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DECISIONS ON AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION

**Adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session (Enlarged)
of the Seventh Central Committee of the
Communist Party of China
October 11, 1955**



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DECISIONS ON AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION

*Adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session (Enlarged)
of the Seventh Central Committee of the
Communist Party of China*

(These decisions were adopted on October 11, 1955, in the light of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's report "The Question of Agricultural Co-operation" delivered at a meeting of secretaries of provincial, municipal and autonomous region committees of the Communist Party of China on July 31, 1955)

I

At the present moment, a profound movement of socialist transformation is taking place in the rural areas. Between the spring of 1954 and the summer of 1955 the number of agricultural producers' co-operatives rose from 100,000 to nearly 650,000. The number of peasant households in the agricultural producers' co-operatives rose from 1,800,000 to 16,900,000. That is about 15 per cent of all peasant households in China. The progress of the movement is, however, uneven. In many parts of the old liberated areas it has already assumed the form of a huge mass movement. This is because the peasants there have a richer experience of revolutionary struggle, and mutual-aid teams (which serve as a foundation for co-operation) have existed there for many years. For instance, in provinces in North China, like Shansi, 41 per cent of the peasant households have joined the co-operatives while in Hopei, 35 per cent have joined.

Thirty-four per cent of all peasant households in the three northeastern provinces are in co-operatives. In some *hsiang*,¹ districts and even counties in these regions, 60, 70 or even 80 per cent of all peasant households have joined co-operatives. In the provinces in Southeast, Central-South, Southwest and Northwest China that were liberated later on, most *hsiang* already have their first groups of agricultural producers' co-operatives. This has paved the way for a great expansion of the agricultural co-operative movement.

The facts confirm the estimate of the Central Committee of the Party that the tide of social reform in the countryside—in the shape of co-operation—will soon sweep the entire country. It has already reached some places.

II

Faced with the daily growth of the agricultural co-operative movement, the Party's task is to lead the movement forward, boldly and according to plan, not timidly. It must be understood that in leading the peasants to overthrow imperialism and feudalism, our Party carried out a bourgeois-democratic revolution. But the aim of the working class is to continue the advance and follow up that revolution by leading the peasants to embark on a socialist revolution. In the earlier stage of the revolution the class struggle in the rural areas was chiefly a struggle between the peasants and the landlord class. The peasant question which had to be solved then was that of land. In this new stage of the revolution, however, the class struggle in the countryside is chiefly between the peasants on the

¹ An administrative unit of one or several villages.—
Translator.

one hand and rich peasants and other capitalist elements on the other. It is essentially a struggle over the choice between two roads—the development of socialism or of capitalism. The question to be solved is a new peasant question—the problem of agricultural co-operation. New relationships within the worker-peasant alliance and the leading role of the working class in this alliance must be established and strengthened on the basis of concerting the development of socialist industrialization and agricultural co-operation.

China's industry is growing rapidly. Facts show that if the development of agricultural co-operation fails to keep pace with it, if the increase in grain and industrial crops lags behind, China's socialist industrialization will run into great difficulties. The situation has already changed fundamentally, but the attitude of some of our comrades to the peasant question still remains at the old stage. They fail to see the sharp struggle over the choice between the two roads which is now taking place in the rural areas. They fail to see the active desire of the majority of the peasants to take the road to socialism. They are satisfied that the peasants have obtained land from the landlords, and want to keep things as they are in the villages, or contend that the speed at which agricultural co-operation develops should be very slow. They fail to understand that this means abandoning the active leadership of the Party in the movement for agricultural co-operation and allowing capitalism to develop freely in the rural areas. This would result in undermining the worker-peasant alliance, losing working-class leadership of the peasantry and so heading the cause of socialism for defeat. Comrades with such misguided views are afraid to trust the masses. They are pessimistic about the policy on co-operation of the Central Committee of the Party and about the

leadership of the local Party committees at various levels. They assume that our Party can hardly consolidate the several hundred thousand small co-operatives that already exist, and that any large-scale expansion is certainly inconceivable. They have put forward a Right-opportunist policy of "drastic compression," and in some places dissolved a large number of co-operatives by compulsion and "orders from above." Yet this pessimism is in practice shown to be unfounded by the growing consolidation of the several hundred thousand co-operatives which already exist, the increased output of the great majority of them, and the active desire of the peasant masses to join them. The bankruptcy of this Right opportunism is thus exposed and shown up for what it really is—a reflection of the demand of the bourgeoisie and the spontaneous growth of forces towards capitalism in the rural areas. The Sixth Plenary Session holds that the criticism made by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee against Right opportunism is absolutely correct and necessary. We can bring about a fundamental change in the Party's rural work and alter the situation in which leadership lags behind the mass movement only when this Right opportunism is thoroughly criticized and repudiated. This change is vital if progress in the agricultural co-operative movement is to continue till complete victory is won.

III

It is possible to develop agricultural co-operation primarily because we have established in our country a people's democratic dictatorship headed by the working class, and because this people's democratic dictatorship is now engaged in organizing our socialist

construction. At the same time, it is possible because the majority of the peasants are willing to take the socialist road in order to get rid of exploitation and poverty. The majority here referred to are mainly the poor peasants who have not yet risen to a better economic position, the lower middle peasants among the new middle peasants who were formerly poor peasants, and the lower middle peasants among the old middle peasants.¹ Since the land reform the economic condition of these sections of the peasantry has improved to varying extents, but many peasant households still have their difficulties or are still not well-off, while some have again lost their share of land because of exploitation by rich peasants or speculative merchants, or because they were unable to withstand natural calamities. Therefore, if the Party fails to give the peasants active guidance along the socialist road, capitalism will inevitably grow in the rural areas and the separation of the rural population into two extremes will become serious. Actual experience has taught the peasants that they cannot go on living as they used to—farming scattered, tiny plots on their own—that the only way out is for a large number of people to come together, pool their labour and work under collective management. The advantages of this method were first shown by the numerous mutual-aid teams and, even more, later, by the large number of agricultural producers' co-operatives which were established. Agricultural producers' co-operatives can organize labour power rationally so that productivity can be raised more rapidly; they can systematically and effectively use land and extend the area under

¹ Old middle peasants are those who were middle peasants before the land reform. New middle peasants are those who have risen to the status of middle peasants since the land reform.—*Translator*.

cultivation; they can resist or reduce the ravages of nature, and, with state help, gradually introduce technical reforms in agriculture. For these and other reasons, they are able to bring about a speedy development of the productive forces in agriculture and give the peasants substantial benefits. That is what accounts for the growing popularity of agricultural producers' co-operatives among the peasants.

As the past few years' experience shows, the following procedure will enable the co-operative movement to develop on an even firmer foundation:

1. As the movement progresses, an acute struggle will be waged against the rich peasants and speculative merchants, and the peasants themselves will be educated in the midst of the struggle. The mass of the middle peasants in particular must be educated and convinced so that they can stop vacillating between the socialist and capitalist roads. Therefore, the movement must be given a firm core—a core formed of the active elements among the poor peasants who have not yet been elevated to a better economic position and those of the lower middle peasants among the new middle peasants who were formerly poor peasants. It should also include part of the active elements of the lower middle peasants among the old middle peasants. The first step to be taken by the Party in the co-operative movement should be to organize these people, so that they can set an example and convince other peasants.

2. Although these sections of the peasantry—the poor peasants and the lower middle peasants among both new and old middle peasants, stand fairly close to each other as far as their economic condition is concerned, their active desire to join the co-operatives will for a time differ in degree for various reasons. Therefore, every year we should carry out work among

them so that they will, over the next few years, organize themselves group by group, according to the degree of their understanding, into new co-operatives, or be absorbed into existing ones. Patience must be exercised towards those who, for the time being, do not wish to join, even if they are poor or lower middle peasants. The principle of voluntariness should never be violated; they should not be dragged into co-operatives against their will. A peasant may put forward and withdraw his name for membership several times before he finally makes his mind up. He should be given plenty of time to consider the matter.

