

1955

Speeches/Documents

**Title:** On the Cooperativization of Agriculture

**Author:** Mao Zedong

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**Source:** Xuanji, V, pp. 168-191. Other Chinese Texts: RMRB ( Oct 17, 1955), 1-2; Xuandu A, pp. 295-317; Guanyu nongye huo zuohua wenti, pp. 1-38; Buyi, pp. 42-62; Gaizao wenji, III, pp. 9-30. XHYB, 11 ( Nov 28, 1955), 1-13; ZFYJ, 6 ( Dec 1955), 1-10. Available English Translations: SW, V, pp. 184-207; SR ( 1971), pp. 289-420.

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*Minor variations exist among the various Chinese versions listed here, particularly between the Xuanji and the RMRB versions.*

*Mao's speech on the cooperativization of agriculture marked a decisive intervention in the struggle over agricultural collectivization. Although the struggle had been going on within the CPC since land reform had been basically completed in 1953, the lagging agricultural growth rates through 1956 - the midpoint of the First Five-Year Plan - forced the issue of agricultural policy to the forefront. During this struggle, many within the CPC national leadership, including Liu Shaoqi, had argued that in this period the need for accumulation from agricultural production to finance industrial development could best be met by relying primarily on consolidating the rich peasant economy, i.e., providing the conditions that would allow the most skilled and best equipped peasants to increase production most rapidly, and only secondarily on collectivization. Thus in line with the position of the Soviet Union at that time, they argued that collectivization must be postponed until mechanization of agriculture had at least been begun.*

Mao, to the contrary, argued that such a policy could lead to increased polarization in the countryside. Thus, although these policies might allow for rapid accumulation, they would do so in such a way as to develop the conditions for the reemergence of classes in the countryside. Therefore, he argued for primary reliance on a rapid cooperativization of agriculture <sup>1</sup> and for the first time challenged the prevailing Soviet model of socialist development.

In July 1955 the opposition to Mao had the upper hand. The plan adopted by the NPC in July called for postponing collectivization until the economy was capable of producing sufficient machinery and the other requisite factors to allow for full-scale mechanization of agriculture, and until 70 to 80 per cent of the peasantry had become rich peasants.

Mao strongly opposed this approach and the consequences to which he feared it would lead. Therefore, on the day following the NPC he addressed a conference of secretaries of provincial, municipal, and autonomous region Party committees-who, he felt, would be more supportive of his position than the Central Committee - with his position on agricultural cooperativization. He argued that immediate and rapid collectivization would not only

increase accumulation, but would do so in a way favorable to the development of the further revolutionization of China's economy. <sup>2</sup> Subsequently, in October 1955, at an enlarged meeting of the Central Committee - which was attended by 338 regional Party secretaries, as opposed to only 38 Central Committee members and 25 Central Committee alternative members - the "Resolution on the Question of Agricultural Cooperativization," which was based largely on Mao's position, was passed. But victory in the struggle for acceptance of this position did not mean that Mao's suggestions were carried out as planned. Once the country got caught up in the struggle for rapid collectivization, the pace of collectivization far outstripped anything suggested either by Mao himself or by the Resolution. <sup>3</sup> Mao's preoccupation with the problem of agricultural cooperativization for the remainder of 1955 and 1956 is evident in the many speeches and writings on the subject in this period. As we shall see, the issue was not merely a major program of the transformation of the agricultural base of the Chinese economy, which it was, but also a problem of ideological and policy struggle in Chinese society at large (with "conservative" intellectuals such as Liang Shuming) and within the Party (with, for example, Liu Shaoqi and the Rural Work Department). On this issue, the CPC published two major sets of documents:

1) Shi Jingtang, Zhang Lin, Zhou Qinghe, Bi Zhongjie, eds. *Zhongguo nongye hezuohua yundong shiliao (Materials on the History of the Movement for the Cooperativization of Agriculture in China)* ( 1957, Sanlian chubanshe, Beijing), 2 volumes, with vol. 1 concentrating on pre-Liberation conditions and vol. 2 on the situation from 1953 to 1955;

2) *Nongye shehui zhuyi gaizao wenji (Documents on the Socialist Transformation of Agriculture)* ( 1955, Caizheng jingji chubanshe, Shanghai), 3 volumes. (Herein abbreviated as *Gaizao wenji*.) This article is contained in vol. 3 of this latter set, pp. 9-30.

A high tide in the new socialist mass movement will soon sweep across the rural areas throughout the country. Some of our comrades, however, are tottering along like a woman with bound feet, <sup>4</sup> complaining all the time about others, saying: [You're] going too fast, [you're] going too fast. [They are given to] excessive nitpicking, unwarranted complaints, endless worries, and countless taboos and take this to be the correct policy for guiding the socialist mass movement in the rural areas.

No, this is not the correct policy; it is a wrong policy.

At present, the high tide of the social transformation of cooperativization in the countryside is already evident in some areas and will soon engulf the whole country. This is a large-scale socialist revolutionary movement involving a rural population of over five hundred million and has tremendous worldwide significance. We should give this movement active, enthusiastic, and well-planned leadership, rather than dragging it back by all sorts of means. That there are some deviations in the movement is unavoidable. It is understandable and also not hard to rectify. Shortcomings and errors that exist among cadres and peasants can be overcome or corrected provided we actively help them. The cadres and peasants are advancing under the leadership of the Party, and the movement is basically sound. In some places, they have made mistakes in their work. For example, on the one hand, [some] poor peasants have been prevented from joining the cooperatives in disregard of their difficulties; on the other hand, [some] well-to-do middle peasants have been forced to join the cooperatives in violation of their interests. <sup>5</sup> On all of these things people should be educated and corrected instead of simply being reprimanded. Blunt reprimands cannot solve problems. We must guide the movement boldly and not fear dragons ahead and tigers behind. Both

cadres and peasants will remold themselves through their own experience in struggle. We should let them get down to doing the work, and they will draw lessons and enhance their talents while doing it. In this way, large numbers of outstanding people will come to the fore. The attitude of fearing dragons ahead and tigers behind is not conducive to the making of [good] cadres. Large numbers of cadres with short-term training must be sent to the countryside from the higher levels to guide and assist the cooperativization movement, but even cadres sent down from higher levels can only learn how to do their work by being in the movement [themselves]. They may not necessarily know how to do their work just by attending a training class and listening to an instructor lecture on several dozen points.

In short, the leadership should not fall behind the mass movement. Yet, as things stand now, it is the mass movement that is running ahead of the leadership, and the leadership is unable to catch up with the movement. This situation must be changed.

## II

The nationwide cooperativization movement is now moving forward on a giant scale, and yet we still have to argue such questions as whether the cooperatives can develop and whether they can be consolidated. As far as certain comrades are concerned, the crux of the matter seems to be their worry about whether the several hundred thousand existing semisocialist and generally rather small cooperatives (averaging twenty-odd households each) can be consolidated. <sup>6</sup> If they cannot be consolidated, their development is, of course, out of the question. Despite the record of the development of [agricultural] cooperativization in the last few years, certain comrades still remain skeptical; they still want to see how things develop during this year, 1955. They may even want to wait and see for another year in 1956. Only if more cooperatives are consolidated will they be truly convinced that agricultural cooperativization is feasible and that the policy of the Central Committee of our Party is correct. Therefore, the work in these two years is of crucial importance.

In order to prove the feasibility of agricultural cooperativization and the correctness of our Party Center's policy regarding agricultural cooperativization, it is perhaps not without benefit for us to review the history of the agricultural cooperativization movement in our country.

During the twenty-two years of revolutionary wars prior to the founding of the People's Republic of China, our Party had already had the experience of guiding the peasants, after the land reform, in forming agricultural producers' mutual aid organizations containing the rudiments of socialism. At that time [these organizations included] the mutual aid labor groups and plowing teams in Jiangxi Province, labor-exchange teams in northern Shaanxi, and mutual aid teams in northern, eastern, and northeastern China. <sup>7</sup> At that time, organizations of semisocialist or socialist agricultural producers' cooperatives had also come into existence already in isolated cases. For example, an agricultural producers' cooperative of a socialist nature came into being in Ansai *xian* in northern Shaanxi during the time of the War of Resistance against Japan. <sup>8</sup> But this type of cooperative was not popularized at that time.

