

# ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION: A CASE STUDY IN THE SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY GOVERNMENT

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## 1. Motive and methods of the study

A month following the military coup of May 16, 1961, and frequently thereafter the intention of the top officials of the central government of Korea, who were in military uniform, to decentralize certain functions to the local governments appeared in the Korean newspapers and also in the journal of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The program of administrative decentralization thus started on a relatively large scale and this program was proclaimed as a major policy of the Korean government.

To the writer this move in the Korean government was extremely interesting in view of the necessity for it and more particularly because of the following. For decentralization to succeed, a concomitant change in attitudes toward democratic behavior or the preexistence

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of such a behavior is necessary. However, to find a military government which is supposedly more preoccupied with the practice of a strong chain of command, and an order-and-command orientation of supervision to initiate such a large-scale program of administrative decentralization, was paradoxical, and the writer was very dubious of the intention for the decentralization program and of the possible success of it. Because of such curiosity the writer started to follow the program.

The writer could not use the participative observation method mainly because the scale of the decentralization program was so big, including every ministry of the central government and all the local governments of each level. Thus it was virtually impossible to observe the entire process from inside the bureaucracy. Therefore, the main methods used were as follows.

The writer collected all the official statements and other articles in the Korean newspapers whenever they appeared. The journal, Chibang Haengjong, put out monthly by the Ministry of Home Affairs, was also carefully scrutinized to get all information possible. By the middle of June 1964 the writer, through the organization of these materials, could get a fairly good idea of the whole scheme. However, these materials were heavily loaded with official descriptions of the case. And nobody in the government ever evaluated the program in the light of how many tasks, which were formally announced as decentralized because of the program, actually were being carried out by the governments of lower levels as intended. Thus the writer started interviewing the officials concerned from the middle of June 1964 until the end of July of the same year. The officials interviewed were as follows: a bureau chief, a section chief and a class 3-B official of the Ministry of Home Affairs; two bureau chiefs and two section chiefs of the Kyonggi provincial government; one county head and five section chiefs and two officials of lower rank of a county government. The interviews with the two officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs were conducted in their offices. The other ministry official was invited to the writer's home for more candid discussion. These interviews also gave the writer the chance to get access to some of the unpublished and classified official records used for the processing of the program. The interviews with the county officials were conducted in the office of the county head and also in his residence. The interviews with the provincial officials were conducted in their offices. Unstructured questionnaire was used in the interviews. The writer also brought with him the list of the tasks the authorities on which was officially announced as delegated in order to check whether they were really delegated.

It was thought that such confirmation might not be accurate if it was made with the officials of the government at higher level who were in the position of the delegators. In order to avoid the mere endorsement by these officials, the writer asked the officials who were in the position of delegates. Thus the decentralization by the central government was checked with the officials of the provincial government and that by the provincial government was checked with the officials of the county government.

## 2. Historical Description of the Case

Immediately following the military coup of May 16, 1961 the Supreme Council of National Reconstruction (SCNR) was established with the military personnel who were the leaders of the coup. Most of the ministers of the central government also were generals in the armed forces. The governorships of provinces also were occupied by generals.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Han Shin, a major general of the army, was a man who commanded high respect within the army for his honesty and integrity. The chairman of the SCNR had a strong confidence in him as to his disinterestedness in corruption, his energy and capability. The minister, upon his appointment, issued the following policy statement to the officials of the ministry and all the officials of the local governments. The policy statement read as follows:

- (1) We shall eliminate entirely all those who accept or favor communism and thereby firmly guarantee the public safety.
- (2) We shall eliminate dishonesty and corruption, guarantee fair decisions on personnel administration and abide by the principle of reward and punishment.
- (3) We shall promote the social morals.
- (4) We shall establish a professional career system for the public service.

The minister at this time apparently did not have in mind the idea of decentralizing authorities. His policy statement closely resembled the official pledges made by the military government upon its take-over of the government.

Subsequently the minister had his first inspection tour of the provinces during which he was accompanied by the officials of the ministry. Upon his return he said he found a lack of horizontal coordination in the field and a lack of initiative on the part of local administrators.

