

In Memoriam

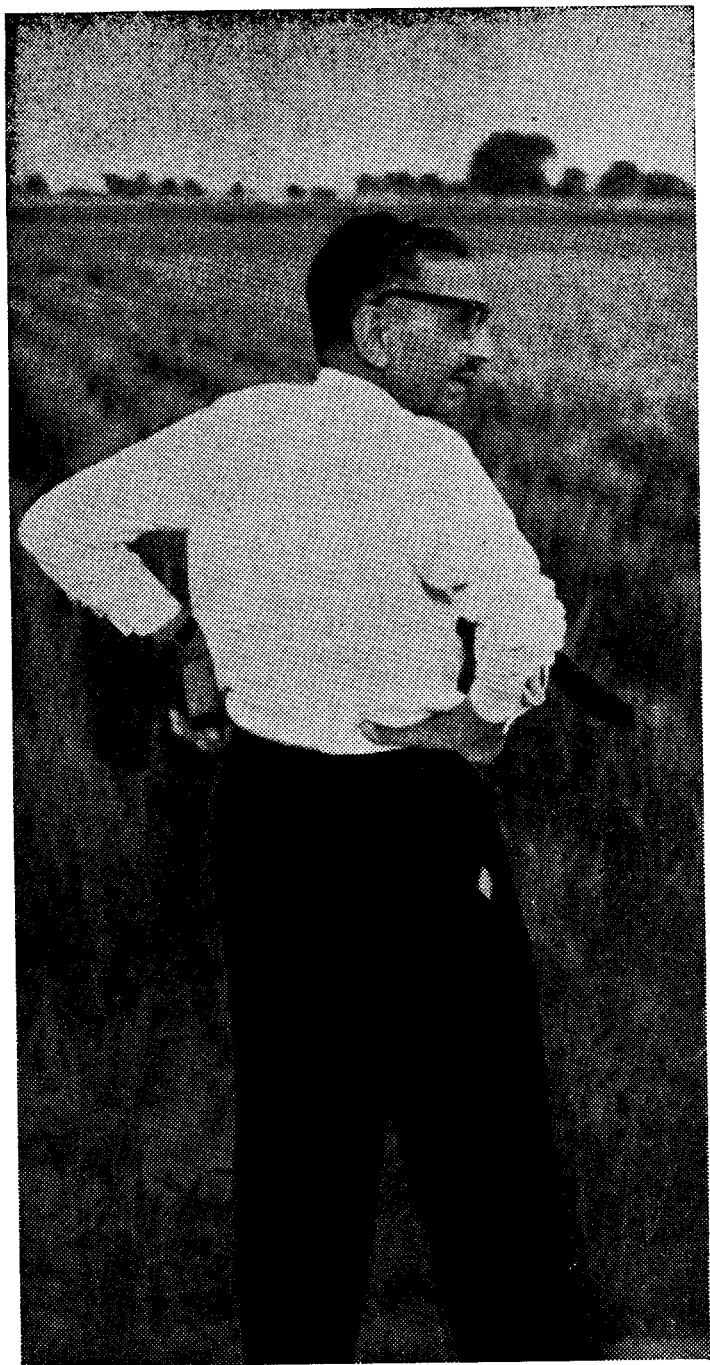
Ghulam Mohammad : (1913-1967)

Ghulam Mohammad, Senior Economist of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, died in a hospital in Rome in September 1967. His death has left the Institute with a void which will never be quite filled. An able and experienced civil servant, a masterful student of bureaucracy, a wide ranging, technically proficient agricultural scientist, a tireless and energetic researcher, a bright cheery, irrepressible and eternally youthful colleague—Ghulam Mohammad was all these things and more. From the humble background of a Punjabi tenant farming family, he rose, by virtue of his intelligence, natural talent, energy and hard work, to a position of recognized professional excellence, eminence, and stature, respected and admired in Pakistan and abroad, even by those who disagreed with his views. His career is an inspiration to any aspiring young professional, particularly in a society which only recently has begun to replace ascriptive qualities by merit and achievement as bases for position, status, and prestige.

Ghulam Mohammad's work reflected his ties to the soil of Pakistan. He had an uncanny knack for recognizing significant trends and incipient problems in Pakistani agriculture. His analysis was always based on hard, empirical facts and first-hand observations; his research was always directed to urgent issues of great importance to his country and to the welfare of those who farmed its land. The hallmark of his work was an ability to join technical expertise on soil, water use, cropping patterns, *etc.*, with an insightful appreciation for and understanding of the economic significance of technical alternatives.

Ghulam Mohammad's work in agricultural economics illustrates the virtues of learning what farmers actually think and do rather than relying on preconceptions. His studies of the economics of tubewell installation, of water and fertilizer use, and of seed improvement have clearly shown that, given information and incentives, farmers will respond to innovative opportunities—and that changes in productivity can be breathtakingly dramatic. Instead of the stereotype of the inefficient, tradition-bound farmer, Ghulam Mohammad's work clearly shows that it is more realistic—and more hopeful—to see the farmer as a rational man whose behaviour reflects not only past experience but opportunities offered by his environment. Pakistan is indebted to Ghulam Mohammad as one of those rare men who first recognized the potential for growth in agriculture—and the implications of a dynamic agriculture for general economic development.

Ghulam Mohammad promoted and defended his views vigorously. One could almost feel the welfare of Pakistan balancing on his frail shoulders as he fought for policies he thought would be beneficial. History will surely show him more often right than wrong. He held his opinions honestly and fearlessly, but was ready to accept and benefit from criticism. Those who knew him will mourn the loss of a valuable colleague and friend. Pakistan has lost what it can ill afford—a keen and analytical mind addressing itself to problems of urgent and fundamental importance.



GHULAM MOHAMMAD (1913—1967)