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 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY **CONFIDENTIAL** REPORT
 INFORMATION FROM
 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS CD NO.

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY China
 SUBJECT Economic - Agriculture, rent reduction
 HOW PUBLISHED Daily newspaper
 WHERE PUBLISHED Canton
 DATE PUBLISHED 6 Apr 1950
 LANGUAGE Chinese

DATE OF INFORMATION 1950
 DATE DIST. 15 Jun 1950
 NO. OF PAGES 6
 SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Nan-fang Jih-pao.

CSCMPC AND CCP ISSUE RENT-REDUCTION DIRECTIVES

CSCMPC REGULATES RENTS -- Canton Nan-fang Jih-pao, 6 Apr 50

Hankow, 5 April -- The Central and South China Military and Political Council (CSCMPC) has issued a set of seven regulations relating to the reduction and refund of rents and promotion of agricultural production. The text of the regulations is as follows:

1. The spring planting season has arrived, but the spring shortage of supplies has not yet been overcome. The matter of rent reduction and rent refunds is of the first importance in the promotion of the spring planting and production. It is very important that the authorities on all levels give their closest attention to these matters to see that there is no delay. Wherever these movements have been started, they should be expanded over the whole area to overcome the possibility of promises without performance. Where the program has not been started, there should be no further delay. With the exception of Hainan, the program can now be carried out throughout the area. A 25-percent reduction should be made in all 1949 autumn-harvest rent payments. Where the rent was collected without reduction, the 25 percent must be refunded. Landlords resisting the program must be dealt with according to law. Any government personnel guilty of collusion or of lackadaisical attitudes toward the program should be dealt with as the case requires.
2. Since landlords are forbidden to sell or otherwise alienate their lands, some middle-class and small landowners may have difficulty in making rent refunds or in paying back rent deposits made in advance. In these cases, adjustments should be made to allow them to make such refunds in installments. From 20 to 50 percent should be refunded before the autumn harvest. Interest need not be added. If refunds already have been made, the matter should be regarded as closed. Rent refunds should be made on the basis of 25-percent reduction of the agreed rent, without reference to crop conditions.

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After the spring calamities are over, measures should be taken to avoid summer calamities. Provincial and special district authorities should dispatch officials to investigate calamity areas and interrogate the sufferers. Problems should be dealt with as they arise and relief applied. Calamitous conditions may thus be prevented from spreading and the period of affliction shortened. Areas of mild calamity will thus not become areas of severe calamity. All who display merit in relief measures should be rewarded, those who are negligent should be criticized. Those who disregard developing calamitous conditions and fail to report them should be dealt with severely if loss results.

CCP ISSUES SECOND DIRECTIVE -- Canton Nan-fang Jih-pao, 6 Apr 50

Hankow, 5 April -- The Central and South China Bureau of the CCP Central Committee has issued a second directive on the subject of rent reduction, the text of which is as follows:

1. The agricultural rent-reduction program is going forward in all provinces, but in several areas the following weaknesses and shortcomings are found:

- a. There is apparent rent reduction without reality. Landlords are manifesting an antagonistic attitude toward the program.
- b. Members of the agricultural delegates assemblies lose touch with the masses. Their attitude is exclusive, they do not unite the masses for struggle, and they lack liaison with the masses.
- c. Assembly members are incapable of controlling the landlords by reason and law. They have, therefore, become stiff and set in their ways, and this attitude has given rise to cases of corporal punishment to force compliance.
- d. When the poor farmers are unable to secure all they expect of the landlords, they borrow grain, encroach upon the middle-class farmers, etc. These shortcomings and weaknesses are a drawback to the movement and must be resolutely overcome.

2. Previously, during a certain period, we scored the neglect of the demands to meet the shortage of grain and stated that cadres are reluctant to lead the masses in rent reduction. They overestimate the difficulties of the task. That is true today and, considering the condition of the cadres in certain places, such conditions still need to be scored. Corrections must be made, or the influence of the forces opposing us cannot be counteracted.

But when this difficulty has been overcome, other variants appear, such as underestimating the difficulty of the task, not understanding that economic struggle is also political struggle, and that such struggle is a universal movement to weaken and strike down the whole landlord class. It is the great struggle of the farmer against the age-old feudalistic extortion; it is the first shout for the abolition of the feudalistic system.

The opposition of the landlords is axiomatic and unavoidable. If the masses are not aroused and their force organized against the great political power of the landlords to establish the political power of the farmers themselves, it will be very difficult to overcome their opposition, and to prevent mere lip-service to the rent-reduction program.

