study of change in child-bearing preferences, the results of two different studies, undertaken in 1978 and 1983, respectively, demonstrate clearly the persistent opposition to a one-child limit.36

Table 14 summarizes the results of a 1978-79 comparative study of the child-bearing preferences of youth in Beijing Municipality and Sichuan Province. As the Table demonstrates, at this early stage of strict population control, rural youth preferred to have two or more children by a margin of two to one. Even rural Beijing residents remained unconvinced of the desirability of one-child families, with 64% of men and 68% of women preferring a two-child family. In Sichuan, the percentages increase to 67% and 69%, respectively. But whereas approximately 29% of Beijing peasants would
Table 14.
A Sample Investigation of the Family Size Preferences of Beijing and Sichuan Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred number of Children:</th>
<th>NONE, 1 girl, 1 boy, 1 girl or boy, TWO, more than 2 (%)</th>
<th>Beijing</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sichuan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>7.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>9.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
choose to have no children or one child, in Sichuan only 13% of men questioned and 18% of women responded in this way. Moreover, 19% of rural Sichuan male youth and 12% of female youth preferred more than two children, compared to 5% and 3% respectively, for rural Beijing, and only 1 to 2% of urban residents in both locales.

A second study, conducted in Yangzhou in 1983 after four years of intensive family planning propaganda, demonstrates the continual gap between urban and rural preference patterns. As Table 15 shows, the desire for two children remains strong, even among those in the non-agricultural sector. Important differences emerge only in the percentage of respondents preferring more than two children. In the 1979 survey, 19% of rural Sichuan men sampled preferred more than two children, along with 12% of the women. In the 1983 survey of Yangzhou, however, no one expressed a preference for a "large" household. Although it is admittedly difficult to compare the results of two such disparate samples, the evidence here confirms what one would expect to be the case -- namely, that the extensive propaganda efforts since 1978 have had a significant impact on preferences for multiple offspring, but have not substantially altered the traditional desire
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector of Employment:</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Education/Culture</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one, girl or boy</td>
<td>34.94</td>
<td>33.85</td>
<td>45.65</td>
<td>30.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one boy</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>7.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one girl</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtotal</td>
<td>43.37</td>
<td>46.15</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>38.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two, girl or boy</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>10.77</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>9.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one boy, one girl</td>
<td>50.60</td>
<td>35.38</td>
<td>41.30</td>
<td>48.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two boys</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two girls</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subtotal</td>
<td>56.62</td>
<td>53.84</td>
<td>45.65</td>
<td>61.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

for two children, and especially, at least one son. Such preferences continue to be intimately related to cultural norms and economic considerations, both of which are slow to change.

II. The decentralized regulatory process.

As the site of implementation becomes more dispersed, both geographically and organizationally, the task of executing a particular program becomes more difficult, given the increase in decisional units involved. China's experience with population control is a monumental confirmation of the dilemmas posed by geographic and organizational dispersion in the implementation process. Though based on a centrally-directed goal, the implementation of the "one-child-per-couple" population program is decentralized in two ways: first, it is left to the localities to generate family planning regulations consistent with central directives and local conditions, and second, it is up to the localities to establish and maintain the organizational structure charged with implementing the policy. In this section we deal with the former, in the following section, the latter.

China's central directives instruct cadres to promote only one child per couple, strictly limit second births, and eliminate the occurrence of third births; they are
also to promote the need for late marriage and late birth. To enforce the policy, subordinates are further instructed to establish a system of rewards and penalties designed to encourage compliance. The September 1980 "Open Letter" to all Party and Youth League members outlined several "special considerations" for only child families, namely, free nursery and school enrollment, medical care, preference in job allocation for the child when it matures, extra housing space for urbanites, and in the rural areas, extra portions of private plot and preference in the allocation of land on which to build houses. Penalties for non-compliance, however, are advocated but not specified, leaving it to the localities to generate appropriate guidelines and regulations.

The result of this decentralized approach to family planning regulations has been some divergence across localities with respect to the provisions in force. In implementing Shaanxi's family planning regulations, for example, Vice-Governor Tan Weixu stated that the provincial levy for having an unplanned second child, "10% of the standard wages or labor income of both husband and wife" conformed with "the standard implemented by all provinces and municipalities." Looking at regulations for Tianjin, Shanghai, Shenyang and Guizhou, as well as Shaanxi, the 10% levy is indeed the common penalty.
What varies is the length of time the penalty remains in force. Whereas couples in Tianjin with an unplanned second child would pay the levy for five years, Shanghai violators would pay for only three years. In Shenyang, however, the same couple would have their income docked for 14 years, or in other words, until the child potentially could enter the work force. In Hua Shan, commune cadres said the penalty was to apply for seven years, in accordance with regulations set by "higher authorities."

Divergence in the regulations does not end at the provincial and municipal levels. Lower level administrative units are responsible for drafting their own regulations. In Tianjin, for example, the family planning decision of June 1, 1981, states:

In view of the great differences in economic conditions existing in our rural counties, every rural County People's Government may formulate its own regulations concerning the length and amount of levies in accordance with local conditions and should report its stipulations to the municipal family planning office for the record.

This provision grants the five counties under municipal jurisdiction a great deal of autonomy in generating specific regulations governing sanctions for unplanned births and rewards for single-child households.

Why allow local autonomy in enacting family planning regulations? Local generation of rules is often preferable,
it is argued, in order to take into account different economic levels, different types of agricultural arrangements, and different demographic characteristics across localities. In the case above, regulations for urban Tianjin may indeed be inappropriate for outlying counties. Thus, the decision was made to allow the counties to formulate appropriate rules.

To focus unduly on such examples of voluntary delegation of authority to lower levels, however, masks the structural dilemma — namely, the limited ability of higher levels to compel local administrators to adopt the regulations drafted above, a modified version of them, or any at all. The problem becomes particularly acute moving toward the bottom of the administrative system (production brigades and teams), for it is there that the rules must finally be enforced, and it is there that the costs of enforcement — material and manpower costs — must be borne. At the grassroots, teams and brigades must find the funds to provide paid pregnancy leave and "preferential treatments" for single-child households, pay cash bonuses to those who agree to undergo sterilization after having one child, and land for those who want to build homes. In addition, they must devise a mechanism to extract penalties from policy offenders, not just once, but for three, five, seven or fourteen years. The source of
funds for family planning rewards typically is the collective welfare fund, comprised of money retained by brigades and teams prior to the distribution of peasant income. Because the size of the fund varies with the economic performance of each unit, and because demands on the limited funds similarly vary, in many localities it has been taxed by the new burden placed on it. In some places, it has proved inadequate to meet the demands for rewards; thus, promised rewards never materialize. Implementation of the responsibility system has exacerbated this problem, as well as the problem of enforcing penalties (see section 4.). In Guizhou, "the necessity to make rewards and penalties stick" was termed by the Vice-Governor in November 1981 the "current main problem" in family planning work. Similarly, Jiangsu deputies to the 11th Session of the Fifth National People's Congress noted that some rural areas "can neither afford to give rewards nor do anything about a penalty." In short, because family planning regulations are enforced through local funding with local personnel, higher levels cannot force them to be adopted, or if adopted, carried out. In Hua Shan Commune, for example, there was resistance to enforcing economic penalties for those who violated the local birth plan. Only three of six brigades for which information is available had
penalties in force in 1982, despite a January 1982 commune meeting encouraging the adoption of stiffer sanctions. Among the three, only one enforced the so-called standard penalty of a 10% deduction from the offending couple's combined income for seven years. The two other brigades both opted for a flat fee of 200 yuan for a second birth, and one brigade raised the levy to 300 yuan in the event of a third birth. Moreover, of the five cases of third births which were admitted to have occurred in 1981 and 1982, four were born in brigades which had no penalty in force. When asked about this variable enforcement of economic sanctions, the commune family planning cadre conceded that brigades could not be made to enforce regulations advocated by the commune. With the influence of commune-level cadres on the wane, and the role of the xiang (township) government not yet firmly established, brigades and teams are becoming increasingly important "decisional units" in the policy process, particularly when they retain substantial administrative and fiscal autonomy, as in the case of population policy.

III. Administrative structure and the family planning services delivery system. In 1978, Offices for Planned Birth were established at the state, provincial, municipal and county levels. These offices were charged with
overseeing the implementation of population policy, the focus of which was voluntary adoption of birth control measures and reduction of family size. As discussed above, the structure for implementation has since been expanded to the commune, brigade and team through the addition of staff in charge of family planning and the cooptation of "women's leaders" in the villages. Lower-level offices or personnel report vertically to higher levels, and each level coordinates laterally with government and Party offices. In conjunction with these offices, family planning personnel set birth quotas, arrange for the dispensation of contraceptives, monitor implementation of the plan, and provide reports to higher level offices.

In the 1970s this administrative system, combined with a rural delivery system for contraceptive services and supplies, was remarkably effective in helping to bring down birth rates. The costs of contraceptives and contraceptive procedures were borne by the state or collective enterprise. Commune clinics provided medical services associated with family planning (sterilizations, abortions, and insertion of intrauterine devices), and barefoot doctors or health workers helped dispense birth control supplies on demand.
The system that was adequate for a voluntary family planning program, however, has been strained by the increasing pressures to limit family size and meet birth quotas. Organizational weaknesses that could be tolerated under a voluntary program have posed severe impediments to implementation of the mandatory "one-child" program. Moreover, new responsibilities have been placed on the administrative and technical cadres, making coordination of activity and high quality performance increasingly difficult at the grassroots level.

First, although the cooptation of local cadres as family planning workers minimizes administrative costs, the result is a specialized family planning bureaucracy highly dependent on non-specialized local personnel to enforce the population program. As with rural programs of the past, this one has been plagued by two disruptive responses on the part of local cadres. The first is overzealousness on the part of those anxious to fulfill and overfulfill state plans. This phenomenon was especially common during the early stages of the "one-child" campaign, the most notorious example occurring in Fujian Province, where it was charged that women were forcefully taken to health clinics for abortions or sterilizations.
In Hong Shan District, too, it was clear that 1979 and 1980 had been periods of mobilization of those with two or more children to undergo sterilizations. Of the 63,400 child-bearing age couples in the district, approximately 10% had undergone sterilization procedures by 1982. According to the district family planning cadres, 80% of this total occurred in 1979 alone, and most of these individuals already had two or three children. In Hua Shan Commune, too, many sterilizations occurred in 1979 and 1980. Table 16 shows statistics for five brigades in Hua Shan. In each case, 1979 or 1980 has a disproportionately high number of sterilizations. In Yan Jiang the picture is clearest. Here, the brigade women's leader proudly noted that she and all team women's leaders had undergone sterilizations to set a good example. Having done so, it is unlikely they would be lenient with policy offenders. Abortion totals for the commune have also been high, with a 1980 ratio of 68 abortions for each 100 births, and 65 abortions for each 100 births in 1981. Figures for 1979 are unavailable.

A series of reports out of Guangdong Province in 1981 on mobilizations for contraceptive surgery also illustrate the consequences of cadre zealousness. In Huiyang Prefecture, 102,400 operations were carried out
### Table 16.

Data on Sterilizations for Five Production Brigades in Hua Shan Commune

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brigade</th>
<th># child-bearing age couples</th>
<th>total # sterilizations</th>
<th>sterilizations as % of total child-bearing age couples</th>
<th>of which:</th>
<th># sterilizations per year:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chun He</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yan Jiang</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>.574</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong Gang</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>.497</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lian He</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan Hu</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in 50 days during May and June 1981, 27,000 in one month in Dongguan County alone. In 1982, provincial leaders announced their intention to carry out two "shock attacks" during the year. National leaders concede that "instances of compulsion" do occur, but that they are "impermissible." As with the case of Guangdong's "shock attacks," however, it may be difficult to judge where persuasion ends and coercion begins.

The other response detrimental to the program has been to ignore family planning targets, or, while nominally implementing them, to be blind to policy infractions. Rural cadres, sympathetic to the plight of labor-poor households and susceptible to the "feudal idea" of preferring male to female offspring, are frequently reluctant to enforce the policy. In Hua Shan, one brigade women's leader, responding to a query about why no penalties were enforced, resignedly noted that "People want to have boys. What can we do?" Moreover, some cadres find themselves in the awkward position of enforcing the one-child stricture on relatives or kinsmen in tight-knit, or single lineage villages. Most difficult is adhering to the one-child limit in their own households, especially where older cadres have themselves enjoyed the benefits of multiple offspring.
To encourage cadre discipline, the Communist Youth League published its "Open Letter" to all Party cadres and Youth League members on September 25, 1980, calling on them to take the lead in implementing the one-child policy. Higher authorities have limited options for extracting compliance. Threats of demotion, often used against urban cadres, are less potent in the villages, where the benefits that accrue from leadership posts do not necessarily outweigh the costs. With respect to material benefits, new agricultural policies reduce the motivations for accepting administrative posts which reduce the time available for household production but offer little remuneration. Another option is to offer bonuses for plan fulfillment. For example, Hua Shan had five family planning goals in 1982, some more important than others. They are listed below, along with their attached values, in Table 17: If the commune achieved 100% of its targets, the Party secretary, commune director, and family planning cadre each received a 20 yuan bonus. For each target they missed its value was deducted from the bonus. Brigade cadres who met their quotas each received 30 yuan.
Table 17.

Family Planning Goals for Hua Shan Commune, 1982

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth rate: 13.5 per 1000</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Only-child certificate&quot; rate:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85% of all only-child couples</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late marriage: 90% of all marriages</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Birth Rate: 90% of all births</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilization of birth control:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% of all child-bearing age couples</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another factor affecting cadre enthusiasm for, and derivatively, commitment to implementation of population plans, is the lack of remuneration for their efforts.66 Below the commune level, the bulk of family planning work falls to the brigade and team women's leaders, none of whom receive special compensation for their efforts. Wage scales set in earlier years for brigade women's leaders have not been adjusted to account for the added responsibilities. Thus, in Hua Shan, for example, these women received salaries consistently lower than other brigade committee members who hold a lower rank. In three brigades, salaries of brigade women's leaders were
from 84 to 91% of the salaries of other deputy brigade leaders, and only 87 to 91% of the salaries of lower-ranking male administrative committee members. At the team level, women's leaders receive little or no administrative salary, and thus are not compensated for their family planning work responsibilities.

A third problem to emerge has been abuse of family planning workers. Not only are these individuals subject to verbal abuse, there have been reports of violence against them. For example, two serious cases were reported in Hubei Ribao in 1982. In each case, family planning cadres were beaten by the family members of women who had undergone birth control procedures or abortions. In one case, an irate husband, having lost his job because of his refusal to allow his wife to abort her third pregnancy, was aided by the local brigade Party secretary in beating the doctor who had reported the case to commune officials. The secretary was the man's father. Thus, the threat of violence, taken together with the other factors discussed above, is a powerful disincentive to actively pursue defiant couples.