About this time, a section chief of the Ministry of Home Affairs, through the bureau chief and the vice-minister, asked the minister to delegate the authorities of the central government

to the provincial governments and those of the provincial government to the county governments. The section chief, the bureau chief and the vice minister were all civilians and had been in the ministry as career officials. The section chief who originated the idea was a man of respect among the officials of the ministry and was widely known among the local administrators as a capable person. He had never had a local assignment before. He passed the higher civil service examination and was a graduate of the best university. He had been writing articles in the journal of the ministry. He had an ability to persuade others. When he was a subsection chief under the previous governments he participated in a program of administrative decentralization, but he was dissatisfied with the results of it.

Because the operation of the ministry was closely supervised by the Committee on Internal Affairs of the SCNR, the ministry had to get the approval of this committee. The section chief and the bureau chief were called in to the committee to explain the plan. The committee in turn reported its approval to the chairman of the SCNR.

On June 12, 1961, which was twenty-seven days after the military coup, the first meeting of the governors' council was held in the conference room of the Ministry of Home Affairs. At this meeting the minister in his instruction, which was based on his first visits to the localities, told the governors as follows:

The abilities of the county heads and those of the rank-and-file who are to execute and get the results for all the national programs in front line should be developed and strengthened immediately.

He also told the meeting if anything seemed impossible due to a lack of authority, administrators should have a more positive attitude of asking the superior agency for the solution.

At the same meeting, the governors were told by the bureau chief that the central government was going to undertake the decentralization program. The guidelines, which had been prepared by the section, were handed out. They were as follows:

The central government will have the planning function, the provincial government will have both planning and executory functions, and the cities and counties will have only executory functions.

Further elaborations were made and pointed out as follows:

The following decisions will belong to the central government: (1) those decisions which need over-all planning and uniform treatment because of the nation-wide character; (2) the decisions which affect more than one provincial area and those the provincial

government cannot deal with effectively if it was given such authority; and (3) regardless of the intentions of the provincial government those decisions which need control and supervision by the central government.

The province will make the following decisions: (1) over-all planning of the province; (2) those decisions which have to be made without regard to the areas of the cities and counties; (3) the decisions which cannot be made with the capacity of the cities and counties; and (4) the decisions which coordinate the imbalance in the administration and finance between different counties and cities.

In the days following the meeting the section started to draft the ministerial directives and further guidelines in order to let the governors request authorities on specific tasks from the central government for delegation. On July 29 these directives of the minister (Local Administration No. 614 and No. 664) were issued to the provinces requesting the latter to submit names of the tasks they wanted to be delegated and at the same time also to delegate in turn the provincial authorities to the counties and cities. In addition to those announced in the governors' council the following were presented as guidelines for the finding of the tasks for which delegation of decision-making authorities was needed:

- (1) Those which are uneconomical by deciding at the central government;
- (2) Those which have close relationship with special interests of localities;
- (3) Those which do not need uniform control;
- (4) Those with which the central government does not need to interfere from the viewpoint of policy; and
- (5) Those for which the local governments bear the expense.

As a result, by a few days before the next governors' council which was scheduled to be held on August 28, 1961, 163 tasks were applied for the delegation of authority. The names of tasks, the reasons for the request, the ministries concerned and the province proposing the delegation were compiled by the section of the Ministry of Home Affairs and, before the convening of the governors' council, copies were sent to each ministry with the accompanying memorandum of the Minister of Home Affairs asking each ministry for cooperation.

While there were a variety of reasons for the requisitions for the delegation, the following can be said as the main characteristics.

- (1) The complexity of procedure and the waste of time.
- (2) The close relationship between the authority already delegated and the authority

proposed for delegation.

- (3) The possession by the provincial government of the technicians and technical facilities needed for the making of decision.
- (4) The fact that the central ministries usually make decisions as proposed by the provincial government.
- (5) Maladjustment of central decisions to the local conditions.
- (6) Inconvenience to the clients.

