AGRICULTURAL COLLECTIVIZATION IN COMMUNIST CHINA

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I

ON December 16, 1953, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party adopted a *Decision on the Further Development of Agricultural Producer Co-operatives*. This document, released to the Chinese public as well as the outside world on January 10, 1954, provides the most detailed information we have received on the progress of agricultural collectivization in Communist China and the Peking régime's plans for the next few years.* It also leaves little doubt as to the Chinese Communists' long-range intentions. The *Decision* states:

> . . . The Party's most fundamental task in the rural areas is to raise the productive forces in agriculture so as to educate the peasants and stimulate them to organize themselves and carry out the socialist transformation of agriculture; . . . so as to transform China's agriculture from small-scale production by individual economy to the advanced, large-scale production of co-operative economy, gradually narrowing the gap between industrial and agricultural development.

In other words, the Chinese Communists have decided to follow the course which was taken twenty-five years ago by the Russians. The Soviet Union is not once mentioned in the *Decision*, but the document is nevertheless strikingly reminiscent of similar statements and decisions which were made by the Soviets under the leadership of Stalin in the late 1920s. The Chinese seem to be aware of the lesson of the tragic Soviet experience in one respect at least. They do not plan to achieve complete collectivization at breakneck speed. By 1957 approximately 20 per cent. of all peasant households in China are to have been organized in agricultural co-operatives, and 800,000 co-operatives are to have been created. The majority of these may not be as tightly organized as the Soviet *kolkhozy*. The proportion of total cultivated area which is to be affected is not specified, but it is likely to be appreciably higher than the percentage of households to be collectivized, since the best land and the larger holdings are usually best suited for co-operative exploitation.

Collectivization began in earnest in the Soviet Union in 1929. By 1935, after six years of persuasion and pressure, the Kremlin had enrolled nearly 83 per cent. of the peasant households in the country in the collectives; a

* All quotations from the *Decision* in this paper are based on the English language text released by the New China News Agency on January 10, 1954.

year later, in 1936, 89 per cent. had joined. By 1939, the Soviet peasantry was 98 per cent. collectivized. Ninety-four per cent. of the whole cultivated area of the U.S.S.R. had already been collectivized by 1935, and this figure too rose to nearly 100 per cent. by 1939.* Thus it can be seen that though the Chinese are following the same road the Russians took twenty-five years ago, they plan to travel it only about one-quarter as fast for the time being. They have not made clear their plans for the period after 1957. In all likelihood they have not yet decided themselves. The course to be followed after 1957 will depend on the results of efforts made during the 1954-57 period. It is interesting to note while we are comparing the Chinese situation with the Russian that the Soviet Communists waited nearly ten years after the complete assumption of power to inaugurate their collectivization drive. The Chinese Communists have been in complete control of their country for less than four years. By starting earlier than the Russians and spreading the collectivization campaign over a much longer period, the Chinese no doubt hope to avoid the acute economic and social dislocations which the Soviets brought upon themselves in the early 1930s.

Soviet agriculture has not yet completely recovered from the upheaval which collectivization caused. First Secretary of the C.P.S.U. Khrushchev revealed in his historic speech in September 1953, that the total number of livestock in the U.S.S.R. had still not reached the 1928 level. He also revealed that the Russian peasantry had still not reconciled itself to the collective system and that concessions had to be made to the "spirit of material interestedness of the peasantry" if the desperately needed increases in basic agricultural production were to be achieved in the near future.† Before the Communists came to power, Russia had regularly produced large surpluses of food grains. In modern times China has never been in such a fortunate position. China under the Communists is in as precarious a food supply situation as ever. Among the factors which have made it necessary for the Chinese Communists to content themselves with a slower rate of collectivization is undoubtedly their realization that the Chinese countryside would be gripped by complete chaos if it were subjected to a Stalinist-type collectivization campaign accompanied by "dekulakization" and mass deportations. Millions of peasants died of starvation and hardship during the early 1930s in the U.S.S.R. and famine raged in the Ukraine. These Soviet experiences would seem mild in comparison with the tens of millions who would die of starvation and confusion were a similar campaign to be carried out in the much more primitive conditions of present-day China.