It was after the founding of the People's Republic of China that our Party led the peasants in setting up agricultural producers' mutual-aid teams on a more extensive scale and in starting to organize agricultural producers' cooperatives in large numbers on the basis of [these] mutual aid teams. Nearly six more years has since been added to the history of this work.

By December 15, 1951, when our Party Center adopted the first Draft Resolution on Mutual Aid and Cooperativization in Agricultural Production <sup>9</sup> which had first been issued to local Party organizations and carried out on an experimental basis in various areas (this document was not published in the press in the form of a formal resolution until March 1953), <sup>10</sup> more than 300 agricultural producers' cooperatives had already come into being. Two years later, when our Party Center issued its Resolution on Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives on December 16, 1953, <sup>11</sup> the number of agricultural cooperatives had grown to more than 14,000, a 46-fold increase in the course of two years.

This resolution pointed out that between the winter of 1953 and the autumn harvest season of 1954, the number of agricultural producers' cooperatives was to increase from more than 14,000 to over 35,800; that is to say, an increase of only 150 per cent was contemplated. As it turned out, the number of cooperatives actually rose to 100,000 during this one year, representing more than seven times [the figure of] over 14,000 cooperatives. In October 1954, the Central Committee of our Party decided on an increase of a further 500 per cent, from 100,000 to 600,000 cooperatives; as it turned out, 670,000 cooperatives were established. By June 1955, after a preliminary readjustment, the number decreased by 20,000 to 650,000, or 50,000 cooperatives more than the planned figure. A total of 16,900,000 peasant households joined the cooperatives, with an average of 26 households in each cooperative.

These cooperatives are to be found mostly in the several northern provinces that were liberated early. As for most of the provinces in the country that were liberated later, a number of agricultural producers' cooperatives have been set up in each of them. More cooperatives have been set up in Anhui and Zhejiang provinces, but there are not many in other provinces. These cooperatives are generally small, but there are also a few large ones among them, some with 70 to 80 households, others with over a hundred and still others with several hundred.

These cooperatives are generally semisocialist [in nature], but there are a few among them that have developed into higher-stage cooperatives of a socialist nature. <sup>12</sup>

Simultaneous with the development of the cooperativization movement in agricultural production among peasants, a small number of socialist state farms have already come into being in our country. <sup>13</sup> By 1957, the number of state farms will reach 3,038, with a total of 16,870,000 *mu* of cultivated land. Of these, the number of mechanized farms will reach 141 (including those already in existence in 1952 and those to be set up during the period of the First Five-Year Plan), with a total of 7,580,000 *mu* of cultivated land, and the number of nonmechanized state farms [under] local [administration will reach] 2,897, with a total of 9,290,000 *mu* of land under cultivation. State-operated agriculture will undergo a large-scale development during the period of the second and third five-year plans.

In the spring of 1955, our Party Center decided that the number of agricultural producers' cooperatives should increase to one million. This figure, compared to the original [number] of 650,000 cooperatives, [represents] an increase of only 350,000, or only a little over 50 per cent. It seems to me that the increase may be a bit too small. Probably the figure of 650,000 existing cooperatives should be roughly doubled, that is, increase the number of cooperatives to approximately 1.3 million so that the 200,000-odd *xiang* in the country, except in some of the border regions, may each have one or several small agricultural producers' cooperatives of a semisocialist nature to serve as models. These cooperatives will have experience and become old cooperatives after a year or two, and other people will [strive to] learn from them. There are still fourteen months to go between now and the autumn harvest of October 1956;

the realization of this plan for establishing cooperatives should be possible. I hope that the comrades responsible for this in the various provinces and autonomous regions will go back and study this matter, make appropriate plans in accordance with concrete circumstances, and report to the Central Committee within two months. We will then discuss the matter again and make a final decision.

The question is whether [the cooperatives] can be consolidated. Some people say that last year's plan to establish 500,000 cooperatives was too big and was adventurist and that this year's plan to establish 350,000 cooperatives is also too big and adventurist. They suspect that so many cooperatives, once established, cannot be consolidated.

Can they be consolidated or not?

Of course neither socialist industrialization nor socialist transformation is an easy job. There are indeed many difficulties involved in getting some 110 million peasant households to switch from individual farming to collective farming and then to proceed to accomplish the technological transformation of agriculture. Nevertheless, we must have confidence that our Party is capable of guiding the masses in overcoming these difficulties.

As far as the question of agricultural cooperativization is concerned, I think we should be confident, first, that the poor peasants and the lower-middle peasants among both the new and old middle peasants <sup>14</sup> who, either because they are in a difficult economic position (as in the case of the poor peasants) or because, even though their economic position has been improved in comparison with that before Liberation, are still not well-off (as in the case of the lower-middle peasants), have a certain enthusiasm about taking the socialist road and are enthusiastic in responding to the Party's call for cooperativization. In particular, those among them who have a higher level of political consciousness have even more of this kind of enthusiasm.

Second, I think we should be confident that the Party is capable of leading the people of the whole country into socialist society. Since our Party has successfully led a great people's democratic revolution <sup>15</sup> and established a people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class, it can certainly lead the people of the whole country in basically accomplishing socialist industrialization and the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicraft industries, and capitalist industry and commerce in the course of roughly three five-year plans. We already have powerful and convincing proof of this in agriculture, as in other fields. Witness [the fact that] the first batch of 300 cooperatives, the second batch of 13,700, and the third batch of 86,000, three batches totaling 100,000 cooperatives, were all established before the autumn of 1954 and have all been consolidated. Why, then, should it not be possible for the fourth batch of cooperatives (550,000) established between 1954 and 1955 and the fifth batch of cooperatives [to be established] between 1955 and 1956 (the tentative control figure is 350,000, yet to be finally determined) to be consolidated as well?

We must have faith in the masses, and we must have faith in the Party. These are two fundamental principles. If we doubt these two principles, we won't be able to accomplish anything.

### III



In order to accomplish, step by step, cooperativization throughout the rural areas of the country, we must conscientiously reorganize the existing cooperatives.

We must stress paying attention to the quality of cooperatives and oppose the tendency to pursue only [the increase in] the numbers of cooperatives and of the peasant households [in them] without regard to quality. We must therefore pay attention to the work of reorganizing cooperatives.

Reorganization of cooperatives is not to be done once a year, but rather two or three times a year. A certain number of cooperatives went through a reorganization in the first half of this year (in certain places, the reorganization seems to have been very cursory, conducted without vigorous effort); I suggest that a second reorganization be carried out in the autumn and winter of this year, and a third in the spring and summer of next year. Of the 650,000 cooperatives now in existence, there are 550,000 that are new ones established last winter and this spring, including a batch of so-called "first category cooperatives" <sup>16</sup> that are more consolidated. If we add to these the previous 100,000 old cooperatives that are already consolidated, the number of cooperatives already consolidated is by no means small. Can these cooperatives that are already consolidated lead those yet to be consolidated to achieve gradual consolidation? The answer should definitely be that it is possible.

We should treasure and not thwart any small bit of socialist enthusiasm on the part of the peasants and cadres. We should throw in our lot with the members and cadres of the cooperatives and the cadres of the *xian*, districts, and *xiang* and not thwart their enthusiasm.

Cooperatives that are determined to dissolve are only those in which all, or nearly all, the members are determined not to carry on. In a cooperative, if only some members are determined to quit, let those people withdraw while the majority stay in and carry on. If the majority are determined to quit while only a minority want to carry on, let the majority withdraw and the minority stay in and carry on. Even if this should happen, it will still be a good thing. There is a very small cooperative of only six households in Hebei Province in which three households, [made up of] former old middle peasants, were determined to quit and were consequently allowed to withdraw, while the three households of poor peasants <sup>17</sup> showed that they wanted to continue on no matter what. As a result, they stayed in, and consequently the organization of the cooperative was preserved. Actually, the direction indicated by these three households of poor peasants represents the direction that the five hundred million peasants of the country [will follow]. All peasants [now] operating individually will eventually take the road resolutely chosen by these three households of poor peasants.

