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CONCERNING SOME PROBLEMS OF OUR VILLAGE POLICY

There is no doubt that in the development of the productive forces in our agriculture we considered behind the rest of the economy. This applies to both the direct economic, material aspect of this question and the assertion of new relationship in the economy, which are otherwise characteristic of the present phase of our socialist build-up and which have also been productive of excellent results in other spheres of the economy, outside agricultural. Partly this position issues from the fact that in the first phase of our post-war development we were forced to devote by far the greatest attention to the industrialisation of our economy, in which connection we also had to concentrate the material resources, primarily upon the key projects of industrial construction. Causes of this kind will be considerably eliminated already under the current economic plan, which makes provision for substantial material resources toward the promotion of agriculture. However, in order that such material resources could be utilised really efficaciously by ourselves, it is necessary that we have a clear picture also regarding the other causes of our lagging behind, in agriculture, i.e., those that issue from our agricultural policy, from our administrative and other interventions in the village. Here there are weaknesses and shortcomings that today represent the greatest brake on a quicker development of productive forces in the sphere of agriculture and which we must absolutely eliminate if we wish to make a quicker pace of development possible in that sphere.

Here, before everything else, it is question of agricultural Co-operation. In discussing this subject today, we must not rely purely upon theoretical premises and the experience of others. We possess our own experiences and it is from these that we should without prejudices, draw clear conclusions and determine upon this basis the path of our further struggle for a socialist transformation of agricultural production. Within the scope of the present article I propose to advance only a few thoughts on those problems, as a contribution to the discussion that is today developing around such questions.

I

During recent years our agricultural Co-operation has definitely achieved considerable economic results. This applies to the Work Co-operatives, or at least to a good part of them. In the case of some, those results were so solid that they were able to overcome all internal difficulties and are really well on the way to becoming healthy and solid sizable socialist enterprises.

For all this, however, it cannot be denied that agricultural Co-operation, and in the first place that of the Peasant Work Co-operative type, is experiencing very serious internal difficulties, which are manifesting themselves, primarily, in a wavering of a considerable portion of the membership of the Peasant Work Co-operatives. And the drought, which was very strong in this economic year, has seriously intensified all the reasons that had given rise to wavering. This process was evidencing itself already during the past several years, and its consequences

are manifesting themselves also in the economic sphere, that is, in too slow a progress of the productive capacities of the Work Co-operatives, in an insufficiently utilising of the material resources placed at their disposal, in a slow raising of labour productivity, and sometimes even in regressing. I do not claim that this is true of all work co-operatives, but in any case of a considerable part thereof.

Various means were used to offset such processes. There were used also administrative measures whereby the leaving of Co-operatives was made more difficult, in the expectation that, in the interval, the crisis would be overcome and the Co-operative consolidated through such means as the new forms of organisation, the introduction of economic accounting, the new working methods, and so on. To be sure, all such measures did lead to certain positive results, but they neither removed nor overcame the internal difficulties. The utility of such measures lay primarily in that they afforded an insight into the substance of the matter also to our broadest active political circles and convinced them that such questions could be solved solely through economic means, and not administrative ones.

And this in fact the crux of the question. The internal difficulties of our Co-operation have their source not so much in the one or the other organisational weakness as they do in its social-economic substance, i.e., in that, in its present forms – which particularly applies to work co-operatives – it is in contradiction with the general economic conditions in which our Co-operatives operate today. That the matter is indeed such is indicated already by the very fact that, a weaving appeared in the Work Co-operatives as soon as we proceeded to changes in our economic system, i.e., as soon as it came to the abolition of the assessment and other administrative-compulsive agricultural plans, and as soon as there appeared a free market with a free competition of agricultural forces.

This was a comprehensible development. In order to be able to survive and prosper in such conditions of free economic competition, the Work Co-operative must primarily meet two conditions; it has to dispose of the indispensable technical basis and be built not only upon the principle of absolute voluntariness but also upon a high consciousness of its members, a consciousness capable of adapting the forms of the organisation and operation of the Co-operative to its own technical progress and the general economic conditions in which the Co-operative is living. If the State or any other apparatus were to prescribe those forms, the Co-operative could not get far in its development. Wherever, then, such conditions are lacking, the work Co-operative becomes economically incapable and thereby also subject to the permanent disease of wavering and disintegration. The granting of economic privileges of such Co-operatives – which some of our comrades are pronouncing to be a salutary remedy in such cases – has a converse effect. Economic privileges make people used to parasitism and undermine every struggle for increased labour productivity and the economic consolidation of the Co-operative.

The forms of work Co-operatives that prevail with us today are the product of entirely different economic conditions than the present-day ones. They go back to the time when a State monopoly, revolutionary and administrative means, and also bureaucratic-centralistic forms had -absolutely dominated in the economy and when

all our efforts were concentrated upon the basic tasks of the Five-Year Plan, with those efforts was also connected the system of assessment and various other measures of administrative intervention in agriculture. The Work co-operative type of co-op was best suited to such a situation. That is why they were successful in that period.

Today the opinion is frequently heard that many work Co-operatives has been formed through compulsion, and that precisely such Co-operatives were today experiencing a crisis. I believe that such opinions overestimate the role of phenomena of compulsion precisely because they fail to conceive the real economic substance of the present difficulties in Work-Co-operatives. Of course, there have been cases of compulsion, here and there, but at that time it did not exercise some decisive role. Then the economic relations were in themselves convenient for the creation of work Co-operatives. They often originated as a protection of the peasant from assessment obligations, with which the agricultural production of the time had to be burdened. On the other hand, for all other types of agricultural Co-operation there was left so little room in our economic life that they could not develop at all. It thus happened that our general agricultural Co-operation upon which we were – perspectively – laying stress, was not developing whilst the Work Co-operatives, which we had considered only as the highest product of Co-operative development, and never as the principal means for the transformation of agriculture, went rising far more rapidly. We therefore had a process which was the opposite of the present one, when our cadres in the field are endeavouring to maintain the Work Co-operatives complete, and are neglecting other forms of agricultural Co-operation and socialist agriculture, which forms are precisely the ones to be spontaneously developing, whilst many Work Co-operatives are experiencing a crisis.

The essence of the matter lies in altered economic relations. A great many Work Co-operatives were completely lacking in conditions for developing into sizable and modern socialist holdings. Just as it would be impossible to create a modern shoe factory by merely mechanically merging a number of shoemakers' shops, a modern agricultural holding is not to be obtained through mechanical patting together of ploughs and horses. Such simple co-operation can, to be sure, produce positive results among highly conscious people, having before them a distinct perspective and being capable of making even some sacrifices for its sake, but it cannot be made into a universal economic law. In the conditions of State monopolism and administrative distribution of the social product, such weaknesses of our Work Co-operatives remained hidden, since such an important criterion as the productivity of labour could not function. A large part of the peasants joined the Work Co-operatives *so as to get more from society, that is, to give less thereto, and not so as to produce more and better and thereby improve their living standards*. In the new economic conditions, however, all those weaknesses and contradictions in Work Co-operatives had to come to the fore. The criterion of labour productivity appeared as a social factor and wherever individual work on individual holdings had shown itself more successful than the Co-operative one, i.e., where it transpired that the conditions for a modern socialist holding were not yet ripe, difficulties were to

emerge. A series of Co-operatives came into crisis.

The initial reaction of our cadres was spontaneous, i.e., an administrative one. They began to prevent the falling off of Work Co-operatives in administrative ways, which meant the prevention of a process having its deep economic roots. Only then did in fact administrative compulsion appear in the true sense of the word as the principal instrument for maintaining the Work Co-operatives complete. Naturally, it could not give the desired results. Indeed, the opposite result was achieved. Movement was stopped, and concurrently a clarification of the position, which would have enabled at least those Work Co-operatives that were capable to maintain themselves, either wholly or in part to place their activity upon a more wholesome basis. Such clarification would have oriented our cadres towards those types of agricultural Co-operation which today can go developing and to many other forms of the socialist transformation of our agriculture, which are equally important but were neglected. Thus, all the measures of preventing normal free development in Co-operation deepened the crisis in the Working Co-operatives themselves, on the one hand, and caused damage to our agriculture generally.

In other words, the error did not consist in that Work Co-operatives had been created in their time, but in that processes in them are administratively braked today. Such methods are only fettering natural economic development, and agricultural Co-operation is prevented, or handicapped, from adapting itself to the new circumstances and conditions, that is, from conforming to them both economically and organisationally and in the matter of its methods of operation. That which has to be maintained by compulsion or artificially in the sphere of economy is as a rule incapable of existence. On the other hand, it is also clear that any artificial or administrative maintenance of obsolete forms or even invented constructions in the economic life must conduce to contradictions between the tendency for developing productive forces and the artificially or compulsively maintained economic relations. And such contradiction breeds negative consequences in both an economic and political sense.

There, in my opinion, is the source of the crisis our agricultural Co-operation is now experiencing. The fact is that the whole rest of our economy has been placed in the condition of a free competition of economic forces – of course, on the general basis of social ownership of the means of production – whilst agriculture, and Particularly a large portion of agricultural Co-operation, still finds itself largely hemmed in by administrative control and various artificial forms than can be maintained exclusively, thanks to their being upheld by administrative means.

Accordingly, the first principle that, in my view, we have to adopt without reserve in our economic policy and make sure of its unimpeded application is that *our agriculture, too, should be freed from elements of administrative management and have its development based upon a free competition of economic forces.*

II

Of course, this attitude should not signify that we are leaving peasant agricultural production to spontaneous movement, divorced from the socialist sector of our economy, or that we are losing sight of the perspective of its socialist

transformation. No, not for one moment must we forget that, particularly in that sphere of our economic life, a conscious activity of socialist social forces is indispensably necessary. Today we know just as well as we did yesterday that a spontaneous movement of petty production – in the conditions of a free market and without active *economic* intervention by the socialist economic sector – would inevitably and perpetually reproduce capitalist relations in the village. And we are against such processes not only as fighters for socialism and a government of the working people but also because in our political system such processes necessarily lead to a strengthening of bureaucratism and, in the final analysis, again to administrative intervention in the field of agriculture.