A second major weakness in the organization is the system of reporting. Statistics are gathered and maintained by family planning and Party cadres at each level of administration. Although higher cadres go to localities periodically to investigate, it is impossible
to get independent verification of local records, short of a house-to-house survey. Thus, district cadres must accept the statistics provided by commune cadres, who, in turn, have relied on the reports from brigade cadres. This system of in-house verification leaves a wide margin for tampering with figures to fulfill the local plan. Errors, intentional or accidental, will be passed up the administrative network undetected. Equally important, higher cadres overseeing family planning have little or no incentive to seek out such errors, with bonuses and commendations at stake. With no independent auditing mechanism, then, errors in the reporting system are likely to multiply.\textsuperscript{71}

A related problem is the manipulation of registration records. Straightening out these records was a major thrust of the preliminary census preparations. In many localities, households have been denied, or not sought, registration for unplanned births. Additionally, reports have circulated concerning manipulation of the system by people who go to the city or the countryside to have a child, then return to their rural or urban homes.\textsuperscript{72} There, cadres are told the baby was born to relatives and is registered elsewhere. Because the child is actually not registered in either location, it goes unreported.
Three additional weaknesses are found in the family planning services delivery system. The first is the quality of medical services available. In some localities, low quality medical procedures have caused patient injuries. More common is the improper installation of intrauterine devices, with some localities reporting IUD failure rates of as high as 50% of all wearers. Such problems are major disincentives to comply with population control policy, breeding fear in women who must undergo birth control procedures. To improve the quality of medical services, some localities are offering bonuses to doctors who perform consistently without any "accidents." The second problem is the provision of contraceptive supplies. As with many other commodities, there have been imbalances in the supply of, and demand for, contraceptives. Shortages afflict major cities like Beijing, as well as rural areas, disrupting family planning efforts.

The third problem is one of inadequacy -- namely, inadequate numbers of personnel and inadequate funding. An article written by officials in the Changling County Health Department of Jilin Province illustrates the consequences of these problems. First, the burden posed by the one-child program quickly outstripped the county's manpower. In 1979, commune cadres in one locality mobilized over 100 women to undergo sterilizations, but
the local clinic could not handle the burden. Thus, they requested the county hospital to send a medical team to conduct the procedures. Because the hospital staff was also busy, however, they could not go at that time. When they did reach the commune days later, several people had changed their minds and refused to be sterilized.77

Explaining this problem, the report notes that the annual upsurge in family planning activities during the first months of the year occurs precisely when available medical personnel are busiest with health campaigns and other medical work.78

In addition to the lack of qualified personnel, there is also a shortage of properly equipped facilities. In this county, a redistribution of equipment not being fully utilized to commune clinics, plus the purchase of additional medical equipment, was necessary to upgrade commune clinics sufficiently to safely carry out birth control procedures.79

Finally, inadequate funding has posed an impediment to the rural family planning medical network. The Changling County report summarized it succinctly:

"Since the launching of family planning work, relevant family planning operations and medical expenses have all been paid for (dianfu) by each medical unit. With the large increase in the number of people using birth control, the necessary costs are becoming greater and greater, making it difficult for some hospitals,
especially some commune clinics which originally had a very weak economic base, to defray (the costs), and at a certain level, influencing the regular development of medical services... If we do not handle immediately the funding contradiction created between health work and family planning, it is bound to be difficult to guarantee the smooth development of the 'four techniques' (IUD insertion, abortion, vasectomy, tubal ligation)."80

In short, medical personnel in the health bureaucracy are being asked to shoulder the burden of family planning work, in addition to their routine activities. As a result, commune clinics and hospitals are hard-pressed to meet their expenses and medical personnel are not adequately compensated. Such situations only enhance the likelihood of organizational breakdowns and medical "accidents."

To summarize, the organization for family planning suffers from several weaknesses, some administrative, some technical in nature. The administrative weaknesses derive from the dependency of the system on commune, and especially brigade and team cadres to carry out family planning work. Because these individuals are sympathetic to peasant desires for larger families, because the work is hard and the payoff small, and because there is no independent oversight of their performance, those who choose to ignore or loosen the policy run little risk in doing so. Technically, the system suffers from problems of supply and quality of service, further impeding
progress toward the goal of one child per couple.

IV. The impact of the agricultural responsibility system. A fourth impediment to China's "one-child-per-couple" population program has been the policy environment in which it has been implemented. Agricultural reform, and particularly the agricultural responsibility system, has posed a major obstacle to family planning work. In its most liberal form, the agricultural responsibility system allows households or individuals to contract for a specific production quota. Land is parcelled out for use by a household, for example, which is responsible for supplying and utilizing the inputs necessary to reach the assigned quota. Crop prices are specified in the contract, as well as penalties to be applied should the quotas not be met. In short, households or individuals bear all responsibility for meeting quotas, and income is tied directly to their own production. The basic accounting unit reverts to the household, with the team or brigade acting mainly as an agent for the household in the marketing process.

This system of full responsibility (da bao gan) has been detrimental to the population plan in five ways. First, as discussed above, division of land generally has been based on the amount of household labor power, with the result that labor rich households receive more land,
often boosting their incomes faster than their labor-poor neighbors. This pattern of distribution sets a negative example for young couples already influenced by traditional values and family pressures.

An example of one team in Hua Shan Commune demonstrates the full implications of this distribution system for peasant incomes. When one of Hua Shan's brigades implemented the household contract system in 1983, team five had 169 mu of land to distribute among 42 households, 163 people. The land was divided into three grades, each grade having a different quota attached: for grade 1, 1100 jin of rice per mu; for grade 2, 1000 jin per mu; for grade 3, 900 jin per mu. Of team five's land, 66% was grade one, 23% grade two, and 11% grade three. In dividing the land, each household was to receive proportionate amounts of each grade land.

Step one was to distribute one-third of the average per capita land to each person as "grain-ration land" (kouliang tian) to provide for each person's diet. In team five, the amount was .333 mu per capita. No distinctions were made based on age, sex or physical condition.

Step two was to distribute "labor land" (laoli tian) based on the laborer's previous work point standard. Thus, Table 18 shows the total land area to be allotted assuming different household compositions. As can be seen, a
A household with two healthy sons would get 0.67 mu more than if they had one daughter and one son, and 1.34 mu more than if they had two daughters.

Table 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Family of 4 --</th>
<th>&quot;grain-quota land&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;labor land&quot;</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 males 3 10 work points (father, two sons)</td>
<td>.311 mu x 4 = 1.244 mu</td>
<td>(3.36 x 3) + 2 69 = 12.77 mu</td>
<td>= 14.014 mu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 female 3 8 work points (mother)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 males 3 10 work points (father and son)</td>
<td>.311 mu x 4 = 1.244 mu</td>
<td>(3.36 x 2) + (2.69 x 2) = 12.1 mu</td>
<td>= 13.344 mu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 females 3 8 work points (mother and daughter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 male 3 10 work points (father)</td>
<td>.311 mu x 4 = 3.36</td>
<td>3.36 + (2.69 x 3) = 11.43 mu</td>
<td>= 12.674 mu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 females 3 8 work points (mother, two daughters)</td>
<td>1.244 mu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does this difference in land allotment translate into collective income for the household? In team five, 25.3% of each household's total rice quota had to be sold to the state at the price of 12 yuan per 100 jin. Another 1.3% was to be turned over to the team without compensation. After harvest, each household was responsible for paying the agricultural tax of 4 yuan per mu of contracted land, and contributing 3 yuan per mu to the team welfare fund. Finally, brigade cadres estimated that average
grain consumption was 600 jin per capita, and that household expenses toward agricultural production averaged 15 yuan per mu of contracted land. If we assume that: 1) actual yields are equal to quota levels; 2) investment and consumption levels are the same for each household; and 3) all excess production is sold to the state at its above-quota price of 18 yuan per 100 jin, it is possible to calculate household and per capita incomes from rice production alone, assuming different household compositions. The result, shown in Table 19, is a spread of 50 yuan in annual per capita income between families with two sons and families with two daughters, 25 yuan between families with two sons and families with one son and one daughter. For household income, the annual spread is 200 and 100 yuan respectively. Table 19 also shows the household income of cases 2 and 3 as a percentage of case 1. The spread of 6% and 12% respectively is slightly wider than under the old system where, assuming the same number of full days is worked by all, one daughter/one son families would have earned 96% of the income of two son families, and two daughter families would have earned 90% of two son family incomes.
Table 19.

Estimated Annual Income from Rice Production for 3 Hypothetical Households in a Team in Hua Shan Commune (Yuan per year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Per capita income</th>
<th>Household income</th>
<th>Household income as a % of Case 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>415.34</td>
<td>1661.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>390.26</td>
<td>1561.04</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>365.26</td>
<td>1461.03</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the contract system has tended to enhance the value of male offspring. Moreover, as per unit yields go up, the value of each additional increment of land increases. In our example, we assumed only that the quota levels for yield per mu were met, whereas the 1981 brigade average yield was 25% higher than the team five quotas. If 25% higher production levels were used to calculate incomes, the difference of .67 mu between male and female allotments would translate into even wider discrepancies in household income.

A second problem under the da bao gan system is that brigade cadres receive parcels of land along with other peasants, and are assigned production quotas. Whereas they formerly drew administrative salaries from the collective, under this system all or part of their income
from the collective comes from cultivating their allotment of land. In three Hua Shan brigades, two brigade leaders got land allotments 50% the size given to a full-time male laborer, and one got 30% of the allotment. Other brigade cadres also get 50% allotments, and team-level cadres get 50% or more. As a result, cadres have tended to neglect administrative duties of all types, including family planning work, preferring to busy themselves on their assigned plots of land in an effort to boost their income from production. According to two Hubei county family planning officials, the disruption caused by cadre laxity was the most damaging consequence of the responsibility system.

Another effect of the agricultural responsibility system has been to diminish or deplete local welfare funds from which benefits are paid to holders of one-child certificates. Under the old system, collective income would be distributed after the team had siphoned off funds for the welfare fund and various expenses. Now individuals and households are entitled to receive directly all the income from their production, from which they must pay the agricultural tax and contribute to the welfare fund. As a result, the fund sometimes has less money than before, since the team no longer has the discretionary power to set the annual contribution levels.
At the same time, a heavier burden has been placed on the fund to provide for the medical and educational costs and other rewards promised to single-child couples. The result, in some instances, has been depletion of the fund without providing all the promised rewards. In Hua Shan Commune, data from two brigades does demonstrate that collective welfare funds have diminished since 1979. In one brigade, the fund was cut in half between 1979 and 1981, dipping from 12,000 yuan to 6000 yuan. In a second brigade, the 1981 welfare fund of 4648 yuan was only 36% of the 1979 level of 12,974 yuan. In both cases, the dramatic drop occurred in 1980, when the responsibility system was introduced in the area.88

A fourth and related problem is that of care for the elderly. With collective welfare funds reduced and procedures for collective services disrupted, care for the elderly went unattended. According to one report:

"After implementing the production responsibility system, some localities did not care well for (zhaoqu buzhou) the elderly with no children. The source of income of rural five-guarantee households generally is guaranteed, but daily services for them are not carried out adequately. Some places have adopted the method of assigning the work concerning the necessary services for the livelihood of the childless elderly on a voluntary basis (yiwugong), so that more often than not, because the production work of each household is heavy, in practice there is no one to attend to it, and the elderly must run around (benpao) for the sake of some essential services, thus
making some single-child parents feel that the elderly with a daughter but no son have nothing to rely on, their lives are inconvenient, and thus, they want a second child, a third child..."89

Thus, even in localities which continued to guarantee a minimum income for the dependent elderly, the problem of care for those in need of daily assistance was left unresolved.

The responsibility system has also posed problems for the enforcement of penalties. When the work point system remained in effect, teams deducted a percentage of work points earned from those who violated the policy. However, after this system was abolished, taking deductions from salaries became far more problematic, since income flowed directly to the peasants.90 Moreover, as peasants began to utilize private supply and marketing cooperatives, now being encouraged by the state,91 local cadres had no basis for determining household income beyond the value of contractually-stipulated quotas. Since "within-quota" income constitutes a declining percentage of total household income, cadres who do persist in enforcement may find that such penalties fail to deter offenders.

In short, the responsibility system, by its very success, added to the difficulty of population control work. It demonstrated the economic value inherent in labor power,
further undermined the commitment of local cadres to
family planning work, and disrupted the system of rewards
and penalties on which compliance largely depends. More­
over, as the scope of reform was extended under the guide­
lines of Central Document No. 1 (1983), the attempt to
stabilize rural land-holding by means of fifteen-year
contracts further undermined family planning work. The
shift to fifteen-year contracts was designed to calm
peasant fears of an imminent change in agricultural policy
and increase incentives to invest in land improvements.
Such investments would raise per unit yields and increase
rural incomes.

This measure was not compatible with family planning
incentive programs, however. In most locales, the initial
division of land when household contracting began took
into account population policy by allotting an extra
portion of land to those who had signed an only-child
certificate. For those who gave birth and signed the
certificate after land division, however, no additional
land was available to apportion. In theory, readjustment
was to occur annually to shift lands from families whose
size was reduced (through death, marriage or relocation)
to families whose size increased. In practice, such a
policy was not only cumbersome and time-consuming, it was
antithetical to the land-holding stabilization focus of
agricultural policy. Thus, in Hua Shan, villages (brigades) which first divided the land in 1982 had made no effort at readjustment by the spring of 1984. Village leaders, pressed to explain the land policy, admitted that transfers of land between households, arranged by the two families and approved by the village leaders, were indeed occurring. However, such transfers were based on the economic calculations of the households involved, with no village interference on behalf of one-child households. Thus, for example, a laborer who wished to shift to sideline production might transfer his land to a neighbor who wished to increase his agricultural holdings. Such a transfer would be approved even if a second neighbor was a single-child household that had not received the extra allotment of land.

Village cadres sometimes argued that instead of land, these young couples were encouraged to take industrial jobs and given priority for them. However, priority for an industrial job has consistently been one of the rewards for signing an only-child certificate, in addition to the extra portion of land which they were promised. Thus, in Hong Guang Village, one-fourth of those who gave birth in 1983 (11 out of 44) refused to sign an only-child certificate because no land allotment was forthcoming. According to the village women's leader, with no land to divide, the people "don't care" (wusuowei) about family
planning regulations. Finally, the campaign to reduce peasant burdens has also posed obstacles to family planning work. The early emphasis of this campaign on reducing or eliminating non-productive personnel threatened the ranks of barefoot doctors and medical workers in the villages. Although health and family planning officials rallied to their defense, attempts to eliminate local subsidization of health workers impaired the extension and strengthening of family planning services at the local level. By 1983, with household contracting in place and the role of the team greatly reduced, the continued stress on reducing peasant burdens led some locales to eliminate team women's leaders altogether. In Hua Shan, some teams reduced staff size to one, eliminating the posts of team women's leader and accountant. Others retained two cadres but required the women's leader to double as accountant. In either case, the entire family planning bureaucracy is weakened when those best placed to monitor local-level compliance no longer do so.

V. Commune Structural Reform. The problems faced by local cadres trying to enforce economic sanctions at the local level have been exacerbated by the enactment of structural reforms in the countryside. With the decision to shift political and administrative
responsibilities away from the commune to newly established xiang governments, a process which was scheduled for completion by the end of 1984, the position of commune cadres was called into question and their authority was diminished. Family planning work, which had been under direct Party supervision, and not a formal part of commune administration, was placed within the township government structure under the reforms. As outlined in Chapter 2, new township governments typically have three deputy heads, one of which is responsible for health and family planning work. Under this deputy is a specialized cadre who is responsible for the routine conduct of family planning work, and coordinating with district officials above. At the village level, a committee on health, education and family planning has been created, subordinate to the villagers' committee. This committee is typically headed by the women's leader, who also serves as a deputy village head. Beneath the village, work teams or groups continue to have a women's leader who participates on the village committee and serves as the final link to the peasant population.