The policy of so-called "resolute reduction" adopted in Zhejiang <sup>18</sup> (not a decision made by the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee) resulted in the dissolution at one stroke of 15,000 cooperatives, comprising 400,000 peasant households, out of 53,000 cooperatives, causing great dissatisfaction among the masses and cadres. This was very unsound. This policy of "resolute reduction" was decided on when they were gripped by a mood of panic. It was also unsound to make such a major move without the approval of the Central Committee. Moreover, in April 1955 the Central Committee had already issued a warning: "Don't repeat the error of dissolving large numbers of cooperatives as committed in 1953 or you will have to make self-criticism again." <sup>19</sup> But some comrades turned a deaf ear [to the warning].

It seems to me that there are two undesirable [tendencies] in the face of victory. First, that victory makes one dizzy and makes one's head swell so much that one commits "leftist" mistakes. This, of course, is bad. Second, that victory scares one silly so as to cause one to call for a "resolute reduction" and commit rightist mistakes. This is also bad. The present situation belongs in the latter category; some comrades have been scared silly by several hundred thousand small cooperatives.

#### IV

Good preparatory work must be done seriously before cooperatives are established.

The quality of cooperatives must be emphasized from the very beginning, and the tendency to solely seek [the increase of] their numbers must be opposed.

Fight no battle without making preparations for it; fight no battle without being sure of [winning] it. This was the well-known slogan of our Party in the past during the period of the Revolutionary War. This slogan can also be applied to the work of building socialism. To be sure of success, one must be prepared, and be adequately prepared. A great deal of preparatory work must be done before a new batch of agricultural producers' cooperatives can be established in a province, a special district, or a *xian*. Such work, in the main, consists of [the following]: (1) criticizing erroneous ideas and summing up work experience; (2) systematically and repeatedly publicizing among the peasant masses our Party's principles, policies, and measures on agricultural cooperativization; in doing so, we should not only explain [to the peasants] the advantages of cooperativization, but should also point out the difficulties likely to be encountered in the course of cooperativization so that the peasants can be well-prepared mentally; (3) drawing up a comprehensive plan for developing agricultural cooperativization throughout each province, [special] district, *xian*, district, or *xiang* in light of the actual situation and formulating an annual plan out of it; (4) training cadres for running cooperatives through short-term [courses]; (5) developing agricultural mutual aid teams on a wide scale and in large numbers, and wherever possible prevailing upon many teams to join together in organizations of united mutual aid teams so as to lay a good foundation for uniting them further into cooperatives.

If these requirements are met, it will be possible to basically solve the problem of uniting quantity and quality in the development of cooperatives; however, it is still necessary to follow the establishment of each batch of cooperatives by going immediately into the work of reorganization.

Whether a batch of cooperatives, once established, can be consolidated or not depends first on whether the preparatory work before their establishment is done well and second on whether the reorganization work after their establishment is done well.

We must rely on the *xiang* branches of the Party and Youth League <sup>20</sup> for the work of establishing and reorganizing cooperatives. Therefore, the work of establishing and reorganizing cooperatives must be done in close coordination with that of building and rectifying the Party and Youth League organizations in the rural areas.

Whether in establishing cooperatives or in reorganizing them, the local cadres in the rural areas should be the main force. They should be given encouragement and be held responsible

for the work. The cadres sent from above should be the auxiliary force, whose function is to provide guidance and assistance and not to take everything into their own hands.

## V

In production, the agricultural producers' cooperatives must achieve higher crop yields than "going-it-alone" households and mutual aid teams. On no account should [the cooperatives'] output remain at the same level as that of "going-it-alone" households or mutual aid teams. Otherwise it would mean failure, and then what would be the point in having cooperatives at all? Still less should crop yields be allowed to fall. Over eighty per cent of the 650,000 agricultural producers' cooperatives that have already been established have increased crop yields. This is an excellent situation; it proves that members of agricultural producers' cooperatives have great enthusiasm for production and that cooperatives are superior to mutual aid teams and even more superior to peasant households farming on their own.

To increase crop yields it is necessary: (1) to adhere to the principles of voluntary [participation] and mutual benefit; (2) to improve management (planning of production, management of production, organization of labor, etc.); (3) to improve farming techniques (deep plowing and intensive cultivation, close planting in small clusters, increase in the area of multiple cropping, introduction of improved seed strains, popularization of new types of farming implements, the fight against plant diseases and insect damage, etc.); and (4) to increase the means of production (land, fertilizer, water conservation facilities, draft animals, farming implements, etc.). These are the few indispensable conditions for consolidating the cooperatives and ensuring growth in production.

In adhering to the principles of voluntary [participation] and mutual benefit, attention must now be paid to solving the following problems: (1) whether or not it is proper to delay for a year or two the turning over of draft animals and large farming implements to the cooperatives [as shares], whether or not they are fairly priced when they are turned over to the cooperatives, and whether or not the payment period is too long; (2) whether or not the ratio between the payment for land [shares] and the payment for labor is appropriate; (3) how the funds needed by the cooperatives are to be raised; (4) whether or not certain members of the cooperatives may use part of their labor in certain types of sideline occupations (since the agricultural producers' cooperatives we are now establishing are generally still semisocialist in nature, care must be taken to solve the above-mentioned four problems properly so that the principle of mutual benefit between the poor peasants and the middle peasants is not violated, and voluntary [participation] can only be realized on the basis of mutual benefit); (5) how much [land] members of the cooperatives should retain as private plots; <sup>21</sup> and (6) the question of the class composition of cooperative membership, and so on.

Let's take up the question of the class composition of the cooperatives' membership. I think that, in the next year or two, wherever popularization of cooperatives has just begun or has taken place recently, as in the case of most areas of the country at present, [the cooperatives] should be [made up of] the active elements among the following sectors: (1) poor peasants, (2) lowermiddle peasants among the new middle peasants, and (3) lower-middle peasants among the old middle peasants. We should get them to organize first. Those among the members of these sectors who are not yet active elements for the time being should not be dragged in against their will. The cooperatives can admit them in groups when their level of [political] consciousness has risen and they have become interested in cooperatives. People in these sectors have a rather similar economic status. They either are still living a hard life ([as



in the case of] poor peasants who have been given land and are much better off than before Liberation, but whose lives are still difficult owing to a shortage of human resources, draft animals, and farming implements) or are still not well-off ([as in the case of] lower-middle peasants). Therefore, they have the enthusiasm to form cooperatives. Even so, their enthusiasm varies in degree for a variety of reasons; some of them are very enthusiastic, others are not so enthusiastic yet, and still others prefer to wait and see. Therefore, we must take a period of time to educate all those who do not want to join cooperatives yet, even though they may be poor or lower-middle peasants; we must patiently wait for them to become [politically] conscious, and we must not violate the principle of voluntary [participation] and drag them in against their will.

As for the upper-middle peasants among the new and old middle peasants, that is, all the middle peasants who are economically relatively well-off, except for some who already have the [political] consciousness to take the socialist road and are really willing to join the cooperatives, and can be admitted, the rest should not be admitted into the cooperatives for the time being, and we certainly should not drag them in against their will. This is because they do not yet have the [political] consciousness to take the socialist road; they will make up their minds to join the cooperatives only when the majority of people in the rural areas have joined, when the per *mu* yield of the cooperatives has reached or even surpassed that of these well-to-do middle peasants and they feel that it is to their disadvantage in all respects to continue to go it alone and that it is in their interest to join the cooperatives.

So those who are economically poor or not well-off (approximately sixty to seventy per cent of the rural population) should first be grouped according to their level of [political] consciousness and should form cooperatives in various batches within a few years, and then the well-off middle peasants will be drawn in. In this way we can avoid commandism. <sup>22</sup>

For the next few years, in all areas where cooperativization has not been basically completed, landlords and rich peasants should resolutely not be accepted into the cooperatives. In areas where cooperativization has basically been completed, those cooperatives that are already consolidated may, under certain conditions, admit by stages and in groups former landlord and rich peasant elements who have long since given up exploitation and who engage in labor and abide by the laws and decrees of the government, and may allow them to participate in collective labor while continuing to reform them through labor.