3. Well-to-do middle peasants (that is, the upper middle peasants among both the old and new middle peasants) have better farm tools and draught animals, their land is more intensively cultivated, its yield is higher, or they derive a bigger income from subsidiary occupations. As long as they still do not realize that the benefits derived from co-operative farming are greater than—or at least, for the time being, equal to—those obtained by working on their own, they will not readily join a co-operative. If they join reluctantly, frequent conflicts are bound to arise among the members over the practical question of benefits. That is why, when a co-operative is organized, it is not advisable at the start to accept well-to-do middle peasants unless they show a genuine willingness to join, still less to drag them in against their will. Efforts should be made to influence them by showing them the advantages of co-operative farming, letting them wait and see for a bit and not enrolling them till their understanding grows.

4. The middle peasants are the permanent allies of the working class and the poor peasants. Good relations should be maintained with them both inside and outside the co-operatives. Their interests should

never be infringed nor their property taken from them. The backward ideas of the middle peasants, particularly the tendency towards capitalism of the well-to-do middle peasants, should be properly countered by convincing argument, not dealt with by arbitrary administrative methods. The purpose of criticism must be to achieve unity. It must never be used as a pretext for attacking the middle peasants.

5. Before setting up co-operatives it is essential that the masses should be mentally prepared and that Rightist tendencies in the Party should be censured and overcome. Our Party's principles, policy and measures on agricultural co-operation must be publicized, systematically and repeatedly, among the mass of the peasants. And not only should the advantages of co-operation be made known to them; they should also be made aware of the difficulties that may arise in the course of co-operation and how such difficulties can be overcome.

6. The masses should be prepared organizationally for the formation of co-operatives. Agricultural producers' mutual-aid teams must be promoted on a really widespread scale; wherever possible they should be combined into joint teams so as to lay the groundwork for turning them into co-operatives. Joint committees of mutual-aid teams and co-operatives may be established in villages where there are mutual-aid teams and co-operatives. These should hold regular meetings, to which representatives of individual peasants should be invited so that experience can be exchanged and arrangements made for whatever mutual help is needed and possible. This will pave the way for the future merging of co-operatives, the gradual transformation of mutual-aid teams into co-operatives and the drawing of individual peasants step by step into the co-operatives.

7. Short-term training of cadres for running co-operatives is an important preparation for the setting up of co-operatives. Those to be trained should be carefully chosen.

IV

The growth of the co-operative movement should go hand in hand with the consolidation of existing co-operatives. It is one-sided and wrong to pay attention only to consolidation and disregard expansion, to deny that an increase in the number of co-operatives would help raise their quality. It is equally one-sided and wrong to pay attention only to expansion and to disregard consolidation, attaching importance only to the number of co-operatives and ignoring their quality. Therefore, once they are established, co-operatives should take steps to check over their work systematically. Checking over of the co-operatives should be carried out not just once, but twice or three times a year, so as to keep on improving their quality.

1. Each co-operative, in the light of its own special characteristics and current practical problems, should draw up a policy and measures for checking.

2. The work of checking should be carried out group by group, starting with those co-operatives which have the most problems. The varied experience gained in checking over different types of co-operatives should be made known to help push forward the entire movement.

3. Those carrying out the work of checking should have a warm and helpful attitude and approach this work with care. It should not be done in an oversimplified and arbitrary manner. It is utterly wrong to decide beforehand the number of co-operatives that must be cut down and then forcibly dissolve them.

It is also entirely wrong to be harsh towards those co-operatives which have been "spontaneously organized." They should be given warm help after careful consideration of their cases.

4. In checking over co-operatives, attention should be focussed on production, for that is the key issue. In the course of organizing production various problems should be unearthed and solved methodically; ideological work among co-operative members should be intensified; management improved; and the Party policy on the co-operative movement of voluntariness and mutual benefit thoroughly carried out.

5. During such checking, attention should also be paid to improving the make-up of the co-operatives, reshuffling their leading members as need arises, and training of new key personnel from among the poor peasants.

6. The *hsiang* Party and Youth League branches must be relied on both for establishing co-operatives and checking them over. The key to the successful running of co-operatives lies in the strengthening of the work of Party and Youth League branches. Therefore, the work of building and checking over co-operatives should be closely associated with the building and strengthening of the Party and Youth League branches in the countryside. In carrying out all such work the local cadres in the rural areas should be the mainstay, cadres sent from above should be an auxiliary force.

V

At the present stage agricultural producers' co-operatives in our country are generally of an elementary, semi-socialist type, characterized by the pooling

of land and a single management. This kind of co-operative is a transitional form to the fully socialist type. Private ownership of land and some other important means of production is, in the main, or to a considerable extent, retained, and privately-owned means of production are not to be hastily turned into common property. That is to say, both during the period of establishing and of checking over co-operatives, the private property of the members should be dealt with in a reasonable way, in line with the principle of mutual benefit, so as to make it easier to expand the co-operatives and put them on a sound footing. This means that co-operatives pay a certain amount of compensation for the use of private land, draught animals and large farm tools, and reasonable prices for such private means of production as draught animals and farm tools when transferred to the co-operatives as common property.

The means of production owned by members of co-operatives differ in number and quality. Moreover, it is necessary for different co-operatives in different areas to take varying circumstances into account when they decide on how and when the means of production owned by members are to be hired or transferred to the co-operatives as common property. In view of this, suitable agreements must be reached between co-operative members, and chiefly between the poor and middle peasants, on all these questions, as well as on the question of subsidiary occupations.

1. As regards the land belonging to members of the co-operatives:

a. Methods of assessing the yield of land to be pooled in the co-operatives should be based on the quality of the land, giving due consideration to the economic interests of those members the yield of whose land is, owing to lack of means, relatively low but

can be raised after being pooled in the co-operative. Likewise, due consideration should be given to the value of the labour and fertilizer previously applied to the land by its owner on the basis of its actual yield for a normal year. In this way, conflicts arising out of differences in the actual yield as well as in the latent productivity of the land can be solved amicably between the poor and middle peasants, and this will make for greater enthusiasm on the part of the members to raise the productivity of the land and to invest in it.

b. Different methods are used in different areas to decide what dividends will be paid on land pooled in co-operatives. Generally speaking, the method of giving a fixed dividend is good for encouraging the members' enthusiasm for work. The method of giving dividends on land and paying for labour according to a fixed ratio is suitable, however, in newly organized co-operatives or in areas where the yield tends to fluctuate. In certain places some methods supplementary to these have been adopted. Whatever method is used, attention should be paid to the following points:

The amount paid out in dividends on land should generally be lower than the amount paid out for labour. It is wrong to set the dividend on land too high. But at the same time consideration should be given to those co-operative member households which are short of labour power but have more land, especially those of the old, weak, orphaned or widowed, so that they can get a suitable income. It is just as wrong to fix the dividend on land too low.

The proportion of income decided on as dividend for land should not be arbitrarily standardized. Consideration should be given to the difference in conditions between areas which have relatively less land

and more people, and those which have more land and fewer people, as well as to the specific circumstances of certain areas which grow industrial crops requiring more field work.

In view of the peasants' predilection for the private ownership of land, the amount of dividend which the co-operatives decide to pay on land should remain constant for a certain period, say two or three years after a co-operative is founded, and should not be lowered each year; still less should dividends on land be discontinued prematurely.

c. Co-operative members should be allowed to retain small plots of land of their own, amounting to about two to five per cent of the average individual land-holding in the village, for growing vegetables, or for subsidiary agricultural products and occupations. The produce of such plots may be kept for home use or sold on the market. Some co-operatives have refused to allow their members to retain any land for their own use. That is wrong.