The same copies also were distributed to the governors in the governors' council of August 28, 1961.

At this meeting the chairman of the SCNR in his address said: "The government established a policy of strengthening the local decentralization and will stop the tendency of centralization." This was mentioned as a means of strengthening the executive abilities of the governments at lower levels with regard to central programs. The Minister of Home Affairs also told the council that the ministry was studying the possibility of preparing laws needed for the decentralization program. He asked that the creative ability of those engaged in the local administration should be exercised. He said that the government would decentralize to a great extent and that the central government would only do the planning, coordination and supervision, and the governments below the provincial level should have executive functions. On the other hand, the governors in the meeting asked the ministers and vice-ministers present to delegate to them authorities on specific tasks most of which were already included in the copies distributed beforehand. The Ministry of Home Affairs in its instruction urged the governors to delegate provincial authorities to the counties and cities.

Following the meeting the ministry immediately made an analysis of the chairman's address and the basic points of emphasis were broken down into programs and schedules. As a result of this process, such items as 'the strengthening of local decentralization,' 'the extension of governors' authorities', 'the revision of laws and regulations,' 'reorganization,' and 'the correction of the defects of local administration due to central intervention' were listed under the heading 'strengthening of the executive capacity of the local administration with regard to the central programs.'

Meanwhile, the ministry asked the other ministries to act on the summary of tasks distributed by the ministry as soon as possible. However, in most of the cases delegation was

refused. The major excuses given for refusal were the provisions of the current laws and orders, and the poor capacity of the local administrators. The ministry finally suggested a delegation which would make the legal authority remain with the ministers and let the provincial governors act only in the name of the minister concerned. Under this arrangement the actual authority of decision-making would be with the governors, and there would be no need to amend the laws or orders. On the other hand, under this arrangement it would be easier for a minister to take the authority back because no other minister or committee members of the SCNR could interfere in such an action. With this suggestion there were notifications that some tasks would be delegated. But this was still unsatisfactory to the minister and the officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The above analysis of the chairman's address at the previous governors' council was sent to the SCNR's Committee on Internal Affairs and the committee was asked to have the chairman of the SCNR issue a directive to the ministries ordering the decentralization program to be given full support by each ministry. Also the minister himself personally asked the chairman for such directive. The chairman issued this directive. Thereafter, all the ministries again started to notify the Ministry of Home Affairs what could be delegated and what could not be delegated, but with much larger proportion of the former than before.

By the end of October, 83 tasks were reported which could be immediately delegated by the ministries.

While the reasons for the acceptance of the proposals for delegation were not to be given, those for refusal were requested by the Ministry of Home Affairs on each task. The reasons given can be grouped as follows.

- (1) The possible abuse of authority.
- (2) The possible favoritism in personnel administration.
- (3) The possible degrading of standards.
- (4) The lack of technical capacities in the local government.
- (5) The need for over-all policy and uniformity.
- (6) The relatedness of the decision to more than one province.
- (7) The possibility of more expense due to decentralization.
- (8) Relatedness of the authority with other central authorities.
- (9) Relatedness of the ministry with other central agencies with regard to the same decision.

The above 83 tasks were notified by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the provinces within a few days.

On the other hand, an entirely new basic policy statement of the Minister of Home Affairs was issued. The contents of it were very different from the previous one and were adjusted to the programs already going on under his support. It read as follows:

- (1) By strengthening the local administration we shall accomplish the public pledge of the revolution.
- (2) We shall cultivate the self-governing capacity by enhancing the desire for self-help, cooperation and service.
- (3) By supporting full-heatedly the five-year economic plan we shall promote the development of local industries.
- (4) With every effort possible we shall promote the convenience of the people.
- (5) By rearranging and developing the public safety administration, we shall establish the social order which will be pleasant for the people.

The officials of the ministry broke down this statement for ministerial programs and schedules. Thus under the first category of the policy statement were included such breakdowns as 'delegation of authority and redistribution of power' and 'the strengthening of the administrative capacities of the rank-and-file.'