However, the question does not arise at all as to whether to leave the movement in agriculture to spontaneous development or not. Every social movement is both spontaneous and conscious. Also, the capitalist bank and the village rich of the old Yugoslavia who utilised objective possibilities to their advantage had proceeded to the exploitation and subjection of the working peasant consciously and systematically. And our working peasant is no longer confronted with capitalist banks, and the power of the village rich, too, has declined substantially. We have, in fact, a strong socialist economic sector, whose relation to the individual peasant is not exploitive but can and should assist him under determinate circumstances. It is primarily through such relations that the conscious action of socialist forces should come to the fore. Accordingly, it follows in itself that the socialist society, or the leading forces of socialist society, must have before them a dear perspective of the socialist transformation of agriculture and that they must on no condition renounce this perspective. However, at the same time the question arises: can we secure this socialist perspective by the hitherto methods of administrative intervention in agriculture or not. This question calls for a clear answer in the negative. We must free our agriculture in general and our agricultural Co-operation in particular from administrative restrictions and pressure and give economic forces in agriculture the right of way. And subsequently, upon this basis, we must establish adequate *economic relations* between the socialist sector and individual peasant production, which will naturally proceed to develop and strengthen ever more the socialist elements and forms of socialist agricultural holdings in the village.

Has our society the strength and the resources for a realisation of such a task? Undoubtedly it has. I shall refer to but some of them.

1. Above all one should not forget that the socialist economic sector absolutely dominates in our economy. This is enabling us to firmly fix through the social plan the status of the individual goods producer, and therefore of the peasant as well. Through this very fact – provided that we have secured a free competition of economic forces in the sphere of agriculture – the socialist forces are determining also the pace of development in the economy, and they can also influence its direction,

2. Through the social plan our society fixes the proportions whereby it determines also the aggregate purchase fund of the peasants and the general level of prices, and thereby also the market status of the individual peasant producer.

3. Price policy is likewise an important instrument for securing the promotion of agriculture and its socialist reconstruction. This does not mean that we shall employ methods of administrative establishing of prices, but the socialist society disposes of sufficient means to be able to decisively influence their economic formation,

4. In our conditions fiscal policy is primarily an instrument of a determinate social or class policy.

5. A particularly important role in respect of the influence of the socialist economic sector upon the development, of individual agricultural production will fall to the policy of credits and agricultural investments. Subject to the agricultural prices being maintained upon an economically healthy level, and the mutual ratio of such prices being freely formed, credit will constitute the chief form of financing in connection with agricultural investments, which will enable the best use of such resources and simultaneously a firmer linking of individual goods production with the socialist sector of production. Since, in all probability, credits will mainly be directed through agricultural Co-operation, too, will gain in strength *as the most important element of the linking up of individual agricultural Production with the socialist economy.*

By removing in principle all the forms of various privileges and non-controlled, or economically unjustified, grants by placing, then, all the producers in equal economic relations through a combination of the aforesaid and other instruments the socialist society will nevertheless be able to stimulate both the individual branches of agriculture and a development of socialist elements in the village and agricultural Co-operation. Accordingly, there is no danger whatever that with the abolition of the present administrative control over agricultural Co-operation and in agriculture generally the socialist forces might lose their leading role in the development of agriculture. On the contrary, if the present forms of administrative "management" were to be kept, they would daily cause us ever more serious economic consequences, since, in effect, they are impeding the struggle for raising labour productivity and a quicker development of productive forces in agriculture generally. We must have a clear calculation and a clear situation in economic relation, if we wish to go ahead successfully. It is therefore necessary to eliminate all the remnants of administrative management in the economy together with the remains of privileges and economically unwarranted. grants, which blur the picture and make it more difficult for us to make a really effective use of the material resources for the promotion of agriculture.

This applies, before all else, to those administrative measures which act as a handicap to normal processes in Co-operation. Here we must absolutely secure two indispensable conditions to the further normal development of agricultural Co-operation: first complete voluntariness of joining or leaving a Co-operative, and, second, more elasticity and more latitude in connection with Co-operative forms.

From the very first comrade Tito and other leading personalities of our State had warned that voluntariness on joining or leaving a Co-operative was an indispensable condition for the healthy development of agricultural Co-operation.

We did not say this only because this was a democratic right of our citizens, but primarily because voluntariness in this case is an economic category, i.e., the barometer of the economic justification of Co-operatives and an indispensable factor for their economic prosperity. A Co-operative that does not rest upon this principle cannot fight for increased labour Productivity, and thereby loses its main goal and the purpose of its existence. The Federal Executive Council has prepared a Decree in this sense which will shortly be enacted to assist a clarification of relations in our agricultural Co-operation.

III

However, in themselves the aforesaid instruments still do not secure the development of socialist elements in agriculture. They only create economic conditions for encouraging, facilitating and accelerating such a development. At the same time we need to have a clear perspective on the economic organisational forms in which the socialist social relations will be manifesting themselves and developing, as they do, for instance, through workers' councils in the industry. Of course, we must not decree such forms from above, nor try to brake the initiative from below, which will no doubt enrich our socialist practice in the sphere of agriculture with fresh forms. However, in this respect as well we must have a clear perspective, for whose realisation we shall also work, as fighters for socialism.

Indeed, on the basis of our experiences over the past few years, there is not much to be changed along the line of our struggle for a socialist transformation of agriculture. In the first post-war years we traced this line fairly correctly, and it was bent only by practice in the period of administrative management of the economy. Today we primarily have to eliminate the remains of such management, as well as the artificial forms that were perforce a result of that period, and to secure greater breadth and freedom in the forms of agricultural Co-operation and the other socialist forms of agricultural Production. In my opinion, the greatest attention should be devoted to the following questions:

1. A development of agricultural Co-operation – in its various forms, from the lowest to the more developed producing Co-operatives – remains also today our most important task, and that for economic and political reasons. For economic reasons because Co-operation conduces to more profitable forms of agricultural production, and for political ones because it directs the peasant toward socialism. Its importance – as we already have stressed on many occasions – lies primarily in that *today* it can directly embrace virtually the whole mass of the working peasants, to associate it in the simplest forms of co-operation and economically link it to socialist economy.

This circumstance is frequently underrated. Experience has shown that our political and economic workers have invariably erred when orienting themselves exclusively towards the most progressive forms in the promotion of agriculture, which forms demand an exceptionally high degree of consciousness and neglecting to struggle along a broad front. And we need precisely such a struggle and such organisational forms, so that the most progressive forms could develop on such a basis. For such an action along a broad front there is no better form than offered by

agricultural. Co-operation in all its simple and developed forms. This, at any rate, is corroborated also by the practice of other countries in Europe and elsewhere. Nearly everywhere promotion of agriculture is closely bound up with a development of agricultural Co-operation. It is therefore very much wrong that some people here, due to the weaknesses displayed by our Work Cooperatives – which arose wholesale and heedless of economic conditions through the elemental period of administrative socialism, thereby carrying from the start the germ of the present wavering — should now be inclined to underestimate Co-operation in general and overestimate the present-day significance of other progressive socialist forms, which, to be sure, must not be rejected, but which even today can embrace but a, small Part of our current agriculture.

In fine, if we wish to eliminate administrative measures and artificial constructions in the development of agriculture, if we desire to ensure a true competition of economic forces in that sphere, then agricultural Co-operation should be adopted as the basis of our efforts. It is the simplest and the most varied in the matter of forms, acceptable and necessary to every working peasant because it is capable of meeting the most varied of his interests whilst at the same time being the most convenient for a socialist State and economy since it embraces a huge majority of peasants and renders possible the linking of the whole individual peasant production to the socialist economic system. On this basis could develop more successfully, also the progressive Co-operative and other socialist forms of agricultural production and constitute a constant stimulant to advance in agriculture. Without such a, basis we would always be experimenting, and not engaged on active and systematic work for the promotion of agriculture.

2. Agricultural Co-operation must not be restricted in its forms, nor have any forms imposed upon it, save when there are evident tendencies to use the Co-operative form as a cloak for a capitalist content. However, there is not much of this danger, and it is easily spotted.

The period of administrative management in Co-operation has left some traces also in that sense. Our general agricultural Co-operatives, too, have been too fettered in their development, and particularly the various specialized Co-operative forms. Agricultural economic organisations of the general Co-operative type can have but one sole aim: to prevent multiplication of Co-operatives in a way causing a waste of energy and material resources, and thereby retarding their progress. Therefore, the associating of Co-operatives of various types and their mutual assistance in the creating of common funds devoted to production no doubt represents a progressive tendency. However, also here nothing can be achieved through administrative compulsion. Development in this direction should be the result of our economic policy, of the development of the consciousness of the working peasants, of practical experiences – which are necessary to both the peasants and the leading personalities of our economy – and of the conviction and own initiative of the working peasants.

3. The creation of Co-operative funds devoted to production and the development of model Co-operative holdings, nurseries, livestock stations and farms, workshops,

processing-industries, and so on, are the prime measure of the significance and general progress of Co-operatives. With such development in every Co-operative there will arise modern socialist agricultural holdings of one kind or another, which will not only assist peasants and instruct them but also link them economically to the Co-operative and socialist production, pressing individual work by means of individual means of production increasingly into that framework within which it will still have an economic advantage over other forms of work, Every individual peasant should be made economically interested in a development of such Co-operative funds, and the State agricultural policy must have such a perspective before its eyes. Besides, with the creation of such self-governing organs of the producers as the workers' council, for the management, of such funds and holdings socialist agriculture will obtain a firm support in the village.