Although the structure outlined above would be adequate to sustain family planning work, there is often a significant gap between the formally prescribed structure outlined above and the actual post-reform structure. First, some locales have difficulty recruiting someone to
accept responsibility for family planning work. For example, in one district of model Huaiyuan County in Anhui Province, the local Party secretary took responsibility for heading the family planning leading small group because no one else was willing to do so. Second, in areas where communes are being divided into multiple townships, new cadres must be recruited to carry on all aspects of township work, including family planning. In one Hubei county, however, no county funds were available to pay the salaries of additional family planning cadres, and the newly formed townships refused to use collective funds for this purpose. As a result, 31 of the 55 townships established in early 1984 were still without family planning cadres six months later. Third, at the village level, evidence from Hua Shan indicates that the subcommittee on health, education and family planning exists only on paper. When asked to outline the village structure in 1984, only one of seven village leaders indicated the existence of any subcommittees whatsoever. And finally, emphasis at the team level is on streamlining, as noted earlier. The result has been a trend toward the elimination of the post of team women's leader, and with it, the bottom layer of the family planning enforcement apparatus.
Thus, commune structural reforms, taken together with the effects of: 1) calls for increased exercise of village and team autonomy; 2) a reduction in the number of personnel drawing salaries from the collective; and 3) a decrease in the amount of time cadres are willing to spend away from their responsibility fields fulfilling administrative duties, are changing the political landscape in the countryside. Although the effect on family planning work may be transitory, the reform process itself sufficiently disrupted established routines to threaten the stability of the family planning organization at the grass-roots.

VI. Conclusions

When China's central leaders opted for the one-child policy in 1980, they anticipated two major obstacles to successful implementation. The first was the set of child-bearing preferences and attitudes of the subject population. The second was the shortcomings of the organizational apparatus. Shortly thereafter, in 1981, the adoption of the household quota and household contracting forms of the responsibility system compounded the problem by 1) reinforcing motivations for rearing sons, and 2) producing degenerative tendencies in
local-level leadership. At the vortex were commune, village and team cadres who, trapped in their dual roles as program subjects and enforcers, sought to reconcile individual, community and state interests.

In a perfect world, one without the constraints imposed by resource scarcity, money and manpower could have been used to professionalize and extend the family planning bureaucracy, making it possible, in turn, to:

1) stifle the influence of "feudal" child-bearing habits,
2) shore up discipline and compliance among local cadres, and
3) improve the technical services delivery system.

In practice, the state-funded organization stopped at the county or district level, and funding down to that level was inadequate. Beneath it, the rural Party branch was responsible for the conduct of family planning work, and in particular, the local head of the Women's Federation branch. Specialized cadres were usually added to the commune staff, at commune expense, to aid in local enforcement. These women, in turn, relied on village and team women's leaders to monitor their localities and enforce the commune regulations.

Even in the absence of the disruptions caused by the agricultural reforms, this system suffered from a fundamental structural weakness. Although operating as extensions of the vertical family planning bureaucracy,
local women's leaders are first and foremost low-level functionaries within the local village leadership group. The title of "deputy village head for women's work" notwithstanding, women's leaders are dependent on the support of male superiors -- the Party secretary and the village leader -- to enforce compliance with the one-child limit. As a Wuhan Municipal family planning official pointed out, if the authoritative male leaders do not "take the lead," family planning regulations cannot be enforced. Thus, women's leaders are caught in a nebulous situation in which they are held accountable for family planning quotas, but lack the ultimate authority to enforce them.

Attempts to solve these structural problems were forestalled by the introduction of the responsibility system, which undermined local leadership, and thus, exacerbated organizational weaknesses. Although many women's leaders themselves abandoned their administrative tasks for agricultural work, many more were rendered ineffective due to a lack of support from male leaders. When Party discipline broke down in the temporary confusion resulting from the introduction of deregulatory agricultural policies, the vulnerability of the family planning network was painfully apparent.
Essentially, the central leadership sought to use a modified mobilizational approach to implement this regulatory policy. That approach, however, assumes that local Party members can indeed be mobilized to actively carry out Central campaign directives. This was not always the case with population policy because: 1) the policy was very unpopular among many local Party cadres, who sympathized more with peasant desires for a son than with the state's warnings of a population crisis; and 2) the environment necessary for a mobilization campaign was disrupted by the introduction of the responsibility system, which diverted cadre attention and threatened discipline. With leadership compliance in doubt and peasant opposition running high, provincial and central authorities searched for alternative solutions to smooth the implementation process.
ENDNOTES


3. Ibid., 31.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.


7. Ibid., 41.


10. According to a district-level interviewee, most units did not use these short-term contracts, but because Hua Shan was more backward in their thought and work, they continued to rely on them. Interview File, 1982.12.1, p. 9.

12. Interview File, 1982.5.23, p. 11.

13. Interview File, 1982.10.28, p. 10. Of the 41, 14 had undergone operations.


16. Ibid., 8.

17. In 1980, there were 8262 "homes of respect for the aged," serving 111,700 people in rural China. Additionally, 4000 basic accounting units provided old-age pensions for more than 180,000 People. See Zhongguo Baike Nianjian, 1981, p. 545. Assuming that 5% of the rural population is eligible for such retirement support, the programs listed above cover only about .7% of those eligible.

18. The state's response to this problem is to promise the existence of old-age insurance in the future. See, for example, the "Open Letter" of September 25, 1980, in Renmin Ribao.


23. Another commune study, it should be noted, takes cognizance of the difference in labor power, and concludes that in "labor strong" households, families with more children do better than one-child households. In "labor-weak" households, however, one-child families do better than most others. See Liu Honglian, "Kongzhi Wo Guo Fenkou Zengzhang buneng Fangsong" (The Control of Our Country's Population Increase Must not be Relaxed), Sichuan Caijing Xueyuan Xuebao (Sichuan Finance Academy Journal), 1982, no. 2, 5.


29. Ibid., 5.

30. Ibid., 7.
31. Ibid., 7
35. Renmin Ribao, 7 April 1983.


49. See Interview Files, 1982.4.6, p. 4; 1982.5.16, p. 8; 1982.10.12, p. 13; 1982.10.28, p. 11; 1982.11.4, p. 15.

50. Interview File, 1982.11.9, p. 10.


This case is reported by Orleans, *China's Population Policies*, 18-19.


Interview File, 1982.5.23, p. 9.


62. Press accounts and journal articles are replete with examples of errant cadres whose reluctance was overcome through "persuasion" and "education." One presumes that there are many more cases that go undetected or unreported. Tong Hua County Planned Parenthood Office "Cong Yingebu Gongshe Lishugou Daduide Gongzuo Chengguo," 53; Hua Dian Township Party Committee, "Shixing 'Shuang Bao' Zerezhi, Gao Hao Jihua Shengyu Gongzuo" (Implement the 'Dual Contract' Responsibility System, Do Well Family Planning Work), Renkouxue Kan, 1982, no. 1, 31; Guangming Ribao, 7 September 1979, in FBIS, 19 September 1979, Qi-2; Hunan Provincial Service, 23 September 1979, in FBIS, 26 September 1979, P2-3; Renmin Ribao, 11 April 1980, in FBIS, 23 April 1980, Ol-3; "Jihua Shengyu Bie Fangsong Zhong Nan Qing Nu Yaobude" (Don't Relax Family Planning, the Idea of Male Superiority over Women is Intolerable), Zhongguo Nongmin Bao, 4 July 1982, 3.


64. For a discussion of the motivations, costs, and benefits associated with local leadership positions, see Parish and Whyte, Village and Family, 96-114.


67. Interview Files, 1982.3.30, p. 8; 1982.5.11, p. 8; 1982.10.8, p. 8.


70. Hubei Ribao, 12 November 1982.

71. Beginning in 1980, Chinese sources admitted that population statistics were among the types of data subject to falsification at the local level. See John Aird, "Recent Demographic Data from China: Problems and Prospects," in China Under the Four
Modernizations, 202-03. For a more general treatment of the problem of falsification and motives and opportunities for it, see pp. 204-12.


73. Evidence on medical "accidents" is implied through press accounts which refer to the need to improve the quality of technical services and reduce the number of accidents. For example, Xinhua quotes Qian Xinzhong as saying, "More skilled doctors with a high sense of professional ethics must be selected to form technical groups to work at the grassroots units to ensure that birth control surgery is of good quality, safe and reliable," 10 January 1983, in FBIS, 13 January 1983, K15; and on January 3, Qian was quoted as saying, "He emphasized that accidents should be avoided in operations such as sterilization, which is encouraged among couples who have had two children." China Daily, 4 January 1983, in FBIS, 5 January 1983, K24; see also Shaanxi's regulations on family planning which include the stipulation that "Medical units should improve the quality of surgery and ensure safety. They must provide treatment for accidents and illness caused by this surgery," Shaanxi Provincial Service, 3 May 1981, in FBIS, 4 May 1981, T5.

74. Zhang Xinxia, "Qian Tan Yuling Funu Qingkuangde Xin Bianhua" (A Basic Discussion of New Changes in the State of Rural Child-Bearing Age Couples), Renkou yu Jingji, 1982, no. 3, 47. In Hong Shan District, Wuhan, district cadres estimate that about 20% of all IUD wearers have problems with it, such as slippage and expulsion. Of these, it was said that "many" get pregnant. Interview File, 1982.12.1, p. 11.

75. See for example, the Shanghai family planning regulations which state: "The medical personnel who have done 1000 or more planned parenthood operations in succession without an accident should be rewarded with bonuses." Jiefang Ribao, 10 August 1981, in FBIS, 2 September 1981, 05.


78. Ibid., 54.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Interview File, 1982.11.4, pp. 6-9.

82. Ibid.

83. Brigade rice production in 1981 was 2,810,000 jin. Rice acreage was 2021 mu. Average yield per mu equals 1390 jin. Interview File, 1982.11.2, pp. 2-3.


86. Interview File, 1984.6.13, p. 4.

88. This drop cannot be attributed to decreases in the overall solvency of the brigades. In both cases, total production value, net income, and per capita income all increased between 1979 and 1981. Interview Files, 1982.10.12, pp. 8-9; 1982.11.2, p. 8-9. See also Zhang and Cao, "Shengchan Zerenzhi yu Kongzhi Nongcun Renkou Zengzhang," 13; Zhu Mian, "Nongye Shengchan Zerenzhi," p. 27.


92. Of the nine villages where interviews were conducted in 1984, only one indicated that there were explicit provisions for readjustment of landholdings based on family size (1984.3.3, p. 8). Four indicated that readjustments sometimes occurred between households who made private arrangements, but these changes were unrelated to household size (1984.3.10, p. 2; 1984.3.17, p. 5; 1984.3.24, p. 11; 1984.2.28, p. 5). Four other brigades indicated that brigade-wide adjustments would occur after two, three or five years (1984.3.6, p. 12; 1984.3.13, p. 8; 1984.3.20, p. 5; 1984.6.11, p. 9), and one after 10 to 15 years (1984.3.24, p. 12).


94. Interview File, 1984.3.10, p. 10. Of these 11 couples, nine had given birth to male children. Thus, reluctance to sign cannot be attributed to the desire to bear a son.
95. Interview File, 1984.3.10, p. 15.


97. Ibid.

98. Interview Files, 1984.3.6, p. 4; 1984.3.17, p. 6; 1984.3.13, p. 4.


101. Interview File, 1984.6.9, p. 4.


Chapter 6. The Search for Solutions: The Interplay of Regulation and Mobilization

By mid-1981, the parallel evolution of China's population policy and rural reforms had generated a host of implementation problems, highlighting the tension between mobilizational and regulatory methods of enforcement. The concurrent goals of enforcing the one-child policy while 1) minimizing central government program costs, and 2) maintaining order and stability in the rural areas conflicted in several ways. As outlined in Chapter Five, the desire of the Center to place the economic burden of enforcement on the localities undermined the compliance incentives and weakened the family planning organizational structure. To compensate, the regime resorted in 1979 and 1980 to mobilizational tactics that were generally incompatible with the new focus on regularized administration and were disruptive to a stable agricultural sector. Because central policymakers increasingly gave top priority to the enactment of agricultural reforms and the political struggle that surrounded it, however, local-level disruptions for the sake of family planning goals had to be kept in check.
Family planning administrators were to accommodate themselves to the changes wrought by the introduction of the responsibility system, not vice versa. This was the case even though the achievement of the medium- and long-term goals of agricultural reform — sustained economic growth in the agricultural sector — was ultimately dependent on the control of population growth. Thus, from mid-1981 on, the search was on for a coherent strategy of implementation which would effectively blend administrative and mobilizational techniques rather than oscillate between them. The result was an accommodation in which both the content of policy and the style of implementation evolved to fit a changing rural context.

I. "On Contradiction:" Mobilization or Regularized Administration?

By late 1980, China's leaders and family planning administrators were faced with the problem of shoring up Party discipline in order to eliminate the deviant extremes of coercion and neglect in the implementation of population policy. Having failed to pass a State Family Planning Law at the Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in September 1980, the "Open Letter" was issued instead to attack the problem. The issuance of an "Open Letter," though a brilliant mobilizational tactic, was essentially
a containment effort in the face of a rising floodwater of indifference. Advocacy of only one child per couple had begun over eighteen months earlier. Despite mobilizations and exhortations, massive popular resistance and the enormity of the task had resulted in a failure to achieve the population growth target for 1979, and 1980's performance was shaping up even worse.¹

It had been hoped that mobilizational techniques would compensate for short-term deficiencies in the family planning organizational network while it was being strengthened and extended to the village level. Yet mobilization proved insufficient for two critical reasons. First, mandated population control is, by nature, a continuous enforcement process, one unsuited to a mobilizational strategy which typically draws on an excessive amount of human and material resources for a limited period of time. Since such campaigns siphon off resources needed for other state functions, they are most effective when permanent gains can be achieved based on a finite investment of time and resources. With the exception of those mobilized to undergo sterilization, the results of a family planning campaign were by no means permanent. Not only did those who nominally agreed to bear only one child have many years to reconsider that decision, the child-bearing age population was also constantly replenishing itself.
Second, and more problematic to central planners, mobilizational efforts had been severely impaired by the unusually widespread opposition among Party cadres throughout the system. Since the mobilizational style of implementation is based upon the presumption of tight cadre discipline, the absence of support for the one-child limit greatly impaired its utility. Just as bad, those who did seek to mobilize localities to adopt birth control measures resorted to coercion to overcome resistance, thereby reinforcing local resentment and opposition.

On the other hand, reliance on administrative methods alone was not a viable strategy, given the weakness of family planning organs at the local level, the increased burden upon them, and the changing rural environment. By 1981 many localities still had no specialized family planning cadres to oversee implementation of the local population plan. Yet it was in 1981 that the first serious efforts were made to enforce the one-child policy across the countryside. Up to that time, the thrust of the campaign had been on the elimination of third or additional births, and the push for sterilization among those with two or more children. One-child couples had been encouraged and rewarded, but among peasants, the two-child family was still the rule. By January of 1981 the Center had signalled its intention to enforce the one-child limit in
rural areas, increasing dramatically the burden on an already sagging organizational structure.

Coinciding with this shift in policy was the adoption of Central Document No. 75 (1980), which sanctioned the spread of the household quota and household contract forms of the responsibility system in backward, poverty-stricken areas. Although these agricultural changes were by no means universally supported at that time, their adoption and expansion during 1981 and 1982 wreaked havoc on the local-level family planning apparatus, such as it was, at precisely the time more was demanded of it.

Faced with the overlapping dilemmas posed by substantive changes in both population and agricultural policies, national family planning officials worked throughout 1981 and 1982 not to achieve positive goals so much as to avert a complete organizational breakdown in the rural sector. That effort depended on a continuing propaganda and education campaign to increase peasant compliance and cadre commitment. More importantly, however, it depended on organizational improvements to build up the local-level system of enforcement and creative responses to the host of specific problems resulting from the rapid spread of the agricultural responsibility system and its staged implementation. Since organizational strengthening was temporarily impaired by the destabilizing influence of the rural
reforms, local cadres experimented with techniques compatible with the new agricultural policies. The result was a proliferation of contracts and responsibility systems covering peasants, cadres and medical personnel.