## VI

As far as the development [of cooperativization] is concerned, the question at present is not that of criticizing adventurist advance. It is wrong to say that the present development of cooperatives has "surpassed what is practically possible" and "overtaken the level of [political] consciousness of the masses." This is how things stand in China: [the country has] a vast population, insufficient cultivated land (there are only three *mu* per capita on the average in the country, and one *mu* or even less in many areas of the southern provinces), frequent natural calamities (every year large areas of farmland suffer to varying degrees from flood, drought, windstorm, frost, hail, or insect pests) and backward methods of management. Consequently, though the life of the broad masses of peasants has improved or greatly improved since the land reform, the life of many of them is still difficult; many are still not well-off, and well-off peasants are, relatively speaking, in the minority. Therefore, the majority of the peasants are enthusiastic about taking the socialist road. Their enthusiasm is being daily heightened by our country's socialist industrialization and its achievements. For them there is

no way out other than socialism. Peasants in this situation make up sixty to seventy per cent of the country's rural population. In other words, the only way for the majority of the peasants in the country to attain the goal of shaking off poverty, improving their livelihood, and resisting natural calamities is to unite and advance along the high road of socialism. This feeling is rapidly growing among the broad masses of poor peasants and peasants who are not well-off. Well-to-do or fairly well-to-do peasants, who make up only twenty to thirty per cent of the country's rural population, are wavering, and some (of them) are bent on following the capitalist road. As I said earlier, many among the poor peasants and those not well-off, because of their low [political] consciousness, still take a wait-and-see attitude for the time being, and they, too, are wavering. Nevertheless, compared with the well-to-do peasants, it is relatively easy for them to accept socialism. This is the actual existing situation. Yet some of our comrades ignore this situation and choose to believe that the several hundred thousand newly formed small and semisocialist agricultural producers' cooperatives have already "surpassed what is actually possible" and "overtaken the level of the masses' [political] consciousness." This is [because they] are looking only at the comparatively small number of well-to-do peasants while neglecting the overwhelming majority -- the poor peasants and those peasants who are not well-off. This is the first kind of wrong thinking.

These comrades also underestimate the strength of the Communist Party's leadership in the countryside and the wholehearted support of the broad masses of peasants for the Communist Party. In their view, since it is difficult enough as it is for our Party to consolidate the several hundred thousand small-scale cooperatives, big expansion is inconceivable. They pessimistically describe the present state of the Party's work of leading agricultural cooperativization as having "outstripped the level of the cadres' experience." True, socialist revolution is a new revolution. In the past we only had experience in bourgeois democratic revolution but not in socialist revolution. Yet how can we gain such experience? Will we gain it by sitting back and doing nothing or will we gain it by plunging into the struggles of socialist revolution and learning amidst the struggles? How can we gain experience in industrialization if we do not carry out the Five-Year Plan and do not engage in undertaking the work of socialist industrialization? Agricultural cooperativization is incorporated in the Five-Year Plan. If we do not guide the peasants in forming one or a few agricultural cooperatives in every *xiang* or village, let me ask you, where will "the level of the cadres' experience" come from and how will it be raised? Evidently, the idea that the present development of the agricultural producers' cooperatives has "outstripped the level of the cadres' experience" is a wrong one. This is the second kind of wrong thinking.

The way these comrades look at problems is wrong. They do not look at the essential or principal aspects of the problems but emphasize things that are not essential or principal in nature. It should be pointed out that problems that are not essential or principal are not to be overlooked but they must be resolved one by one. However, we should not take them to be [something of] essential or principal [importance] and thereby get our bearings confused.

We must have faith, first, that the broad masses of peasants are willing to take, step by step, the socialist road under the leadership of the Party and, second, that the Party is capable of leading the peasants in taking the socialist road. These two points are the essential and principal aspects of the matter. Without this faith we would be unable to basically accomplish the building of socialism in a period of about three five-year plans.

The Soviet Union's great historical experience of completing the construction of socialism inspires the people of our country and gives us full confidence in building socialism in our country. However, there are divergent views even on this question of international experience. Some comrades disapprove of the Party Center's policy of keeping the steps taken toward our country's agricultural cooperativization at pace with those taken toward the country's socialist industrialization, even though this policy has been proven to be a correct one in the Soviet Union. <sup>23</sup> They believe that as far as industrialization is concerned, the speed set at present may be adopted, but that agricultural cooperativization should proceed at a particularly slow pace and need not keep in step with industrialization. This is to ignore the experience of the Soviet Union. These comrades do not realize that socialist industrialization cannot proceed in isolation from the cooperativization of agriculture. In the first place, [as] we all know, the present level of production of commodity grain <sup>24</sup> and industrial raw materials is very low, whereas the state's need for these materials grows year by year. This is a sharp contradiction. If within the period of roughly three five-year plans we cannot basically accomplish the solution of the problem of the cooperativization of agriculture, that is to say, [if we cannot bring about] a leap in agriculture from small-scale farming with animal-drawn farming implements to large-scale mechanized farming, including large-scale state-organized [projects for] migration and resettlement of the [peasant] population and land reclamation involving the use of machinery (the plan is to reclaim 400 to 500 million mu of wasteland in the course of three five-year plans), we will not be able to resolve the contradiction between the annually increasing need for commodity grain and industrial raw materials and the generally very low output of staple crops at present, and we will encounter extremely great difficulties in our cause of socialist industrialization and will be unable to accomplish it. The Soviet Union once faced the same problem in the course of building socialism and solved it by guiding and developing agricultural cooperativization in a planned way, and we can only solve the problem by the same method. In the second place, some of our comrades have not considered the following two matters in connection with each other; namely, heavy industry, the most important branch of socialist industrialization, <sup>25</sup> with its production of tractors and other farm machinery, its production of chemical fertilizer, its production of modern means of transportation, oil, electric power for agricultural use, etc., all of this can be utilized, or utilized extensively, only on the basis that agriculture has achieved large-scale cooperativization. We are now engaged not only in a revolution in the social system to transform private ownership into public ownership, but also in a revolution in technology to change from handicraft production to large-scale modern mechanized production, and these two revolutions are interrelated. Under the conditions that prevail in our country, agriculture must go through cooperativization before it can adopt the usage of large machines (in capitalist countries, [this is attained] through the development of agriculture in a capitalist way). Therefore, we should on no account separate industry and agriculture or socialist industrialization and socialist transformation of agriculture, or regard them as two matters isolated from each other, and on no account should we emphasize the one at the expense of the other. On this issue, the Soviet experience has also indicated the direction for us, and yet some of our comrades pay no attention and always see these matters as isolated and unconnected. In the third place, some of our comrades have also not considered the following two matters in connection with each other; namely, large amounts of funds are needed to accomplish national industrialization and the transformation of technology in agriculture, and a considerable portion of them must be accumulated in the area of agriculture. Apart from directly levying taxes on agriculture, this is [to be achieved by] developing production in light industry [to produce] in large quantities consumer goods needed by the peasants, and exchanging them for the peasants' commodity grain and raw materials for light industry, so that the material needs of both the peasants and the state can be met and funds can also be

accumulated for the state. Furthermore, largescale development of light industry requires not only the development of heavy industry, but of agriculture as well. This is because large-scale development of light industry cannot be realized on the basis of a small peasant economy, but depends on large-scale agricultural [operations], which in our country means socialist cooperativized agriculture. This is because only this type of agriculture can give the peasants a purchasing power I don't know how many times greater than the present [level]. The Soviet Union has also furnished us with experience in this matter, but some of our comrades pay no attention [to it]. They always take the stand of the bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, or the well-to-do middle peasants with spontaneous tendencies toward capitalism and look after the interests of the comparatively few. They never take the stand of the working class and look out for the interests of the whole country and people.

## VIII

Some comrades have also found a rationale from the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for their criticism of what they call impetuosity and adventurist advance in the present work of agricultural cooperativization in our country. Does not *A Short Course on the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)* <sup>26</sup> tell us that during a certain period of time many of the [Soviet Union's] local Party organizations committed the error of impetuosity and adventurist advance <sup>27</sup> on the question of the pace of cooperativization? Should we not pay attention to this international experience?

I think we should pay attention to this Soviet experience and must oppose any impetuous and adventurist thinking that foregoes preparation and disregards the level of political consciousness of the peasant masses, but we should not allow some of our comrades to use this Soviet experience as a smoke screen to cover up their idea of moving at a snail's pace.

What is our Party Center's decision on how to carry out agricultural cooperativization in China?