4. Working Co-operatives also remain as one of the more developed socialist forms of agricultural production. However, in order that they should take their real place, today they should be freed from the wavering element and placed in identical economic conditions with all the other producers, so as to be able to demonstrate their true economic value. It is therefore primarily necessary to secure, really and consistently, complete voluntariness in connection with the joining or leaving of Co-operatives – proceeding, of course, to the realisation of this principle at once, but in organised fashion and without one-sided acts. There is no doubt that this measure will reduce the number of Work Co-operatives, and also the Co-operatives that remain will lose in membership. Whether more or less of this will occur is not essential- *The essential thing is that the Principle of voluntariness should be implemented consistently and the Work Co-operatives thereby placed upon a healthy economic basis.*

One should also not forget that the Work Co-operatives – even the most prosperous ones – are burdened with a serious weakness: they are closed economic organisations of households, and they operate as developed social holdings. With the introduction of techniques necessary to such holdings, and without which the Work Co-operative cannot exist, there always occurs a surplus of labour, a surplus however which does not depart because it is attached to the soil. On this question the Work Co-operatives will primarily have to rely on their own resourcefulness, and society will also have to help them; not with privileges, of course, but, for instance, with credits for investments, the expansion of agricultural production, construction of processing plant, and so on.

The Work Co-operatives could also develop some types of machine-tractor stations, nurseries, workshops, and so on, as service concerns open to all peasants. Of course, in this way the Work Co-operatives will increasingly develop into social socialist enterprises, which is what our enterprises that have arisen on the basis of State ownership of the means of production are. Some Work Co-operatives will probably organise themselves in this manner already now.

Be that as it may, the lifting of administrative pressure from the Work Co-operatives is the indispensable primary condition so that the Work Co-operatives could take their real place. Let there be fewer of them even, but those that remain

will be free, healthy and vital.

There are those comrades of ours who find it difficult to decide on such a measure. To them it seems that they would be destroying an achievement of the hitherto efforts on the socialist transformation of agriculture. However, that way of thinking is far removed from reality. A bad Work Co-operative, maintained through unhealthy privileges, is no achievement of the socialist transformation of agriculture but its brake.

Besides, one should not forget that the support of society to Work Co-operatives' through credits is also impossible, unless such Co-operatives are solid and healthy enterprises. It will therefore be only to the benefit of the Work Co-operatives' consolidation, of those that will remain or arise in the future, if every trace of administrative compulsion and unhealthy privileges is removed from them.

5. In devoting attention to agricultural Co-operation we all too frequently neglect other socialist forms in agricultural production that can be highly important. This wants stressing especially now, when the system of workers' councils is making it easier for us to develop a whole network of socialist agricultural enterprises, or enterprises serving agriculture. Here I primarily mean the machine-tractor and other service enterprises, as well as the other service undertakings, the various workshops and the processing and other enterprises. Further, this also includes the various holdings with an intensive cultivation, and vegetable gardening, modern livestock farms, fruit farms, agricultural holdings devoted to the cultivation of industrial plants for different factories and so on. Such enterprises can be established by People's Committees, alone or at the instance of the citizens concerned, of the interested factories. Cooperatives, commercial and catering enterprises, and so on. Such enterprises' can be founded upon land from the general social land reserve, upon Co-operative land, upon land leased from peasants, and upon purchased land. All such enterprises operate, of course, under the direct management of the working collective, with the same rights and duties as those of any social enterprise. Especially the initiative of People's Committees could be productive of valuable results in this direction. Such enterprises would be among the most important bearers of the socialist transformation of agriculture, and at the same time an exceptionally important economic factor. As such they will be elevating agriculture to a higher level, and concurrently industrial! ^ng our village and rallying a large portion of its manpower.

To all such forms, Co-operative and other, we should, then, devote an equal amount of attention. The socialist society will, of course, assist such organisations and enterprises also materially, but not with privileges and concessions, which breed tendencies of parasitism, but with healthy economic measures and credits, as well as with technical and expert aid.

Given such a policy of ours and under such conditions, there is no danger whatever that an abolition of administrative control in agriculture, to the same extent as has been effected in the rest of our economy, might cause any damage to our efforts for a socialist transformation of agriculture. On the contrary, a free movement of economic forces in agriculture will accelerate this process. Therefore, it

would be harmful to delay any further the implementation of the measures which should free our agriculture from the most detrimental remnants of administrative control and bureaucratism.

STATEMENT BY JOVAN VESELINOV

"The importance of this law cannot be estimated only according to figures concerning the land which will be included, by its acceptance in the general public land fund, but it should be assessed in the first place from the point of view of future development of social-economic relations in the village, because this draft gives to a great extent a defined economic basis of this development. The law provides that maximum of land should be now and in the future ten hectares of arable areas. This prevents to the greatest extent capitalistic development in the countryside and permanent and systematic exploitation of hired labour. The centre of our struggle for developing agricultural production is through this draft transferred to agricultural cooperativism and other forms of agricultural organisations, which in our socialist conditions can solely take over this task.

The law which deals only with the problem of the land fund, does not enter nor can enter into other problems of our policy in the countryside. But one can see out of the text of the draft law that it takes care to the greatest extent possible of the middle peasant, poor people in the villages and of the landless ones. The very passing of this law and measures which have been undertaken so far in our country will liberate still more the initiative and individual peasant households, which strive to advance their farms and increase production, A large number of the landless and poor people in the countryside will obtain land which they will run and cultivate by themselves, creating such forms of agricultural organisation which will be socialist both by their internal organisation and method of work.

In one word, the basic objective of this law is to strengthen socialist democratic forces in the village and in the sector of production and in political relations.

It is quite clear – when we say this – that we do mean to say that the carrying out of this law will solve by itself all those important political-social questions about which we have spoken nor do we wish to overestimate the material side of the problem (the quantity of land obtained) which is provided for by this law.

Democratic-socialist forces in the countryside, with the political and material aid which will be offered to them; by our working class and community as a whole will have still to fight in the forthcoming period for such a development, which has already, particularly in the lowlands and richer regions from the agricultural point of view, a relatively strong material basis. It is not the question to solve momentarily one or the other problem, or that a number of the landless or poor peasants obtain land and thus avoid exploitation on the part of rich peasants or to make of these measures a political demagogical advertisement. It is neither the question of some present-day fear of capitalistic elements in the village. It is a question of far-reaching decisions linked up with our general policy of developing productive forces in agriculture and creating new social relations in our countryside. When one looks at this draft law from this angle then its both social and political justification is obvious.

I am going to present here some concrete figures which speak about the situation in our agriculture, particularly in regard to property relations which exist there.

The structure of our agriculture

The backwardness of our agriculture in comparison to our general development is linked up for a number of reasons, in the first place by the small property structure in our agriculture, under-development of productive forces – a low technical level, low cultural and technical level of agricultural producers. All this draws in its wake a poor exploitation of economic conditions in agricultural production, which otherwise from the point of view of climatic conditions and quality of land, are extremely favourable.

The property structure of our agriculture is as aforesaid mainly small property. This is best shown by the following figures: out of the total number of agricultural households 35% are under five hectares and they hold 34% of the total areas, i.e., 38.2% of the arable areas. The average area of these households is 2.5 hectares of the total or 1.9 hectares of arable land.

Peasant

There are 21.3% or 5-10 hectares of the total number which hold 31.3% of the whole i.e. 33.1% of arable areas. Their average space of the total area is 8.9 hectares or 5 hectares of arable land. There are 5.6% peasant households which have 10-15 hectares and they hold 14.6% of the total area i.e. 13.7% of arable land. Their average area of the total land is 12.3 hectares while arable land is 7.9 hectares. Peasant households with over 15 hectares participate in the total with 4% and hold 19.4% i.e. 14.4% of arable land. There are 221,000 or 9.3% of peasant households which possess more than ten hectares of land. They hold 34% of the total area or 28.1% of arable land. Their average area of the total' land is 13.3 hectares and that of arable land 9.5 hectares.

The above figures show us clearly that the countryside observed as a whole consists on one side of small properties and that the agricultural farms are quite small while on the other side a small percentage of agricultural households – under 10% – hold more than 1/3 of the land fund (34%) and somewhat less than 1/3 of arable area (28.1%). The average area of arable land of 9.5 hectares shows also that even these 220,000 agricultural peasant households are not uniform in their structure and that here somewhat more than 50% of family households cultivate their land with their own labour and not by hired labour, and that there are 90,000 farms which in order to cultivate their land hire labour and this way preserved a permanent appearance of relations of hire against which we must struggle in our social reality.

In the most fertile regions there are most farms with more than 10 hectares of land and the largest number of landless

The structure of agricultural peasant households is not every where the same and particularly, not the participation of the total number of peasant households and in arable areas or those over ten hectares. Thus for example if we observe agricultural farms with more than ten hectares of land according to regions then we shall get the following picture: in the Vojvodina 7% of the total number of peasant households with more than ten hectares of land hold 39.9% of arable land and the average area possessed by a peasant household is 14.3 hectares of arable land;

In the Belgrade region 12.5% of such peasant households hold 35.4% of arable land; in the Osijek region 3.9% of such peasant households hold 15.3% of arable land; in the Banja. Luka region 9% of such peasant households hold 27.2% of arable land; in the Tuzla region 8.7% of such peasant households hold 28.5% of the arable areas; in the Bitolj region 5.9% of such peasant households hold 27.7% of arable land etc, I have mentioned these regions because they are characteristic. But it is just as certain that in other regions also and sectors there exist peasant households which possess more than ten hectares of arable land, which for a normal cultivation of their land, hire labour.

From all the aforesaid one sees clearly that the general characteristic is: that in our most fertile regions the largest concentration of land is in the hands of individuals and that exploitation is developed in these very regions. On the other hand in these regions the number of farm hands is the largest, who are landless and who have been so far members of peasant working cooperatives and found there full employment and who wish to continue to cultivate land, but not as hired labour of the rich peasants, but social land on the basis of self-management by workers or on a cooperative basis.

They demand in full right that production on land must be run by those who cultivate the land and that exploitation of the working peasant should cease.

The figures which we have presented justify fully these yearnings and objectives by which our socialist community is inspired by passing this law.

The social land fund will amount to more than 400,000 hectares

Taking as a foundation the present situation of productive forces in our agriculture an agrarian maximum of 10 hectares of arable land (ploughing fields, gardens, orchards, vineyards, hop and grazing fields) is proposed, as an area which an average peasant family can cultivate by its own labour.

According to statistical data, roughly 200 hectares of arable land will be included in the social land fund on the basis of this draft law. This land will be taken away with compensation from roughly 90,000 peasant households which means that this law will apply to less than 4% of the total number of peasant households in our country.