2. As regards draught animals and farm tools belonging to members of the co-operatives:

a. Great care must be taken while deciding whether draught animals belonging to members shall be transferred to the co-operatives as common property. During the first year or two after they are formed, and while they are still economically weak or lack administrative experience, the co-operatives may retain the private ownership and rearing of draught animals, and hire them on a temporary or long-term basis so that the co-operatives may avoid incurring too many debts or losing animals through improper feeding. As productivity increases, the co-operatives may purchase the animals in such ways as circumstances permit. Those co-operatives which bought draught animals when they were established need not,

however, reverse their decision, provided that they are organized on a sound basis and economically fairly well off and that the original owners of the animals or other members of the co-operative raise no objection.

In some places, there is no difficulty in getting fodder but the charge for the hire of draught animals is rather high. In cases like this, if it is beneficial to the production of the co-operatives to buy the animals somewhat earlier and if the owners consent, the co-operatives can do so provided local conditions permit. In other places, because of production needs or the local custom among the peasants of feeding their draught animals jointly, co-operatives may, in the period before the animals are purchased, adopt the method of individual ownership of animals and co-operative rearing (or co-operative rearing during busy seasons and private rearing during slack seasons). This is permissible if it is convenient for farm work and the draught animals can be fed properly.

b. Contracts for the hire or purchase of draught animals should be signed after the co-operatives have conducted thorough negotiations with members who own the beasts. Reasonable fees should be fixed for the hire of animals depending on their condition, and reasonable prices and terms of payment should be fixed for the purchase of animals by co-operatives. When payment is made by instalments, a certain amount of interest should be paid to owners before the final instalment is cleared. The length of time taken to pay off the instalments may vary according to economic conditions in various areas and co-operatives. In general, three years is reasonable; anyhow, it should not be longer than five. There are some co-operatives which set too low a price on draught animals and too long a period for payment; there are even cases where

no definite date is set and no interest is paid at all. This has led to members neglecting their animals. It must be put right.

c. Co-operatives should make appropriate arrangements for the use of the big, medium and small draught animals which are hired, bought by the co-operatives or owned and used privately. In order to breed more draught animals, special care should be given to pedigree beasts and the protection of young animals.

d. In dealing with large and fairly large farm tools owned by members, too, co-operatives can, after renting for a certain period, buy them over one by one. Co-operatives should pay a reasonable sum for the hire of such tools and pay by instalments if they are bought. There are some co-operatives which use their members' farm tools for prolonged periods but pay nothing for their hire or upkeep, and no compensation when they are damaged. This must be corrected.

3. As regards means of production for subsidiary occupations such as groves of trees, fish-ponds, etc. belonging to members of the co-operatives:

a. A distinction should be made between those subsidiary occupations which are best run individually and those which are best run collectively. It is unsuitable to bring into the co-operatives means of production used in subsidiary occupations which can be made better use of under individual management, and it is even more unsuitable to make them the property of the co-operatives. Those which can be better used under collective management, which will help improve the economic status of all members to a greater extent, may be gradually brought under the management of the co-operatives after negotiations with the owners,

either by hiring them or buying them on the instalment plan.

b. Members' small holdings of trees (including fruit trees, bamboos and other trees used for industrial purposes) may in general be left to the management of members themselves. Where members own groves or orchards and there is need for unified planning of agricultural and forestry production, they may be brought with the owners' consent under the single management of the co-operative, but the private ownership of them remains. The method of distributing income from such groves and orchards must be settled through thorough negotiations among members.

The question of fish-ponds owned by members may be dealt with according to circumstances in the same way as that of groves and orchards.

VI

In order to put their collective economy on a sound basis, agricultural producers' co-operatives should gradually build up common funds in two main forms, namely, a shares fund and a reserve fund.

The shares fund is built up in the following way. Every member makes a contribution towards the costs of production covering seed, fertilizer, fodder, etc., or towards the cost of draught animals and tools bought from members. The amount of the contribution is based on the amount of land pooled (or in some cases on an agreed ratio between the land and labour contributed, or in others, where land is plentiful and payment for it low, on labour only). The share each should pay should be properly worked out, and should be within the power of the majority of members to

pay. Payments to the shares fund may be made in cash or kind. If the amount paid in kind is more than is needed, the balance should be credited to the member concerned as investment. Poor peasants who cannot afford to contribute to the shares fund may be helped by state loans.

The amount to be set aside each year as a reserve fund for increasing the co-operative's means of production must be decided according to the actual circumstances. Generally speaking, it is better in the first few years that it should not exceed five per cent of the total annual income from agriculture and subsidiary occupations (gross output less production costs). Later, as output grows, this proportion can be suitably raised. The fund set aside for the welfare of members should, in the first few years, generally speaking, not exceed one per cent of a co-operative's total annual income. Depending on local conditions, the relative amounts to be set aside for the reserve and welfare funds may be slightly higher in co-operatives in areas cultivating industrial crops.

When a member withdraws from a co-operative, he may take with him his share contribution but not any of the reserve fund or welfare fund. There must be a revision of the regulations given in the "Decisions on the Development of Mutual Aid and Co-operation in Agricultural Production" issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in March 1953, in as far as they specify "complete freedom for members to withdraw both their invested capital and their contributions to the reserve fund" when leaving the co-operatives.

Apart from the shares fund and the reserve fund, members should be encouraged to invest in the co-operatives, which should repay capital so invested, with interest, at regular intervals.

VII

Agricultural producers' co-operatives must adopt measures to ensure the growth of their productive powers and prove in practice that co-operatives are much superior to individual farming and mutual-aid teams.

1. They should draw up their annual production plans and long-term over-all production plans, make full use of all favourable factors in the co-operatives or in the locality, unearth the key factors which make for increased output, and develop the latent capacity in agricultural production.

a. They should improve farming skills and methods by such means as deep ploughing and intensive cultivation, planting rationally in close rows, increasing the number of crops harvested annually, using good seed, popularizing new farm tools and fighting plant diseases and pests.

They should pay attention to learning from veteran farmers and absorbing all that is valuable in their experience; they should take energetic measures to teach the young men and women members to improve their farming skills.

b. They should undertake capital construction where necessary and possible, for example, building small water conservancy projects, terracing fields, improving the soil, work on conservation of soil and water, buying draught animals and farm tools. They should use locally-produced natural fertilizer and make great efforts to accumulate and prepare fertilizer. Appropriate payment should be made to members who hand over their accumulated fertilizer to the co-operatives for public use.

c. They should expand the area under cultivation and plant high-yield crops. Wherever there are

water-ways or other water sources, the acreage of rice should be extended as much as possible in order to further increase grain output.

d. A diversified economy should be developed in accordance with local conditions and with the plans of the local state organs, to include agriculture, handicrafts, livestock breeding, forestry, fruit growing, fishery and other subsidiary occupations.

To develop the economy of hilly, well-forested areas where livestock breeding prevails, producers' co-operatives may be organized to combine agriculture, forestry and livestock breeding.

