

## VI. CONCLUDING NOTE

The expansion of subcontracting cannot by itself solve the problem of rural poverty in Thailand. That is a complex task, which needs to be approached from many different directions. The line of reasoning suggested here is based on the proposition that incomes will rise as a result of the introduction of a variety of different income-earning options to villagers. These will compete with each other for claims on the villagers' time. Low yielding activities will be dropped, unless returns per hour increase to match the alternatives available. Subcontracting is one such alternative, and may be a particularly interesting one in view of the flexibility of working hours which it makes possible. Other alternatives include additional time spent on farm work, on the production of non-farm products within the village household, and on off-farm paid employment. Changes in income-earning opportunities in any of these lines will change the economics of each of the others. Each one has a contribution to make; each should be encouraged.

As someone once said, "Let 100 flowers bloom!"

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