By November 5, 1961 the Ministry of Home Affairs actually delegated authority on twelve tasks. The ministry in its proposal to the other ministries always showed that it was taking a lead in deciding to accept the provincial requests and in actually delegating the authority so decided.

On November 8, 1961 another governors' council was convened in the conference room of the Kyonggi provincial government building. At this meeting while the chairman and the Minister of Home Affairs did not refer to the program, the prime-minister spoke as follows with regard to the program:

Because there had been various defects and inefficiencies in the past due to the excessive centralization, we are going to raise the administrative efficiency and promote the welfare of the people in the future by establishing a system in which the central government will perform the functions of policy formulation, coordination and supervision and let the local governments perform strong executory functions.

He also said that the central government was going to delegate authority on 83 tasks



than toward decentralization from the central ministries to the provincial governments. The cooperation of the other ministries was less than in the previous year. Thus by the end of May 1962 only 17 additional tasks were notified over the period of five months, to make the total figure of tasks already delegated or to be delegated 108. Decentralization from the provincial governments was increased to 922 from the previous figure of 460.

The section shief and the bureau chief responsible for the whole program later were told by the minister to start the pogram of decentralization from the counties to the towns and villages though this was not scheduled in the original plan. The officials of the ministry felt a sense of conflict in this program because it was they who had initiated and carried out the measure to make the county as the basic local government and thus centralized most of the authority of the towns and villages to the counties in the preceding year. However, this new program was scheduled to be undertaken from the beginning of September to the end of October.

Since August the minister was in the hospital because of an injury he had in a traffic accident. There ensued discussion that a new minister would take over the ministry. In the early part of October a new minister, Pak Kyong Won, a major general of the army, started to work in the office. In his inauguration address he issued the following policy statement:

- (1) To be kind to the people.
- (2) To confirm the results after the execution of programs.
- (3) To improve the morale of the civil servants.
- (4) To eliminate the social evils.
- (5) To maintain public safety.

After his first visits to the localities he decided to undertake a program of work simplification for the villages and towns. He himself had had experience in work simplification in the army. He brought in an army lieutenant who had previously under him as a major executor of the work simplification program. On November 8 of that year two town offices in Kyonggi province were designated for analysis by the army officer. The attention of the section gradually had to be switched to the work simplification program. In this program decentralization from the counties to the villages and towns was squeezed in the form of eliminating reports to counties.

On January 21, 1963 the minister issued the first directive with the title 'Simplification

Kyongnam Province .....	74
Kangwon Province .....	60
Total .....	182

The ministry, dissatisfied with this result, distributed the summary of the provincial reports to all the provinces pointing out that if a certain province delegated authority on a certain task there should be no strong reason for [the [other provinces not to delegate the same authority. The figure rose sharply then. By the end of the year the following was the standing.

City of Seoul .....	36
Kyonggi Province .....	41
Ch'ungbuk Province .....	4
Ch'ungnam Province .....	51
Chonbuk Province .....	37
Chonnam Province .....	78
Kyongbuk Province.....	79
Kyongnam Province .....	74
Kangwon Province .....	60
Total .....	460

At the governors' council of January 24, 1962 the prime minister spoke as follows:

From now we will stop the trend of centralization and democratize administration through local decentralization. On the other hand, we will promote the administrative efficiency and the spirit of creativity and service of the civil servants by a strong program of education and training.

The chairman told the council that the successful execution of the five-year economic plan is the most important program to be carried out in the year 1962. the Minister of Home Affairs also urged that the successful execution of the five-year economic plan be one of the most important policies of the new year. On the other hand, he also mentioned the strengthening of the functions of local government as equally important. The impact of the first year of the five-year economic plan on the program of administrative decentralization, however, was to degrade the program in the position of priority among the different programs. The program was carried out, but with less emphasis than before. All the other ministries were occupied with their own programs under the five-year economic plan. The Ministry of Home Affairs could expect little further cooperation. The emphasis in the program was more toward decentralization from the provincial governments to the counties and cities

under the program of decentralization and that there would be a lot more delegated continuously to the local governments in the future. He said the basic intention of the program was to have higher efficiency in administration by letting the local governments perform detailed programming and execution based on the principle of division of work between planning and execution. He emphasized the responsibility of the local administrators. The convenience of the people and the priority of the field were pointed out to be the guiding principles for further delegation. Final emphasis was given to the creativity and initiative of the local personnel.