2. The valuable experience of those co-operatives which have successfully built up a system of fixed responsibility for a specified job should be publicized, and labour power should be rationally organized. Where such a system of responsibility cannot be practised all the year round, it may be adopted on a temporary or seasonal basis to prepare the ground for a year-round system of responsibility.

a. Systems should be introduced to specify the responsibilities of production brigades and groups and their individual members as regards cultivation, livestock breeding and the care of farm tools. Labour discipline should be tightened up.

b. A labour production quota (that is, a standard work-day) system covering both quantity and quality should be introduced on a piece-work basis, on the principle that "he who works more is paid more and he who works less gets less."

c. A regular inspection system should be introduced whereby the work of the production brigades and groups and their individual members can be examined at all levels and any work that falls below standard improved in good time.

d. A system of rewards for above-quota production should be adopted, tied to a seasonal or year-round system of responsibility. Those who overfulfil their production plans should be rewarded and those who fall behind because of slackness should have deductions made from their pay. In the event of natural calamities, production quotas should be revised taking into account the resultant difficulties. Those who work hard in combatting calamities and exceed their revised production quotas should be rewarded. Those who do little or nothing to combat natural calamities and so fail to reach the revised quotas should be penalized.

3. An industrious and thrifty attitude should be encouraged in running co-operatives. Financial management and book-keeping should be improved. Financial work should be such as to supervise and ensure a growth in production and a proper distribution of income. Slack financial management should be cut out and waste and extravagance checked.

a. A limit should be set to all expenditure. The simple and convenient system of "fixing a maximum expenditure for each item" should be widely adopted. Those who economize should be rewarded, and those guilty of corruption or waste penalized.

b. Reliable book-keepers should be selected and a mutual-help network set up among book-keepers of co-operatives to exchange experience.

4. Political, cultural and educational work should be improved to raise the level of socialist consciousness among co-operative members and develop their keenness and creativeness.

a. Our country's socialist cause and the momentous significance of agriculture in the economic life of the nation should be widely publicized among co-operative members. The state plans for economic

construction, particularly the agricultural production plan and the plan for the purchase of agricultural produce, should be publicized among co-operative members and they should be shown how to properly implement the policy of the state on rural work and the planned purchase of grain and other farm produce.

b. The idea of collective concern for the co-operative and for common property should be instilled in members, and efforts should be made to gradually overcome individualist tendencies. Behaviour detrimental to labour discipline should be checked.

c. Unity and mutual help should be promoted among production brigades and groups and individual members, and emulation in labour introduced. Unremitting research into and improvement of farming technique should be fostered. Care should be taken to bring the energies of the women and the younger members of the co-operatives into full play.

d. Democracy should be promoted within the co-operatives and members encouraged to put forward rationalization proposals to improve the work.

e. Plans should be drawn up to eliminate illiteracy over a period of years and to raise the cultural level of members, particularly of cadres.

f. Co-operative members should be educated to raise their political vigilance so that they can wage an unrelenting struggle against all forms of counter-revolutionary sabotage.

VIII

Financial and economic departments concerned, and especially agricultural administrative departments, must treat financial and technical aid for the agricultural co-operative movement as one of their most important tasks.

1. Besides issuing loans to poor peasants to help them take up shares in agricultural producers' co-operatives, and thus facilitate co-operation between them and the middle peasants, the People's Bank and the Agricultural Bank should gradually increase the amounts loaned to agricultural producers' co-operatives for investment in capital construction, reduce interest rates where appropriate, and extend the period of repayment of loans which can be set at three to five years.

2. Departments concerned with agriculture should set up agro-technical stations in a planned way and make them centres for passing on technical aid by the state to agricultural producers' co-operatives (e.g., demonstrating the use of improved types of farm tools, the cultivation and use of better seed, methods of improving farming skills and eliminating insects and pests).

The work of state farms should be improved so that they give better assistance to the co-operatives and set an example to be followed.

3. Administrative departments concerned with the engineering industry, and with trade and handicraft production should make reasonable reductions in prices not only of farm tools but also of insecticides and insecticide spraying equipment. The quality of these products however must not be lowered when prices are reduced; on the contrary, efforts should be made to improve their quality.

To keep pace with the growth of the agricultural co-operative movement, all departments concerned with the engineering industry should pay special attention to research on the design, assembly and repair of improved types of farm tools. The first tractor plant should be completed as quickly as possible, and preparations begun at the earliest possible date for

the second and third. They should also produce more machinery and equipment for water conservancy undertakings. Departments concerned with the chemical industry should increase the output of fertilizer.

4. Departments concerned with agricultural administration should pay attention to the training of a large number of book-keepers and gradually send a sufficient number of book-keeping instructors, who can travel from place to place to give guidance to co-operative farms in improving their book-keeping and accounting methods. Book-keepers in district or *hsiang* branches of the People's Bank, the Agricultural Bank and the supply and marketing co-operatives should do their best to help agricultural producers' co-operatives with their book-keeping and accounting.

IX

As the co-operative movement develops, many former landlords, rich peasants and counter-revolutionaries of various sorts will undoubtedly engage in all kinds of sabotage. We must be alert to the serious danger of such sabotage in the agricultural co-operative movement. Quite a number of landlords, rich peasants and counter-revolutionaries have already wormed their way in various guises into co-operatives. Some have even seized important positions in them, pushing their way into the leadership in an effort to turn them into their tools or destroy them by underhand means. They try to undermine the Party leadership in co-operatives, attack and victimize the active elements among the masses and the cadres of the co-operatives, slaughter livestock, destroy farm crops and even commit such crimes as arson and assassination.

Some landlords, rich peasants and counter-revolutionaries have even organized sham co-operatives. It must therefore be laid down that:

1. In places where the great majority of peasants have not yet joined co-operatives, for the next few years landlords or rich peasants must be resolutely debarred from joining co-operatives. Only in those places where the great majority of peasants have joined co-operatives and the co-operatives are on a sound basis can former landlords or rich peasants be permitted to join in different groups at different time, and then only on condition that they are law-abiding and have for a long time ceased to exploit others and have themselves engaged in work. This may be done in order that their reform can be continued through collective work in production.

2. Landlords or rich peasants who have already joined the co-operatives should be dealt with individually according to how they have behaved since joining. Those who have engaged in sabotage must be resolutely expelled. Cases of serious misdemeanour should be handed over to the courts. Only those who work and are law-abiding may be permitted to remain and continue their reform in the co-operatives.

3. Measures appropriate to the circumstances must be taken to clean up and reorganize those co-operatives in which landlords, rich peasants or counter-revolutionaries have gained control of posts.

4. Sham co-operatives organized by landlords, rich peasants or counter-revolutionaries must be dissolved. Educational work suited to each individual case should be carried out among the poor and middle peasants who joined such co-operatives; they should be reorganized in a proper way.

In various provinces there are still backward villages where the agrarian reform was not carried

out in a thorough-going way. Such villages total approximately 5 per cent of all villages. Feudal landlords, rowdies, counter-revolutionaries and other bad elements in these places are still exploiting and oppressing the peasants, either openly or in secret. In such villages, it is also possible to organize the active and reliable elements among the poverty-stricken peasants to form co-operatives. At the same time, it is essential to get the masses fully on the move as soon as possible, resolutely wipe out the feudal and counter-revolutionary forces, and so create the conditions necessary for smooth development of agricultural co-operation.

X

To give active, planned leadership to the movement for agricultural co-operation, national, provincial (or autonomous region), administrative region (or autonomous *chou*), county (or autonomous county), district, *hsiang* (or nationality *hsiang*) and village plans should be drawn up for the co-operative movement to be carried out in stages. In making such plans, attention should be paid to specific differences which the co-operative movement shows in different places, as well as to similarities.

Because different conditions obtain in different areas, the progress of agricultural co-operation may, generally speaking, differ in the following ways:

1. In places where the mutual-aid and co-operative movement is relatively well advanced, and where, by the summer of 1955, between 30 and 40 per cent of all peasant households had joined co-operatives, the movement can, generally speaking, be expanded by the spring of 1957 to embrace 70 or 80 per cent of

the peasant households. That is to say, in such areas, the building of semi-socialist co-operatives can be basically completed by that time. Provinces in North and Northeast China and a larger or smaller area in certain other provinces will fall into this category.