II

Let us examine the present state of collectivization and the current "Three-Year Plan" on the basis of the information contained in the Central Committee's *Decision*:

* One of the best general summaries of agricultural collectivization in the U.S.S.R. is contained in Sir John Maynard's *Russia in Flux*, New York, 1948.

† N. S. Khrushchev: *O Merakh Dal'neishevo Razvitiya Sel'skovo Khozyaistva SSSR; Doklad na Plenume TsK KPSS*, September 3, 1953. Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1953. The speech was also published in *Pravda* on September 15, 1953.

The *Decision* speaks of the present stage of Chinese politico-economic development as a " transitional stage to socialism." Referring to the " two forms of peasant activity in production since land reform," (1) " individual economy," and (2) " mutual-aid and co-operation," the *Decision* maintains that this

> " reflects the two-sided nature of the peasants—mainly the middle peasants—as working people and private owners. Their activity in mutual aid and co-operation, based on the peasants as labouring people, shows that they can be led to socialism. Their activity in individual economy, arising from the nature of the peasants as private owners and sellers of agricultural products, indicates their spontaneous potentiality towards capitalism. The party's policy is actively and carefully to change the peasants' activity in individual economy to mutual aid and co-operation through numerous, concrete, appropriate and varied forms so as to overcome the spontaneous tendency to capitalism and gradually lead them to socialism."

According to the statistics contained in the *Decision*, 47,900,000 peasant households, or 43 per cent. of the total in all China, are now organized in mutual aid teams. There are 273,000 peasant households organized in agricultural co-operatives, and 14,000 such co-operatives now exist. By the autumn harvest of 1954, nearly 22,000 more co-operatives are to have been established. Even then barely 1 per cent. of all Chinese peasant households will have been collectivized. During the next three years the total number of argicultural co-operatives is to be multiplied nearly twenty-three times. It seems clear that there will have to be much " persuading " and " convincing " of peasants if the goal of 800,000 is to be reached. A breakdown of the figures for 1954 on a regional basis is provided:

	Present	*By Autumn Harvest* 1954
North China	6,186	more than 12,400
North-east China (Manchuria) ...	4,187	„ „ 10,000
East China	3,301	„ „ 8,300
Central-South China	527	„ „ 3,600
North-west China	302	„ „ 750
South-west China	59	„ „ 600
Total	14,562	„ „ 35,650

Though these statistics are too limited to justify very many far-reaching conclusions, they confirm what we have already assumed to be the case. The regions which the Communists are developing as the main bases of their strength—areas where collectivization of agriculture has already made the most progress—are the regions where the greatest emphasis on the creation of new agricultural co-operatives is to be placed. As the *Decision* states, collectivization of agriculture is a necessary prerequisite for Communist-style industrialization. It is natural that the Communists plan to push collectivization fastest in the areas where they are making most of their industrialization effort—North China and Manchuria. Nevertheless, in view of the relatively sparse population of China's western

regions, the figures for those areas are proportionately larger than they would at first sight seem.

It is quite possible that the Peking régime may attempt to force collectivized cotton culture in Chinese Turkestan, following the example of Moscow's successful efforts in Soviet Central Asia in the 1930s.* Manchuria already has more agricultural co-operatives than any other part of China. The first collectives established by the Chinese Communists were in this region.† The principal economic (as separate from political) aim of Communist collectivization is always to get as much of the food supply as possible under direct State control. Peking is especially anxious to secure food supplies in the North for the workers who are rebuilding and operating the war-damaged and Soviet-dismantled industries originally established by the Japanese.

The *Decision* talks of three stages of agricultural co-operation: (1) temporary and year-round mutual-aid teams; (2) agricultural co-operatives; and (3) collective farms. The first two stages are not to be considered as ends in themselves, but as steps toward the current goal—fully developed collective farms.‡ The distinctions between these three stages are not made clear. The Chinese Communists appear not to have thought through this process in specific terms as yet. Exact definitions of the different stages of collectivization will no doubt be developed as the campaign progresses, and—if Communist practice in the U.S.S.R. and the Eastern European satellites is taken as a guide—these definitions will be changed as the tactical requirements of the collectivization campaign dictate.§

The *Decision* has almost nothing to say about mechanization of agriculture. In the U.S.S.R. and in the Eastern European satellites collectivization and mechanization have gone hand in hand, theoretically at least. The fact that mechanization has nowhere kept up to the pace of collectivization (including the U.S.S.R.) has been one of the principal material difficulties contributing to the malfunctioning of the collective system. Nevertheless lavish promises of further deliveries of tractors and agricultural machinery continue to be made and Soviet and satellite Communists often seem to be deluding themselves into believing that if only they can get

* See *e.g.* Sir Olaf Caroe, *Soviet Empire, The Turks of Central Asia and Stalinism,* London, 1953, pp. 173-214.