II. The Proliferation of Responsibility Systems: 1981-82

Early in 1981, the primary thrust of organizational work was on extending the family planning bureaucracy to the village level and integrating family planning work into the administrative routine of county- and commune-level cadres. By the end of the year, and throughout 1982, the greatest threat to enforcement of the one-child policy was the "paralysis" and "laxity" of rural leadership, a result of the rapid spread of the household contracting form of the responsibility system. Beyond this organizational breakdown, the most debilitating consequences of the initial implementation of the agricultural responsibility system were: 1) the abolition of the work point system, on which the system of family planning rewards and penalties had been based, 2) the elimination or reduction of salaries for all collective personnel (including cadres, family planning workers and health workers), which reduced incentives to attend to administrative work, and 3) the diminution of collective welfare funds used to underwrite
the benefit program for single children. With no remedies proposed by Beijing, localities began to experiment with various management techniques which shared the designation of "responsibility system." In fact, three separate measures evolved locally and were sanctioned in Central Document No. 11 (1982): 1) a dual contract responsibility system for peasants; 2) a cadre post responsibility system for local cadres; and 3) a technical responsibility system for health and medical personnel. In addition, efforts were made to shore up the system of "five guarantees" for elderly and needy households, and provide retirement support in the forms of homes for the elderly.

The "dual contract" (shuangbao hetong) system called for linking production and family planning quotas in the same contract. Although these population control contracts took different forms in different localities, three general types can be discerned. The first was applied to areas where production teams were subdivided into work groups and assigned production quotas (baochan dao zu). Under this system, work groups were held responsible collectively for a violation of the local population plan by any individual member. In Mianju County, Sichuan Province, for example, work groups signed contracts specifying the total bonus to be allotted if agricultural and family planning quotas were met. Of the bonus amount, 30 percent was contingent on
meeting the population control target, while 70 percent was tied to agricultural production. If one member of the work group violated the population plan, the entire group forfeited 30 percent of the bonus money. If both targets were met, an additional 10 to 20 yuan bonus was given on top of that specified in the contract. In similar fashion, teams contracted with brigades and brigades with communes, with cadre bonuses tied to the successful completion of both obligations. As might be expected, this system of collective enforcement was decidedly unpopular among cadres, work group leaders (zuzhang) and peasants, pitting their sympathies for those who wanted more children against individual and collective economic losses.

The second system was utilized where the household quota system was in effect. Here, land was divided to the households according to family size and production contracts were entered into specifying penalties to be levied if an "unauthorized" child was born. In one Jiangsu Province commune, for example, offending couples were penalized with a 20-30 percent increase in production quotas to be turned over to the state for a period of fourteen years.

Finally, under the household contracting (baogan dao hu) system, peasants were required to sign two contracts, one for agricultural production, one for family planning,
or sign an agricultural contract which included a clause concerning family planning. Violation of the contract meant financial penalties, as in the cases above. Moreover, offenders were also punished through increased production quotas or forfeiture of a portion of the household "responsibility fields" (zerentian). Two cases from Jilin Province are illustrative. In the first, those who have an unplanned child pay a fine of 50 yuan and also forfeit a percentage of their contracted land. For an unplanned first child, 15 percent is forfeited; for a second, 30 percent, and for a third or additional birth, 50 percent must be returned to the team. However, the originally contracted agricultural quotas remain unchanged. In the second case, however, this method was rejected in favor of raising production quotas. Two reasons were proffered: 1) if contracted fields are taken away, households are unable to raise the money for the flat fine levied by the commune, and 2) the amounts of returned land are so small that neighbors and relatives are unwilling to take responsibility for them, and thus the land goes unworked. Unmentioned here, but undoubtedly also a factor, is that such splintering of the land works in opposition to the emphasis on landholding stability and concentration.
Regardless of the precise form "dual contracts" took, they proliferated in the second half of 1981 after receiving official recognition via a People's Daily report on the experience of model Chuxian Prefecture, Anhui Province, with the system. According to Hong Shan District family planning officials, this system began to be implemented in the district in 1982. Demonstrating the poor flow of information to lower units, however, Hua Shan officials were totally unfamiliar with the term shuang bao (dual contract) as late as October 1982. Explaining this, district officials said that three communes had taken the lead in implementing this program, with 90 percent of commune members operating under it. Of the remaining communes, 8 had adopted the system, which covered 80 percent of their members. Hua Shan did not adopt the system, however, an indication of the policy autonomy of local level units.

By June 1984, however, the same officials indicated that the provisions of the dual contract system, where implemented, were no different than the local regulations had been before the contracts were enforced. In other words, the contracts did not link production quotas or landholding to family planning. Instead, they simply specified the same rewards and/or penalties already in effect. Moreover, these officials noted that the dual
contract system was also weakened because of failure to coordinate with legal departments to ensure that the family planning contract was legally binding. As a result, it was judged an ineffective measure in that district.¹⁹

Thus, where the dual contract system was enforced, the effect may have been to reduce the incidence of unplanned births. However, adoption and enforcement of the dual contract system, like other regulations, rested with local cadres. They could choose not to adopt the system, or if adopted, not to rigorously enforce it. Cadres sympathetic to peasant concerns would take little pleasure in inflicting higher state quotas on offending households, much less denying them the right to contract for "responsibility fields." Thus, the easy solution was to nominally implement dual contracts, while ignoring their provisions or diluting them.

To ensure that cadres overcame such sentiments, dual contract systems were coupled with a variety of cadre job responsibility systems, all of which relied on economic incentives to induce cadres to strictly enforce population control plans.²⁰ In addition, this system was meant to spread the burden of family planning work from local women's leaders and family planning cadres to Party branch secretaries and brigade/team cadres by tying job evaluations and bonuses to family planning work results. Thus,
in one case, brigade family planning cadres had 60 percent of their bonus tied to family planning work, while for other brigade cadres the figure was only 10 percent.21

A second example deserves more detailed examination. In one Jilin Province commune, a detailed cadre job responsibility system was established in 1981 with the following characteristics.22 First, commune cadres were held accountable by tying their bonuses to family planning work, which constituted 30 percent of the total work target value. Within family planning work, three specific quotas were set -- a birth control utilization rate (jieyu lu) of 90 percent of all child-bearing age couples, a natural population growth rate of seven per one thousand,23 and a one-child rate of 90 percent. Each was worth 10 percent of the total bonus value, and failure to meet any one or all would result in the forfeiture of that portion of the bonus. The remaining 70 percent, however, would be unaffected by the results of family planning work. Second, brigade cadres were collectively responsible for three family planning targets -- namely, a planned parenthood rate of 100 percent, a birth control rate of 100 percent and a one-child rate of 100 percent. These targets were worth 50, 30 and 20 points, respectively. For each target that was met, the point value was multiplied by 2 yuan and divided among the cadres. For each target they failed to
meet, 0.60 yuan would be subtracted per point. Thus, for example, meeting the planned parenthood rate would net 100 yuan (50 points at 2 yuan each). If the other two targets were not met, however, a 30 yuan penalty would be levied (50 points at 0.60 yuan each), for a net bonus of only 70 yuan. Third, team cadres operated under the same system as brigade cadres, but with the point values reduced. At this level, each point was worth one yuan, for a maximum potential bonus of one hundred yuan. Penalties were to be levied at the rate of 0.30 yuan per point, for a maximum penalty of 30 yuan. 24

Clearly, the cadre job responsibility system was an important addition to the dual contract system, increasing substantially incentives for cadre enforcement of local population control plans and regulations. However, a further examination of the case outlined above suggests important limitations in its utility. According to the authors of this case study, brigade and team cadres termed the system "unfair" because: 1) commune cadres had no penalties levied against them for failing to meet targets, as did lower-level cadres. Commune cadres suffered only a reduction in bonuses; and 2) the population targets for brigade and team levels were set at 100 percent, whereas the targets for commune cadres were set at more reasonable levels, allowing them to meet their
targets even if a percentage of brigade and team cadres failed to do so. These discrepancies made commune-level incentives to devote time and energy to family planning work minimal. Moreover, without higher-level backup for "difficult" cases of unplanned pregnancies, lower-level cadres had to work even harder to achieve a perfect family planning record.

The third type of responsibility system which evolved during 1981-82 was a technical responsibility system, applicable to all health and medical workers. This system was prompted by problems with 1) poor quality medical care, 2) "accidents" involving those undergoing birth control procedures or abortions, and 3) worker attitudes regarding hospital or outpatient care for those who suffered debilitating aftereffects, whether or not they were the result of poor quality medical care. These problems, in turn, were the result of poor coordination between health bureaus and family planning cadres, a lack of competent medical personnel below the county level, and a shortage of funds to compensate doctors for their work. As medics were trained to staff commune health clinics, funds for their salaries had to come from collective sources, not state health or family planning funds. Thus, technical responsibility systems were instituted which extended contracts into the sphere of
family planning-related medical care.

A typical example is that of Peng County, Sichuan Province, where contracts specified medical targets, expenses, and rewards and penalties. First, four targets were specified: 1) the IUD utilization rate should reach 80 percent of all those who have given birth and should use the IUD; 2) the sterilization rate should equal at least 30 percent of all those who should undergo sterilization; 3) the IUD failure rate should not exceed 10 percent; 4) the failure rate for vasectomy should not exceed 3 percent. Second, the commune must make available to the health clinic 0.10 yuan per capita as the annual family planning operating expense fund. Third, assuming that all quotas are met and the quality of work is high, rewards are provided on a "piecework" basis: 1) for an IUD insertion, 0.10 yuan; 2) for a vasectomy, 0.20 yuan; 3) for a tubal ligation, 0.30 yuan. To encourage a reduction in the number of abortions, no rewards are given for this procedure. Those who demonstrate a poor work attitude or act irresponsibly will be fined one yuan for each occurrence, and those who make errors (chacuo) during operations will be punished on the basis of their attitude and the consequences of the error. Finally, those who "practice fraud" (nongxu zuojia) or "engage in malpractice for selfish ends" (yingsi wubi) will be deprived of half a
year's bonus money, with additional penalties for other serious offenses.

In short, improved performance at the local level was to be achieved by offering positive inducements that would rival the lucrative prospects of household farming. All available evidence suggests that these systems were local responses to local problems, receiving national-level sanction in Central Document No. 11 (1982). The decision to adopt these responsibility systems and the exact terms of the contracts, however, were left to individual localities to establish.

Also left to the localities was the problem of retirement support for the elderly. As outlined in Chapter 5, the support system for the elderly or infirmers, such as it was, was dependent on collective welfare funds. With implementation of the agricultural responsibility system came a reduced emphasis on collective funds and a reduced capability for extracting them. As a result, many who were dependent on collective funds and services were neglected.

These conditions, and the threat they posed to the success of the one-child campaign, prompted a great deal of central-level concern, but no real solution. To address the immediate problem posed by the diminution of collective welfare services after implementation of
household contracting, the Civil Affairs Ministry issued a circular on January 20, 1982, calling for upholding the "five-guarantee households" system. Later in the year, a second circular was issued, calling on each province and locality to undertake a census registration of all needy households, and to guarantee them a standard of living equal to that of the local average commune member by providing grain allotments and small monthly cash subsidies.

The state also advocates the establishment of retirement homes (jinglaoyuan), but the implementation and funding of these programs is left to the localities. Consequently, most rural villages do not have either retirement homes or pensions. As of 1981, less than 1 percent of the rural elderly were covered by pensions or housed in retirement homes, and average income from pensions was only ten to fifteen yuan per month. By the end of 1981, the number of retirement homes reached 8544, an increase of 282 over 1980, and by the end of 1982, the number had "topped" (tupo) 9000, accommodating 120,000 people. Despite this 9 percent increase in two years, however, it represents only a tiny fraction of the rural elderly, or even the rural elderly in need of support. According to the ten percent sample survey of China's 1982 census, 4.9 percent of the population of 1.008 billion is over 65 years
of age, or approximately 50.562 million elderly. If we assume that only 5 percent of this group is in need of collective or state assistance for their livelihood, the number still totals almost 2.53 million people, far outstripping the capacity of available retirement homes or pension plans.

Since direct state subsidies for retirement are out of the question, given the magnitude of the problem and the limitations on state resources, several alternatives have been proposed. One population expert has argued for the addition of a light "old-age support tax" to be levied and collected along with the agricultural tax turned over to the state in grain. Under this formula, the fund would accumulate for 10 to 20 years before being used, and would be administered by the county. A second scheme argues for contributions from the state, collective and individual, creating a fund administered by the family planning departments or by a specially created organ.

Although social security plans like those outlined above theoretically are feasible, in practice they would present a host of organizational, management and distribution problems to those charged with implementation, and require substantial outlays of state funds, above and beyond monies targeted for old-age support, to support the bureaucracy that would inevitably be created. Moreover,
the establishment of a system of old-age support cannot be expected to bring immediate returns in terms of fewer rural births. Its reliability could only be proven after many years of uninterrupted payments to peasants, who in the meantime may be hedging their bets by having a second or third child.

Moreover, with the current emphasis on reducing peasants' financial burdens, including their contribution to such programs as family planning and old-age insurance, it is unlikely that either the wide-scale establishment of state-local cooperative insurance programs or locally funded programs will occur in the near future. A circular issued by the Agricultural Research Office of the CPC Secretariat in November 1982 advocates the establishment of homes for the elderly (jinglaoyuan) only where local conditions permit, and only by decision of the local populace. Left with the choice of contributing to the maintenance of retirement homes or supporting a second or third child, peasants will undoubtedly continue to prefer the economic potential of additional children to the state's promise of a stable welfare system in the future.

Finally, it is by no means the case that instituting a retirement system can rapidly change child-bearing preferences. One investigation conducted in 23 brigades in Henan Province at the end of 1982 demonstrates this
vividly. The investigator surveyed two groups of forty households concerning their child-bearing preferences, distinguishing between 1) brigades where retirement homes had or had not been established, and 2) remote, hilly districts versus flatlands. The results of the survey are shown in Table 19. The author interprets his findings as evidence of the positive impact of a retirement system, since 62 percent of households surveyed in localities with retirement homes desired one or two children, compared to 40 percent in localities without homes. Leaving aside the obvious methodological problems, what is far more interesting is that, in localities without homes, a larger percentage of households preferred only one child (12%) than in localities that did have them. Moreover, in either case, the vast majority still prefer two or more children, illustrating the absence of any short-term impact on child-bearing preferences through the construction of retirement homes.

Indeed, the short-term impact of each of these measures is difficult to determine. While they undoubtedly contributed to the management of an unstable rural environment in some areas, the census work of July 1982 revealed for the first time the scope of the problem. In the rural sector, census work was carried out under Party direction instead of the civil bureaucracy. Thus,
Table 20.

A Sample Survey of the Influence of the Establishment of Retirement Homes on Peasant Child-Bearing Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children Preferred:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4 (or more)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 40 Households</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>(60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages with Retirement Homes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilly Areas (20 Households)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plains areas (20 Households)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>(70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 40 Households</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>(28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages without Retirement Homes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilly Areas (20 Households)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plains Areas (20 Households)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(35)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

local Party officials, members, and village accountants were drafted and trained to conduct the census, which for a time was given highest priority by Hu Yaobang and other national leaders. This census work directly affected the implementation of family planning policy in two ways. First, the organization and mobilization of a local cadre of census takers (many of whom were already holding local leadership positions, and most of whom were Party members) could not but aid in the effort to build a stronger grassroots family planning organization and make family planning work a priority item on the local Party branch work agenda. Second, the census results, when revealed in October, underscored the extent of violation of the one-child policy by revealing the extent of error in earlier estimates of the 1981 population growth rate, set at "under 12 per 1000." Instead, the rate was found to be 14.55 per 1000. The discrepancy was due to a range of factors, such as poor statistical work and the failure to register children born in violation of the local plan. Long before official reports confirmed the increase in the national population growth rate, however, local cadres and family planning officials were aware of the persistent problem of "multiple births" and "unplanned births." That realization, and perhaps, the desire to maintain a high profile for population control work while
local cadres still had it on the agenda, led to a shift in implementation strategy.