2. Over a large part of the country, by the summer of 1955 approximately 10 to 20 per cent of all peasant households had joined co-operatives. In such areas the work of building semi-socialist co-operatives can be basically completed before the spring of 1958.

3. More time is needed to build co-operatives in areas where the foundations of the mutual-aid movement are relatively weak and where there are still only very few agricultural producers' co-operatives. These are for the most part border areas. There are some border areas where land reform has not yet been carried out and no mutual-aid teams or co-operatives have been organized at all. In such areas, it is necessary to advance fairly slowly, or even wait and see for a long time.

In drawing up plans for agricultural co-operation, the Communist Party committees in various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions should select areas where conditions are ripe to try out the establishment of agricultural producers' co-operatives of an advanced (that is, entirely socialist) type. In some areas where the work of building semi-socialist co-operatives has been basically completed, plans may be drawn up to transform co-operatives of an elementary type into co-operatives of an advanced type, bearing in mind the need for increased production, the degree of the people's political consciousness and local economic conditions. Such a transformation should be carried out step by step—that is, by the trial establishment of a few co-operatives of an advanced type and a gradual, stage-by-stage increase in their number.

In areas where many nationalities live together co-operatives may be formed either by people of a single nationality or of several different nationalities.

In areas where livestock breeding is the only occupation of the people, experimental livestock breeding co-operatives may also be established if conditions permit.

Plans for agricultural co-operation in the various areas should include such branches of the economy as forestry, livestock breeding, fishing, salt production and other occupations. They should also include plans for supply and marketing co-operatives, credit co-operatives, handicraft producers' co-operatives, transport co-operatives, and plans for cultural and educational work and for the growth of the Party and the people's organizations.

In drawing up plans for agricultural co-operation, the Party committees at all levels, and first and foremost the *hsiang* Party branches and county Party committees, should simultaneously work out all-embracing, long-term production plans based on local conditions, all with the development of agriculture as their central aim.

XI

In planning agricultural co-operation, particular attention should be paid to the plans for *hsiang* and villages, because such plans are the foundation of the whole plan of agricultural co-operation. Party committees at all levels should give the Party organizations of a number of selected *hsiang* or villages guidance in the preparation of comprehensive plans for stage-by-stage development in the light of local conditions. This will build up experience that helps to guide the whole

movement. Such plans should include the following measures:

1. The making of a concrete analysis of class relationships in the village and the way in which the mutual-aid and co-operative movement is being organized.

2. The making of arrangements for the establishment or expansion of mutual-aid teams and agricultural producers' co-operatives stage by stage and group by group. This should be done on a voluntary basis, taking into account the degree of understanding of various strata of the peasantry, their social relations and where they live and work.

3. The making of suitable arrangements to train and supply key personnel for the establishment of mutual-aid teams and agricultural producers' co-operatives, taking into account the interests of the whole movement for agricultural co-operation in the *hsiang* or village.

These plans should be carefully studied by the cadres and active elements among the peasants; they should be repeatedly discussed with the mass of the people. Running things by simply issuing orders must be avoided and necessary revisions made from time to time as the work goes ahead.

XII

The Party organizations of provinces (or autonomous regions), administrative regions (or autonomous *chou*), counties (or autonomous counties), districts and *hsiang* (or nationality *hsiang*) should pay close attention to rural questions and energetically improve the quality of their leadership in rural work. The leading responsible comrades of local Party committees

at all levels should spare no pains in learning to become experts in agricultural co-operation. In short, what is needed is initiative, not passivity; active leadership, not its relinquishment.

Those in the leadership should base their work on the method of learning from the mass movement, familiarizing themselves with the actual situation, summing up experience and adopting a flexible approach in guiding the movement. Ignorance coupled with unwillingness to learn, the issuing of arbitrary orders and an irregular tempo of work—these are things which violate the principles on which the growth of the movement must be founded in actual practice. They represent subjectivism, not Marxism. There can be no correct leadership unless such subjectivism is opposed.

The leadership should respect and encourage initiative and creative ability among the masses; it should protect and foster these growing, developing forces. To impede or discourage the growth of new things emerging in society, instead of helping them wholeheartedly, or to try and force their growth artificially, in a rash and impetuous way, before conditions are ripe, instead of taking appropriate measures to foster their natural birth and development—are both methods which injure the tender shoots of the new. They are opportunist, not Marxist methods. There can be no leadership unless such opportunism is opposed.

The aim of the co-operative movement is to lead about 110 million peasant households from individual farming to collective farming and then go on to bring about technical reform in agriculture; it is to eliminate the last vestiges of capitalist exploitation in the rural areas and establish socialism. This is a tremendous change affecting the livelihood of several hundred

million people, and it is inconceivable that difficulties should not crop up. Opportunists and subjectivists lose the ability to exercise sober judgement and overcome the difficulties with which they are confronted, either because they do not realize that they need to rely on the masses and the Party, or because they have no confidence in them. However, ours is a well-tempered, well-steered Party, a Marxist-Leninist Party closely linked with the people. Throughout the thirty years and more of its existence, our Party has weathered many storms in the revolution and faced many serious difficulties. But its close unity with the masses enabled it to overcome such difficulties one by one and lead the people's revolution to victory. The building of socialism is the cause of hundreds of millions of people. In the industrialization of our country, in the building up of agricultural co-operation and in every other aspect of our work, we should give full play to the creativeness and initiative of the masses, work in a realistic spirit and shun complacency and impetuosity. It is the conviction of the Sixth Plenary Session that if we do this we shall overcome all difficulties and go on to new and greater victories.

**EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE DRAFT
DECISIONS ON AGRICULTURAL
CO-OPERATION**

**(A Speech Delivered on October 4, 1955 at the Sixth Plenary
Session of the Seventh Central Committee of
the Communist Party of China)**

Chen Po-ta

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's report on agricultural co-operation, delivered on July 31, 1955 at the meeting of secretaries of provincial, municipal and autonomous region committees convened by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, summed up many years' experience of the agricultural co-operative movement in our country. It pointedly criticized the main ideological errors—Rightist errors—now existing in our Party on the question of expanding agricultural co-operation, and gave policy directives on a series of questions, such as the necessity and possibility of agricultural co-operation, the practical way forward and the steps to be taken, and the way to lead agricultural co-operation. These directives of Comrade Mao Tse-tung have enabled all our Party comrades to prepare themselves ideologically and organizationally for the coming upsurge in the socialist mass movement in the countryside, and to avoid serious mistakes at this vital turning point in history.

On the basis of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's report, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee has

prepared draft Decisions on Agricultural Co-operation which are now submitted to this plenary session. As I am in charge of part of the work in the Rural Work Department of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau has appointed me to give explanations of the draft Decisions.

I wish to draw attention to the following points:

I

THE POLICY OF EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION

(1) The draft Decisions point out that the nature of the peasant question is different in each of the two stages of the revolution. Our Party must adapt its policy in the rural areas to a new turn in the revolution and to new changes in class relations and in the forms of class struggle in the rural areas since the land reform. Rightist mistakes made by some comrades arise precisely from their failure to see this new situation and the new changes.

As you all know, our Party's general line in the period of transition has three parts: socialist industrialization, socialist transformation of agriculture and handicrafts, and socialist transformation of capitalist industry and commerce. These parts cannot be separated one from the other, because the work of socialist construction and socialist transformation covers the whole national economy. A socialist economy must include the two main branches of production—industry and agriculture. As Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out in his report, socialist industrialization is not something that can be carried out in isolation, separate from agricultural co-operation; our

country must, therefore, adopt the policy of keeping agricultural co-operation in step with socialist industrialization. We cannot stand with one foot planted on socialist industry and the other on a small-peasant economy. The victory of socialism is unthinkable unless we win over the five hundred million strong rural population to take part in socialist construction. There is a rising tide of socialist industrial construction; and in view of this, it is highly significant that Comrade Mao Tse-tung has in good time put the expansion of agricultural co-operation as an important item on the agenda of work for the whole Party.