By November 15 of the same year 43 more tasks were notified to the Ministry of Home Affairs as ones to be delegated. At this time the standing of each ministry as to the number of tasks delegated or to be delegated was as follows.

Ministry of Home Affairs .....	12
Ministry of Finance .....	5
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.....	30
Ministry of Commerce and Industry .....	37
Ministry of Public Health and Social Affairs.....	37
Ministry of Transportation .....	5
Total .....	126

Meanwhile there were more requests coming in from the provinces. The Ministry of Home Affairs distributed all of them to the ministries concerned in less than ten days after they were received.

On the other hand, the ministries canceled some of the tasks which they already had notified to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Either reasons similar to those stated above were mentioned and/or the need for later consideration was mentioned in the cancellations. Thus by the end of 1961, the total figure of 126 was reduced to 91 tasks.

As to decentralization from the provinces to the cities and counties, each province reported to the Ministry of Home Affairs on the tasks which would be delegated. The names of the tasks, and the provincial bureau responsible for them were included in the reports. On November 5, 1961 each province and the City of Seoul had the following standing.

City of Seoul .....	6
Kyōnggi Province .....	27
Ch'ungbuk Province .....	4
Chonbuk Province .....	7
Chonnam Province .....	4

and Standardization of the Works at Towns and Villages.' Thereafter the whole attention of the officials of the ministry and those in local assignment was on this program. On the other hand, the year 1963 was a year in which political and social unrest was predominant. The civilian politicians who had been under curfew during the last two years were set free to engage in political activities. New parties were formed. Student demonstrations occurred.

There ensued a big controversy over whether or not to extend the military rule. Finally a presidential election was set for October and the election for the national assembly was set for November. Under such circumstances the program for decentralization could not get attention. Nothing was mentioned in the subsequent governors' councils with regard to the program. Though the reports were reduced in frequency and in number between the villages and counties as a result of the program of work simplification, this did not mean that the authorities were delegated from the counties to the villages and towns.

### 3. Evaluation of the Case

In September 1962 Pak Won Bin, a member of the SCNR and also a member of its internal affairs committee ex officio, said after his inspection tour to the localities that, while authority on 108 tasks had been reported as delegated, he found only 96 tasks had actually been delegated and 12 tasks had not been delegated at all.

Though the Ministry of Home Affairs has never officially confirmed whether the decisions are actually being made by the governments of lower levels, the official statement printed in a classified document for circulation within the ministry in December 1963 said that "the decentralization has been carried out only formalistically," by which apparently is meant that the control by the governments of higher levels was not reduced with regard to these tasks.

According to the writer's confirmation the results were as follows. By July 1964, among 84 tasks which were reported as fully delegated as of March 31, 1962 to the provincial governments, 29 tasks have been either withdrawn or have not been delegated by the central government and 4 have been partially delegated. Thus only 51 tasks were declared as being carried out by the provincial governments at the time of the confirmation. As to the decentralization from the provincial government to the counties, 94 tasks the authority on which were supposedly commonly delegated to the counties of all provinces by May 31, 1962 were used for confirmation in July 1964. Out of this number 29 have been either withdrawn

or not delegated and 2 have been partially delegated. Therefore, 63 tasks were declared by the interviewees as the ones which were at their command.

As to those which were declared to be at their command it is still doubtful whether decentralization was not a mere formal change of the loci of authority. The following will illustrate an aspect of this point.

The permit to open a barbershop is one of those authorities delegated to the counties. A county head after he received the official file for such an application through his subordinates did not simply sign the document as he was supposed to do. Instead he used to write a personal letter to a bureau chief of the provincial government asking for his approval. Since the bureau chief knew that the authority had been delegated already, he also wrote a personal letter to the county head either approving or disapproving the applications. These letters were kept by the county head in his personal file, which, according to my informant, were intended to be shown when the county head gets in trouble. The bureau chief said "One just cannot disapprove such behavior of showing loyalty to me. After all he keeps me well informed what happens there."