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3. Rent and advance-deposit refunds in grain or money should naturally go to the tenant involved, but because many poor tenants are in actual need, the agricultural associations should persuade the more prosperous tenants to divide some of their funds with the needy so that production will not be impeded.

4. In the south it has been customary to have public granaries in which large quantities of grain were kept in storage as a provision against famine. During the period of reactionary government, the stores in these granaries fell into private control. The authorities throughout the area should take steps to change these conditions. By action of people's delegates assemblies, or agricultural assemblies, steps should be taken to inventory all these supplies on hand and then to loan them at low interest to poor farmers.

These loans should be repaid, in kind, from the summer or autumn harvest in 1950 and again stored in the granaries as a reserve for possible shortage next year. The hsien and rural officials should organize committees to take the inventory and assume control of these stocks. These committees should also inventory the common funds belonging to ancestral halls and temples. Funds over and above the amount needed to maintain the schools and other philanthropic work of these organizations may be used for loans to needy farmers for agricultural production.

5. In areas where rent refunds, appropriate rent-deposit refunds, and loan of stores from old public granaries have been carried out, it should not be necessary to employ the government loan funds for aid. Persons still in need should be encouraged to seek loans from private sources on the basis of a mutually satisfactory interest rate and guarantee of repayment.

Where such measures are still insufficient to meet the need, the practice of mutual relief may be employed. Those with extra supplies should be exhorted to loan grain and seed to the less fortunate. However, the principle of voluntary participation must be preserved and debts contracted by borrowing must be repaid.

6. In the rent-reduction program, the general policy must be adhered to and legal methods must be employed so that the masses will be more closely united. While obstreperous landlords must be subdued, no invasion of the rights of middle-class farmers or of industry is to be practiced. Lawless beatings, killings, and corporal punishment should be rigorously prohibited. Cadres in all places who manifest wrong tendencies and do not reform after warnings should be dealt with strictly.

Bandit leaders who organize raids on grain stores and carry out other disorders must be suppressed immediately. All elements who resist the law must be dealt with according to the law. In the case of landlords who are really unable to refund rent or rent deposits and widows and other lone persons who rent out small plots, the authorities should make a careful investigation, and, if necessary, persuade those to whom such payments are due to agree to partial payments or no payments at all.

7. At this juncture, when there is danger that winter supplies will not extend through the spring season, the authorities and relief committees everywhere must act to investigate all cases of famine conditions, register famine sufferers, and use effective means of relief. They should coordinate agricultural, forestry, water-conservation, financial, and trade agencies to organize the famine sufferers for production for self-help, make agricultural relief loans, or furnish relief work. In areas of severe calamity, relief grain should be issued at once, emergency measures should be undertaken, attention should be given to hygiene and healing of the people, and measures should be taken to prevent loss of life among agricultural animals.

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We wish to make it clear to all cadres and farmers that the present situation of the landlords is much different from that during the period of resistance to the Japanese. Their opposition and disruption will be much milder than it was then. This factor is to be counted on, but it cannot be assumed that the whole class of landlords will voluntarily obey all the laws of the revolution from now on. It should be realized that without a struggle and a victory it will be very difficult for the feudalistic landlords as a class, voluntarily, to surrender to the revolution.

The basic factor of arousing the masses must be firmly grasped. On no pretext should anyone weaken in his attitude toward this. We must depend upon the struggle of the masses to overthrow the political power of the landlords and set up the power of the farmers. We must organize the masses. We must strike against the law violators and the wicked members of the landlord class whom the people fear. Only thus can conditions be created for the universal practice of rent reduction. Also, considerable impetus may be given to the work of dividing up the landlords' properties, compelling them to accede to the demands of the people and carry out the law. This has been a sustained principle of our Party through the years and should not be lightly regarded.

3. Sometime ago, we criticized the idea of living by old experience and old rules, not understanding how, or being afraid, to take advantage of the new method of employing the people's delegates assemblies to arouse the masses. Wherever this fault still exists, strong efforts should be made to change it. However, when this defect is corrected, many times formalism develops and the basic purpose of arousing the masses is lost sight of. This results in limiting the stimulation to the delegates alone.

The mistake develops from paying attention only to rent reduction and forgetting the matter of laying foundations for the mass movement. To overcome this tendency, the agricultural association movement should be expanded. The responsibility for organizing and uniting the masses rests upon the agricultural delegates conference. This should be clearly understood by each delegate. Each agricultural delegates conference should be gradually brought up to standard. We cannot expect each delegate to struggle alone, nor do we wish merely to train a small group of delegates and expect them to carry out the struggle.