By late 1982, family planning contracts and responsibility systems were already becoming obsolete. Although they addressed short-term symptoms of rural reform, they failed to cure the disease -- a rising population growth rate, a disease which had deeper causes than agricultural reform. More specifically, such measures failed to eliminate "multiple births," which constituted 28% of all births in 1981 and 24% in 1982. Moreover, in 1982 only 22.7% of China's 1209 counties had multiple birth rates of 10% or less, and in "some counties," the rate exceeded 40%.

As the dimensions of this problem grew clearer in the second half of 1982, the decision was made to launch a national family planning education and propaganda campaign, aimed at educating peasants, training cadres and enforcing population control. Thus, in November a work conference was held to prepare for the month-long campaign to begin on January 1, 1983. As outlined in Chapter 3, this campaign sought to combine education and practical measures, sending propaganda and medical teams
into localities simultaneously. Although the detection of unplanned pregnancies and the adoption of birth control measures were key components of the campaign, the new emphasis was on that group of child-bearing age couples who had already borne two or more children. To ensure that the incidence of third or additional births would be eliminated, all such couples were "called on" to undergo sterilization.

Thus, at Hua Shan Commune, 941 operations were performed in 1983 alone, comprising 35% of all child-bearing age couples who had undergone sterilization. To carry out the procedures, a medical team composed of two doctors, two assistants and a secretary, was dispatched by the Women and Children's section (fuyousuo) of the Hong Shan District Health Bureau. One brigade women's leader described the process that took place in her village in November of 1983. At this locality, 52 operations were conducted in 1983, 50 of which were tubal ligations, while the remaining two were vasectomies. To carry out this measure, the relevant population was divided into three groups, the first composed of Party members, cadres and those who worked in commune or brigade industries. After this group underwent sterilization in early November, setting an example for others through their willingness (or at least acquiescence) and their post-operative
health, a second group was dispatched to the hospital on November 29, followed by a third group on December 7. Nevertheless, by March 1984, 33 couples still refused sterilization.\textsuperscript{58}

Despite some localized opposition, sterilization campaigns persisted throughout 1983 in an effort to reduce dramatically the incidence of third or additional births. At the same time, a second, equally important goal of the campaign was being pursued -- strengthening bureaucratic coordination and rebuilding a grassroots organization for the long-term implementation of population control. As nation-wide economic reforms were implemented in 1981 and 1982, the breakdown in rural local-level leadership had been accompanied by uneven or poorly coordinated family planning efforts in many higher-level units. Thus, for example, Bo Yibo's speech to the November 1982 Family Planning Propaganda Work Conference relates a conversation he had with State Family Planning Commission Director Wang Wei, who complained of a radio broadcast which carried three news items, the first concerning family planning, the last concerning a peasant household which had gotten rich through the efforts of several healthy sons and a total of seven laborers.\textsuperscript{59} The moral of this latter story only served to reinforce rural beliefs that more labor power translates into greater wealth and nullify the value of the family planning news item.
This type of problem was perhaps less serious than another identified by Jilin Party Secretary Liu Jingzhi, who noted that:

"Yet another problem in the coordination of work is that localities grasp [family planning work] firmly [kuaikuai zhuadejin], [but] the movement along vertical lines is lacking [tiaotiao dongdecha]. Looking at our province, the forestry and coal systems [xitong] grasp [family planning work] somewhat better, [but] some responsible departments basically do not pay attention to it. If the vertical lines [tiaotiao] don't grasp it, it is not easy to get the attention of basic-level units."60

The organizational problem addressed here is a key one, affecting all policy areas and the operation of the Chinese political system. Whereas local governments and family planning bureaus may generally do an effective job with family planning work in their geographic area of jurisdiction, vertical, functionally-defined organizational systems cut through these regions to directly administer local-level production units. Enterprise or factory managers, faced with a range of norms and quotas to achieve in a certain period of time, seek to meet those quotas on which the most importance is placed by their superiors. Thus, where the emphasis on family planning work is only nominal at the top of the system [xitong] local units are likely to ignore it. To deal with this problem, Central Document No. 37 (1982) required all factories and neighborhoods to sustain a family planning organization and personnel.61
Brigades were not to use the excuse of "reducing peasant burdens" to eliminate family planning personnel. Moreover, as administrative and structural reforms got underway in 1983, the position of the family planning bureaucracy was strengthened by the decision to upgrade its status at all levels and to enlarge its authorized staff size in an environment of bureaucratic retrenchment.

Thus, throughout 1983, family planning work continued to be a blend of mobilization and regularization, as provinces like Guangdong carried out "shock attacks," while others concentrated on cadre and peasant education and the strengthening of local family planning and medical services. By the end of the year, however, it was clear that the Guangdong-style mobilizational tactics were viewed as inappropriate to the changed rural agricultural and structural context, relying as they did on an obsolete work style and an inefficient organization. With the successful launching of Central Document No. 1 (1983), elite attention was focused increasingly on Party rectification and administrative and structural reforms, projects which would take several years to complete. Beyond the political imperatives driving both reforms, the major goals were to realign Party-government relations, streamline and restructure Party and government organs at all levels, force the departure of Cultural Revolution-era
relics among departmental personnel, and promote a new work style among young cadres which placed much greater emphasis on regularized procedures and administrative rationality and efficiency.66

In the rural areas, this translated into a reform of the commune system designed to enhance the role of the local governmental organ and force the retreat of Party cadres from the control of routine activities.67 With respect to family planning, township governments were to include a health and family planning unit which would serve, as did other township units, as the local extension of the vertical government bureaucracy. The family planning cadre, in turn, served as the local representative of the national family planning organization and was accountable to her district- or county-level supervisors as well as the local Party committee.68

This structural reform was coupled with the first concerted effort to define fully the obligations of the Public Health bureaucracy vis-a-vis family planning work. In two circulars issued in the spring of 1984, the relationship between the two units was more specifically defined, leaving hospitals or clinics responsible for establishing a family planning section and maintaining beds for such patients, but relieving them of the responsibility of providing medical personnel to go to villages to conduct birth control procedures.70 This made local units
responsible for training and maintaining medical personnel for family planning technical work at collective expense.

In short, although mobilizational tactics had ushered in 1983 and continued sporadically throughout the year, their value reached the point of diminishing returns by the end of the year, outstripping local budgetary funds and unduly imposing on medical personnel within the public health system. Although the second sterilization campaign, like the first in 1979, effectively punctuated the shift in policy content and achieved meaningful results, concerns of cost efficiency, bureaucratic turf, and the compatibility of this implementation technique with other regime goals made it difficult to rely on indefinitely.

IV. The Fusion of Policy Styles: Regularized Mobilization

In 1983, China's population growth rate dropped to an estimated 13 per 1000, the first significant drop since 1979. \(^{71}\) In the intervening years the growth rate had risen, despite monumental efforts to contain or lower it. The failure to do so was partly the result of the demographic composition of the population, of course, as well as the passage of a new marriage law in 1981 that produced a spurt of new marriages that year. The decline in 1983's growth rate, however, was due not only to the passing of
these population crises, but also to the most effective use of the combined techniques of regulation and mobilization since the dramatic introduction of the one-child policy in 1979. That effectiveness, in turn, was made possible by bridging the organizational gap between the two implementation styles.

In 1979, as in 1983, national pronouncements spoke of popularizing and regularizing family planning work, and regulations began to appear to guide local cadres in implementing the new policy. When national goals were articulated in June 1979 at the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress, however, provincial and local levels responded in habitual fashion by instituting propaganda campaigns which were designed, as always, not merely to propagate but to enforce new central guidelines. Seizing on the simplest indicator of successful implementation, local cadres and special work teams concentrated on the number of procedures performed and showed little tolerance of resistance. This first mobilization effort was thus conducted in more or less classic style: campaign targets were isolated, Party cadres were mobilized and work teams sent in, special obligatory meetings were convened, economic sanctions were invoked, and coercion was used when deemed necessary to meet campaign "quotas."
While it may be true that central leaders allowed this potentially counterproductive campaign as a means of emphasizing the importance of this policy change, it is also true that they had no other alternatives for grassroots level implementation that were compatible with national goals. Mobilization, despite the desire of the central leadership to move away from that method, was the only mechanism available for ensuring the rapid exposure of the rural population to birth control education and their access to birth control services. Provincial-level regulations were being issued, but months would go by before rural localities actively began to enforce them. In addition, Party-directed mobilization was the only means by which to cut through bureaucratic red tape and compel propaganda, health, family planning, pharmaceutical, and financial departments to cooperate in the provision of the requisite human and material resources. Whereas central leaders may have sought to carefully control the character of the mobilization drive, however, local-level cadres placed under familiar pressures reacted in familiar ways, assuming that this campaign, like others before it, would peak, wane and end.

Instead, central leaders, still lacking the organization for administrative enforcement, upped the ante by formalizing the one-child policy in 1980 and firmly
extending it to the rural areas. This time, however, Party cadres at all levels would themselves resist being the vehicle of implementation due to: 1) a lack of support for the policy; 2) an impatience with a policy viewed by many as a nuisance; and 3) a tendency to view population policy as a women's problem, and thus, of low priority.

Because of the time gap between the proclamation and actual enforcement of the rural one-child policy, the first real test of implementation should have come in 1981. Efforts were made to shore up family planning work at local levels by pressing communes to add a family planning cadre to the collective salary roll and training greater numbers of local medical personnel competent to perform birth control procedures. By mid-year, however, these efforts at building an effective organization were neutralized by the agricultural reform process which now had highest priority among the reformist leadership. Moreover, the reforms brought with them a near breakdown in the ranks of local leaders, rendering mobilizational techniques useless and incompatible with rural reform goals. Family planning officials, desperate to keep rural cadres and medical personnel on the job and accountable for family planning work, encouraged localities to improvise with cadre and technical responsibility systems. These and other
measures were then adopted by the Center as damage-limiting mechanisms to discipline personnel until further organizational developments could be effected.

In this context, only the concentrated attention of central leaders could ensure the mobilization of the Party apparatus to carry out the census in July 1982. The organization and training of census-takers undoubtedly helped redirect attention to the importance of family planning work. The preliminary results of the census and the projections for 1982's population growth rate painted a gloomy picture for family planning efforts. With renewed central-level attention to the scope of local problems, several decisions were made. First, policy content was changed to allow several additional categories in which second births were permissible, a direct response to peasant complaints. On the other hand, to eliminate additional births, all those with two or more children were to undergo sterilization.

Second, organizational changes would be carried out which would strengthen the role of the family planning bureaucracy through the provision of increased material and manpower resources and redefinition of its administrative status. Further, all localities -- communes, factories, and neighborhoods -- would be required to retain a family planning cadre, despite the emphasis on reducing
administrative personnel.

Neither of these two changes, however, would help in coping with the immediate, critical problem uncovered by census reports -- a climbing population growth rate and a large percentage of unplanned births and pregnancies. Thus, to deal with this imminent threat and compensate for the concession to peasants of additional categories in which second births were acceptable, a propaganda campaign was launched in which the key targets would be clearly defined and easily identifiable.

Although this mobilizational technique was at odds with the policy preferences of China's leadership, its use was preferable to program failure. In addition, the mobilization campaign had the advantage, as always, of forcing local governmental financing rather than rely on central disbursements. The problem would center on the issue of control -- carefully defining the scope of the campaign, its targets, and acceptable cadre work style. This was done through careful planning over a period of five months between August and December 1982, and through the careful decision to rely, as much as possible, on work teams composed of cadres experienced and knowledgeable in various aspects of family planning work, rather than local Party cadres. The result of this blend of campaign tactics and specialized cadres resulted in a synthetic implementation
technique which can be characterized as regularized mobilization -- a style of mobilization in which the state apparatus, not the Party, plays the dominant role.

Thus, in the aftermath of this carefully controlled, temporally limited campaign, the problems of inter-bureaucratic coordination and burdensome local-level costs were those which loomed large. Health departments were tired of sending medical teams to the countryside, family planning departments were tired of relying on them, and local governments were weary of major disbursements from local revenues to cover campaign costs. The solution was to work toward adequate personnel and funding for family planning units so as to increase their autonomy and authority independent of other bureaucracies.

In sum, the evolution of China's population policy is marked by the transition from a predominantly mobilizational style of implementation, by default, to one of regularized administration, as that became possible. Policy oscillation existed only at the local level, as cadres wrangling with competing goals and new job pressures attended to family planning work when it was demanded of them. Between these periods, their preference for ignoring family planning work was made easier by the burden of agricultural work, either for the collective or for themselves. Thus, periods of neglect would be followed
by concerted efforts at the end of the year, perhaps instigated by county officials who had also delayed attention to family planning work as long as possible. In this fashion, many localities oscillated between intense periods of mobilization and neglect, rather than put consistent effort into family planning work.

At the Center, however, a consistent effort was made to move toward a regularized, decentralized family planning apparatus that would not be dependent on Party organs or other state bureaucracies for its functioning. Lacking anything resembling this in 1979 below the county level, and faced with a population crisis, mobilizational techniques were relied on to achieve short-term results. When the rural reforms rendered that style useless but impeded organizational development, the Center adopted indigenously developed stop-gap measures which were in line with its long-term organizational goals -- responsibility systems that made local personnel accountable for their work performance. Finally, faced with proof of the shortcomings of family planning work in late 1982, a new breed of mobilization campaign was mounted which served to enforce policy changes and strengthen local family planning organs and personnel.

Of course, periods of mobilization were also utilized to vividly demonstrate the importance attached by the Center to population policy. Nevertheless, what appears
at first glance to be a pattern of manipulative oscillation between periods of mobilization and regulation can better be seen as a pattern resulting from the gap between central-level policy implementation preferences and system capabilities, a gap which was extended temporally and exacerbated by the competing goals of rural reform. Thus, far from carefully manipulating and monitoring the policy implementation process, central leaders were held hostage to a fluid set of systemic- and self-imposed constraints, each combination of which necessitated creative responses to the problem of implementing population policy. The result, though by no means a straight path, was nevertheless an evolutionary process which ultimately resolved the tension between regulatory and mobilizational implementation styles.
ENDNOTES

1. For the 1979 population target, see Xinhua, 29 June 1979, in FBIS, 2 July 1979, L29. See also the 1979 Government Work Report of Hua Guofeng, which calls for a population growth rate of ten per 1000 in 1979, dropping annually to a level of five per 1000 in 1985. FBIS, Supplement No. 15, 2 July 1979, p. 19. In fact, the 1979 population growth rate was estimated to be 11.7 per 1000, and despite early predictions that the 1980 rate would drop to "below 11 per 1000" (FBIS, 11 February 1981, L18), the final figure was 12 per 1000 (Zhongguo Baike Nianjian, 1981, 535).

2. Although no specific figures are available indicating the percentage of all communes and brigades which lacked specialized family planning cadres, press reports and journal articles frequently stressed the need of all localities to designate such cadres and build a more effective local-level organization, implying a continuing failure to do so. See, for example, Zong Xin and Bai Jian, "Shilun Nongcun Shengchan Zerenzhi yu Jihua Shengyu" (Discuss the Rural Production Responsibility System and Family Planning), Renkouxue Kan, 1982, no. 1, 12. Also, even in the suburban area around Wuhan, it was only in 1981 that a special family planning cadre was added to the commune staff. Interview File, 1982.4.6, p. 1.