† Soong Ching-ling, *The Struggle for New China* (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1952), pp. 294-310, contains interesting information on the reorganization of agriculture in several Manchurian villages during the 1947-50 period and concludes with a naïve but revealing account of the virtues and activities of one Han En, a peasant co-operative farming enthusiast, who had been leading peasants into the collective movement.

‡ As in the U.S.S.R., a further goal for the more distant future is also occasionally referred to—State farms, which in their highest form become *agrogoroda*—"agricultural cities." According to Marxist-Leninist theory this is the point at which differences between the city and the countryside, between urban and rural life, will cease to exist and peasants will become agricultural "factory workers." The Chinese, of course, have had little occasion to speak of such a Utopian stage of agricultural development. However, even the Soviets are embarrassingly vague about how and when this goal is to be reached.

§ An excellent recent summary which deals with both the theoretical and practical aspects of agricultural collectivization in the Communist orbit is the Symposium *Satellite Agriculture in Crisis,* published by Praeger, New York, 1954.

more machinery into the hands of the Machine Tractor Stations, then everything will work smoothly and bountiful crops will be harvested with a minimum investment of manpower. The Chinese cannot permit themselves any illusions of this sort. They know that they do not have the capability of mechanizing their agriculture themselves. They know that the hard-pressed Russians and satellite peoples are having serious difficulties trying to produce enough agricultural machinery to meet their own demands. The Chinese *Decision* speaks modestly and unspecifically of " the establishment of State farms, agrotechnical stations, new type farm tool stations, pumping stations, and tractor stations in various parts of the country "—that is all. Whatever success the Chinese collectives have will depend upon effective application of their one seemingly inexhaustible resource—manpower.

There is another aspect of this mechanization problem which deserves consideration—the political rôle of the Machine Tractor Stations in the Soviet and satellite systems. Soviet theoreticians have themselves always admitted the important political rôle played by the Machine Tractor Stations. The Machine Tractor Stations, more than any other aspect of the collective system, prove the essential political nature of the whole effort. A Machine Tractor Station may serve several dozen collective farms. The collective farms themselves dispose of very little machinery, and the individual farmers of almost none at all. The tractors, the sowing machines, the cultivators, harrows, mowing machines, cotton pickers, combines and threshing machines all belong to the Machine Tractor Stations. It is therefore obviously the Machine Tractor Station which decides when and how the collectives do their work. It is to the Machine Tractor Station that the collective farms deliver a major share of their output as " payment " for the work the Machine Tractor Station does for them. The Machine Tractor Station thereby becomes one of the principal State wholesale procurement agencies. Specialists of all kinds are attached to the Machine Tractor Station and are designated by the Machine Tractor Station director to work on the various collective farms in turn. Machine Tractor Stations apportion delivery quotas. Every Machine Tractor Station has a large *agitprop* department under a political officer who is in charge of ideological indoctrination of the peasantry in his area. This department holds lectures, shows films and distributes books and pamphlets on agricultural methods. It exacts pledges of plan overfulfilment from collective farms and individual peasants and distributes rewards to shockworkers, brigade leaders and collective farm chairmen who carry out their tasks well. It is therefore easy to see that when this system works according to plan (which is by no means always the case) the director of a Machine Tractor Station is one of the most influential people of his district. The M.V.D. in rural areas is based on the Machine Tractor Station. It is not yet clear how the Chinese plan to cope with the problem of political control of the countryside without some counterpart for the Machine Tractor Stations. It is undoubtedly their ultimate aim to set up a similar system. For the time being they will probably have to rely on local party cells and on village councils and other administrative organs.