First, it is prepared to basically accomplish this plan in eighteen years. The period of a little over three years from the founding of the People's Republic of China in October 1949 to 1952 was devoted to accomplishing the task of restoring the economy of our country. In the sphere of agriculture during this period, in addition to carrying out such tasks as the land reform <sup>28</sup> and the restoration of agricultural production, we greatly expanded the organization of agricultural producers' mutual aid teams in all the old liberated areas <sup>29</sup> and also began to organize agricultural producers' cooperatives of a semisocialist nature and gained some experience. This was followed by the First Five-Year Plan, which began in 1953 and has been in operation for nearly three years now, [during which time] our agricultural cooperativization movement has been spreading on a nationwide scale and our experience has likewise increased. The period from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the completion of the Third Five-Year Plan covers eighteen years, during which time we plan to basically accomplish the socialist transformation of agriculture together with the basic completion of socialist industrialization and of socialist transformation of handicraft industry and capitalist industry and commerce. Is this possible? Soviet experience tells us that this is entirely possible. In the Soviet Union the civil war came to an end in 1920; the seventeen years from 1921 to 1937 brought the cooperativization of agriculture to completion, and the main part of the work of cooperativization in their case was accomplished in the six years from 1929 to 1934. Although, as stated in *A Short Course on the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik)*, when some local Party organizations in the Soviet Union once

committed the so-called error of being "dizzy with success," <sup>30</sup> it was quickly corrected. By a great effort the Soviet Union eventually accomplished the socialist transformation of its entire agriculture successfully and at the same time brought about a tremendous technological transformation in agriculture. This road traveled by the Soviet Union is our very model.

Second, we have adopted the method of step-by-step advance in the socialist transformation of agriculture. As the first step, we called on the peasants, in accordance with the principles of voluntary [participation] and mutual benefit, to organize in the countryside agricultural producers' mutual aid teams that had only certain rudimentary elements of socialism and comprised a few to a dozen or so households each. Then as the second step, we called on the peasants to organize, on the basis of these mutual aid teams and still in accordance with the principles of voluntary [participation] and mutual benefit, small agricultural producers' cooperatives that are semisocialist in nature and characterized by the pooling of landholdings as shares and by unified management. Only later, as the third step, will we call on the peasants to combine further and organize, on the basis of these small semisocialist cooperatives and in accordance with the same principles of voluntary participation and mutual benefit, large agricultural producers' cooperatives that are fully socialist in nature. <sup>31</sup> [These steps] make it possible for the peasants to gradually raise their level of socialist consciousness through their own experience and to gradually change their way of life so as to lessen their feeling of an abrupt change in their way of life. Taking these steps will basically allow us to avoid a drop in crop production during a period of time (say, the [first] one or two years); instead of a drop, it must ensure an increase in production each year, and this can be done. <sup>32</sup> Of the 650,000 existing agricultural producers' cooperatives, more than eighty per cent have increased production, while over ten per cent have not had any increase or decrease in production, and a few per cent have shown a decrease. Things with the two latter categories are not going well, particularly the category with a drop in production, and a great effort must be made to reorganize [them]. Since more than eighty per cent of the cooperatives have increased production (the margin of increase being ten to thirty per cent), while over ten per cent of them, though showing neither increase nor decrease in production in the first year, may increase production in the second year after going through reorganization, and since even the few per cent with a drop in production may increase production or break even through reorganization, the development of cooperativization is on the whole healthy and can basically guarantee an increase in production and avoid any decrease. Moreover, these steps constitute a good course for training cadres; by [carrying out] the steps, management and technical personnel for the cooperatives can be gradually trained in large numbers.

Third, each year a control figure <sup>33</sup> for the growth in agricultural cooperativization must be worked out in light of the actual situation, and the cooperativization work must be checked several times. In this way concrete steps for the annual expansion [of cooperativization] in each province, *xian*, and *xiang* can be decided on according to changes in the circumstances and the quality of [their respective] achievements. In some areas [expansion] can be halted temporarily while reorganization is being carried out; in other areas, expansion and reorganization can be carried out simultaneously. Some members of certain cooperatives may be allowed to withdraw, and in individual cases a cooperative may be allowed to be dissolved temporarily. In some areas new cooperatives should be set up in large numbers, while in others it will suffice to increase the number of peasant households in the existing cooperatives. In every province or *xian*, after establishing a batch of cooperatives, there must be a period of time in which expansion is halted and a reorganization is carried out before proceeding with the establishment of another batch of cooperatives. The idea of not allowing any pause or intermission is wrong. As for the work of inspection of the cooperativization



movement, the Party Center and Party committees of every province, autonomous region, municipality, and [special] district must take a firm hold of the work and see that [inspection] is done not only once but several times a year. As soon as a problem crops up, tackle it right away; don't let problems pile up and then try to resolve them all at once. Make criticism in good time; don't get into the practice of making criticism after the fact. For instance, in the first seven months of this year, the Central Committee alone called three conferences, including this one, of comrades in responsible positions from the localities to discuss the question of agricultural cooperativization. Using this method of taking such measures as

are suitable to local conditions and of giving timely guidance ensures that we make fewer mistakes and that, when mistakes are made, they will be quickly corrected.

Judging from the conditions described above, can it not be said that the guiding principle of the Party Center on the question of agricultural cooperativization is a correct one and therefore one that ensures the healthy development of the movement? I think we can and should say so; to evaluate this principle as "adventurist advance" is totally incorrect.

## IX

Proceeding from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, or the well-to-do middle peasants with a spontaneous tendency toward capitalism, some comrades have taken a wrong view on the extremely important question of the alliance between the workers and the peasants. They believe that the cooperativization movement is presently in a very dangerous situation, and they advise us to "get off the horse quickly," [halting our advance] along the road of cooperativization that we are presently taking. They have warned us: "If [you] don't get off the horse quickly, [you] run the risk of disrupting the alliance of the workers and peasants." We believe the very opposite [to be true], that if [we] don't get on the horse quickly, there will be the risk that the alliance of workers and peasants will be disrupted. It appears that there is the difference of only a single word here. One is to get off the horse while the other is to get on it. Yet it indicates the difference between two lines. As everybody knows, we already have a worker-peasant alliance built on the basis of the bourgeois democratic revolution, a revolution that opposed imperialism and feudalism, that took the land from the landlords and distributed it to the peasants to free them from [the bondage of] feudal ownership. But this revolution is now over, and feudal ownership has been abolished. What exists in the rural areas today is capitalist ownership by the rich peasants and individual ownership by peasants as extensive as a vast ocean. It is evident to all that the spontaneous forces of capitalism in the rural areas have been growing steadily in the last several years, new rich peasants are emerging everywhere, and many well-to-do middle peasants are striving to become rich peasants. Because of insufficient means of production, however, many poor peasants are still bogged down in poverty. Some of them are in debt, and others have sold or rented out their land. If this situation is allowed to develop further, polarization in the countryside will become more and more serious every day. Those peasants who lose their land and those who still [live] in poverty will bear a grudge against us, and they will complain that we are not coming to their rescue when they are in peril, not helping them overcome their difficulties. Those well-to-do middle peasants heading in the direction of capitalism will also be dissatisfied with us, for their demands will never be met if we do not intend to take the capitalist road. Can the alliance of the workers and peasants continue to be consolidated under these circumstances? Obviously not. This problem can be solved only on a new basis. This means bringing about step by step the socialist transformation of the whole of agriculture

along with the gradual realization of socialist industrialization and of socialist transformation of handicraft and capitalist industry and commerce, that is to say, carrying out cooperativization and eliminating the rich peasant economy system and the individual economy system in the countryside so that all the people in the rural areas will become well-off together. We believe that only in this way can the alliance between the workers and peasants be consolidated. Otherwise, this alliance runs the risk of being disrupted. Those comrades who advise us to "get off the horse" are completely wrong in their thinking.