3. This tightening of policy occurred after September 1980, when localities began to modify family planning regulations to indicate that penalties would be levied against all who gave birth to a second child without special permission. For example, Wuhan family planning officials indicated that Provincial Document No. 82 of 1980 was issued specifically to deal with this policy change. Interview File, 1984.6.7, p. 5.

4. This emphasis can be discerned not only from reports on family planning campaigns during 1979 and the first half of 1980, but also from the provisions of provincial regulations issued during this period, which reserved penalties for those bearing a third or additional child, not a second child. Compare the 1979 regulations for


6. Ibid.


9. Xinhua, 13 March 1982, in FBIS, 15 March 1982, K2-6. This summary of the contents of Central Document No. 11 does not refer specifically to either the dual contract system or the technical responsibility system. However, a Sichuan Provincial Service report of 19 February 1982, concerning a telephone conference conducted to publicize the new Central guidelines, does list all three measures. See FBIS, 22 February 1982, Q1.

10. Two circulars were issued by the Civil Affairs Ministry in 1982 in an effort to improve support for "Five-Guarantee Households." The five guarantees are for food, clothing, medical care, housing and burial expenses. See Zhongguo Baike Nianjian, 1983, 675.


13. Ibid.


19. Interview File, 1984.6.6, p. 3.


21. Ibid., 30.

23. Ibid., 47. In the text, the population growth rate is actually listed as 7%, or 70 per 1000. This is a common error in reports of population statistics.

24. Ibid., 47.

25. Ibid., 48.


29. The definition of those who "should" undergo sterilization is not indicated. However, it probably refers to those with two or more children and under 40 years of age.

30. Ibid., 29-30.


32. Ibid.


38. The actual number of needy, or the precise definition of needy (if one exists), is unknown.


43. Ibid.

44. Compare, for example, the estimates of China's population growth rate issued in August during the family planning work conference with the official census results, issued in October. In August, the estimate was "under 12 per 1000." Xinhua, 17 August 1982, in FBIS, 18 August 1982, K7. In October, the rate was given as 14.55 per 1000. See Renmin Ribao, 28 October 1982.

45. To conduct the census, Party committees and local governments at all levels were responsible for establishing census offices composed of local officials. These offices, in turn, were responsible for recruiting and training census-takers. See Renmin Ribao, 3 March 1982, in FBIS, 5 March 1982, K10-11; on the census directive, see Xinhua, 3 March 1982, in FBIS, 5 March 1982, K12-14. In Hua Shan, the census work was supervised by a commune deputy director and Party leader, not family planning cadres. According to the family planning cadre, the census-takers were brigade and team accountants, or other cadres. Interview File, 1982.10.14, p. 13.

46. See, for example, a Guizhou report of a telephone conference, which sought to sustain the momentum of the census work, and follow up with a family planning shock attack. Guizhou Provincial Service, 20 July 1982, in FBIS, 26 July 1982, pp. Q1-2.

47. See note 44.
48. Hua Shan cadres readily admitted that prior to the 1982 census, they denied registration to "unplanned" births as a sanction to the offending parents. During the census work, the resulting discrepancies were rectified, as Public Security departments overhauled their registration rolls and registered children who had previously been denied a hukou. Family planning officials at the municipal level said that this practice had never been sanctioned by family planning regulations, but local public security officials cooperated with family planning cadres in applying this sanction. The problem was corrected during the preparatory census work. Interview Files, 1984.2.28, p. 12; 1984.6.7, p. 12.


50. Liang Jimin, Peng Zhiliang, "Quanmian Zhunquede Lijie he Zhixing Dangde Jihua Shengyu Fangzhen Zhengce" (Understand and Implement the Party's Family Planning Policies in an All-Round and Accurate Way), Renkou Yanjiu, 1984, no. 3, 12.

51. Ibid.


53. Ibid., K20.

54. See Qian Xinzhong's speech to the conference, "Nuli Kaichuang Jihua Shengyu Xuanchuan Jiaoyu Gongzuo Xin Jumian" (Make Great Efforts to Initiate the New Phase of Family Planning Propaganda and Education Work), Renkouxue Kan, 1983, no. 1, 9.

55. Ibid; see also a Xinhua report, which attributes to Qian the statement that those with two children should be "persuaded" to undergo sterilization. Xinhua, 10 January 1983, in FBIS, 13 January 1983, K15.

56. Interview File, 1984.2.28, p. 15.

57. Interview File, 1984.6.6, p. 4.


60. Liu Jingzhi, "Zemyang Kandai Jihua Shengyu Jeixiang Zhanlue Renwu" (How to Treat the Strategic Task of Family Planning Work), Renkouxue Kan, 1983, no. 1, p. 15.


62. Ibid.

63. Ibid., Interview File, 1984.6.7, p. 2.


68. Interview File, 1984.2.21, p. 3.


70. Ibid.

One of the continuing debates in Chinese politics has focused on the issue of central-local relations.\(^1\) The tension between the conflicting needs for centralized control and local flexibility and autonomy has led to intermittent shifts toward a more or less centralized structure, in search of the optimal administrative formula.\(^2\) In the rural sector, these shifts have resulted in varying degrees of flexibility for local cadres in the implementation of national policy directives, as central leaders experimented with different combinations of incentives for compliance.\(^3\) At the Center, the dilemma is how to maintain effective control and ensure compliance without sacrificing necessary local-level diversity or sustaining unacceptable political and economic costs to the regime. For local leaders, the dilemma is how to fulfill their leadership responsibilities in a manner which will be deemed satisfactory by both their superiors and their constituents, and do so in an environment of scarcity.

Numerous studies of rural China have focused on this enduring dilemma of central-local relations and its
importance for the policy implementation process. To use Paul Berman's terminology, they focus on the "macro-implementation" problem, placing great emphasis on the efforts of central policy-makers to get policies adopted at the local level with a minimum amount of deviant cadre behavior (e.g., "formalism" or "commandism"), but with the necessary leeway for cadres to adapt to local conditions. Thus, local leaders are presumed to have a substantial degree of discretionary power, a condition which is the result of two factors — one, the limitation on structural capacity to achieve absolute hierarchic control, and two, the conscious choice of national leaders to allow local discretionary authority to ensure some representation and communication of local interests. Moreover, local cadres are presumed to steer a process of adaptation which makes possible incorporation of new policies into the local political, economic and administrative arena.

Given this shared perspective on the key role of local-level cadres in the policy implementation, it is surprising that so little attention has been given to what might be termed the issues of local-sublocal relations and the "micro-implementation" process. By local-sublocal relations I refer to patterns of interaction between local-level administrative layers — communes, brigades and teams — and the significance of those patterns for
grassroots implementation activities. "Micro-implementation," according to Berman, refers to the local-level process of putting newly adopted local policy guidelines into practice.7

To simply acknowledge the retention of local-level discretionary authority is to have said very little about its scope, importance or impact on policy implementation and outcomes. Similarly, to imply adaptive behavior on the part of local cadres without specifying its form is to leave a critical aspect of the implementation process shrouded in mystery. What range of discretionary authority is present at each level for different cadres? What factors facilitate or impede the exercise of discretionary power? How does local-level adaptation occur and what is its impact on policy outcomes? This chapter will examine these issues with respect to the implementation of population policy.

I. Local-Sublocal Relations and the Structure of Authority

Before exploring the sources of local-level discretionary authority, it is useful to first review briefly the characteristics of the formal rural organizational structure and those who staff it. To the county (xian) or municipal district (chu) levels, this structure is
functionally specialized and professionally staffed, with guaranteed annual operating funds. Although reliant, until recently, on the public health bureaucracy for technical support (provision of medical services), the family planning bureaucracy has nevertheless shouldered the major burden of drafting and enforcing family planning rules and delivering family planning services. Moving to the commune or township level and below, however, the administrative picture changes dramatically. At the local level, the phenomenon of cross-cutting administrative lines which exists at all intermediate levels of the system becomes more pronounced, with functional bureaucracies intersecting with grassroots territorial administrations. In addition, functional specialization drops off rapidly below the commune level, as fewer cadres take on more responsibilities covering the range of village activities, including family planning work.

More specifically, each layer of the rural administrative system has unique characteristics which shape the local-level implementation process, characteristics which appear to have been reinforced in the short term by the process of commune structural reform. First, the commune or township level effectively mirrors the bureaucratic structure of higher levels, combining cadres responsible for territorial (horizontal) administration with those who
serve as the extension of functional (vertical) bureaucratic systems. The top echelon of cadres at this level is usually comprised of non-native state cadres who are relatively professional and very career-oriented, and thus inclined to heed seriously the instructions of their county-level superiors. These cadres also tend to be overwhelmingly occupied with the economic performance of commune enterprises and the management of commune affairs, and only secondarily concerned with individual village performance and welfare.\(^9\)

**Brigade or village-level administration contrasts sharply with the commune level.** Because of its small size, village-level organization is a greatly simplified reflection of the commune structure, but with no parallel reduction of the range of administrative responsibility. In fact, because village organs are the basic-level units responsible for the maintenance and delivery of social services, as well as the management of economic production, one could argue that the burdens of this level relative to available manpower and economic resources outweigh those of the commune level. Moreover, village cadres are predominantly native-born, collective cadres with low levels of specialization and at best, only semi-professional. Because their personal characteristics place severe limits on their ambitions but do not preclude
movement to the commune level, and because the successful fulfillment of their job responsibilities demands a cooperative relationship with local villagers, village-level cadres find themselves in the unenviable position of trying to balance demands above and below while operating on a severely limited local budget.

At the team level, all semblance of professionalism and specialization is removed, and the skeleton crew of cadres is overwhelmingly preoccupied with agricultural production activities and the improvement of team economic performance. Cadres at this level are firmly entrenched in their local communities and less likely to move up the administrative hierarchy. Thus, as one would expect, they share the local interests and concerns of their fellow peasants and, in their cadre roles, defend those interests in the face of pressure from above.

This three-tiered local administrative structure shapes the contours of local-sublocal relations and the implementation process. In particular, the organizational structure is characterized by loose hierarchical control and the retention of substantial autonomy at the village and team levels. Notwithstanding the mitigating influence of the Party apparatus, which cuts across administrative lines to ensure cadre discipline, this structural arrangement ensures that some slippage will occur within the
local-level implementation sector, resulting in a gap between official commune policy and actual implemented practices. That gap can be seen as the yardstick for local discretionary power.

II. The Route of Local-Level Implementation

How does this administrative division of labor affect the route of local-level implementation? The case of population policy is very instructive in this regard. At the commune level, the main thrust of policy activity is on the formal adoption of national policy and the practical work of turning broad policy guidelines into specific rules and regulations. Thus, for example, Hua Shan Commune guidelines for rewards for those who underwent sterilization after giving birth to one child were precisely specified in 1979, including the amounts which brigades and teams should contribute and the amount of paid sick leave to be granted. These specifications went far beyond the outlines of provincial and municipal regulations, and thus, were clearly within the discretionary authority of the local administration, though they were undoubtedly reflective of higher-level advice and guidance.
In addition to adopting specific policy regulations, commune cadres are responsible for communicating those guidelines to brigade and team cadres, preferably evoking their genuine commitment to achieving program goals and mobilizing them to implement commune guidelines in their own units. Lacking such a commitment themselves, or failing to elicit the commitment of brigade cadres, however, commune cadres will settle for much less -- acquiescence in program goals and the achievement of key targets, with little concern for the work style used to achieve them.

Such was the case with the population control program. Since the one-child policy was universally unpopular in the countryside as a whole, and thus viewed by many county and commune cadres as a bad policy and a nuisance, only higher-level political or administrative pressure could force the policy onto the work agenda of the county or commune committee, and even then, not on a regular basis. Thus, while state-sponsored propaganda and education campaigns sought to change attitudes over the long-run, the short-run task was to get brigade cadres to adopt commune regulations and achieve periodic family planning targets by eliciting the compliance, not commitment, of lower-level cadres.

In this case, the results of commune-level efforts to elicit brigade-level compliance depended on the manipulation of political controls, since administrative compliance
mechanisms were non-existent. As Steven Butler has pointed out, the amount of commune administrative control over its constituent units is directly related to the extent of budgetary control. Where brigades have financial autonomy from the commune, they cannot be compelled to comply fully with commune rules and regulations. Thus, because brigades were responsible for providing the financial incentives for one-child families and bearing the costs, they resisted, altered or ignored many commune-set guidelines, exercising their autonomous powers and protecting their financial interests.

The extent to which brigade cadres did adhere to commune guidelines can be attributed to the effectiveness of political controls. To improve compliance levels among brigade and team cadres, normative appeals and a set of positive and negative inducements were channeled through the Party apparatus, including monetary rewards and penalties, personal commendations and demotions, or even forced sterilizations. Under the weight of this pressure, brigade cadres typically found it expedient to give the appearance of compliance, even if personally opposed to the one-child limit. Thus, in the case of Hua Shan, each brigade had its own set of family planning guidelines, having responded to pressure from higher levels. Those guidelines were not uniform, however, varying with respect
to both the rewards and penalties in force. Brigade cadres seemed unconcerned with this gap between official commune guidelines and their own, arguing that they were appropriate for brigade conditions and that they were meeting their annual targets, the key indicator of compliance. Conversely, commune cadres conceded that they could not compel brigades to adopt commune guidelines.

Thus, brigade cadres, like their commune-level counterparts, adopt policy regulations and communicate them to the team level. Unlike the commune-level cadres, however, brigade cadres must actually put the regulations into operation, a task which requires utilizing grassroots policy deliverers and devising concrete procedures for the regulation of village births and the delivery of family planning services. In short, it is at the brigade level that routines must be established which link the state apparatus to individual households. Enacting those routines are "peasant-cadres," i.e., individuals who, due to their local roots, integration with fellow villagers, low levels of education and semi-professionalism are peasants first and cadres second. The distinction is important for what it implies about the creation and continuous operation of routines in a context of loose hierarchical control. Specifically, where state policies test fundamental peasant values and loyalties, village
cadres will seek legitimate or illegitimate avenues for reconciling peasant and state interests by adopting policies in such a way as to reduce the contradiction between their dual roles to a tolerable level.

In this case, village-level cadres empathized with other peasants on the undesirability of strict population control. Although required, due to pressure from above, to comply with state policy in form by adopting regulations and issuing birth permits, etc., there remained substantial leeway for circumventing policy through direct falsification or neglect of record-keeping, or failure to impose penalties on policy offenders; to cite only two examples. As long as the pressure from above on brigade cadres did not become too severe, these and other forms of acceptable and unacceptable adaptation were often preferable to strict adherence to a policy which generated the wrath of one's friends, neighbors and families, even to the point of violence.

At the team level the skeleton crew of peasant leaders has a narrow but critical role to play in the implementation process. Since team cadres usually follow brigade-set regulations on the implementation of population policy, they appear at first glance to be minor actors in the implementation process, contributing little or nothing to the making of local-level policy. From the
perspective of their "clients," however, they make key decisions on such issues as: 1) who will get a birth permit; 2) where they will be permitted to build a house; 3) which extra plot of land will be designated for their use, and 4) whether or not they will actually receive the benefits due them, or conversely, be forced to pay a penalty. Although such decisions are of little consequence to higher-level authorities, they are extremely important to local villagers, and thus, highly contentious.