III

The new *Decision* apparently does not involve any reversal of the 1950 decision to favour the kulaks, the so-called rich peasants.*

At the time of the promulgation of the Agrarian Reform Law in 1950, the Chinese Communists realized clearly that agricultural production could be maintained at a relatively high level only if the independent peasants were enabled to work without interference and guaranteed a reasonable profit on their produce. Compared with conditions in Eastern Europe or in the Soviet Union, middle and rich peasants were promised extremely favourable treatment in China. The Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Liu Shao-chi, stated at the time:

> " . . . The great revolutionary unity of all nationalities, all democratic classes, parties and groups and people's organizations throughout the country has already been established politically and organizationally, and the political attitude of the rich peasant in general has also undergone a change.
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> " If the People's Government carries out a policy of preserving the rich peasant economy, the rich peasants can be won over to a neutral attitude in general and better protection can then be given to the middle peasants, thus eliminating certain unnecessary worries of the peasant during the development of production. Therefore, in the present situation, the adoption of a policy which will preserve the rich peasant economy in the coming agrarian reform is necessary both politically and economically. It will be relatively advantageous to our country and our people and in overcoming the current financial and economic difficulties.
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> " The policy adopted by us of preserving the rich peasant economy is, of course, not a temporary but a long-term policy. That is to say, rich peasant economy will be preserved in the whole stage of New Democracy. Only when conditions mature for the wide use of mechanical farming in the organization of collective farms and for the socialist reform of the rural areas can the need for a rich peasant economy cease—and this will take a somewhat lengthy time to achieve.
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> " That is why we advocate the preservation of a rich peasant economy at present."†

Liu's arguments were based on a very realistic appraisal of the actual situation. He went out of his way to stress the fact that the policy of " preserving the rich peasant economy " was conceived as a long-term policy. He was careful to point out that collectivization was the ultimate goal, but very indefinite about the time when concrete progress toward that goal would actually begin. The principal prerequisite for collectiviza-

* By Western standards these peasants are, of course, anything but rich. In China, as in the U.S.S.R., they are usually defined as peasants owning a few animals and tools and who possess enough land to make it necessary for them to hire outside help at certain seasons of the year.

† The Cominform Journal, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, July 21, 1950.

tion, at least as Liu Shao-chi saw it in 1950, would be the introduction of mechanization on a broad scale.

The capacity of the Chinese to mechanize their agriculture is not much greater in 1954 than it was in 1950. The ability of the Russians to deliver agricultural equipment to China in large quantities is not very great. Nevertheless, the Chinese have now decided to embark upon collectivization at what, given Chinese conditions, is a fairly rapid rate. In doing so, they appear to be disregarding their own earlier and far wiser conclusions. One must necessarily be sceptical of the results they are likely to achieve.*

The December 1953 agricultural *Decision* of the Chinese Central Committee gives the impression of perhaps being the result of a series of hard-fought compromises within the upper levels of the Chinese Communist Party itself. The *Decision* is full of statements which even on the surface appear to contradict each other. It is said that there must be " strict adherence to the basic principle of voluntariness " in the organization of agricultural co-operatives. Nevertheless " a number of good agricultural co-operatives *must be set up* as models in every province or county where land reform has been completed."

But what if the peasants of a given province or county do not want to set up co-operatives? The State has various forms of disguised pressure at its disposal. The State will give special aid to co-operatives in the form of " low-interest loans, irrigation facilities, agrotechnical facilities and farm tool stations—this will enable the peasants to realize the benefits of this type of agriculture and will thus facilitate its development." Here we have reference to a number of devices which Communists have learned to manipulate with great skill. Concessions are made to peasants who join co-operatives; peasants who are still not tempted by these concessions soon find themselves discriminated against more and more. The State may for a while extend aid to them too, if it needs their produce badly enough. Then it stops its aid and reminds them that they can continue to receive it only if they join the co-operative. If they still refuse to join they may find their tax rates rising rapidly, or they may find that their compulsory delivery quotas are set so high that they cannot fulfil them. They may be forbidden to own private livestock, or to employ outside labour or their sons and daughters may be forced to leave and take up

* For the Soviets the policy of the Chinese Communists towards the kulaks is a rather embarrassing subject, since it contrasts so sharply with the policy the Kremlin has followed in regard to the Russian peasantry since the late 1920s. Most Russian works on Communist China treat the subject only very briefly—*e.g.* Myakin, *Kitaiskaya Narodnaya Respublika,* Voenizdat, Moscow, 1952, p. 100:

" We must carry out a change in our policy in respect to rich peasants," declared Mao Tse-tung in his report at the third plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in June 1950. " Specifically, we must change from a policy of confiscation of surplus land and property of rich peasants to a policy of supporting the economy of rich peasants in order to aid the rapid re-establishment of production in agricultural districts. This change is also conducive to isolation of the landlords and will strengthen the situation of peasants of modest circumstances and small tenant-farmers." The new law on the agrarian reform preserves private property in land and permits landowners free buying, selling and renting of their land. Efimov, *Ocherki po Novei i Noveishei Istorii Kitaya,* Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1951, pp. 525-6, treats the problem at slightly greater length but in no greater depth.

jobs elsewhere. It is an old familiar story now. It began in the U.S.S.R. more than twenty-five years ago; it is still going on in very acute form in the countries of Eastern Europe. That is what the Chinese peasants have to look forward to. It may not happen to many of them this year or next; it may well be ten or fifteen years before most of them are affected.

The Chinese régime is moving relatively slowly, as we have observed before. But if the Peking leaders remain committed to the course they have now embarked upon, the fate of the Chinese peasantry is neither difficult to foresee nor pleasant to contemplate. "Leading the peasant masses to socialism" is a phrase which in Communist terms means complete subjugation of the peasants to the narrow interests of the totalitarian State. It means that the peasant is no longer master of his time, his land, his tools or his family. He becomes merely a cog in the Communist machine and a cipher in the economic plan. The fact that the economic plan for agriculture is never fulfilled and the machine is always suffering minor breakdowns is not sufficient reason for the Communist to reconsider the whole theory. For the most important aspect of the theory is not economic considerations at all, but political control. From a short-range point of view at least, it guarantees political control.

The justification which the Chinese Central Committee offers for embarking upon the policy of collectivization is couched in classical Stalinist terms:

> . . . the general line of the Party during China's transitional period requires not only a phenomenal growth in industry but also appropriate immense growth in agriculture. However, the scattered, backward and conservative individual economy *limits the development of the productive forces in agriculture and its contradictions with socialist industrialization increasingly make themselves felt.* Small-scale agricultural production is increasingly falling behind the peasants' demand for improved living conditions and cannot meet the surge forward of the entire national economy. . . . Mutual aid and agricultural producer co-operatives, supply and marketing co-operatives and credit co-operatives are the three forms of co-operation in the rural areas. Through division of labour, these three are linked together and stimulate each other. *They are gradually linking the rural economy with national economic construction plans* and are transforming the small peasant economy on the basis of co-operation in production. (Italics mine.)

What these passages really say is that the Peking régime cannot carry out its industrialization programme unless it can bring the agricultural sector of the economy more fully under its control and continue to exploit it effectively by means of an interlocking system of State service, procurement and supply agencies which, when they have been fully developed, will leave the peasants no alternative but to dispose of their resources, time and energy as Peking directs. When this stage is reached the peasantry will be under complete economic and political control; in Com-

munist terminology, " the rural economy will be completely linked with national economic construction plans."

China has only one readily accessible and pliable internal source of capital for industrialization—the agricultural sector of the economy.* There is likewise only one major source of new industrial labour—the peasantry. At the present time the Chinese Communists appear to be having no particular difficulty recruiting new industrial labour; but as the industrialization programme progresses, labour requirements are bound to increase rapidly.

Much publicity has been given to the industrial credits the Soviets have extended to China and lavish promises of future deliveries of all sorts of capital equipment are constantly being hinted at by both Moscow and Peking. It is true that the Soviets have displayed more generosity toward their Chinese ally than they have ever displayed toward any of their satellites. Nevertheless, there is still no good reason to believe that they will be able to provide much more than a small share of the massive investment of capital that is going to be needed to industrialize China. Moscow's much publicized aid to China to date has probably done no more than compensate the Chinese for the cost of their intervention in Korea and repair partially the losses China suffered through the Soviets' slapdash dismantling of Manchurian industry in 1945. The Kremlin will most likely continue to force its hard-pressed Eastern European satellites to contribute as much as they can spare of their own resources to help build up China and North Korea.†

Full examination of this problem must await further passage of time and the accumulation of more concrete data. From the point of view of the foreseeable future, however, it appears reasonably certain that the real key to the Chinese Communists' industrialization programme is bound to be the extent of their success in organizing and exploiting the agricultural sector of their economy in such fashion as to guarantee as complete State control of food resources, technical crops and the labour supply as possible. In this way they hope to be able to distribute available food and other essential supplies to all urban areas in just sufficient quantities to ensure satisfaction of minimum consumption requirements, while draining off all extra purchasing power—*i.e.* surplus labour value—for investment in the national economic development plan.