## X

It is inevitable that there will soon be a nationwide high tide of socialist transformation in the countryside. This must be recognized right now. By the spring of 1958, the end of the last year of the First Five-Year Plan and the beginning of the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan, there will be about 250 million people or about 55 million peasant households (taking four and a half persons per household as an average), that is, half of the total rural population, in semisocialist cooperatives. By that time, semisocialist transformation of the agricultural economy in many *xian* and some provinces will have been basically accomplished, and a small number of cooperatives in every part of the country will have developed from being semisocialist into being fully socialist. By 1960, [toward the end of] the first half of the Second Five-Year Plan, we shall have basically completed the semisocialist transformation of [that part of] the agricultural economy that involves the other half of the rural population. By then, the number of cooperatives changing from being semisocialist into being fully socialist will have increased. During the period of the First and Second Five-Year Plans, social reform will remain as the principal [aspect] of the reform in the countryside, and technical transformation will be the secondary [aspect]; the number of large-scale agricultural machines will certainly increase, but not by any large margin. During the period of the Third Five-Year Plan, social reform and technical transformation will proceed simultaneously in the reform of the countryside; there will be an increase each year in the use of large-scale agricultural machines, and in the field of social reform, from 1960 on, semisocialist cooperatives will gradually develop by stages and in batches into fully socialist ones. Not until the socialist transformation of its social and economic system has been completely accomplished and, in the field of technology, machinery is used in all sections and places where operation by machinery is applicable, will the social and economic outlook of China change completely. In light of our country's economic conditions, the period of technological transformation will be longer than that of social reform. It is estimated that it will take roughly four to five five-year plans, or twenty to twenty-five years, to basically complete the technological transformation of agriculture on a nationwide scale. The whole Party should strive for the fulfillment of this great task.

## XI

There must be overall planning, and leadership must be strengthened. There must be plans for the staged realization of cooperativization in the whole country and throughout every province, [special] district, *xian*, district, and *xiang*. Moreover, plans must be constantly revised in light of the actual conditions of progress in the work. The Party and Youth League organizations at each level of province, [special] district, *xian*, district, and *xiang* must pay serious attention to rural problems and earnestly improve their leadership in rural work. Comrades in major positions of responsibility in the local Party and Youth League organizations at all levels must get a firm grip on the study of the work of agricultural

cooperativization and become knowledgeable about it. In short, we must take the initiative, we must not be passive; we must strengthen leadership, we must not abandon it.

## XII

In August 1954 (this is no longer news), the Heilongjiang Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party reported:

Along with the formation and expansion of the upsurge of rural cooperativization, mutual aid, and cooperative organizations of various types and the masses of people of various strata in the rural areas have all, to varying degrees, started to move [ahead]. The existing agricultural producers' cooperatives are planning and fermenting [a drive] to expand their membership, and the agricultural producers' mutual aid teams that are the targets for the formation of cooperatives are also planning and fermenting [a drive] to increase the number of their [member] households; even those mutual aid teams lacking the prerequisites [for cooperativization] are anxious to develop further and move up to a higher level. Some [people among the] masses are busy trying to join new cooperatives, others to join existing ones. Those who are not prepared to join cooperatives this year are nevertheless actively preparing to find a slot for themselves in mutual aid teams. The scope of activity is very broad, and a mass movement has already been formed. This is a new and outstanding feature in the great development of agricultural cooperativization. But because some leading comrades in certain *xian* and districts have not been able to keep pace with this new feature and strengthen the leadership in time, certain unhealthy phenomena have begun to arise in a number of *cun* and *tun* (note: in Heilongjiang Province the *cun* is an administrative unit corresponding to the *xiang* in the provinces south of the Great Wall, and the *tun*, which is not an administrative unit, is equivalent to the village in the latter provinces), such as, in the masses' selfmotivated search for targets [i.e., people to bring into cooperatives as fellow members], "the strong seek out the strong, ostracizing peasants who are badly-off," "disunity is being fermented through competition to recruit backbone elements and members," "backbone elements are sticking together blindly," and "the rich peasants and those well-to-do peasants with a fairly strong capitalist way of thinking seize the opportunity to organize lower-level mutual aid teams or rich peasant cooperatives," and so on. All this amply demonstrates that, under the conditions in which agricultural cooperativization is undergoing great development, it is no longer enough to think only in terms of and within the confines of establishing new cooperatives when implementing the Party's policy and guiding the movement. It is necessary to think in terms of the entire *cun* (note: that is, the entire *xiang*) and of promoting the agricultural cooperativization movement in its full scope, and to give consideration both to expanding the old cooperatives and to establishing new ones, both to developing the cooperatives and to raising the level of the mutual aid teams, and both to [the work for] this year and to [the work for] the next year, and even the year after. Only in this way can the Party's policy be implemented in its entirety and the agricultural cooperativization movement pushed forward in a healthy manner.

We mentioned here that "some leading comrades in certain *xian* and districts have not been able to keep pace with this new feature and strengthen the leadership in time." Is this the case in Heilongjiang Province only? Is this the case in certain *xian* and districts only? As I see it, it is possible to find in many leading organs across the country people who typify this grave situation in which the leadership lags behind the movement.

The report of the Heilongjiang Provincial [Party] Committee also said:

Xiqin *cun* in Shuangcheng *xian* has carried out overall planning with the *cun* as a [basic] unit by adopting the method of combining leadership with voluntary participation of the masses. This is an innovation in leading the big expansion of cooperativization. Its important effect lies first in the fact that through [such] planning the Party's class line in the countryside has been fully implemented, the unity between the poor and middle peasants has been strengthened, and a vigorous struggle has been launched against the rich peasant tendency. Backbone elements have been properly deployed in the interests of overall cooperativization of agriculture. Relations between the [various] cooperatives and between the cooperatives and the [mutual aid] teams have been readjusted and strengthened so that the agricultural cooperativization movement has advanced in a planned way and with an overall approach. Second, through such planning, the work of developing agricultural cooperativization on a large scale has been allocated through specific assignments to the leadership at the basic level and to the broad masses so that Party branches at the *cun* level have understood how to give guidance, the old cooperatives have understood how to keep on advancing, the new cooperatives have understood how to establish themselves, and the mutual aid teams have understood the direction in which they must go to move to a higher level. Thus the initiative and enthusiasm of the Party branches at the *cun* level and of the broad masses have been further brought into play, and the correct principle of relying on the Party branch and on the experience and wisdom of the masses has been fully carried out. Finally, it is precisely through such planning that it is possible to acquaint [oneself] further with the true situation in the countryside and to carry out the Party's policy in a concrete and comprehensive manner. Hence, it has been possible to avoid impetuosity and adventurist advance as well as conservatism and the [the practice of] letting things drift along on their own, so that the Center's policy of "active leadership and steady advance" has been correctly implemented.

How were the various "unhealthy phenomena" mentioned in the report of the Heilongjiang Provincial [Party] Committee tackled? The provincial [Party] committee's report did not answer this question directly. But a report of the Shuangcheng *xian* [Party] committee was appended to the report of the provincial Party committee, and this report did answer the question. This report said:

As a result of carrying out overall planning by combining the leadership of the Party branch and the voluntary participation of the masses, the deviation of barring the households that are badly off from the cooperatives has been corrected, the problem of excessive concentration of backbone elements in one place has been solved, the phenomenon of competition in recruiting backbone elements and members has disappeared, the relations between the cooperatives and the mutual aid teams have grown closer, the rich and well-to-do peasants have failed in their attempt to organize rich peasant cooperatives or lower-level [mutual aid] teams, and the plan of the Party branch has been basically fulfilled. Two old cooperatives have expanded their membership by forty per cent, the frameworks of six new cooperatives have been set up, and two mutual aid teams have been reorganized. It is estimated that if everything is done well, the whole *cun* will be cooperativized next year (i.e., in 1955). At present, the masses in the entire *cun* are actively engaged in fulfilling this year's plan for expanding agricultural cooperativization and doing a good job of increasing production and ensuring [a good] harvest. The *cun* cadres all share the opinion: "It's lucky we've done it this way; otherwise things would have been in a mess. Not only would things have been in bad shape this year, but next year would have been affected as well."

In my opinion, let us just do things that way.

Overall planning and strengthening of leadership - this is our policy.