The appointment of village and town chiefs was one of the authorities delegated to the county heads. They exercised this authority in their names, but almost without exception prior approval of the provincial government was sought. In this case such approval was requested by the provincial government after the delegation. The section chief of the provincial government who was responsible for personnel administration said "this authority is too important to be left entirely to the hands of county heads." Such statement apparently meant that he was obliged to delegate the authority due to the program of decentralization.

The method of withdrawal was as follows. A directive by a ministry or a provincial government was issued merely stating that a designated authority was to be exercised by the delegating agency or that the decisions should be authorized by it from a designated date. No specific reason was given for such action. Such action was never reported by the ministries to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Neither the provincial nor the county government reported on such action to the latter Ministry. As a result only those which were delegated or to be delegated were reported. This situation made it difficult for the writer to examine the reasons for all the withdrawn authorities. However, the following will provide a picture of the situation.

The transfer within the area of a province of the officials of Class 3-B of the national

civil service was delegated to the provincial governor. In order to comply with the provisions of law, the blank assignment certificates issued in the name of the Minister of Home Affairs were sent beforehand to the provinces in bulk. When a transfer was going to be made the governor could merely fill in the person's name and hand it to the transferee. The action was to be reported to the Minister of Home Affairs afterwards. This authority was later actually withdrawn by the minister in the form of requesting prior approval for each action of transfer. The reasons given by my interviewees of the Ministry of Home Affairs were as follows:

- (1) The minister is in stronger position than the provincial governor to resist political pressure and other pressures for favoritism.
- (2) There were instances of unfairhandling of the transfers in view of the seniority and ability of the transferees.
- (3) It was difficult to rotate personnel on a nation-wide scale.
- (4) There were many class 3-B officials in the ministerial headquarters waiting for local assignment. They were eager to get especially class 3-B county head positions.

In conclusion, the whole program did not accomplish as much as the policy makers of the central government emphasized. What was declared as accomplished had a big proportion of exaggeration. The whole pattern of supervision was not affected at all.

A characteristic of this program was the strong support given to it by all the top personnel of the central government. As mentioned earlier, the chairman of the SCNR, the prime minister, and the first minister of Home Affairs all strongly supported this program. In addition the member of the SCNR who was responsible for the affairs of the Home Affairs Ministry and the chairman of the Internal Affairs Committee of the SCNR gave strong support in approving the program filed by the ministry, in persuading the chairman of the SCNR, and in issuing messages of strong support to the officials of the ministry and all those in local assignments. The prestige of and the chairman's confidence in the first minister of Home Affairs helped a great deal in inducing the chairman, the members of the SCNR and the prime minister to give such support. If there had not been such strong support, the program would have failed entirely. The support given by the chairman especially had the strongest effect in letting the other ministers notify the tasks the authority on which was to be delegated.

The main originator of the idea was the section chief mentioned earlier in the description

of the case. The prestige he carried with him among the officials of the Home Ministry and those in local assignments had the effect of inducing both the higher and lower officials to rely on or believe in what he was planning to do. The facts that his section had the function of administrative improvements and that he had had experience in decentralization through the previous program also helped him in carrying out the new program. He got new ideas from the Japanese journal on local administration and disseminated them through the journal published by the ministry. His former subordinates and colleagues who were in local assignments as bureau chiefs and section chiefs told him informally when they visited him in Seoul that they were facing various hardships due to the lack of authorities. A characteristic of this case from the viewpoint of idea-origination is that the section chief and his superiors such as the bureau chief, the vice-minister, the minister, the prime minister and those of the SCNR did not seem to have received any direct suggestion for the program from outside sources such as consultants, Korean academic persons, or any others.