* The following observations by E. S. Kirby in *Introduction to the Economic History of China*, London, 1954, pp. 147-148, are interesting. They are made with reference to the T'ang Dynasty: " While money-capital or circulating capital was accumulating in the hands of the temples and of foreign immigrants particularly, the fundamental form of ' capital,' the real basis of both rank and wealth, and the ultimate form of fixed capital and investment, was, however, still—the land. This has remained the case in China right up to modern times."

† There is an interesting theory that the U.S.S.R. was to a considerable extent able to offset the cost of the war materials and other supplies it had to contribute to China and North Korea to fight the Korean war by increased exploitation of the Eastern European satellites during the 1950-53 period. This effort caused severe strains in the economies of Eastern Europe and the so-called " New Course " is now designed to bring them back into balance. Nevertheless the Soviets continue, on a reduced scale, to make the satellites foot part of the bill for their contribution to the economic development of China and the reconstruction of North Korea.

There is nothing new in this technique. It is the same as the system which has been applied in the Soviet Union from the late 1920s and which has been enforced in varying degrees of intensity in the East European satellites during the last few years.

IV

Collectivization of agriculture in a Communist State is not a purely economic problem. In fact, in the final analysis, it is not an economic problem at all but a political problem. Communism is a doctrine which makes much of economic determinism. Its political conclusions are allegedly merely the result of logical analysis of "objective" economic criteria and application of economic "laws" according to "scientific" methods. Marx's basic assumptions were questionable when he made them. They have little relation to the economic realities of the modern Communist State. Marx's followers, from Engels through Stalin, have developed Communism as a revolutionary technique for seizing and maintaining power. In every country where they have established themselves, Communists have found the peasantry the most difficult element of the population to control. They have always distrusted the peasantry. Nevertheless they have realized that they must control the peasantry if they are to maintain themselves in power, for it is the peasants who produce both the food and the surplus population which a modern State must have to maintain its position in the world. The collective agricultural system was devised by the Russian Communists as a means of keeping the peasants under effective political control, as a means of preventing them from exercising the inherent political power which their economic and social position in the State naturally gives them. From a purely economic point of view the collective system has been a monstrous failure. From the political point of view it has not been as much of a success as the Communists would like it to be, but it has at least up to this point in history enabled them to attain their minimum objective—that of preventing the peasants from challenging the authority of the State in a decisive fashion.

The myth that the Chinese Communists are simply agrarian reformers, akin to the democratic populists of the West, has died hard.* If further proof were needed that it never was valid, the recent *Decision* of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party should provide it. It contains many solicitous phrases which when translated into Western terms sound both familiar and humanitarian in spirit. We must not forget, however, that there are very few of our economic slogans and political symbols to which Communists attribute the same meaning as we. One does not even have to look behind and between the words of this *Decision* to discover its real meaning. It is stated in very straightforward

* There is no more thorough an examination of the theoretical basis of Chinese Communism than Benjamin I. Schwartz's *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, Cambridge, Mass., 1952. Mr. Schwartz states in his conclusions (p. 199): "The Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung has been . . . neither 'the vanguard of the Proletariat' in the Marxist-Leninist sense, nor a 'peasant party' in the Marxist-Leninist sense, but an élite of professional revolutionaries which has risen to power by basing itself on the dynamic of peasant discontent."

fashion. The *Decision* says that collectivization of agriculture is necessary because industrialization is necessary. Industrialization is necessary because Communist China cannot become and remain a world power unless she is industrialized. Industrialization—under Communist conditions—cannot be achieved unless the peasantry is " linked with national economic construction plans "—in other words, unless the peasantry is brought under effective political control. Communist China is not managing its affairs for the benefit of the peasantry any more than any other Communist State has ever done. It is managing its affairs for the benefit of the party oligarchy which rules the country from Peking and which is interested primarily in the maintenance and exercise of power.