### Notes

1. For more information on these struggles, see text 1960 Reading Notes, note 9; K. Walker ( April-June 1966), pp. 216-243; Kang Chao ( 1970); *CR*, 884 ( July 18, 1969), 663; and Su Xing ( 1965) (trans. in *JPRS*, 32414, 32420, 32793).
2. See R. Levy ( 1976), pp. 108-122.
3. See K. Walker ( April-June 1966), and R. Levy ( 1976), pp. 122 ff.
4. Mao was referring to the common practice in traditional China for the feet of women of the upper and middle classes to be bound in such a way that their growth is artificially and forcibly stunted and they in fact become misshapen. According to ancient documents such as the *yuefu*

(ballads) of the early Han dynasty (ca. 3rd-2nd century B.C.) the practice began with dancers in ancient times. It was popularized in courtly and nobility circles in the late-tenth century by Li Yu, the ruler of the state of the Southern Tang (reigning 961-976) and since then had become a common characteristic of upper-class women in Chinese society. It is commonly considered by Chinese women in modern times as a mark of the oppressiveness and sexual inequality of the old "feudalistic" society. Though it was romantically described in classical literature (the term *jin lian*, or golden lotus, was coined for the practice) it is generally condemned in modern days even though it was not officially outlawed by the government until the establishment of the PRC.

5. For some indication of what these classifications mean in the early 1950s, see text March 12, 1950, notes 1 and 2. For agricultural producers' cooperatives (APCs) see text Oct. 15, 1953, note 2.

6. See text Aug. 12, 1953, note 9.

7. Between 1930 and 1934, land redistribution and low-level mutual aid organization was carried out in the Central Revolutionary Base with Ruijin in Jiangxi Province as its capital. This was aimed at activating the peasants and solving the problem of agricultural labor shortage. It entailed the organization of five to ten rural households into a collective mutual aid unit. The reference to labor exchange teams in Northern Shaanxi and mutual aid in North China, East China, and the Northeast is to the situation during the period of the War of Resistance against Japan.

8. This refers to the formation of twelve-household agricultural producers' cooperatives (then also called collective farms) in Miaodianzi, at No.5 *xiang*, in the Gaoqiao district of Ansai *xian* in early 1944. It entailed the collective concentrated utilization of labor and fertilizers, as well as other technological innovations.

9. The Draft Resolution on Mutual Aid and Cooperativization in Agricultural Production was adopted on December 15, 1951, by the Central Committee of the CPC. Copies were circulated to Party branches at all levels to be implemented on a selective experimental basis. (See Mao's circular to Party units, text Dec. 15, 1951.) On February 15, 1953, these resolutions were partly amended on the basis of experience gained in practical implementation and were adopted officially by the Central Committee. For a translation of this document see T. Chen ( 1967), pp. 218-221. The document itself was first published in *RMRB* ( March 26, 1953), and in *XHYB*, 4 ( April, 1953), 118-121. See also *SR*, p. 418, note 2. According to the Xuanji source, Mao personally took part in the drafting of this draft resolution. See text Dec. 15, 1951, note 1.

10. Here the *RMRB* version has February instead of March. There appears to be similar confusion in terms of dating in other secondary commentaries as well. See T. Chen ( 1967), p.



218; and Kang Chao ( 1970). We believe the *SW*, V, dating of March to be correct. (See previous note.)

11. This refers to the "Resolution on the Development of Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives", December 16, 1953. It was published in *XHYB* ( Feb 1954), 142-147, and in translation in a supplement to *People's China* ( April 1, 1954). For a brief discussion of the debate within the CPC over the issue of agricultural cooperativization between 1951 and 1953, see *Kang Chao* ( 1970), pp. 16-18. Also see *SR*, p. 418, note 3.

12. See text Oct. 1953, note 2.

13. See text Mar. 19, 1953, note 4.

14. "During the cooperative transformation [editor: i.e., cooperativization] of agriculture, those who were formerly poor peasants but rose to middle peasant status after the agrarian [editor: i.e., land] reform were called new middle peasants. Those who were formerly middle peasants and whose economic status remained unchanged were called old middle peasants." ( *SW*, V, p. 207, note 1.)

This differentiation was clarified in considerably greater detail in the September 1964 Revised Draft of the "Provisions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Concerning Certain Specific Policies Regarding the Socialist Education Movement in the Rural Areas." Liu Shaoqi was the main architect of this document and the policies advocated in general in the document were later severely criticized by Mao, although the schema for the classification of the peasantry on the whole was not affected. For a discussion of this last document see R. Baum and F. C. Teiwes ( 1968).

15. See text Jun. 15, 1953, note 2.

16. "At that time, agricultural cooperatives which were well run, middling and poorly run were usually called Class I, Class II and Class III cooperatives respectively." ( *SW*, V, p. 207, note 2.) The descriptions of these three types, or classes, of cooperatives suggest that the classification was done with rather impressionistic standards ( *SR*, p. 419, note 7). According to an article in the journal *Xuexi* (Study), 12 ( 1955), 32, these demarcations differed also from place to place.

17. "The three poor peasant households here referred to were those of Wang Yu-kun [Wang Yukun], Wang Hsiao-chi [Wang Xiaoqi] and Wang Hsiao-pang [Wang Xiaopang] in Nanwanchuang [Nanwanzhuang] village, Anping County [*xian*] of Hopei [Hebei] province. The agricultural producers' cooperative they set up was the predecessor of the present Nanwangchuang [Nanwanzhuang] Brigade of the people's commune of the same name. " ( *SW*, V, p. 207, note 3.) For a slightly more detailed description of the situation see *SR*, pp. 419-420, note 8. See also text Dec 27, 1955(2), note 9.

18. The "resolute reduction" policy mentioned here and in the next two paragraphs refers to the policy of "halting, reduction, and reorganization" advocated by the faction led by Liu Shaoqi at the Third National Conference on Rural Work in May 1955. From the autumn of 1954 to the spring of 1955, the number of cooperatives grew from about 100,000 to about 650,000, and in the spring of 1955, the Central Committee of the CPC resolved to have the number of cooperatives increased to 1 million before the autumn harvest of 1956. The Liu faction then argued that the establishment of cooperatives had gone beyond the limits of practicability and had gone ahead of the levels of the masses' socialist consciousness and the standard of the cadres' experience. Arbitrarily they called for, and in certain localities carried out, the reduction of the number of cooperatives. It was later claimed that in the two months between May and July 1955, over 200,000

cooperatives were disbanded. This policy was not limited to Zhejiang but spread across the country and was conducted in many, though not all, areas after its promulgation by the Third National Conference on Rural Work.

19. We have no concrete data on the dimensions of this "cutback" in 1953 mentioned here by Mao. The formal launching of the cooperativization movement (that is, the establishment of agricultural producers' cooperatives [APC's]) did not begin until the end of 1953 and early 1954. However, mutual aid teams were established on a national scale after the promulgation of the first Draft Decision on Mutual Aid and Cooperativization in Agriculture (December 1951). This decision was ratified in finalized form in February 1953. According to *RMSC* (1952), pp. 356-357, many of the mutual aid teams, by becoming year-round mutual aid units, had already transformed themselves into cooperatives of a transitional nature. These were later known as lower-level or elementary APC's. (See text Oct. 15, 1953, note 2.) There is therefore evidence of considerable growth in the establishment of elementary APC's in 1953 which undoubtedly would have elicited significant response. While we do not have concrete or statistical data regarding the form and dimensions of this reaction, we do have some comments about the situation. (See F. Schurmann [1971], pp. 439-440, and Mao's own speech on the subject of cooperativization to the members of the Rural Work Department of the Central Committee of the CPC - text October 15, 1953, and *SW*, V, pp. 133 ff.).
20. See text Feb. 18, 1951, note 8, and text June 30, 1953, source note.
21. This refers to small plots of land that belonged to members of cooperatives and were retained by them in view of their need to grow vegetables and other garden produce not subjected to taxation or planned unified purchasing of the cooperative system. Their existence was affirmed in the "Model Regulations for an Agricultural Producers' Cooperative" of late 1955. In 1958, at the beginning of commune establishment, they were abolished; they were later reinstated, their total area being limited to 5 per cent of the land within the commune jurisdiction. Since then the issues of the existence, size, roles, and consequences of "private plots" have been a focus of considerable struggle.
22. See text June 6, 1950(1), note 11.
23. Mao's reference to the Soviet experience here is quite important as the Soviet Union's experience in coordinating agricultural and industrial development was perceived quite differently by different groups in the leadership. Mao was referring to the Soviet experience in

order to counter the general understanding of that experience held by those coalesced around Liu Shaoqi, Deng Zihui (director of the Party's Rural Work Department), and others, which was in line with the official Soviet position that the Soviet experience demonstrated that agricultural cooperativization must be preceded by the mechanization of the agricultural means of production and that this was the necessary sequence of the two developments. Mao argued to the contrary that the Soviet experience in fact demonstrated that agricultural cooperativization had taken place *before* agricultural mechanization and this was the correct sequence. See Mao's "Reading Notes on the Soviet Textbook on Political Economy" (text 1960 Reading Notes). For more on the relationship between agricultural and industrial development in the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s, see C. Bettelheim (1978).