The social land fund which will result from this law as well as the existing social land fund which was not organised in agricultural production and which is estimated at more than 700,000 hectares together with the social fund of the land which was run until now by peasant working cooperatives and which has an area roughly of 100,000 hectares, should all play an important role in the development of agricultural production and socialist transformation of the village. The social land fund of more than 400,000 hectares of arable land represents a solid foundation, particularly in wheat growing regions, to begin more rapidly with the organisation of solid socialist agricultural enterprises. After the carrying out of this law, in our most developed and richest agricultural region – in the Vojvodina – there will be 25% of arable land in the general social land fund. This, besides the land of members of cooperatives, members of peasant cooperatives, will make up a strong basis of new social relations and will quicken up the development of productive

forces in this very region, which produces market surpluses, where every development of production means an increase of market surpluses.

I would like to mention, that, in the past period, although productive forces have not increased on the whole, yet a large number of new solid agricultural enterprises was formed such as "Pancevacki Rit", "Sloboda", "Zotnatica", "Macva", etc. A number of former capitalistic properties have been reconstructed and extended and transformed into progressive socialist, enterprises – "Belje", "Coka", etc. In this period the state sector of agriculture invested roughly 10 billion dinars at lower uniform prices and thus put on its feet and organised 270 state farms with more than 500 hectares each and roughly about 2,200 smaller state farms and economies. Looked at as a whole, we have devoted our main attention in this period to important state agricultural farms. They are today in regard to production per unit of area and number of livestock much above the average, some of them are even 70% above the average in regard to their productivity and on the whole state farms give a larger productivity by more than 30%.

We have cited these examples because they show clearly that one can with good organisation of socialist farms together, with the help which the community must proffer in the form of credits, expect good results both in regard to production and productivity of work. The law on the agricultural land fund concerning which our assembly will discuss today is different from the law concerning agrarian reform in 1946. It is not the case of an agrarian reform in the old sense of the word because all that which will result from the provided for measures should lead up not to dispersion of land but on the contrary to group the land and to achieve on this basis a new relationship amongst men. In this regard this law is a step forward, in regard to the law concerning agrarian reform.

I am going to say a few words concerning concrete provisions of the law.

The agrarian maximum prevents permanent and systematic exploitation of hired labour

In the first place I am going to say a few words concerning the maximum., The Executive Council discussed how large this maximum should be. As you see, the draft law provides a maximum of ten hectares of arable land. Such a maximum is proposed because it is considered that this is roughly the border between the peasant working households and those peasant households who cannot cultivate the land with their own labour. This of course does not mean that some peasant households even with such a maximum will not employ hired labour periodically during the season. but such a limit prevents to the greatest extent possible a permanent and systematic exploitation of hired labour and profit on account of others. The law takes into account patriarchal family cooperatives which exist in the Kosovo and Metohija, Sandzak, Macedonia and Bosnia which have been preserved on account of the great backwardness of production and insufficient area of land and where production of land is natural on the whole (the land is cultivated by the members of the family also in the case when the area surpasses the legal maximum). In such cases the land will not be entered into the land fund as a rule.

The law takes care about those areas where the land is of poor quality and gives

small yields. The Councils in the republics will establish those regions where the agrarian maximum might oscillate up to 15 hectares of land.

In other regions and sectors the agrarian maximum will be as a rule ten hectares.

Free trade of land should be permitted

After the carrying out of this law it will be necessary to abolish the last administrative measure in restriction of peasant property. One should permit free trade of land within the framework of the established legal maximum. This means that all peasants, as free owners of the land, will be able to dispose of it freely: sell, purchase, enter into a cooperative, make a present of it and similar. Such a maximum should offer also the maximum of security and guarantee to the working peasants that they can dispose of freely with their property, that they can develop it and advance it without any fear that it might be restricted by administrative measures or by some other new law concerning a new agrarian maximum, as some rich peasants, to whom this law will apply, are attempting to frighten our middle peasants. Our working peasants can rest assured that our public authority will not disturb them or prevent them to develop their production as much the present general economic conditions permit this. After all, present experience which we had after the abolition of administrative measures have shown that the working peasants look with confidence at the attitude of the community towards them. This is proved by cultivated fields increased livestock fund, even in the past drought year.

Allocation of land to agricultural organisations

The draft law provides for the formation of an agricultural land fund of general public property and allocation of land to agricultural organisation, but does not give land to individual landless and poor peasants. This is an extremely important moment because this establishes how obtained land will be handled; will it be exploited as it should, in the interest of the whole community and in the interest of the poor peasants who are expecting this land.

Allocation to individuals one hectare or so of land would not achieve that which is desired, development of production through formation of larger and more progressive socialist agricultural organisations. By the dispersal of land we would create only a larger number of small and for life incapable peasant households and we would thus retrogress our agricultural production. This would not on the whole be profitable also to the poor peasants, because it would hold back the whole process of development.

By allocation of this land, as well as that land which is already social property, to agricultural organisations – enterprises and agricultural cooperatives, we are not only creating profitable and progressive farms, but also a broader basis for development of agriculture as a whole and for achieving new social relations in the countryside. In order that those to whom land will be allocated might profit by it in this sense they must create such organisation of work and operation which would secure such a profit. On account of that the draft law enumerates conditions under

which land will be allocated to agricultural organisations.

The land from the general public fund, as provided for by the law, will be allocated also to peasant working cooperatives and cooperatives of other forms, where working peasants are associated. But these will be new cooperatives organised on new principles. These new principles have been established more or less by the Decree concerning property relations in peasant working cooperatives and conditions to obtain land on the part of these organisations, which this law provides for, affirms still more these new foundations of our agricultural cooperativism.

Such peasant working cooperatives must develop more and more on the same principles as our socialist enterprises. Otherwise they will be incapable to move forward, to attain that which is most vital, to increase production. The society will aid such progressive cooperatives by allocating them land from the fund as well as credits for investments, amelioration, irrigation etc.

Voluntaryism as to either joining or walking out of a co-operative

The referred to Decree stressed as its basic principle the voluntaryism as to joining or walking out of a co-operative and a democratic settlement of mutual relation between the members of co-operatives based on economic interests of the community and of its individual members. The Decree opened new paths towards a really free and democratic development of agricultural co-operative movement in accordance with objective possibilities in our country.

The production in co-operative agricultural organizations will be controlled by those who work, by those who create the material benefits. As to remuneration, it will be evaluated by the contributed labour like in other socialist enterprises. Individual members who would contribute land, inventory, livestock and other items to the co-operative, the co-operative will give a determined rent. Co-operatives organized on that basis can be strengthened and further developed since the chief obstacles which caused the deterioration of our co-operatives thus far will no longer exist. In this the significance of this Decree is actually reflected, this is why it is most closely connected with the Law which about to be issued.

Comrade Veselinov then emphasized that peasant working co-operatives do not constitute the only or the chief form of associations of individual producers.

It may happen that in some parts of the country where there is a certain amount of arable land state or co-operative productive units cannot be established, and that it cannot be, on the other hand, included in the existing ones. In that event we have envisaged that this land remains in use by its former owners who must give an obligation to work efficiently on it, pay taxes and until it be worked by them no payment for that land will be claimed. As soon as there be suitable conditions for these areas to be included into a state or co-operative agricultural organisation, one should take that opportunity without any delay. Naturally, the procedure envisaged by the Draft Law with regard to such cases must be carried out, such as registration of land, etc.

The bodies of the authority who will be in charge of the application of this Law must take into consideration to whom the land will be assigned, whether it may be

better to found an agricultural farm or to allocate, the land to agricultural co-operatives. What is most essential in this matter is to see that efficient and progressive enterprises be established which will be able to improve agricultural production and advance the productivity of labour, the enterprises which would be able to serve as an example as well as a centre for the improvement of agricultural production in their whole area thanks to their economic power and efficiency. In other words, this means that by no means one should allow the dissipations of the obtained land or the establishment of husbandries of which the operation would be unprofitable or which might even deteriorate production. This is why the Republic and district commissions must assume the responsibility for the application of this Law together with district and municipal people's committees.

The district people's committee must examine the problems affecting their districts as a whole and the municipalities in particular, and settle the questions concerning the use of general public land fund in harmony with the prospects of the development of agriculture. For under the newly created circumstances it will be possible to found firm agricultural co-operatives, extend the existing ones, and organize new agricultural farms, livestock farms; erect experimental vineyards and orchards, insemination stations, nurseries, etc. All this must be taken into consideration during the examination of the problem of land allocations.

Commissure of Land

The commissure of land will undoubtedly constitute an important problem during the application of this Law, of land which will now be included into the public land fund. The commissure of land is necessitated by efficient use of this land. In evaluations of this problem, two things must be primarily considered:

Firstly, that the already effected commissure of land in peasant working cooperative be taken as a basis for this and that things be settled on that basis wherever possible. And this will be possible in all regions where the land is flat, and especially in the Vojvodina. And what is advantageous is that this measure is to be carried out at the same time when the Decree on Property Relations and Reorganization of Peasant Working Co-operatives is put into practice, thereby making the minimal changes to take place on agricultural farms. This can be best applied in those husbandries which will- be affected by the new Law and were previously included in a peasant working co-operative.

And, secondly, that in taking decision as to the taking of individual plots of land from their owners one should bear in mind a possibility for their grouping within the framework of various products and exchange of land. The land should not be grouped into one single plot. An agricultural co-operative or an agricultural farm may have its land distributed into several plots. In that way one should ensure the grouping of fields, meadows, orchards, vineyards, etc.

Anyhow, our efforts must be aimed at the commissure of land to be reduced to the smallest possible extent and that this measure does not cause greater changes in property relations in the countryside.

Agricultural organizations established in this manner will in a majority of cases obtain a considerable number of equipment. Most of this equipment is to be found in

the Vojvodina and other flat regions where the land is fertile as well as in the regions where peasant working co-operatives either existed or still are in existence. In these regions we shall have most of the land included into the general public land fund.

Jovan Veselinov then gave some figures concerning the number of agricultural equipment possessed by co-operatives in the Vojvodina.