(2) Our Party led the bourgeois-democratic revolution for almost thirty long years. The work of every comrade in the Party centred round the struggle for victory in this revolution. It is quite natural, therefore, that some comrades are not mentally prepared for the transition from this stage of the revolution to the stage of socialist revolution. But our Party has Comrade Mao Tse-tung at its head and is armed with Marxism-Leninism; even when it was working to overthrow the system of land ownership by feudal landlords, it was preparing to lead the peasants on from the point where the land was returned to the tillers to socialist co-operation. Comrade Mao Tse-tung in his report recalled the history of the agricultural co-operative movement in our country; this is also the history of the gradual putting into practice of the policy of our Party on agricultural co-operation.

It would be as well for us to review Comrade Mao Tse-tung's exposition of this Party policy in his works written in various periods. As you all know, as early as the time of the First Revolutionary Civil War Comrade Mao Tse-tung, in his *Report of an Investigation into the Peasant Movement in Hunan*, described

the co-operative movement as an important part of the peasant movement, though, in view of actual conditions at that time, mention was made only of supply and marketing co-operatives and credit co-operatives.

During the Second Revolutionary Civil War, Comrade Mao Tse-tung, drawing on the experience of mutual-aid working groups and ploughing teams created by the masses in the revolutionary bases, pointed out the great role played in agricultural production by this kind of mutual aid in labour (that is, co-operative organizations for agricultural production). (See Comrade Mao Tse-tung's *Survey of Changkang Hsiang*.)

During the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression, Comrade Mao Tse-tung gave two famous speeches, *On Co-operation* and *Let Us Get Organized*, in which he called on the people in all the anti-Japanese bases to organize this rudimentary form of mutual-aid production group in large numbers on a voluntary mass basis. Later, in other works (such as *On Coalition Government*), Comrade Mao Tse-tung continued to draw attention to this question. At the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Party in 1949, speaking of economic construction after the liberation of the country, Comrade Mao Tse-tung said:

If we have only a state sector in the national economy and no co-operative sector, it is impossible to lead the individual economy of the labouring people gradually on to the road of collectivization; we cannot consolidate the proletariat's leadership in the political power of the state. Anyone who ignores or underestimates this point will be making a grave mistake.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Central Committee of our Party, on the basis of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's views, passed the "Decisions on Mutual Aid and Co-operation in Agricultural Production" in December 1951, and the "Decisions on the Development of Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives" in December 1953. All this shows that the Party has consistently adhered to the policy of agricultural co-operation; this is not something put forward all of a sudden. Some of our comrades are somewhat taken aback by this policy because they have not had time to study the question seriously. The main reason for this is that many of our comrades joined the Party during the bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism, and are acquainted, in their day-to-day practical work, only with the programme of that revolution (that is, our Party's minimum programme) but are not yet familiar with the Party's programme relating to socialist revolution (that is, our Party's maximum programme). That is why, as with many other important new questions, we must take up the question of agricultural co-operation again and devote serious study to it; and in the course of our study we must realize what our mistakes are and correct them, so as to correctly grasp our Party's principles and policy, and raise our knowledge of Marxism-Leninism to a higher level. That is the task confronting all Party comrades.

(3) The draft Decisions criticize the illusions harboured by certain comrades who are quite content with things as they are in the countryside, and with the small-peasant economy. The Party must criticize such mistaken ideas. At the Third Conference on Mutual Aid and Co-operative Work called by the Cen-

tral Committee in October 1953, Comrade Mao Tse-tung had this to say:

If positions in the countryside are not held by socialism, capitalism will assuredly occupy them. How then can we say that we will take neither the socialist nor the capitalist road?

It is an invariable law that, once the feudal land system is overthrown, a struggle begins in rural areas in which the choice lies between the capitalist and the socialist roads. It is either the one or the other: there is no middle course. Some comrades took quite a radical stand in their attitude towards the bourgeois-democratic revolution, but once they pass through that stage of the revolution, they remain quite content with the peasants' having got back their land. So they loiter at the crossroads, between socialism and capitalism, and are actually more interested in preserving the small-peasant economy than in giving a lead in its transformation to a socialist agriculture. Such comrades fail to realize that a small-peasant economy is not a paradise for the peasantry, but a garden in which capitalism grows. We have Lenin's dictum on this:

Small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale.

It is impossible to compromise with a small-peasant economy. To entertain such an idea is mere self-deception.

We can cite plenty of facts to prove that where the mutual-aid and co-operative movement has grown, the poor peasants in general have rapidly improved their economic condition, the tendency towards class differentiation has been slight, the grain question has

been easily solved and a lively spirit prevails in the villages. On the other hand, where the mutual-aid and co-operative movement has failed to take root or its growth has been slight, in such places, even though the landlords no longer own the land, even though the peasants are, to a greater or lesser extent, living better, there are still many poor peasants whose economic condition has not improved, there is already the beginning of a new trend towards class differentiation, with some poor peasants again losing their land, some old middle peasants sinking to the status of poor peasants, and a certain number of new rich peasants emerging. In places like this we have run into a fair amount of trouble in our work, and, taking advantage of this backward state of affairs, landlords, rich peasants and all sorts of counter-revolutionary elements are attempting a come-back.

The recent report of the Kansu Provincial Party Committee to the Central Committee said that some comrades feared there might be "disturbances" or that "emperors" might arise if we gave the co-operative movement its head. Facts, however, prove that "emperors" do not spring up in places where the mutual-aid and co-operative movement has grown, where socialism has dug itself in and broadened out, where the peasants have reached a higher level of political consciousness fairly fast. They spring up in places where the level of political consciousness among the peasants is low, where the co-operative movement has not taken root, where the struggle against feudalism has not been properly carried out. From the Kansu Provincial Party Committee's report we reach the conclusion that the growth of co-operation is the only way to guarantee the peasants the land they hold, to go on consolidating the worker-peasant alliance, to strengthen the leadership of the working

class in that alliance after land reform, and to make any counter-revolutionary come-back utterly impossible.

(4) There is bound to be some resistance to the transformation to a socialist agriculture. It is inconceivable that there should not be. What Comrade Mao Tse-tung's report sets out to do is precisely to destroy the ideas behind this resistance. Agricultural producers' co-operatives are a newly emerging force, and we know that any such force encounters resistance from conservative forces. The agricultural co-operative movement will be no exception.

The conservative forces are two. On the one hand, there is the class enemy—the landlords, rich peasants and other capitalist exploiters in the countryside. On the other, there is the spontaneous tendency towards capitalism inherent in the dual character of the peasants (mainly well-to-do middle peasants) with all the prejudices and customs inseparable from prolonged individual farming. Since such forces do exist in society it is natural that they are reflected in our Party in various forms. This is specially true of the sentiments of some well-to-do middle peasants. The recent dissolution of large numbers of co-operatives, the acts of "drastic compression," certainly originated in the conservative outlook of some of our comrades who are content with the small-peasant economy. Such misguided activity, viewed as a social phenomenon, is not accidental, but reflects pressure from the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants or the well-to-do middle peasants who tend to move spontaneously in the direction of capitalism. On the one hand, we have the peasant masses (and first and foremost, the active elements among the poor peasants and the lower sections of both the old and the new middle peasants) who have the active desire to follow the Party's lead and organize co-operatives. On the other

hand, we have the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants or the well-to-do middle peasants with the spontaneous tendency towards capitalism, who want to stifle it. That is the contradiction that exists in our society.