The value of the delegates conference lies in:

- a. Discovering and collating the demands of the masses.
- b. Preparing resolutions embodying the demands of the masses in accordance with the policies of the party and the government, placing them before the masses, and organizing them to carry out the resolutions. Each delegate comes from among the people and returns to them; he may not represent his own actions or opinions as being those of the masses. On returning to his village, the work of the delegate is to disseminate the resolutions, and call upon the masses to organize agricultural associations to stimulate the struggle. In the struggle carried on by the agricultural association, he represents only his own membership in the association and seeks to carry out the resolutions as a progressive member.

The struggle in each village is undertaken only after having been organized by the farmers of that village, and shall not be carried on merely by a few delegates. To cope with a preliminary situation in which the delegates are not the most efficient, the plans which the delegates develop for the organization of local agricultural associations must be approved by the agricultural association on the next higher level. At the same time, the leading cadres must themselves act or send out working cells to carry out important immediate actions, set proper examples, and actually elevate the standard of organizational awareness of the masses. Only in this manner may

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the delegates, in cooperation with their local village agricultural organization, deal with questions of immediate importance and at the same time advance the whole movement, stimulate action on and control policy, and unify the work in all its phases.

Those who depend entirely upon the agricultural delegates, and pass up the organization of the masses, or depend wholly upon the agricultural delegates conference and neglect the organization of agricultural associations are no different from those who put all their reliance in the delegates and surrender their right to pass upon their actions, satisfied with the mere convening of the delegates conference and with a superficial program which dispenses with the important work of the village. They will eventually find the fruits of such a course to be evil. This point should be carefully noted.

4. To divide our enemies and reduce their opposition most effectively, in addition to mobilizing the masses and the systematic employment of the agricultural delegates, it is also necessary to control policy closely and to obtain approval of definite policies by the masses. Especially is it necessary to guard against cadres and small numbers of activist persons going into the struggle with the landlords without having properly mobilized the masses. Such persons hope to win in the struggle, but have mistakenly overlooked the masses, hence they employ torture, repeated beatings, and killings, or become defeated by the resistance of the landlords. Sometimes, when the demands of the masses have not been met, they have directed the struggle toward the prosperous middle-class farmers, borrowing their grain and violating the policy of uniting the middle-class farmers. This practice should be stopped whenever it appears.

A distinction should be made in dealing with the landlords. Some landlords, because of the extra heavy public grain levies, or from other causes, actually have no surplus grain. With the consent of the people, the demands on such landlords can be relaxed. They may be given loans for making rent refunds, or permitted to use silver dollars to make payments. Experience in many places has demonstrated that the general requirement to refund rent deposits easily leads to hardship and bickering and slows down the movement. Consequently, the directive of the CSCMPC should be followed to place limits on the refund of excess rents.

After landlords who resist have been overthrown, those who have not resisted should not be molested further. Furthermore, large numbers of killings and arrests should be avoided.

The important method to use in overthrowing recalcitrant landlords is to arouse the masses thoroughly to employ legal methods of struggle against the landlords. Mass arrests and incarceration should not be employed as the main method. This brings about a condition of social unrest. As for landlords who are notorious offenders against the rural inhabitants, the authorities should deal with them, but not with undue severity. Present opponents of the revolution should be resolutely suppressed without mercy. The border line between severity and leniency should be made very distinct so that subordinates can have no question.

It must be recognized that there are difficulties in the way of the spring production plans for this year. The methods of overcoming these difficulties are: (a) to suppress the depredations of our enemies, (b) to make provision to supply the materials for livelihood and production to the masses, (c) to observe, as far as possible, the sensibilities of all classes in the rural population, and to work toward the stabilization of social order.

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We should move forward steadily with proper regard for the mutual promotion of the above factors. We should now show partiality which would tend to produce instability.

5. In places where the rent-reduction program has been completed, immediate steps should be taken to organize the spring planting by getting plowing and planting done at the right time, and by encouraging the masses to become more aware of their organizational capabilities, and to oppose the retrogressive attitudes of the anti-Communist landlords.

In areas of calamity, relief organization measures should be instituted simultaneously with the rent-reduction program. The one should not be promoted to the neglect of the other. Rent reduction and refund is an important aid in overcoming calamity, but relief measures involve other procedures as well. There must be a unified program, which does not lose sight of the distinctive features involved.

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