On some backward theories

Some sceptic people and those who produce criticisms of this Law prophesy a great fall in production and cut in market surpluses. Those same people consider that under the present circumstances in our country individual, and even kulak, land property would be most suitable for an increase in the productivity of labour and production in general. Those are technocrats having figures in their hand to frighten themselves and the others trying to prove that those measures would only make production deteriorate for a longer period of time. Comrade Kardelj in his speech at the Congress of the SAWP of Slovenia gave an answer to those "theorists".

There are several weak points in the conceptions of the technocrats. From those weak points a new line in relation to the countryside and agriculture in general proceeds. This new line, in effect, means: unhindered development of capitalist elements in the countryside and the weakening (to say in a moderate manner) of our efforts for socialist conversion of the countryside. And this is why the opposite is true since their line would in practice lead to deterioration in agriculture because the rich peasants in our country cannot be a factor of economic progress, and furthermore, there is no need to stress that our socialist state will not and cannot allow the unhindered exploitation of landless and poor peasants by rich peasants.

In contrast to such conceptions we do not believe that in these new economic enterprises and new co-operatives the production is to fall and the productivity of labour to be reduced. In saying this, we do not exclude the possibility that in various individual oases, although very seldom, time is needed until various units organize production and that during the first year of their activities they may work even less efficiently. However, in a great majority, those units will work correctly from the very outset.

On what basis we could come to such a conclusion?

We have above referred to a new organization of production based on the principle of socialist economic enterprises which exclude the possibility of a revival of the former methods of work and management in agricultural co-operatives through their organization of work and operation, we also just referred to the fact that those new agricultural organizations will mostly be established in those regions where we have obtained a considerable amount of experiences and material means for an improvement in the cultivation of land and the development of livestock breeding.

Provided that work in the fields be done on time, we can expect that the yield will be greater than the average obtained so far, by about 33%. Deep ploughing may have as a result an increase of about 30 percent. This can be confirmed by data obtained on our agricultural farms. Here I would like to stress that some of our

peasant working co-operatives achieved greater yield than individual farms despite all their inner deficiencies and weaknesses. This was primarily due to mechanization which has made it possible that ploughing be done timely, etc.

Why should we then lack confidence in the new co-operatives to be founded by the peasants and the new agricultural farms after the issuing of the new Law and the effecting of the Decree of the Federal Executive Council as to property relations in peasant working co-operatives. The new method of management which is to be introduced in these economic units must bring about an increase in the productivity of labour and an increase in market surpluses.

The pessimists are equally wrong in speaking about individual farmers. As we have already stated, the peasants work their land well and make efforts to increase production. This Law will not make the things to be changed. The Law will be welcomed by the working peasants owing to the fact that they cannot see that thereby their initiative was to be suffocated as well as the free disposition of the fruits of their work and their property.

Jovan Veselinov then referred to the social-economic significance of the new measures in the field of our policy in the countryside stating that it could not be realized if viewed in parts. He stated that it was a matter of creating such conditions under which economic relations of the working peasants with the socialist economy will be effected through various forms of co-operatives, agricultural organizations, economic enterprises, through co-operative credits, etc.

Veselinov stressed that the working peasants were concerned about an increase in production and that therefore they will establish ties with the socialist sector in economy promptly. Agricultural credits are also required, as well as the development of manufacturing industry, etc. which is also under way.

Proposing on behalf of the Federal Executive Council to the People's Assembly to adopt the Draft Law, comrade Veselinov said that it constituted a component part of our policy with regard to the countryside. All those measures have been aimed at the advancement and improvement of agricultural production to a higher level in accordance with our social and economic development, through lively and strenuous political activities the Socialist Alliance of the Working People and the Union of Communists we must prevent the capitalist and other hostile elements from distorting the meaning of our revolutionary treasures or working against the interests of the working peasants and our social community.

"In the struggle for the advancement of the countryside conscious socialist forces must play a first-class role", stated Jovan Veselinov in conclusion.

DECREE ON PROPRIETARY RELATIONS AND REORGANIZATION OF PEASANT WORKING COOPERATIVES

In accordance with article 81 of the Act of Constitution, in connection with article 20, p, 1, of the Act of effecting of the Act of constitution, the Federal Executive Council have issued the Decree on proprietary relations within peasant working co-operatives.

The decree is worded as follows -

I GENERAL REMARKS

Article 1.

The peasant working cooperative, as a production cooperative, founded on collective working of land, is freely formed by (agricultural labourers) peasants, the terms of ownership being also freely determined.

Article 2

The relations between peasant working cooperative (PWC) and its members are determined according to rules of the PWC itself, or by contract.

Article 3.

The organs and the forms of administration of the PWC, the rights and duties of its members, the organisation of work and tbs mode of operation are determined by the rules of PWC.

The PWC is making its own rules freely.

Article 4.

The manner and the extent of [illegible] in the land, the buildings are working equipment, as well as the relations ensuing from such acts are fixed by contract.

The contract about proprietary relations is agreed upon freely and is based upon general principles of proprietary law, in accordance with the rules of PWC,

If after the entry of the member these rules are altered in such way that they are no longer in accordance with the contract, the contract remains valid for further arrangement of proprietary relations between PWC and its member.

Article 5.

The peasants (agricultural labourers) are free to enter the PWC and leave it within the periods fixed by this decree.

In accordance with the legal rules and regulations of PWC, the leaving members remain liable for all obligations of the PWC contracted up. to the date of their ceasing to be members.

The relations between PWC and its leaving members are fixed by a written document, in accordance with the law, the contract and the rules of PWC,

Article 6.

A PWC ceases to exist either by combining with another existing PWC, or through reorganization into another type of PWCs or through liquidation.

Article 7.

The land., buildings, inventory, cattle and other funds acquired by PWC cannot be partially allotted to leaving members or distributed to all members in case the PWC ceased to exist.

Article 8.

The property in possession of a PWC in liquidation will be ceded to an existing PWC, by its consent, if no other stipulation in this respect be provided by the decree.

Article 9.

The principles of settling proprietary relations as provided by this decree will also be applied to other types of PWCs.

II REORGANIZATION OF PWC

Article 10.

The assembly of PWC can decide on reorganization into another type of PWCs, if majority of members make such proposal.

The assembly decides on reorganization if the majority of members submit the application to retire from PWC.

If the majority of members decide on reorganization, the rest of membership or the part of it may decide to continue with the work of PWC, settling their proprietary relations in accordance with articles 1 to 5 of this decree.

Article 11

The reorganization of PWC can be effected -

- 1/ through combining the entire PWC with some other existing PWC;
- 2/ through joining together one part of PWC with some other existing PwC, whilst the other part of membership remains still in original PWC or forms either another new PWC or a new agrarian (land-working) cooperative;
- 3/ through formation of a number (two to three) of new PWCs or new agrarian cooperatives, out of the existing PWC.

The joining together of entire PWC, or a Part of it, to an existing agrarian cooperative can be effected only with the consent of the agrarian cooperative.

Article 12.

If the entire PWC is annexed to agrarian cooperative, (AC) and no member continues tie work of the PWC, the proprietary relations of the reorganized PWC are arranged as follows -

- 1/ the land and the buildings will be returned to former members in accordance with clauses of chapter III of this decree. The same clauses (art. 25) will be applied with respect to working equipment, cattle and other operating inventory to be restored to former members. The rights of PWC issuing from the said clauses will be exercised by A.C. itself. The liabilities issuing from these clauses of the PWC

towards its members will be assumed by AC which will supply them with adequate binding documents.

2/ the entire property of PWC, acquired from and through funds and credits of PWC, goes over to AC.

3/ the liabilities of PwC come into existence by investment in property to be undertaken by peasant cooperative go over to AC.

4/ the contracts binding the AC to supply agricultural produce are no longer valid unless the AC consents to take the responsibilities ensuing from them;

5/ the unsettled monetary liabilities of PWC resulting from its normal activities shall be undertaken by AC. The members of the reorganized PWC shall vouch for these liabilities in proportion to the worth of returned property.

For liabilities ensuing from p. 3 and p. 5 of the above article the AC is responsible in proportion to property taken over.

Article 13.

If after reorganization of PWC a part of it continues with the work, the rest of the membership or a part of it going over to some existing AC or forming a new PWC or new AC. (art. 11, p. 2) or if two or three new PWCs or new ACs are formed from the existing PWC (art. 11, p. 3) the proprietary relations of the reorganized PWC shall be determined according to these principles -

1/ each cooperative enumerated above will receive a part of property in possession of reorganized PWC, proportional to the number of its members able to work. A PWC resuming the work may obtain even more property than stated above, if that be absolutely necessary for its normal work and if such step be approved by County union of AC-s and People's committee of the county.

2 / the cooperatives taking over a part of property belonging to reorganized PWC will also assume its liabilities in proportion to the worth of property undertaken. For such liabilities these cooperatives are held responsible within the bounds of the value of property undertaken.

3/ the proprietary relations amongst members of the reorganized PWC who remain members of the existing AC only or become members of the new PWC or new AC, with the reorganized PWC, are to be settled according to clauses of chapter III of the decree.

Article 14.

The people's committee of the county may cancel the decision of the assembly to reorganize by annexing the entire PWC or one of its parts to an already existing AC, if they deem that the joining together will not ensure the economic use of property ceded by PWC.

In that case the PWC is to be dissolved unless reorganized on some other lines or unless it continues to work with the minority of members.

In case of dissolution the County union of AC-s can lodge with the Commission from Art. 35 of this decree the demand for the property of PwC to be put to their disposal instead of being put to sale. The said commission (art. 36) shall decide as bidden in case the demand is agreed to by County people's committee.

The cooperative whose decision has been cancelled as mentioned above in pass. 1 of this article can lodge complaint with the State secretary for national economy of the Republic within 15 days from date of reception of information about cancelling.

Article 15.

The County union of ACs to whom cooperative property has been disposed in view of pass. 3 of preceding article may cede that property, subject to agreement with the County people's committee, to some other cooperative or give it over to be managed by some economy undertaking.