What were the motives of both the one who originated the program and those who strongly supported it? Both the section and the bureau chiefs told the writer that they felt the need long before the new program started. The bureau chief specifically pointed out (1) the unfitness of centralized administration to local conditions due to uniform regulation, (2) the lack of recognition of local self-government on the part of the other ministries and (3) the lack of vigor of local officials due to the tendency toward excessive authoritarian rule. The section chief mentioned (1) lack of initiative of the local officials, (2) the need to strengthen the local governments, and (3) the need to get the services closer to the people.

When one analyzes the statements issued by the higher policy makers their intentions with regard to the program were as follows:

- (1) The Chairman of the SCNR; He emphasized local decentralization as a method of guaranteeing strong executory capacity for the central programs. Greater degree of supervision by the governors was also meant by this. (Address at the Governors Council, Aug. 28, 1961) Though he emphasized the need for creativity of the local officials on other occasions, such perception of the need was not tied in with the program of decentralization.
- (2) The Chairman of the SCNR Committee on Internal Affairs; Decentralization was a means of serving the people at their residential areas and strengthening the basic capacity of local governments. (Message to the Officials of the Ministry of Home Aff-

airs, Jan., 1963)

- (3) The Member of the Committee on Internal Affairs; Decentralization was a means of accelerating administrative efficiency and strengthening the local administration and promoting the convenience of the people. (Message to the Officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Sept., 1962)
- (4) The Prime Minister; To him decentralization was a means of achieving administrative efficiency, strong executory capacity, greater welfare of the people, and the greater sense of responsibility. (Address at the Governors Council, Nov. 8, 1961)
- (5) The Minister of Home Affairs; Decentralization was one of the means for getting administrative-efficiency and demanding the exercise of creativity by the local officials. (Address at the Governors Council, Aug. 28, 1961)
- (6) The Vice-Minister of Home Affairs; It was the means of strengthening local autonomy and promoting administrative efficiency. (New Year's Message, Jan., 1963)

In view of the circumstances of this period, however, the real intentions of these top leaders might have been as follows. After the military group took over government they immediately pledged to the nation that the military rule would expire after two years. Thus they set a time limit to their rule. This had the effect of inducing them to try for almost any major governmental program to get positive results within a short span of time. The major emphasis of the military government was on economic growth and economic development in the localities was one of the major aspects of such growth. Thus many new programs directed toward economic development in the rural areas were scheduled. The military personnel were well aware that the previous governments had received the most severe criticism from the urban areas, especially in Seoul. Therefore, the major focus of the military government's effort to gain public support for their action in taking over the government by force was in the rural areas. This led them to try to get immediate results in the localities in many programs designed to benefit the rural people in economic terms. They realized that they must depend a great deal on local administration in order to achieve this objective.

On the other hand, all of these leaders, being themselves military personnel except the vice-minister, used the military analogy in civilian administration. The concept of division between planning and execution was based on their military experience. The chairman once said with regard to inter-agency cooperation in the field "If one is going to develop a basic



plan for the field operation in the army the planning for logistic support should go together with it." To them the provincial governors were army division commanders, the county heads were either battalion or regiment commanders, and the village chiefs were probably company commanders. This military analogy helped them to realize the necessity for delegation of authority. Provincial governors and county heads were supposed to be fully responsible for all operations within their respective areal jurisdictions. Consequently, the authority to perform such responsibilities were to be delegated to them.

As a result of these perceptions of the need for decentralization, the emphasis of the military leaders was laid on such aspects as 'administrative efficiency' which actually meant faster and more accurate execution in the field, 'stronger executory capacity of the heads of local governments,' 'strengthening the local administration, and promoting the convenience of the people. From the viewpoint of changing the attitudes and behaviors, the creativity of the local officials and their exercise of initiative were not emphasized as much as the above needs. When they were mentioned they were directed toward the officials who were the delegates. The blame was thus likely to be toward subordinates. Thus, the most characteristic phenomenon was that no person ever mentioned how the behaviors of superiors, including himself, should be changed in order to induce the creativity and initiative of the delegates. This might be partly because a person does not like to blame himself for another's behavior. It was also due to the lack of understanding that the subordinate's behavior is a reflection of the relationship between the superior and the subordinate.