In sum, the key division of labor in the local-level implementation process is between the commune level, where implementation activities are limited primarily to bureaucratic routines, and the brigade and team levels, where program delivery actually takes place. Since the commune level represents the lowest reaches of the state bureaucratic apparatus, the view from above is that policy is effectively implemented when it has become a part of commune policy. Viewed from below, however, it is clear that the critical local-level implementation activity occurs in the villages and teams below. A more precise understanding of the route of implementation and the exercise of discretionary authority at and below the village level requires a further distinction between the activities of different cadres at each level.
Paul Berman has argued that at the local level, implementation activity is divided between local managers and policy deliverers, or, in other words, between those who adopt or enact policy and those who actually carry it through. This role bifurcation does apply to the case at hand, with local village managers (the Party secretary and brigade leader) responsible for adopting guidelines, and local policy deliverers (women's leaders) responsible for their enactment. Berman's dichotomy does not fully capture the complexity of local-level implementation activities in this case, however. That complexity is introduced through the nature of the policy itself and the characteristics of the organizational setting.

First, China's population policy was primarily designed as a regulatory policy to limit the number of children per couple, but to foster compliance, it also made provision for rewards and penalties to be meted out by local authorities from local funds. Thus, the delivery of policy at the village level entailed both regulatory and redistributive components — the regulation of childbirth and the redistribution of local revenues (or other resources) in favor of one-child families.

Although smooth implementation hinged on the coordination of both activities, this coordination was frequently lacking, as brigade cadres failed to provide
the political and administrative backup needed by women's leaders for enforcement. Beyond the fact that it was an unpopular policy, two factors account for this. First was the budgetary autonomy of village leaders, who had to draw on village resources in order to provide the promised rewards. The second factor was the means by which commune and higher officials monitored performance at the village level. Performance evaluations and bonuses were based on the achievement of specific numerical quotas, all of which were the primary responsibility of women's leaders, not village cadres. The activities which were the direct responsibility of village leaders, activities which were critical to the ability of women's leaders to achieve the numerical quotas, were not subject to evaluation from above. In short, village leaders were accountable not for their own part in the delivery of policy, but for the actions of women's leaders.

This disjunction between operational responsibility and the power of enforcement had two important consequences for local-level implementation. First, during periods of high politicization of the policy, women's leaders were forced to improvise in order to achieve or approximate their targets. Failure to do so would mean the loss of collective brigade bonuses for cadres and the disapproval of commune cadres, consequences which brigade "managers" would
ultimately attribute to deficiencies in the work style of the women's leader. Under heavy vertical pressure, women's leaders would belatedly receive the backup of brigade leaders, resulting in a period of mobilized enforcement, often dependent on the use of coercion. Although the use of coercion was seen as illegitimate by the family planning apparatus (those with operational responsibility), managers at each administrative level concentrated on the achievement of key policy targets, knowing they would not be judged too harshly by their direct superiors (e.g. commune "managers") for exercising their local discretionary power through an excessive use of force. On the contrary, they were likely to be praised for the successful achievement of the targets.

Second, during periods of regularized activity, between 1979 and 1984, the disjuncture between operational responsibility and power of enforcement impeded the institutionalization of programmatic routines at the local level. The failure of local cadres to integrate family planning into the routine work agenda was not simply the result of disagreement over program goals or the disruption of rural organization caused by economic reforms. Underlying these problems was a structural explanation -- the absence, during periods of low politicization, or any mechanism sufficiently compelling to produce adaptive behavior on the part of village leaders, i.e., the modification of their
work agenda and routines. During these periods, only the sustained vertical pressure exerted through the family planning bureaucracy down the ranks of women's leaders ensured the continued regulation of childbearing. Even so, that regulation continued to fall short of central-level expectations, as village cadres, "managers" and "deliverers" alike, continued to adapt the policy to fit their shared rural interests by failing to disallow second and third births.

III. Conclusion

By 1985, it was clear that China's population policy was continuing to loosen, allowing greater numbers of rural households to have a second child, while continuing to forbid a third under any circumstances. Although couched in vague terms suggesting only a slight modification of policy, the shift in emphasis, which can be dated from the issuance of Central Document No. 7 (1984), represents a major concession to the realities of rural implementation. This policy change was effectively made at the local level, the cumulative result of the discretionary decisions of individuals and local cadres across rural China. To use the terminology of policy implementation analysis, policy evolution occurred as a consequence of mutual adaptation.
between the behavior of local policy implementors and the population control program. As initially proposed, the program not only called for the attainment of extremely high goals, it was also premised on the assumption of complete and sustained cooperation between territorial leaders vested with political and economic authority, and women's leaders who had the critical technical ability to monitor other women and thereby control child-bearing behavior. Such cooperation only occurred in many areas during periods of mobilization, a technique which was increasingly distasteful to central leaders and inappropriate to evolving rural conditions. Unable to imbue women's leaders with the power to authoritatively oversee all aspects of the implementation process yet unwilling to resort to continued mobilizations, central leaders chose instead to adapt central policy to de facto rural routines.
ENDNOTES


2. See Harding, Organizing China; Schurmann, Ideology and Organization, Chapter 3.


4. See Note 3.


6. The term is that of Paul Berman, ibid.


9. On the functioning of the commune, see Butler, ibid., pp. 162-220.

10. Although Butler limits this argument to the lateral control of the commune over particular commune-level bureaus, it is clear that it is also true of the vertical relationship between brigades and teams. Ibid., p. 191.
11. The exception, of course, is the commune-level family planning cadre, who not only oversees the enforcement of policy at lower levels, but ensures that residents and workers in the commune center and enterprises abide by the rules. For this group of people, this commune cadre is the policy deliverer. I would argue, however, that in performing those tasks, this cadre is serving in her functional role as local representative of the family planning apparatus. The primary commune-level function continues to be administration, not enactment.


14. According to Paul Berman, this is one of three types of local-level adaptation which may occur. See Berman, "The Study of Macro- and Micro-Level Implementation," p. 178.
Chapter 8. Policy Interdependence and the Chinese Policy Process

This study began with three working hypotheses: first, that in the process of implementation, policy content, style of implementation and environmental context are all subject to evolutionary changes; second, that the implementation of major developmental reforms gives rise to special problems due to the interdependence of reform programs; third, that the critical point in the implementation of China's rural policies is at the local level, where the programs to be implemented and those responsible for implementing them come together. Thus far, chapters six and seven have discussed the issues of evolutionary implementation and local-level implementation, each arguing that political, economic and organizational constraints gave rise to adaptive behaviors and alternative solutions to obstacles in the implementation process, leading ultimately to changes in the content and implementation style for population policy.

Earlier chapters have also documented the impact for population policy of the simultaneous introduction of rural economic and structural reforms, and suggested that the
interdependence of these policies has had important consequences for each -- giving rise to special implementation problems, affecting the evolutionary process of each, and shaping the local-level policy environment. The purpose of this chapter is to explore more fully the phenomenon of policy interdependence and its significance for the policy process and the functioning of the Chinese political system.

I. The Concept of Policy Interdependence

The concept of "policy interdependence" has been developed most fully by Edwin Winckler. In responding to Andrew Nathan's criticism of the "policy cycle" model of Chinese politics, Winckler argues:

"The starting point for a discussion of linkage among policy issues must be the affirmation that such linkages exist." Winckler then proceeds to identify six forms of interdependence which help explain covariation among policies within or across policy "areas," drawing on the organizational theory of James Thompson to do so. In Thompson's typology, three types of interdependence are identified which result from the technological needs of organizations. The first is "pooled interdependence," a situation in which each part renders a discrete contribution to the whole and each is supported by the whole." In this form, there need
be no direct dependency of one part of the organization on any other, but "failure of any one [part] can threaten the whole and thus the other parts." The second form is "sequential interdependence," a situation characterized by the condition of pooled interdependence plus a direct, serial relationship between two organizational units. That is, the outputs of one unit become the inputs of another, without which it cannot perform its function. The third and most complex type is "reciprocal interdependence," "in which the outputs of each become the inputs of others."  

Thus, a continuum of organizational complexity can be discerned based on the types of interdependence present. Moreover, each type of interdependence, Thompson argues, is paralleled by an appropriate form of organizational coordination. "Standardization," i.e., the creation of a set of "routines and rules" which are "internally consistent," is appropriate for pooled interdependence. "Coordination by plan," i.e. the "establishment of schedules "for each unit which provide more leeway for responding to "dynamic situations," is appropriate for sequential interdependence. And finally, "coordination by mutual adjustment" which "involves the transmission of new information during the process of action," is appropriate for reciprocal interdependence.  

Winckler extrapolates this scheme to the broader level of the Chinese political system in his attempt to discern categories of linkages among policy issues. Thus, the first
type he identifies is "allocative interdependence," in which several policies "draw on the same finite pool of budgetary resources."\textsuperscript{10} This category, of course, parallels that of pooled interdependence in Thompson's scheme. Second is "functional interdependence" (sequential for Thompson), a situation in which "the implementation of one [policy] depends on the implementation of the other, but not vice versa."\textsuperscript{11} Third is "reciprocal interdependence," a situation in which "the implementation of one depends on the implementation of the other, and vice versa."\textsuperscript{12}

Paralleling these "'technical' links," Winckler argues, are three forms of "'political' links among the tactics, beliefs and evaluations of actors in the system."\textsuperscript{13} The first is "tactical interdependence," referring to the constraints on political action resulting from loyalties, commitments or personal relationships maintained by system actors.\textsuperscript{14} Second is "ideological interdependence," referring to the beliefs and perceptions of policy-makers concerning the relationship between policies. Third is "evaluative interdependence," a situation in which the general population believes that the adoption of one policy "logically or morally should require a particular policy in another area."\textsuperscript{15}

Winckler further argues the existence of linkages among linkages -- the existence of a parallel hierarchy of technical and political links:
"The first form in both technical and political sets arises at the political core of the system where power is amassed and resources allocated. The second form in both sets relates basically to the administrative structures and programmes which produce policy outputs and deliver them to the environment. The third form of interdependence in each case involves interaction between government and society."\textsuperscript{15}

In short, he posits the existence of interdependencies at each stage of the policy process -- policy-making at the center, the translation of goals into administrative programs through implementation, and the environmental impact of policy outputs and their influence on subsequent policy-making. Because of these linkages, he argues, there will be covariation among policies over time, although the precise nature of the covariation itself will also vary over time and with policy type.

Winckler's typology is a good departure point for assessing the forms of interdependence in the Chinese policy process, and more specifically, for the case at hand, identifying the types of interdependence which linked China's rural reforms and population policy and assessing the consequences of interdependency for policy implementation. Systematic examination of these linkages, however, requires a further discrimination between: 1) policy goals and implementation processes, and 2) central-level and local-level policy-making "systems."
II. Policy Interdependence at the Center

A. Policy Goals. For the reformist coalition of leaders in Beijing, the ultimate policy goal was the achievement of modernization by the year 2000. This goal, in turn, was defined as the achievement of four constituent goals which were hierarchically ranked -- modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology and national defense. The relationship between these four goals was one of reciprocal interdependence, that is, the long-term achievement of each depended on the achievement of each of the others. Within that broad relationship, however, thirty years of experience in attempting to develop a backward society in an environment of scarcity had reinforced the conviction of policy-makers that progress in economic development, i.e., the achievement of short-run economic goals, required sequential attention to different economic sectors, with priority going to agriculture.

Thus, modernization of the agricultural sector was the first priority among policy goals for the reformist coalition. Within that sector, a series of economic, administrative and political reforms were implemented between 1977 and 1984, measures which policy-makers believed to be interdependent. Moreover, they also believed that these agricultural reforms, taken cumulatively, were critical to
building and maintaining the political power which would be essential to the long-term success of the reforms. In short, reciprocal interdependence operated at two levels -- internally among the constituent goals and programs of agricultural reform, and externally between the dual goals of political power and economic development.

Moving beyond the agricultural sector to the issue of population policy, important contrasts can be discerned in the beliefs of policy-makers concerning the relationship and importance of each policy to their political and developmental goals. Specifically, although the control of population growth was believed to be a prerequisite for achieving modernization by the year 2000, it was not an integral part of the modernization program itself. Thus, although population policy was one constituent policy which would make possible the attainment of the goal of modernization (pooled interdependence) tight control over population growth was also a precondition for the achievement of modernization in each of the four sectors. This relationship of sequential interdependence left central policy-makers with a dilemma. On the one hand, high priority had to be given to strict population control in order to attain the long-term economic goals embodied in the modernization drive. On the other hand, proposing a policy of "one-child-per-couple," was a definite short-term political liability due to its widespread
unpopularity. Moreover, demonstrable economic gains could be achieved in the short-term even in the absence of a one-child policy, as long as some controls remained on population growth. Reacting to this policy dilemma, policy-makers placed population policy in a position of high but second-order priority and proceeded to forge ideological and theoretical links between economic policy and population control, thereby making the litmus test for political loyalty a demonstration of support for both policies.

These different perspectives of Chinese policy-makers on agricultural and population policy parallel the distinction made by Albert Hirschman between "privileged" and "neglected" policy problems, where a "privileged" policy is one which commands the attention of policy-makers, while a "neglected" one does not. Hirschman notes that "if there exists a privileged problem that stubbornly refuses to give way," then "a search for the 'real' causes may begin and unearth... various stepchild problems." Once unearthed, policy-makers may develop ideological justifications for linking privileged and neglected problems so as to find a solution to both.

Of course, the relationship between family planning and rural prosperity had long since been established in China and the 1970s saw increasing emphasis on family planning and population control. Relative to the scope of
the problem, however, population policy was neglected until the exponential growth of population size threatened to overwhelm modernization efforts. At that point, the "neglected" problem was linked directly to the "privileged" one through the construction of theories derived from obscure ideological sources which legitimated the call for joint planning of "two kinds of production" — material and human. Contrary to Hirschman's prediction that such theorizing will occur when attention to the neglected problem is likely to enhance the popularity or power of the leadership, in this case it was necessary to defuse resistance to the policy at the mass level, and more importantly, within the Party ranks.

B. Policy Implementation. With the translation of broad policy goals into specific programs of action, both agricultural and population policy became the responsibility of functional state bureaucracies. With programs to be administered by these separate organizational systems, interdependence across policy areas was limited primarily to drawing on the same finite pool of system resources — budgetary and human — for the achievement of policy objectives. Because of the prioritization of elite goals, the weakness of the family planning administrative apparatus, and the enormity of the technical and organizational problems to be overcome, the budgetary allotment for family planning was insufficient during the course of the
Sixth Five-Year Plan. There is no evidence, however, to suggest that this resource deficiency was directly related to allotments for agriculture or other policy areas. Nor is there any evidence to suggest a direct relationship between developments in the agricultural sector and the creation of a State Family Planning Commission and bureaucracy. It is clear, however, that insofar as population policies had to be administered within a systemic framework of economic scarcity, the allocations it received were a function of systemic constraints and elite policy priorities.

Despite the division created by functional specialization of the state administration, a coordinating mechanism did exist to link the policies together, of course. If the theory of "two kinds of production" was designed to forge the ideological link between the two policies, it was the Communist Party that was to forge the organizational link through the layers of state administration. This linkage was critical to the implementation of population policy, because it ensured that provincial and local governments would not overlook the funding and staffing of family planning units and more importantly, that they would devote time and attention to the policy. Also, through the propaganda apparatus of the Party, population policy was continually linked to rural policy, making it
politically difficult to offer support for one and oppose the other.