The County union of AC-s may form, subject to agreement with County people's committee, undertakings – (agrarian services) — which will aid land-workers, employing the inventory which belonged to that part of cooperative property.

The economy organization taking over cooperative property shall vouch for a Part of liabilities of PWC proportional to the worth of property taken over.

Article 16.

If County people's committee find that the PWC, which continues the work with reduced membership, will not be able to use rationally and economically the cooperative property left over, they may decide to entrust it to County union of ACs.

The County union of ACs may dispose of the property as provided in preceding article.

Against judgement brought in conformance with pass. 1 of this article the cooperative can lodge complaint with the State secretary for national economy of the Republic within 15 days from date of verdict.

The clauses of pass. 1-3 of this article shall also be applied to cooperative, the membership of which is considerably reduced through individual withdrawals.

Article 17.

In all cases of reorganization of PWC the County people's committee shall dispose of the national property which was entrusted to cooperative.

The County people's committee may dispose of the above-named property to newly formed services, which will aid land-workers thereby.

The County people's committee may consign, this national property, subject to agreement with County union of AC-s, free of charge for unlimited duration of time to the existing AC with which the reorganized PWC combined, or to PWC which resumed the work, or to new PWC or to new AC which was formed from it.

The national property mentioned in pass. 1 of the present article can be entrusted partially to one and partially to the other of the above-named cooperative. The County people's committee may likewise dispose with the property which was consigned to a PWC, the membership of which is considerably reduced through individual resignations.

Article 18.

The village commons and grasslands as national property allotted to PWC shall be returned into possession of the village with provision that the cooperative may

use it as needed.

The People's republics are authorized to regulate by special rules the relations ensuing therefrom.

Article 19.

The lands belonging to the Agrarian reform and colonization fund which were directly versed into property of PWC, are considered as national property consigned to cooperative for use.

III INDIVIDUAL WITHDRAWAL FROM PWC

Article 20

A member may retire from a PWC in the year fixed by the rules or by contract. if the date is not fixed, the member has right to retire as from the third year after his entry not counting the year of his entry into PWC,

If the member does not retire in the fixed year, his term will be prolonged for the next three years.

A member desiring to retire from PWC must make the application on the 1st of July of the year in which his term is fixed, at the latest. The written application shall be directed to PWC either by post or through the county law court.

The retirement from cooperative can only be effected on the date of October 1st.

Exceptionally, the assembly of PWC may fix other dates in 1953 subject to agreement with County people's committee, but in that case, not less than 30 days should Pass from the last day fixed for the filing of application to the date of withdrawal.

The PWC can make separate agreements with individual members about ether terms of retirement., provided such agreements be not detrimental to the interests of PWC, the decision about it resting with the managing committee of PWC,

Article 21.

In case of withdrawal, the PWC is due to return the land to the owner which has versed into cooperative. If the remaining land complex should become dispersed *by* such procedure, or if PWC had made appreciable investments or erected building on the land belonging to retiring member, then PWC is authorized to return to the owner other land of equivalent worth.

If, as in previous case, the PWC can not return the land of equivalent but of less value, than the difference ought to be settled in money.

The compensating sup must be fixed in conformance with the local market prices of land on the date of withdrawal.

The PWC is due to effect the Payment by equal annual instalments in the next 8 years, as from the date of withdrawal. The PWC and the owner are at liberty to fix conjointly a shorter or a longer balance period.

Article 22.

If a group of members have versed in cooperative their undivided land complex in compliance with article 23 of the Agrarian reform and colonization Act, each

separate household on retirement from PWC will obtain a part of the complex, equivalent to his participation in joint possession.

Article 23.

The PWC and the proprietor will agree on crop actually on owner's land. If no agreement can be reached in that respect, the crop is considered as belonging to the owner, but he is obliged to make good to PWC the worth of man-power, as well as the worth of seeds expended.

Article 24.

The buildings versed by a member to PWC shall be returned to him unless such procedure should prove detrimental to PWCs economy.

When buildings are not returned, the cooperative is due to make good their value to the owner, or to provide him with other buildings instead.

If the worth of returned buildings is less than the value of versed buildings the cooperative is due to compensate the difference.

These differences are to be compensated by cooperative in equal annual instalments within 5 years as from date of retirement.

If the worth of buildings returned to a member of cooperative is greater than the one versed by him, he is due to make the difference good, as provided in preceding passage.

The compensation for buildings and for difference in values are fixed in compliance with prevailing local market prices on the day of withdrawal.

Article 25.

The unbalanced value of operating inventory, cattle and other equipment versed by the members, the cooperative is due to compensate by equal annual instalments three years after the date of retirement; the value of the items being as booked on the day of issue of this decree.

If the value of said items is not booked, the cooperative is due to compensate the member in conformance with local market prices as in pass® 1., on the date of withdrawal.

The items an in pass. 1« may be returned to former owner if they are not necessary for further work of cooperative. In that ease the owner is due to return to cooperative the amount already paid to him, the dates of payments being mutually agreed upon, but the periods should not be longer than 3 years.

Article 26.

The owner to whom the land has been returned, is due to compensate the cooperative for the worth of accomplished investments on his land, by annual instalments, 8 years after the date of expiration of membership, the value of investments being reckoned as per that date.

The clauses of preceding passage apply equally to any improvements and additional buildings (extensions) to original buildings, to be returned to the owner.

Article 27.

The proprietors of returned land and buildings are liable for a part of cooperative debts existing on the date of their retirement, proportional to the value of returned land and buildings in relation to total value of cooperative property.

The creditor of PWC has right to establish security over land and buildings returned to owners as their part of the cooperative debt for which they are liable.

The clauses of the preceding passage do not apply to those owners of returned lands and buildings who have been receiving no rent from cooperative, or have not worked in it, having been unable to work.

Article 28.

A retiring member ought to fee duly provided by cooperative not later than 31 October with a written document stating which property is being returned to him and which are his rights and obligations towards cooperative.

If cooperative assembly in conformance with article 20, pass. 5 of this decree have fixed for 1953 the day of withdrawal, the PWC is due to provide the member with the above-mentioned written document within 30 days as from that fixed date.

The written document is sent in duplicate to People's committee of the borough, one copy authorized by the People's committee being returned to retiring member the second copy remaining with the committee.

The owner in possession of this authorized copy can now book his rights of ownership of returned land, whilst the cooperative can book the mortgage as security for debts of the owner.

All persons deeming their rights to have been violated by the procedure as stated in pass. 1 of the present article, could protect their rights by lodging a coir – plaint with regular law courts, within 30 days from reception of the document.

Article 29.

At dates fixed, for provision of said documents the cooperative is due to return to the owner all lands and buildings.

When in accordance with article 20, pass. 5 of this decree the withdrawal day has been fixed for 1953, the cooperative can determine a different date for return of lands and buildings, but the last day of the term cannot be fixed before the day of withdrawal, nor after 31 October.

IV LIQUIDATION OF A PWC

The assembly of PWC decides on liquidation when the majority of members apply for withdrawal, when neither reorganization takes place nor the cooperative continues to work with reduced number of members.

Article 31.

In case of liquidation the lands, buildings, cattle and other operating equipment versed by the members are returned to them unless they have not even partially been paid off by cooperative. To members of cooperative to whom the worth of cattle and other working equipment have partially been paid, these items, too, may be returned if the members pay back the total amount received to that effect from the

cooperative, into cooperative's reserves.

If the versed equipment has been alienated or otherwise disposed of as unusable, the cooperative member can claim to be compensated for the amount not paid off by cooperative.

The cooperative members are held for all debts contracted by PWC, which could not be balanced out of cooperative active funds, in proportion to the value of returned lands. The clauses of art. 23 and 26 of the decree are also applied at liquidation of cooperative.

The remainder of balance and operating equipment are transferred to county union of AOs which shall- dispose of it as mutually agreed with County people's committee.

All national property is given over to County people's committee. Together with lands the buildings erected by cooperative are also handed over with provision that the economy organization, to which the property has been consigned in compliance with art. 17 is due to deposit the equivalent value of these buildings into cooperative reserve funds.

Article 32.

If cooperative had made big investments on the land to be returned to the owner, the County people's committee can retain that land making it together with the buildings an item of national Property,

The County people's committee may dispose of such property, subject to agreement with County union of AOs, by handing it over to another cooperative or to an economy undertaking.

The economy organization taking over the said property is due 'to compensate the owner as provided in chapter III of the decree.

Article 33.

County union of ACs may require the commission in art. 31 of the decree, should it be of the opinion that such procedure will prove to be economically more profitable, to put to their disposal the land remaining in cooperative possession after return of property to cooperative members. This demand shall be treated in conformance with art. 14, pass. 5 of this decree.

The County union of ACs disposes of this property as provided in art. 15 of this decree.

Article 34.

In case of liquidation, the County people's committee disposes of the national Property which was consigned to cooperative in conformity with art. 17 of this decree.

With the national property handed over by County people's committee, the County union of AOs disposes of in compliance with art. 15 pass. 2 of this decree.

V THE PROCEDURE OF ARRANGING PROPRIETARY RELATIONS IN CASE OF REORGANIZATION AND LIQUIDATION OF PEASANT WORKING COOPERATIVE

Article 35.

When a PWC is being reorganized or liquidated a commission shall be formed to settle proprietary relations.

The commission consists of nine members whereof the president and one member are nominated by the County people's committee, two members are nominated by the County union of ACS and five members are elected by the cooperative assembly.

Article 36.

The commission decides on disposition of property and of debts (dispositional verdict).

Article 37.

In case of reorganization the dispositional verdict shall include following particulars -

- 1) which land, buildings, cattle and other operating equipment (art. 25, pass. 3) are restored to individual owners;
- 2) what part of investment debt (art. 12, p.3) is undertaken by the existing AC or PWC resuming the work, or new PWC or new AC, respectively;
- 3) for what monetary obligations the cooperative members are liable and for what part of these obligations each one of them is individually liable /art. 12, p. 5/;
- 4) for how much each member is creditor of the cooperative and on what grounds;
- 5) the obligations of reorganized PWC or its successor who has accepted the same, towards members of cooperative.