The comrades who make mistakes fail to see the two sides of this contradiction. They do not realize that if we are to consolidate the worker-peasant alliance, we need, on the one hand, to give full play to the peasants' active desire to take the road to socialism, and, on the other, to continue to reform and overcome the backward ideas they still have. Such comrades, as Comrade Mao Tse-tung points out, "usually take the standpoint of the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants or that of the well-to-do middle peasants who have a spontaneous tendency to take the capitalist road. They think in terms of the few, rather than take the standpoint of the working class and think in terms of the whole country and people." That is why they find themselves in an extremely awkward position among the peasant masses. On the one hand, they publicize the general line among them and call on them to take the socialist road; on the other, they refuse to approve the setting-up of co-operatives, or impose restrictions on those already in being by invoking "countless taboos and commandments." On the one hand, they want to train the more active elements among the peasants to organize co-operatives. On the other, in some places such strange things take place as actually "training active elements to withdraw from the co-operatives" or "convening a conference of co-operative members who want to quit them, so pursuing the 'task' of compression." Some peasants say, "The general line calls on us to take the road of co-operation, but when we start our co-operatives, you refuse to give your approval and prevent us from taking that road." Others complain: "You

told us that small-peasant economy was no good. Now you are deliberately telling us to go back to individualism." Some cadres say, "We've learnt to organize co-operatives. We've never been taught how to scrap them!" These are all legitimate complaints.

But a newly emerging force is irresistible. Everyone knows that when our Party was first formed, when it was leading the peasant revolution and guerilla warfare and establishing bases, many people refused to recognize it because at the outset it was small. But what happened? Our Party and the newly emerging force which it represented triumphed, and those who refused to recognize it were the ones who failed. Those who refused to recognize the Party finally had to do so. Nowadays there are many people who adopt an attitude of "non-recognition" of the co-operatives. They will fail too.

What lesson can we draw from all this? That we must shake off the dead hand of conservative forces; that we must look ahead; that we must pay attention to those things among the people which are new and positive. We must not keep looking back, only seeing what is backward and negative. As the draft Decisions say, the leadership has a responsibility to respect and encourage the creativeness and initiative of the masses and protect this newly emerging force.

II

PRACTICAL WORK IN EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION

Once we have the policy, the main thing is how to do the work well.

- (1) We must follow Comrade Mao Tse-tung's

injunction to handle the work "in the light of actual conditions," "work out proper measures suited to varying local conditions and give timely guidance." Comrade Mao Tse-tung said:

We should realize, here and now, that an upsurge in socialist transformation will soon come about all over the country's rural areas. That is inevitable.

What do we mean by an upsurge? We mean the stage at which the movement draws in the broad masses and is no longer limited to a few active elements. This upsurge will come about not simply as a result of what the Party's leading body or a few individuals want, nor can it be forcibly created. It will come about when objective conditions are ripe, when the issue involves the broad masses, not only a few people.

Some comrades say: "If the leadership says there is an upsurge, then there must be an upsurge!" This is a very thoughtless way of talking, to say the least. Let us see why Comrade Mao Tse-tung chooses the present moment to say that a nation-wide upsurge in the agricultural co-operative movement is inevitable.

In his report we find that there are three main reasons for this:

First, the tremendous expansion of our national economy resulting from the First Five-Year Plan, particularly, our socialist industrial construction and its achievements, daily increase the peasants' enthusiasm for co-operation.

Secondly, China's mutual-aid and co-operative movement already has a fairly long history; the movement for mutual aid which has developed extensively in various places has, in fact, laid foundations for

organizing co-operatives. Moreover, the superior ability to increase output demonstrated by most of the hundreds of thousands of co-operatives already formed is an encouragement to great numbers of peasants.

Thirdly, this upsurge has already started in some areas.

All this heralds a nation-wide upsurge in the agricultural co-operative movement. If we fail to see these signs, if we fail to discern this main trend in our life, we shall inevitably be left behind by the masses and, as Comrade Mao Tse-tung has said, in this upsurge of co-operation, simply totter along like a woman with bound feet, or become so stunned by success as to be quite incapable of shouldering the task of leadership. Of course, this is not to say that the nation-wide co-operative movement will develop everywhere according to a uniform pattern and advance in different places at the same rate. The draft Decisions clearly state that development of the movement will be uneven. It points out that in the main three different types of situation exist in different parts of our country. In view of this new situation, where a national upsurge in the co-operative movement is imminent, we must consider all the various local differences that exist and pay suitable attention to these differences at all times in our work. Only by so doing can the agricultural co-operative movement be set on a common path of healthy growth. In May 1948, the Central Committee of the Party, giving instructions on the work of land reform and the strengthening of the Party, said:

It is necessary to train cadres to be skilled at analysing the actual situation and deciding on their task and method of work at a definite place and time according to the actual conditions in

different areas and their varying historical backgrounds.

There is no doubt that this directive of the Central Committee is just as applicable in leading the co-operative movement today.

(2) This upsurge in the co-operative movement comes about because, on the one hand, objective conditions make it possible, and, on the other, because of the hard and careful work the Party has put in. It does not come about by itself. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out that the key to running the co-operative movement well is for the Party leadership to be really in the lead; the leading body of the Party must throw itself heart and soul into the work; it must show initiative, enthusiasm and hearty welcome, and so give leadership to the whole movement (see the preface to *How to Run Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives*). That is to say, it must be able to link the Party's leadership with the enthusiasm of the masses in organizing co-operatives. Provided the Party goes on giving sound leadership, it is possible to hasten the onset of this upsurge in co-operation. On the other hand, if the Party fails to give good leadership, there will be no upsurge even when conditions are ripe for it; and even if an upsurge is already in being, it will probably meet setbacks for want of correct Party leadership. Isn't it true that in some places where the upsurge actually started cadres and people became downcast and despondent because it was met with the wholly wrong policy of what was called "drastic compression"?

Good leadership, in the first place, means that leading Party organizations must take care not to advance blindly, they must show more foresight. To achieve this, every province, county, district and

hsiang should have a comprehensive plan and not "allow things to be done piecemeal, tinkering with things here and there" (preface to *How to Run Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives*), as Comrade Mao Tse-tung has said.

In his article "On Practice," Comrade Mao Tse-tung wrote:

We often hear the remark made by a comrade when he cannot bravely accept an assignment: "I have no confidence." Why has he no confidence? Because he has no systematic understanding of the nature and conditions of the work or has had little or even no contact with this kind of work; hence the laws governing it are beyond him.

Now on this question of co-operation, there are some comrades who have no understanding of the situation or understand only one side of the picture but not the whole; there are others who have quite a bit of material to work on, but fail to apply the Marxist-Leninist method of class analysis to the question. Such comrades cannot grasp the laws governing the co-operative movement. They cannot see the essential, the main aspects, and so they lack foresight and confidence in their work. The result, as Stalin has said, is that "they row conscientiously, pulling hard all the time; their boat floats smoothly, with the current, but not only don't they know whither the current is carrying them, they do not wish to know."

Not long ago, in a report to the Central Committee, a Provincial Committee of the Party stated:

In carrying out the actual work, there are many organs of the Party committee at every level which have still failed to make a deep, consistent and diligent study of the work of the co-operatives, nor do they go very deep in their

understanding of the key questions of the movement or in summing up their experience in extending the movement. That is why, while we can carry out measures which are correct, we also accept measures which are wrong, even though we have a feeling that they are not quite right.