To summarize, at the central level, the two policies were linked because the reformist coalition believed them to be linked. Yet although economic analyses suggested the centrality of population control to the achievement of economic goals, political priorities ensured that population policy would have to adjust to the ongoing rural reform process. To ensure that this second-order prioritization would not be translated by lower-level officials to mean a lack of elite commitment, a theoretical link was forged to ensure that cadres down the line ultimately had to accept both programs. The Party was to enforce discipline by ensuring the propagation of the theory, the coordination of policy efforts, and the resolution of tension in the process of implementation. Although these theoretical and organizational links were sufficient to launch both policies at the Center, mobilize support and allocate resources, they would prove wholly inadequate at the local level, where the theoretical link was rejected and the organizational link was severely weakened.
III. Policy Interdependence at the Local Level

A. Policy Goals. For rural cadres faced with local problems, the interdependent goals of the reformist elite were of little consequence. What was of consequence were the specific programs which they would be responsible for implementing. By September, 1980, it was clear that the population program would settle on only one child per couple, even in the rural sector. As for rural reform, its content would continue to unfold for the next three years. At this point, the theoretical concept of "two kinds of production" had yet to be popularized, but the link between agricultural modernization and population control was being pushed by central authorities. Despite this attempt to link the two and treat them as coequal components of a modernization program, politically sensitized rural cadres were well aware that the focus of political debate was on agricultural policy and that their actions during the course of the debate would determine their political futures. Thus, the primary concern of local cadres was perceived to be the evolving program of agricultural reform. All else was of secondary importance, including family planning.
Moreover, as the theoretical justification for a state-imposed limit on child-bearing was elaborated at the Center and propagated at the local level, it was rejected as being incompatible not only with present traditions, but also with new agricultural reforms. To use Edwin Winckler's terminology, although the policies were linked theoretically at the Center (ideological interdependence), they were not perceived to be complementary at the mass level (evaluative interdependence). On the contrary, rural cadres and peasants alike believed that the new rural policies which reduced governmental regulation and encouraged family-based economic entrepreneurship implied a relaxed attitude on child-bearing as well.

Because of this rejection of the theoretical link between policies, the organizational link provided by the Party apparatus was critical. At the village level, however, this link was greatly weakened not only by the consequences of rural reforms, but also due to the peasant orientation of rural Party members. That is, most village Party members rejected the one-child policy in the same way as their fellow villagers. Only with the political pressure brought to bear through the Party hierarchy did most Party members acquiesce in the call to enforce the policy, but because of their opposition the Party apparatus was unable to effectively coordinate the implementation of
the two reforms.

B. Policy Implementation. The most dramatic evidence of the way in which policy interdependence shaped the implementation of these policies is to be found, of course, at the local level. Although central-level policy goals posited the dependence of agricultural development and the overall modernization process on the achievement of population control, in practice the transformation of rural economic and administrative structures took precedence over all else. Thus, at the bottom of the system, a relationship of sequential interdependence still existed between the two policies, but the direction was reversed -- the outputs or results of agricultural reforms (economic and structural changes) became the inputs for implementing the one-child policy.

More specifically, because of the cohesiveness of the local-level policy-making "system," the alteration in economic and administrative structures resulting from the introduction of rural reforms fundamentally altered the organizational context in which population policy was administered. Thus, to review briefly: 1) the elimination of the work point system forced a revision of the system by which rewards and punishments were meted out to compliant or recalcitrant couples; 2) the push to reduce peasant burdens and the reform of the commune structure led many localities to eliminate family planning cadres or women's
leaders as "unnecessary personnel," leading to calls for a strengthening of the state subsidized family planning bureaucracy down to the village level; 3) the parcelling out of "responsibility fields" to cadres reduced enthusiasm and incentives for administrative tasks such as family planning, leading to the emergence of a responsibility system for cadres to evaluate their administrative performance; 4) the elimination of the collective withholding system diminished welfare funds, leaving local cadres no funds to give to one-child families in rewards or support the elderly.

In these and other ways, the enactment of agricultural reforms altered local structures that comprised the organizational context for the implementation of population policy, forcing an evolving process of adjustment in both the content and the implementation of population policy. Thus, although it is true that significant modifications in the content of population policy occurred as a result of a learning process that was essentially independent of other rural reform efforts (e.g., the shift in 1983 to a stress on sterilizations for all under 40 years of age with two children, a decision made on the basis of survey and census data which indicated the continued large percentage of multiple births), procedural modifications in the implementation process were more often the result of the combined impact of evolutionary changes within the population policy
sector and evolutionary changes in the rural reform sector. Thus, for example, as da bao gan was introduced in 1981 and economic contracts popularized, "dual contracts" emerged to link family planning to agricultural production. In short, the lateral impact, or horizontal evolution, was in this case confined primarily to the procedural aspects of population control, although the cumulative effect of the agricultural reforms was ultimately a factor which contributed to the loosening of the one-child policy.

Although political and economic priorities ensured that the implementation of population policy would have to respond to changes introduced via rural reforms, the relationship between the two was not a unidirectional one. The high priority attached to the achievement of population control goals by the elite ensured that directives on agricultural policy would seek to ameliorate the worst contradictions between agricultural policy and population policy by making special provision for single-child families. Thus, for example, although the requirements of economic goals led to the allotment of land on a per capita basis, thereby giving families with multiple laborers an economic edge initially, special provisions were made for one-child families by offering extra plots of land or alternative employment in brigade or commune enterprises. Similarly, in the process of restructuring the system of rural administration, efforts were made to ensure the retention
of women's leaders in village posts to oversee family planning work. The fact that local units frequently failed to implement these measures, however, demonstrates again the importance of local autonomy and the failure of the Party apparatus to fulfill its coordinating function at the local level. Even when the measures were implemented, they represented little more than a tampering with the margins of policy process, not policy content. In short, although minor adjustments were made in agricultural policy to accommodate population policy, these changes were essentially discretionary, and not the result of mutual adaptation between policies.

This analysis suggests that a relationship of sequential interdependence existed between rural reforms and population policy, a relationship which shaped both the evolving content of, and implementation process for, population policy.

In his organizational theory, James Thompson suggests that different forms of interdependence require different types of coordination processes in order to ensure smooth operation of the organization. This analysis demonstrates the relevance of his proposition to the phenomenon of policy interdependence as well. Specifically, two critical mechanisms were used to coordinate the relationship of sequential dependence between population policy and rural
reform -- first, a policy theory to coordinate the policies ideologically, and second, the Party apparatus to coordinate the policies organizationally. Although many implementation problems were due to 1) factors endogenous to each policy area, and 2) structural autonomy and discretionary authority of local units, a third source of implementation problems can also be attributed to the deficiencies of these two coordinating mechanisms.

In what way were they deficient? First, the coordinating theory of "two kinds of production" was a post hoc rationalization which emerged strongly only in 1981, after the one-child policy was firmly in place. As such, it was perceived to be what it was -- a political tool for justifying a harsh policy which was widely opposed throughout the society and by rank and file Party members, especially in the countryside. Thus, although the theory was a political signal whose significance was appreciated by rural cadres, it did not persuade them of the logic of enforcing strict control of child-bearing at a time of economic liberalization and deregulation. In failing to do so, the organizational mechanism of coordination was also weakened. Because of the fusion of peasant and Party cadre perspectives on this issue at the local level, and because of the opportunities posed by the economic reforms, many cadres abdicated their role as coordinators while others took an attitude of benign neglect. Still others
attended to population policy, but only sporadically or coercively.

These deficiencies in coordination were never fundamentally resolved. Instead, the need for them was obviated with the stabilization of new rural structures and the strengthening of the state family planning bureaucracy. This process had, by 1984, altered the relationship between the two policies from one of direct, sequential interdependence to indirect, pooled interdependence. As Thompson's theory suggests, such a relationship requires only the creation of a standardized set of "routines and rules" for the smooth coordination of parallel activities. China's efforts in rebuilding a rationalized governmental administration in the rural sector had, by 1984, moved it far in this direction.


3. Ibid., 742.


5. Ibid., 54.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 55.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid, 56.


11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.


15. Ibid., 743-44.


17. Ibid, 232.

18. Ibid., 231.
19. For a discussion of the emergence and rationale of this theory, see Chapter 3, pp. 178-180.


23. Ibid.
Chapter 9. Conclusion

It is traditional for studies of policy implementation to conclude with the question, "was the implementation process a success or a failure?" The answer is almost never as simple as the question suggests, of course, but that seldom keeps policy analysts from attempting to formulate a response. In keeping with that tradition, I wish to conclude by addressing this question for the case at hand: was the implementation of China's population policy a success or a failure?

Recalling the complexities of the implementation path which has been charted in this study, it is tempting not to venture into these murky waters, but instead to simply quote the words of Giandomenico Majone and Aaron Wildavsky and say that I "can only answer, and with conviction, it depends..."\(^1\) What it depends on, of course, is the choice of criteria to be used to evaluate the implementation process. Since there is no consensus on the appropriate criteria for evaluation,\(^2\) the choice of one over another can have important implications for judgments of success or failure.
In their study of policy implementation in the United States, for example, Randall Ripley and Grace Franklin identify three different criteria for measuring successful policy implementation, each of which has shortcomings, and each of which may produce a different measurement result. The first criterion for measuring success is bureaucratic "compliance," which can be measured as "the degree of compliance on the part of bureaucratic underlings to their bureaucratic superiors or by the degree of compliance on the part of bureaucracies in general with specific mandates contained in the statute." The second criterion is identified as "smoothness -- lack of disruption" in bureaucratic processes, or in other words, by "smoothly functioning routines and an absence of problems." The third criterion is "performance or impact," or the extent to which the implementation process "achieves both short-run performance and longer-run impacts in accord with objectives," without producing "deleterious unintended consequences, although it may have beneficial unintended consequences."

After identifying the limitations of each of these measurements, Ripley and Franklin argue a preference for the third criterion -- policy performance -- as the most meaningful indicator of successful implementation. In looking at the case at hand, however, it is useful to suspend judgment, for the moment, of which is the "best" criterion, and look instead at the implementation of
population policy as measured against each of the three. As will be seen, irrespective of which of these criteria is used, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that China's "one-child-per-couple" population policy has been far less than a success.

Looking first at the standard of bureaucratic "compliance,"7 this study has documented the widespread resistance to, and subversion of, the one-child program across rural China. Large numbers of cadres from the county to the team level were at least apathetic concerning population control, and at most, strongly opposed to the stringent policy. Others complied in implementing certain measures (e.g., providing rewards for one-child couples), but not others (e.g., disallowing second births), and were able to do so due to the structural and budgetary autonomy of local units.

Similarly, the implementation process also measures up poorly against the second stand of evaluation. Far from being characterized by "smoothly functioning routines and an absence of problems,"8 the attempt to universally enforce a child-bearing limit was beset by problems from the start. Routines were difficult to establish due to the weakness of the family planning bureaucracy and the difficulty of coordinating the constituent elements of the program. Thus, for example, even the best efforts of family planning cadres came to naught when the supply of
birth control products or the technical capabilities of local medical personnel were inadequate. These and other problems were a constant menace to policy implementation, and were compounded by the lack of bureaucratic compliance at the local level.

The third standard, the achievement of "short-run performance in accord with its objectives and longer-run impacts in accord with objectives," without producing "deleterious unintended consequences," is equally problematic. First, short-term performance, though impressive, has not met the stated policy goals. Annual population growth rate goals for the period 1980-1984, the indicator given most prominence by the regime itself, consistently exceeded the targeted levels. Similarly, targets for reducing or eliminating unplanned pregnancies also went unmet. Second, although it is impossible from the vantage point of 1985 to judge the long-term impact of the policy, Western analysts and the Chinese themselves now concede that the targeted goal of holding population down to 1.2 billion by the year 2000 will not be met. The prospects for achieving the other two important long-term goals, improving the health and quality of life of children and fundamentally altering child-bearing attitudes and practices, are more difficult to judge due to the imprecision of the concepts. It is fair to assume, however, that the impact of the one-child program will be sufficient
to make progress (as defined by the regime) on these two objectives.

Against the short-term achievements and long-term prospects must be balanced the negative consequences of the one-child policy, however. One need recall only the worst of these -- forced abortions, female infanticide, and brutality toward family planning cadres -- to be inclined to reconsider any positive evaluation of the implementation process.

This cursory review of Chinese performance based on the three standards of evaluation most subscribed to by Western policy analysts obviates the need to choose between them, since the evaluation ranges from borderline to negative in every case. Indeed, using these criteria, the most generous interpretation of the implementation process is that it was a marginal effort, severely flawed in process and outcome, but nevertheless effective in approximating key short-term objectives. Yet given the scope of the policy goals and the complexities of the policy process that have been detailed in this study, I am inclined to instinctively resist such a judgment, while conceding the evidence which supports it.

The problem, of course, is not the judgment so much as the criteria used to derive it, the sterility of which stand in sharp contrast to the rich vision of the policy implementation process painted in this study. More specifically,
and echoing the themes with which I began, these conceptualizations of success or failure do not take into account two phenomena which have been central to this analysis and which complicate dramatically the evaluation process: policy interdependence and evolutionary implementation.

Early in this study a distinction was made between the Western, developed policy setting and the Third World developmental setting. A notable characteristic of the latter is the desire to achieve modernization, a desire which frequently leads to a search for fundamental, comprehensive reform or development programs. Since the constituent elements of a comprehensive development program are intrinsically interdependent, only the most careful manipulation of each policy lever will ensure that the program will not fall short of its goals, generate undesirable consequences, or fail altogether. Yet precisely because developing societies are frequently characterized by what Albert Hirschman terms a "problem-solving path" in which "motivation races ahead of understanding," such sophisticated manipulation of the policy levers is impossible to achieve, resulting in a "high incidence of mistakes and failures..." But, for Hirschman, the important question is not whether implementation "failed," since one presumes that many "failures" will occur, but rather, whether any collective learning occurred as a result of the effort. If so, progress may have been "smuggled in" despite the
immediate failure, laying the foundation for future efforts.

This focus on learning complements fully the concept of evolutionary implementation, which sees implementation as "a moving target" and assumes that in the process of implementation, policy ideas will be transformed. From this perspective, evaluation must also take on a dynamic quality, capable of assessing the extent to which the policy idea and the policy outcome ultimately converge. Majone and Wildavsky, in attempting to grapple with the notion of evaluation (given the assumption of evolutionary implementation), express the problem succinctly:

"In an evolutionary context "good" and "bad" [implementation] take on multiple meanings. In an evolutionary context "good" means "faithful," but interestingly enough, it might also mean "faithless." A faithful translation of an ill-formed policy idea or theory would bring into being all the inconsistencies, inadequacies, and/or unfortunate consequences inherent in a pristine conception. A faithless interpretation would straighten out logical defects and/or other elements so that the consequences were more desirable than those in the original plan."15

In short, successful implementation is best seen not as the achievement of original goals through a smooth implementation process, but rather as the end product of a learning process which redefines goals and processes to achieve greater compatibility between them.

If we now reconsider the case at hand in light of this perspective, it is possible to arrive at a more balanced evaluation of China's efforts. Specifically, many of the
problems which plagued the population policy implementation process can be attributed to the extremes of "faithful" and "faithless" implementation. In 1979, the Party apparatus was mobilized to achieve a dramatically faithful translation of the new policy on child-bearing, but it did so through reliance on heavy-handed pressure or coercion in many cases, stimulating a negative response. As the policy "idea" tightened even more in 1980, a rejection of the merit of the policy idea, combined with the parallel developments in agricultural policy, led to an increasingly "faithless" implementation of policy. By 1984, this faithless interpretation had resulted in a modification of policy goals, short and long-term, policy content, and policy processes, thereby reducing the severity of many of the problems which had plagued policy-makers. If the modified and somewhat less restrictive policy which resulted from this process may be seen as a progressive change, then from this perspective the implementation process may be judged to have been a success.
ENDNOTES


4. Ibid., 200.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., 202-03.

7. Ibid., 200.

8. Ibid.


10. On this general phenomenon in developing societies, see Albert O. Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress.

11. Ibid. 236.


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