Article 38.

In case of liquidation dispositional verdict includes particulars from p. 1,2,4 and. 5 of the preceding article, also particulars about what cooperative debts are being undertaken by the members and what part of debts each one of them is sharing /art 31, pass. 3/

Article 39.

The dispositional verdict is accompanied by the balance sheet of cooperative on the date fixed for retirement, also inventory lists of the property in cooperative ownership and of national property ceded provisionally to cooperative.

Article 40.

The dispositional verdict is brought by the commission when it has been informed of the views and proposals of cooperative members.

In case of contradictory proposals by the cooperative members the commission will try to make such proposals concordant. 10 that end the commission may organize a legal discussion of the subject. Before and during discussion the commission will hear the opinion and proposals of cooperative managing committee.

The dispositional verdict shall be forwarded to People's committee of the borough

to which the cooperative belongs.

The People's committee of the borough ought to employ any customary and suitable means, to make the contents of the dispositional verdict known to all whom it may concern; the verdict should be disclosed in the office of People's committee and be accessible to all.

The owners of restored land are authorized within 15 days from the date of verdict being made public, to make amendments to it.

They are to be made in writing or verbally and their receipt is to be confirmed by the said commission.

Article 42.

The dispositional verdict shall also be forwarded to the County notary public or to County people's committee.

The County notary public and county people's committee, respectively, may make their suggestions to county law court in order to protect the national property /art. 44/.

Article 43.

At the expiration of date fixed in art. 41, pass. 3 of this decree, the commission shall forward the dispositional verdict accompanied by relevant remarks to county law-court, to be approved.

The commission also forwards the verdict to county law-court if no objections are made.

Article 44.

The county law-court verifies the correctness of dispositional verdict taking all remarks in consideration.

At the same time the court deliberates on disputed questions, on the solution of which the disposition of property and of debts are dependent. The proceeding of the court is urgent.

Article 45.

The court may hear the concerned people should that prove to be necessary, and hereafter draw conclusions.

If the cooperative to be reorganized or liquidated disposed of national property, then the court shall hear the County notary public, or the presiding of County people's committee or any person authorized by the latter.

The court shall hear two experts about the correctness of dispositional verdict.

The decision of the court is forwarded to people's committee of the borough to be made public according to art. 41, pass.2 this decree.

Against court decision, whereby the dispositional verdict is confirmed or altered, the concerned, person can lodge complaint with higher /departmental/ court within 15 days from the date of decision being made public, according to foregoing passage. The complaint is filed with county court.

VI PENALTIES

Article 46

From the date of this decree being made public and put in force, any member of PWC taking back his property versed in cooperative or other cooperative property, before a regular proceeding has been effected as provided by the decree, shall be sentenced to 30 days arrest or to payment of 100,000 dinars.

The same sentence will be inflicted on any member of PWC who has taken back his property versei in cooperative or other cooperative property, before this decree was put in force, if such member fails to restore the said property to cooperative when summoned to do so by the commission of art. 35, within the period fixed by the commission.

The offender will be sentenced for minor offences in accordance with pass. 1 and 2 of this article, unless his acts could be qualified as criminal acts.

VII PASSING AND FINAL CLAUSES

Article 47

When a PWC has ceased to exist through reorganization or liquidation the peasants /agricultural labourers / can form a new PWC in conformance with principles of this decree.

The county people's committee, in agreement with county union of ACs, may hand over to a new PWC, formed in conformity with the foregoing passage, one part of national property on consideration that it is economically capable of rational working.

The County union of ACs may hand over to a new PWC as provided in pass. 1 of this article, one part of the property belonging to reorganized or liquidated PWC on consideration, that the terms of preceding passage are fulfilled.

Article 48.

A member of existing PWC may retire in 1953 from the cooperative regardless of the expiration of the three-year term, as provided in art. 30 – Peasant Working Act.

A member of PWC desiring to withdraw in 1953 from cooperative is to make an application not later than 1. July 1953, or any date fixed by the assembly in conformance with art. 20, pass. 5 of this decree. For the member of PWC failing to make such application, a new three-year term will begin in compliance with art. 20 pass. 2, unless otherwise provided by PWC rules or contract.

Article 49.

The applications already received to date of the decree being put in force and not yet settled, will be considered as regular applications in accordance with art. 20.

The People's committee and courts in possession of such applications shall stop the proceedings and return them to PWC concerned.

Article 50.

Persons who have ceased to be members of PWC, before this decree was put in force, whatever their reasons may have been, are entitled to demand the regulation

of their relations with PWC in accordance with the principles of this decree, if they consider this to be more beneficial to them. The demands are to be made before 1 July 1953 or before date fixed: by the assembly in accordance with art. go, pass. 5 of this decree.

Article 51.

In case a PWC has ceased to exist before this decree came in force its liquidation, however, not being effected to date, the County people's committee shall form a commission to liquidate cooperative property in compliance with articles 34-45 of this decree.

Article 52.

The cooperative may restore in 1953 the land and buildings to any member of PWC on his application before expiration of dates fixed in art. 29. The new date shall be fixed by the assembly, on consideration of the necessity for seasonal land works.

The foregoing clause does not relieve PVC of the obligation to provide the owner, to whom the land was restored, with a written document, nor is therewith the right of the owner to lodge the complaint in accordance with-art. 28, pass. 5, in any way impaired.

Article 53.

The contracts for delivery in 1953 of agricultural produce concluded by PWC as seller, remain in force unless through resignation of members' and reduction of land complex the capacity of PWC be considerably decreased. If the possibilities of PWC are greatly reduced by reasons stated above, the obligations of PWC shall be proportionally decreased.

If the buyer has no interest for a reduced delivery he can renunciate the contact.

Article 54.

The State secretaries for National Economy of the Republics shall take care about the decree taking effect. In agreement with Republican Executive Council they will formulate necessary instructions for this decree to come in force and shall control the operation of same.

The Federal state secretary for national economy is herewith authorized to bring forth relevant rules and regulations in agreement with Federal Executive Council for the decree to take effect.

Article 55.

The decree comes in force on the day of its appearance in Official Gazette of FPR Yugoslavia.

28.III.1953
Beograd

In absence of the
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
EDVARD KARDELJ
Vice-President of Federal Executive Council.

DECREE

In accordance with art. 71, p. 2 of the Constitution Act on fundamentals of social and political order of Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and of federal organs of authority, The President of the Republic proclaims the Act on Agrarian Fund owned by the people and on distribution of land to agricultural organizations, which act has been passed by Federal council and council of peoples of the People's Assembly for Yugoslavia, on the sittings held on May 22, 1953, worded as follows:

In order to embody the constitutional principle that the land belongs to those who are working it; in order to protect the peasant from exploitation; in order to ensure the development of agriculture in conformance with the socialistic social relations, as also in order to endorse the rights of peasants to ownership of the land they are working in person, the people's Assembly of FRP Yugoslavia have approved the

ACT

On Agrarian Fund, owned by the people and distribution of land to agricultural organizations

I Fundamental Clauses

Article 1.

An agrarian fund owned by the people, comprising all agricultural lands in people's possession is hereby established.

Article 2.

The land in possession of the people cannot be alienated except in cases provided by law.

Article 3.

All privately owned agricultural lands above 10 ha go to form the agrarian fund and become the property of the people.

Article 4.

The Executive Council of the republic can decree to leave in possession of the owners a land area in excess of the maximum provided by preceding article, in following contingencies -

1) to family collectives consisting of two or three families proper, in districts where such collectives are a common feature, but not more than 15 ha;

2) to family collectives consisting of several families, in districts where a part of population lives in such collectives, even more than 15. ha;

3) to all households in districts where the land is mostly of poor quality and where it is worked extensively, but not more than 15 ha.

The republican Executive Council shall determine the districts in which the regulations in conformance with the above passage will be applied.

In districts where quasi feudal or similar relations are existing such relations may be abolished by act of people's republic and regardless of the present decree, it

may be appointed authoritatively that the land, with respect to which such relations are existing, becomes either wholly or partially the property of the people, provided that a part of it, within determined limits, be left in possession of the owner. These appointments shall also settle the mode and extent of compensation to the owner.

Article 5

The owners whose lands have become people's property in accordance with the present law or provisions of the people's republic issued in compliance with the present law. are entitled to compensation.

Article 6

No agriculturer can possess more land than provided by this law, nor else utilise more land than the fixed maximum, except in circumstances provided by this law.

The right of private owner to possession of land within prescribed limits is hereby guaranteed.

Article 7

The lands belonging to agrarian funds are handed over to agricultural organizations to utilize for unlimited length of time.

As agricultural organizations are considered all land-working cooperatives, agricultural estates or other economy organizations 'ana institutions occupied with agricultural activity.

Article 8

The land can only be handed over to such cooperative organization whose approved and registered rules with respect to land to be worked collectively include following principles -

-that the agricultural production of the organization be controlled only by such members as are participating in the production, regardless of the proprietary relations they may have with the organization in which they have versed their lands;

-that the part of the income (salary fund) from agricultural production be distributed in accordance with the salary schedule only amongst such persons that are doing the work in connection with agricultural production, as their monetary earnings proportional to their participation in work;

-that the mode of working and -work organization be regulated by rules provided for agricultural estates.

Article 9

In case of a land-working cooperative ceasing to exist, the lands belonging to it become the property of the people.

Article 10

A commission for agrarian fund will be established in each people's republic. The Executive Council of P.R. Serbia may decide that such commissions be also

formed in autonomous provinces.

The commission will take care to effect in correct manner, the clauses of this law, it will also control the work of county commissions for agrarian fund and will decide, in second degree, on matters fixed by this law.

Article 11

The republican commission for agrarian fund consists of president and of necessary number of members.

The president and the members are nominated by republican Executive Council.

The president is nominated from members of the republican Executive Council.

The rules governing the work of the commission fixed, if necessary, by republican Executive Council.

Article 12

The rights and duties of county people's committee appointed by this law are sane as those of people's committee of toe town.

II. The administration of agrarian fund owned by the people

Article 12

The county people's committee shall be the manager of agrarian fund owned by the people.