This is really working in a daze! The reason why the possession of "a comprehensive plan for co-operation" can become an important method of putting an end to this sort of daze is because such planning makes it necessary for all Party bodies which have a genuine sense of responsibility towards the revolution to strive to grasp the whole situation, and to study it. They are then bound to learn to apply the Marxist-Leninist method of class analysis in considering issues that arise. In this way they gradually familiarize themselves with what was formerly unfamiliar; they gradually learn the laws of the co-operative movement and this enables them to foresee things. Naturally in drafting a comprehensive plan, especially in the beginning, things are liable to happen very often which are not quite right, and these must be systematically corrected in the light of the actual situation. However, things should be easier once we have a plan—a plan which has been framed collectively as a result of thorough and repeated surveys and study, and which has been adopted only after the leadership has issued it as a draft to all Party bodies lower down, and after it has been thoroughly discussed and amended at all levels from below. Such a plan will encourage us to work energetically; it will remind us to pay regular attention to and examine the various problems which confront us in every field of our work. As our movement develops, it will show us where we are right and where we are wrong.

(3) Pay attention to the relation between numbers and quality.

Between spring and summer of this year some comrades advocated "lopping off some of the co-operatives," their "theory" being that "when you've got too many co-operatives, it's difficult to manage them." This "theory" has gone bankrupt. What we actually find in plenty of places is that the more co-operatives are set up, the more active the masses are, the fewer problems arise in the co-operatives, the easier it is to improve and consolidate them, and the greater their success in increasing yields. Why? Because as more and more co-operatives are set up, they attract more attention from the whole Party. Then, because there is more opportunity to make comparisons between them and compete one with another, they have the chance to exchange experience, the more backward co-operatives have an incentive to catch up with the more go-ahead, and that makes it far easier for cadres to do a better job. Moreover, it stands to reason that as the socialist positions expand while the capitalist positions contract, more forces become available to withstand the spontaneous tendency towards capitalism. However well a co-operative starts off, it cannot, in the absence of large numbers of co-operatives giving one another mutual encouragement and co-ordinating production among themselves, expand reproduction to a greater extent, and it is bound to be seriously handicapped in its task of providing its members with a better life. We can, therefore, reasonably draw the conclusion that a change in quantity will, at a certain stage, bring about a change in quality: quality cannot be improved independently of quantity. It is wrong to work on the supposition that consolidation of the co-operatives can be divorced from the work of increasing their number, or to make

a sweeping generalization that the fewer co-operatives there are, the easier it is to consolidate them.

That is not to say that we should go on to draw another unwarranted conclusion from all this, and imagine that the growth of co-operatives is simply a question of numbers and that quality can be disregarded. Success in agricultural co-operation is not measured simply by growth in numbers. As Comrade Mao Tse-tung says,

Great emphasis must be placed on the quality of the co-operatives. We must oppose any tendency to neglect quality and concentrate solely on increasing their number or bringing a greater number of peasant households into them.

He makes the point that not only do co-operatives need a series of checkings over to bring about improvements after they have been formed, but that systematic spade-work needs to be done before they are set up. In that way the increase in number can be linked with improved quality. Comrade Mao Tse-tung gave us the warning: "Fight no battle that is not well prepared, no battle whose outcome is uncertain," and added, "If you want to be sure of the outcome, there must be preparedness, full preparedness." That is by way of reminding us that we cannot run a co-operative in a slipshod way; we cannot work in the "help a plant to grow by pulling it up" way.

Some Party members, quite content with their formalistic approach and with no stomach for a mass line which entails doing the hundred and one preparatory jobs needed to establish a co-operative, resort to compulsion and the giving of orders to satisfy their love of impressive figures. There are even some who imagine that "you can shout a few slogans and get socialism in a few days' time." That, too, is a dis-

tortion of Party policy, a distortion which kills the enthusiasm of the masses for co-operatives. In no circumstances will the Party stand this sort of thing.

(4) Interlink plans for co-operation with production plans.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out that land reform is a measure designed to break the shackles of feudal relations of production. It is the first step towards releasing the productive forces in agriculture. "That is the first revolution."

Socialist co-operation is designed to transform the relations of production, to switch them from an individual economic basis to a collective one; it is designed to break the shackles of capitalist relations of production. That is the second step towards releasing the productive forces in agriculture. "That is the second revolution." Unless this second revolution is carried through, we cannot hope for any huge growth in our productive forces.

Our peasants are industrious and hard-working. But in the old days, as a result of the threefold yoke of imperialism, feudalism and capitalism, the productive forces in agriculture were weak and our country had a far lower yield per unit area of many farm products than many capitalist countries. What must we do to overcome this backwardness? Some comrades pin their hopes on small-peasant economy. That is useless. The Central Committee of our Party has refuted this mistaken idea. What then? Shall we put our hopes on capitalism? The capitalist way of increasing production is, as far as the mass of peasants are concerned, a long road strewn with untold suffering. The Party Central Committee has shown that we cannot take that road. The only possible road for us to take then is that of agricultural co-operation backed by a socialist industry. In that way we can swiftly in-

crease the productive forces of our country's agriculture and enable it to catch up with and surpass capitalist countries. All available data show that a co-operative, if it works well, can, from the day it is formed, start increasing production and go on doing so year by year. There have been cases of co-operative members doubling their income in a matter of four, five or six years. For our Chinese peasants who have suffered so much for thousands of years, that is something truly wonderful. The reason is clear: as soon as the peasants get together and organize productive work, they can begin to make use of their tremendous latent productive power.

The Rural Work Department of the Heilungkiang Provincial Committee recently published some materials summing up experience gained in agricultural co-operation. "Investigation," it says, "shows that during its first year the efficiency of labour of a co-operative generally rises from 15 to 20 per cent above that of mutual-aid teams, and 20 to 25 per cent more use can be made of draught animals. This more efficient use of means of production, including draught animals and farm tools, makes it possible to divert part of the productive forces to new production. If all the 22,000 co-operatives in the province were well managed, this means that we should have a productive power equal to the labour of 150,000 people and over 100,000 beasts, besides considerable funds to organize reproduction on an expanded scale. But this is not all. The continual growth of the agricultural co-operative movement will in future provide greater and greater opportunities of increasing productive forces." In other words, agricultural producers' co-operatives have a far greater chance of making full use of favourable conditions to continually increase production.

For this reason every co-operative, right from the start, should set about drafting a plan for increasing production. Every county, district, *hsiang* (or village)—and particularly the *hsiang* (or village)—should, at the same time as it makes comprehensive plans for co-operation, draw up plans to increase production in its area. Such comprehensive production plans will, to a far greater extent than hitherto, give the peasants a long-term target for building up agriculture based on actual local conditions and taking into account the common interests of the various co-operatives in the *hsiang* or village concerned. In this connection, we do not have much experience to go on at the moment, but we do know that as co-operatives spring up group by group or area by area, the need for an all-embracing production plan will be keenly felt. Local Party committees at the various levels must pay proper attention to this matter, and, drawing on the good sense of the masses, start to make a study of it.

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So much by way of explanation of some aspects of the draft Decisions. I think these are the main things I want to talk about. In his report Comrade Mao Tse-tung said:

Needless to say, neither socialist industrialization nor socialist transformation is easy. A host of difficulties are bound to crop up as some 110 million peasant households turn from individual to collective management and go ahead with technical reforms in agriculture. But we should have confidence that our Party is capable of leading the masses to overcome such difficulties.

We should not shirk difficulties, for instance, by being too scared to take the affairs of the co-operatives

firmly in hand. It is even more important that we should not panic in the face of difficulties and, for instance, start "lopping off" large numbers of co-operatives. On the contrary, we must at all times hold ourselves ready to surmount difficulties that may crop up as we push ahead. Even if difficulties are only local, it is still wrong to neglect them.

The policy of co-operation laid down by the Central Committee of our Party is the right one and the steps taken to carry it out are sound. Can there be any doubt that, if all Party comrades unite and follow the lead of the Central Committee of the Party headed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, if they keep close to the masses and work hard and well, we shall accomplish this historic task? I should say, none.

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