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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY 25X1

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DATE DISTR. // May 1951

SUBJECT

China

Manner in Which Land Reform is Forcing Peasants

NO. OF PAGES

into Army

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

- The following is an authentic incident. A rich Yangtze river farmer was brought before a Communist agent whom he recognized as a friend of his. After a friendly 25X1 discussion, the farmer agreed to give up all his land to be divided among the people. There was no trial before a peoples' court and the matter was settled. 25X1 Later, when the agent reported to his superiors, he was denounced, and sent to a training center for intense re-indoctrination. The farmer was brought to trial, fiercely accused, then stoned to death. The element of class struggle was too important to be left out.
 - Everybody is agreeably surprised to learn that under the new regime they will have to pay only 13 per cent of their produce (instead of the former 50 per cent) to the government. This is a very strong propaganda weapon, and forms an important part of the agrarian land reform program.
 - What is not generally known is how the rule is applied. If a man could produce on the land he sharecropped 20 piculs of rice, he paid 10 piculs to his landlord. Under the new regime each parcel of land is assed as to a quota, i e, what the land should produce according to the Communist Party agent. The same parcel which produced only 20 piculs is perhaps given a quota of 80 or 100 piculs. The 13 per cent is not only assessed upon the rice, but also on all other produce and on everything which is used on the farm. Thirteen per cent of the pigs raised are turned over to the government; 13 per cent of truck garden produce is turned over, 13 per cent of winter wheat or other crops are also turned in. Thirteen per cent of all water hauled, of all fuel used, of all manure and fertilizer used is turned over to the government.
 - Many farmers are forced to buy elsewhere in order to meet their quota. The crucial and most shocking fact of the whole system, however, in this: each person's quota amounts to only two may of land. This is equal to 1/3 of an acre. There is usually only one alternative to starvation; join the army.

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- 5. Thus, the great Chinese Communist Field Armies are indeed made up partly of recruits who are volunteers in a technical sense. These men preferred the risk of death at the front to certain death at home from starvation.
- 6. In the division of land, families are deliberately broken up. Each person's share of two mou may be located in different localities, far apart. A wife's lot may be many miles from her husband's, and the son's, many miles in a different direction.

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