To the civilian officials of the Home Ministry, 'the initiative' and 'the lack of vigor of local officials' which they mentioned as the needs meant rather the faithful and positive execution by the local officials of the programs assigned to them in accordance with the plans already laid out by the central government. Thus initiative did not mean the subordinate's behavior of changing or recommending a change in the plans of the central government. When questioned whether creativity was one of the purposes, they hesitantly admitted that it was.

In fact, the writer is inclined to think that the real motives of these career officials were closely tied to the interests of the Ministry of Home Affairs and ultimately of these career officials themselves under the excuse of 'strengthening local autonomy or administration.' The ministry, being the holder of the authority on major decisions of personnel administration of the local governments, of the authority to revise and adjust local government budgets,

and of the authority to reorganize the administrative structure and systems of the local governments, also can exercise an enormous influence in the line functions carried out by each bureau and section of the local governments. Therefore, if a certain provincial bureau has more delegated authority from a certain functional ministry, the Minister of Home Affairs and the officials of the ministry can also enjoy a greater power. Thus the interests of the Ministry of Home Affairs were likely to be served by this program. The Ministry of Home Affairs during the same period, under the same policy of 'strengthening the local administrations,' absorbed field agencies such as the education board office, marine office and agricultural extension service. And also under the same policy the local tax structure was revised to increase local government revenue. On the contrary, to the officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs there seemed to be few interests to be served by the program for the other ministries. These officials did not think in terms of how the program could be made to benefit the other ministries.

What were the characteristic ways of approach adopted in the program? The basic approaches the officials of the ministry used were as follows:

- (1) To influence the minister before, during and after his first visit to the localities.
- (2) To fit the program into the points emphasized in the address delivered to the governors' council which the minister himself based on his experience during the trip.
- (3) To make the drafts of minister's instructions and directives and brief them before the minister.
- (4) To let the governors present the list of the tasks the authority on which the governors want to be delegated.
- (5) To use the governors' council as a sort of pressure-exerting mechanism on the other ministers. Sources of pressure were the addresses given by the chairman and the prime minister, the exchange of the ministerial standings on the program, and the high prestige of the governors.
- (6) To get the policy support from the persons as high as possible and influence the assistants and the committee members of the Internal Affairs Committee of the SCNR in the drafting of the chairman's address or directive.
- (7) To show an example by letting the other ministries know that the Ministry of Home Affairs always was taking the lead in sacrificing the authorities belonged to the ministry.

(8) To exert pressure on the governors to delegate to the counties by letting them know the best results of the other provinces.

The forms of resistance and the methods of overcoming them were as follows. The characteristic of resistance was that it rarely took the form of overt complaint by the other ministries in the official contacts with the Ministry of Home Affairs. The resistance by the other ministries rather took the form of merely showing a smaller number of tasks to be delegated. It also took the form of refusing delegation on the basis of the provisions of the laws and presidential and cabinet orders to which the Ministry of Home Affairs also was to agree. It took the form of withdrawing authority, intervening in the delegated authority or not delegating at all contrary to the announcement made. In the first case the Ministry of Home Affairs used the method of exerting pressure in the forms mentioned above. The most effective seemed to be the express statement by the chairman of his strong support and his directive to the ministries. In the second case the ministry adjusted itself by reducing its goal by providing a leeway of delegation without the change of legal provisions. In the last case the ministry did not take any measure at all. It seems the officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs were more concerned with their achievement as shown by the increase in the number of tasks formally announced as delegated.

The program lost its force and gradually faded away due to the following interferences. A change in the person of the Minister of Home Affairs had the effect of switching the ministerial emphasis toward the work simplification program, which acted as a competing force. Though this new program was not intended to oppose the program of decentralization, nevertheless it had the effect of reducing the emphasis previously placed on the latter program. The fact that the year 1962 was the first year of the five-year economic plan was an interference to the execution of the program in that year. Detrimental to the program in 1963 was the political instability and the government's expectation of a new regime about which nobody was sure of outcome.