24. "Commodity grain" refers to grain produced for exchange, not for direct consumption by the producer, that is, the amount of grain that producers could produce above the amount they needed for their own food and seed supply. Thus this amount of commodity grain would be the amount that could be counted on as the basis of food supply for urban areas and poor areas and as a potential basis for international trade.

25. The relationship between heavy and light industry and Mao's concept of each is clarified in his speech "On the Ten Major Relationships" (text April 25, 1956). See also F. Schurmann (1968), p. 80.

26. In 1938, under Stalin's direction, a new history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was compiled and published to bring the past into line with the purges within the Party. This resulted in the "Short Course in the History of the CPSU (Bolshevik)", which was incorporated into Stalin's *Problem of Leninism* but which also appeared in separate form as the "History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik)", Short Course.

27. See text Aug. 12, 1953(1), note 22.

28. See text Feb. 18, 1951, note 2.

29. See text June 6, 1950(1), note 7.

30. *Short Course* (see note 26), English translation ( International Publishers, 1951 edition), p. 472.

31. See text Oct. 15, 1953, note 2.

32. For an analysis of how Mao's approach to collectivization anticipated yearly increases in production, see J. Gray ( 1974).

33. See text Oct. 15, 1953, note 6.

Communist China 1955-1959: Policy Documents with Analysis. Contributors: Robert Bowie R. - author, Harvard University. Center for International Affairs. | Harvard University. East Asian Research Center. || - author. Publisher: Harvard University Press. Place of Publication: Cambridge. Publication Year: 1962. Page Number: 92.

General comment. The crucial document of the four printed in this chapter is Mao Tse-tung's speech of July 31, 1955 (Document 2). This was not published, however, until the policy "suggested" by Mao had been ratified and formalized in the decisions of the Party's Central Committee in October 1955 (see *Decisions on Agricultural Cooperation*, adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session (Enlarged) of the Seventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, October 11, 1955. Document 3). The motives behind these decisions and the tensions within the Party to which they gave rise are discussed in our General Introduction, part II. The story of the various stages in the formation of cooperatives in China up to 1956, to which there are many allusions in Mao's speech, may be summarized as follows:

1. On December 15, 1951, the Central Committee of the Party circulated draft decisions on mutual aid and cooperativization, for experimental application. These decisions

envisaged temporary and seasonal "mutual aid" teams at the lowest level, permanent "mutual aid" teams, and guided development of agricultural producers' cooperatives on a selective basis. In these cooperatives, peasants were paid dividends for the shares of land which they contributed; this form of cooperative was subsequently known as the "lower" or elementary form, in contrast to the "higher" form in which the peasants surrendered their land. It was emphasized in the draft decisions that cooperativization must proceed on a voluntary basis, and that incentive was all-important; "only under the call to produce more grain and increase their income can peasants be mobilized to organize themselves." After a period of experiment the draft was officially adopted by the Central Committee on February 15, 1953. An attempt was then made to establish cooperatives on a larger scale, but this came to grief and many cooperatives were dissolved. (Mao refers in Document 2 to "*mass dissolution*.")

2. On December 16, 1953, the Central Committee adopted further decisions on the development of agricultural producers' cooperatives, describing them as a "transitional form through which the peasants can be induced to advance naturally and willingly to socialism" (i.e., to collective farms). The cooperatives, it was said, had "fully revealed their superiority." According to Mao, it was decided to increase their numbers from 14,000 to 35,800 before the autumn harvest of 1954 (in fact, he said, the number rose to 100,000 in this period). At the same time there was continued emphasis on the principles that the development of cooperatives must be voluntary and that increased production and increased income for members were the basic criteria of their success.
3. In October 1954, the Central Committee decided, in Mao's words, to increase the number of cooperatives "six-fold, from one hundred thousand to six hundred thousand." (The text of this decision is not available.) The target was exceeded, but the pace proved too hot. In March 1955 the State Council ordered that the organization of more cooperatives be stopped. In April, there was, in Mao's words, "resolute contraction" of numbers, and the Party issued a warning that the mistakes of 1953 should not be repeated. However, even after the dissolution of some cooperatives, the number established in June 1955 was 650,000 (or, according to Mao's figures, 16.9 million out of a total of 110 million peasant households).
4. In the meantime there was criticism of "rightist" tendencies on this question at the Central Committee's Rural Work Conference in May 1955. In the spring of that year (presumably after March), according to Mao, the Central Committee had decided that the figure of cooperatives could go up to a million by October 1956. Gradualness was nevertheless still the keynote of the agricultural section of Li Fu-ch'un's speech to the National People's Congress in July 1955 (Document 1). The target named by him was one million cooperatives by 1957 when, he said, the peasant households joining the present elementary form of cooperative would make up about onethird of all the country's peasant households.
6. Mao, in his speech of July 31, 1955 (Document 2), raised the target number to 1.3 million by October 1956 (i.e., a 100 percent increase in 14 months). In section X of the speech he envisaged that by the spring of 1958 about half the peasant population (55 million households) would be in cooperatives of the "semisocialist" (elementary) type. By 1960 the other half would have joined elementary cooperatives, and some of those already formed would have been transformed into higher-type "socialist" cooperatives.
7. In October 1955 the Central Committee adopted its decision (Document 3) calling for the basic completion of elementary cooperatives by the spring of 1958. Work was rushed forward, and Mao, in his preface of December 27, 1955, to the book *Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside* (Document 4), said that his targets of July had already been far exceeded. He claimed an increase of 300 percent in the number of cooperatives in only

four months.

8. The draft 12-Year Agricultural Program (Document 5) in January 1956 laid down that "all provinces . . . should, in the main, complete agricultural cooperation in its elementary form and set themselves the goal of getting about 85% of all peasant households into agricultural producers' co-operatives in 1956." Higher-stage cooperatives were to be formed by 1957 in "areas where co-operation is on better foundations," and by 1958 the "main work" of organizing them was to be completed throughout the country. Model regulations for "lower" and "higher" forms were adopted by the National People's Congress on March 17 and June 30, 1956 ( *CB* 369, 399). Most important of all, the method of assessing and collecting grain tax was revised in measures promulgated by the State Council, August 25, 1955--known as the "Three Fixes." At the same time, a grain-rationing system, introduced for the cities in November 1953, was extended to country areas; see T. J. Hughes and D. E. T. Luard , *The Economic Development of Communist China* ( London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 183.

A number of supplementary texts for the period 1949-1956, together with notes and bibliography, are given in Chao Kuo-chün, *Agrarian Policies of Mainland China: A Documentary Study, 1949-1956* ( Cambridge, Mass.: Center for East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1957). A short narrative of cooperativization in China, 1951-1955, with some interesting detailed quotations from Chinese press sources, is given in *CB* 373.

Other sources on points of detail are as follows.

*CB* 364, containing details of meeting of Central Committee, October 1955.

*CB* 362 and *SCMP* 1147 on the "Three Fix" policy. See especially the People's Daily editorial of Sept. 27, 1955, in *SCMP* 1147.

*ECMM* 20 ( *Study*, Nov. 2, 1955) and *ECMM* 26 ( *World Culture*, Dec. 5, 1955), containing some detailed articles on opposition within the Party to the new policy, and on the lessons to be learned from the experience of the U.S.S.R. in collectivization.

*URS*, Vol. 1, Nos. 14, 16, 27, and 28, containing material, mainly from the local Kwangtung press, on the problems set to provincial cadres by the new line on cooperatives. *URS*, Vol. 1, No. 11, has quotations from the Chekiang local press of May 1955, showing that dissolution of cooperatives took place with the encouragement of the local Party authorities (contrast Mao's speech--Document 2, section III).