The agricultural organizations to which the land from agrarian fund has been consigned, acquire thereby the right to utilization.

The county people's committee cannot dispose with the land for which the agricultural organizations have acquired the right of utilizations, except in cases provided by this law.

Article 14

The county people's committals due to keep in evidence the land entering the agrarian fund.

The mode of evidence shall be provided by the federal state Secretary for National Economy Affairs.

Article 15

The land entering the agrarian fund shall be booked as property of the people. The right to utilization of the land by agricultural organizations shall also be booked.

The booking of land shall be effected on application of county people's committee; the right to utilization, however, on application of agricultural organization.

Article 16

An agricultural land in people's ownership, not booked for right of utilization, may be exchanged for some other land or sold by the county people's committee, provided that the sums so obtained be again employed for acquisition of equivalent land.

The procedure for exchange or alienation of land in compliance with preceding passage, as also the procedure for exchange as provided in article 33 of this law shall be appointed by Federal Executive Council.

Article 17

If there be lands in agrarian fund not consigned to agricultural organization nor handed over to former owners for utilization, nor utilized for other useful ends, and if there be no chance of forming an agricultural organization, then the county people's committee shall look after that land being worked.

Article 18

The commons, grasslands and other lands owned by the people, which are not intended for agricultural proper, are left to the village and to other similar collections for utilization,

To the village or other similar collectives the land belonging to agrarian fund may also be given over to utilization.

The people's republics shall fix adequate provisions about the right of utilization of land, in conformity with preceding passages,

III Determination of land subject to entry into agrarian fund

The county commission for agrarian fund shall determine the workable land of the owner, in excess of the maximum fixed by this law or by provisions ensuing therefrom, which is to become the property of the people.

As workable land are considered: ploughing lands, vegetable yards, fruit-tree plots, vineyards, hay growing lands and grasslands existing on workable lands either as entered in land-register or as found in reality.

Article 20

The county commission for agrarian fund consists of five members.

Each member has his substitute.

The president of the commission, the members and their substitutes are nominated by the county people's committee. The president is elected from the judges of county law-court.

Article 21

The county commission shall furnish through land-register or by other suitable means, information about the total extent of workable land for each household whose land possession exceeds the maximum fixed by this law or regulations ensuing therefrom.

The total extent of workable land consists of workable land belonging to the head of household as also the workable land belonging individually to members of his household, regardless of the name to which the land was entered into land register.

The county commission is due to hear the head, and the- members of household as owners of the land, about the extent of their workable lands and about which land they propose to set apart for agrarian fund.

A household consists of persons working collectively the same agricultural estate or sharing the income therefrom.

Federal Executive council shall decree on proprietary relations amongst members of the household, whose land is become the people's property in conformance with this law, and these relations will be settled by county law-courts in open procedure.

Article 22

On collected evidence and facts in accordance with preceding article, the county commission decides on which land will be set apart as nationalized property for agrarian fund, determining at the same time the extent of compensation for land, growth and buildings.

The land with buildings shall not be set apart for agrarian fund except when such land and buildings are necessary for agricultural utilization of same.

The county commission shall bear in mind that the land above all without any growth is intended for agrarian fund; only if it is impossible to proceed according to these instructions, then the land with growth will be set apart.

Article 23

As compensation for workable land the sum varying from 30 to 100 thousand dinars per ha is fixed. The extent of compensation shall be determined by Federal Executive Council according to the class of soil and type of culture for which it is suitable.

The extent of compensation for investments in vineyards, fruit tree plots, hop gardens and other long-term growth, as also for buildings and other items shall be determined by evaluation based on current prices.

Article 24

The compensation from preceding article will be paid out to former owners within 20 years, without interest, by annual instalments, according to schedule to be determined by Federal Executive Council.

The owners will be given bonds payable to bearer.

The right to compensation is acquired by the former owner from the moment he ceases to utilize the land.

The compensation will be paid out from federal budget.

The payment of bonds is guaranteed by FPR Yugoslavia.

Article 25

All decisions of the county commission on lands to be incorporated in agrarian fund must be accounted for.

The decision is communicated in writing to the former owner and to county people's committee.

Article 26

Both, the former proprietor and the county people's committee may lodge

complaint with the department law-court, 30 days from date of notification of the said decision, demanding the alteration of same. The department in question is the one in which the seat of the county commission is fixed.

The alteration can be demanded by complaint only when the existence itself of the conditions for setting the land apart is contested or when the extent of land to be incorporated in agrarian fund is contested or with respect to the extent of compensation.

The discontented party can also lodge complaint with republican commission for agrarian fund, but only with respect to claims for substitution of one piece of land for another, belonging to the same owner,

The written complaint ought to be lodged within 15 days from the reception of formal judgement as brought by county commission, but if the complaint is submitted with respect to setting apart of land or with respect to the extent of land to be incorporated into agrarian fund, then it ought to be filed within 15 from the date of legal verdict of department law-court.

Against decision of republican commission no administrative contention may be opened.

If the complaint is filed with republican commission about the extent of compensation then it shall be submitted 30 days from date of notification by republican commission.

Article 27

The land set apart for and entered into agrarian fund on the strength of correct legal decision is left to the former proprietor for utilisation, free of charge, so long it is not handed over to an agricultural organization.

The county people's committee may decide, subject- to agreement with republican commission for agrarian fund, to leave the land already set apart for agrarian fund, to be utilized free of charge by the former owner, instead of being handed over to an agricultural organization, in case the household of the former owner consisted of a greater number of members, or in case the land be of poor quality, yielding insufficient income. The land consigned to him on above consideration the former owner is due to utilize as a good agriculturist.

IV THE PROCEDURE OF HANDING OVER OF LAND Article 28

The procedure for handing over of land is opened by written application to that effect of an agricultural organization.

The procedure may also be started if a group of agriculturists or land labourers, intending to form an agricultural organization, apply for consignment of land.

In that case the land may not be handed over before the agricultural organization be formed.

The application is to be addressed to county people's committee.

In the application the need for consignment and the extent of land, the kind of cultures and the locality of land ought to be accounted for.

Article 29

The county people's committee decides on their meetings about the submitted applications.

Before reaching a decision, the county people's committee shall check and if necessary complement the particulars of the application.

If the claimant be an agricultural cooperative then the county people's committee shall consult the county union of agricultural cooperatives.

Article 30

The decision for consignment of land shall include the particulars about the extent of land, its locality and its plots.

Against decision of county people's committee to grant or refuse the consignment of land, the agricultural organisation may lodge complaint with the republican Executive Council, within 15 days from date of notification.

The republican commission for agrarian fund may stop the execution of a decision of county people's committee about consignment of land and submit the claim with the republican Executive Council, to alter or cancel the said decision.

Article 31

On the strength of a legally correct judgement about the consignment of land to an agricultural organization, the county law-court shall enter the grantee right to utilization into land-register.

Article 32

The land left to former proprietor may be handed over to an agricultural organization as beginning from 1 October to incl. 31 December of the same year, but not before crops are collected.

The handing over of land to an agricultural organization may also take place before 1 October, if the former owner has collected the crop.

About the delivery of land the former owner must be notified at least two months before.

The delivery of land shall take place on the land itself and a joint report shall be made about it.

Article 33

The agricultural organization is entitled to utilize the consigned land to agriculture.

It is due to utilize it rationally, as a good agriculturist would do.

The agricultural organization cannot dispose of the land but it may, subject to approval of the county people's committee, substitute it for other land, or sell it under provision to employ the funds so obtained for acquisition of other land.

The agricultural organization may not hand over the consigned land to other person or persons, but it can propose to county people's committee, to transfer the right of utilization to another agricultural organization.

V WITHDRAWAL OF LAND CONSIGNED TO AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Article 34

The land consigned to an agricultural organization may be withdrawn if it ceases to be organized as provided by this law (art.8).

The land can be taken back only as beginning from 1 October to incl. 31. December of the same year, if the cooperative is notified about it at least three months before.

Article 35

The decisions for withdrawal are come to by the county people's committee on the meetings of their councils.

Against such decisions the complaint may be filed with the republican Executive Council.

VI. PENALTIES

Article 36

Persons intending to frustrate or aggravate the entry of land into agrarian fund by alienating or dividing it, or giving false or incomplete particulars about the extent and culture of their land or of the land of the members of their households, or giving false or incomplete particulars about the membership of their households or about their occupation, shall be sentenced to a fine or to one-year imprisonment.

The same sentence shall be inflicted to persons who, with the intentions mentioned above, conclude a fictitious contract about the alienation or division of land.

The contracts as stated in previous passage are declared null and void.

VII. PASSING AND FINAL CLAUSES

Article 37

The land set apart and entered into agrarian fund in 1953 may be consigned to agricultural organizations before 1. October 1953, if the said organization and the former owner have reached an agreement about the crops.

Article 38

The members of peasant working cooperative possessing land in excess of legal maximum, shall receive on retirement from cooperative, in accordance with the Decree on proprietary relations and reorganization of peasant working cooperatives, only that part of their, land, which amounts to the legal maximum, the grounds about their living houses included, the rest being set apart for agrarian fund.

The workable land in excess of the legal maximum in possession of members who remain in peasant working cooperatives shall be incorporated in agrarian fund.

In cases stated in preceding passages on application of peasant working cooperative the county people's committee may decide to allow the cooperative the utilization of lands versed by its members as excess of legal maximum and incorporated in agrarian fund, provided such cooperative conform their rules to article 8 of this law.

Article 39

In exceptional cases the peasant working cooperatives may be granted the land, even if they do not satisfy the terms included in article 8 provided they pledge themselves to conform their rules to these principles within a period of 12 months.

Article 40

As an exception of the clauses of article 9 of this law, the lands versed by proprietors into such peasant working cooperatives as were formed before the law came in force, renouncing their rights of ownership thereof (type iv), shall not become the property of the people in case of dissolution of cooperative relations in such cooperatives, in conformance with the Decree on proprietary relations and reorganization of peasant working cooperatives.

Article 41

The clauses of the Decree on centralization of lands belonging to agricultural estates and peasant working cooperatives shall be applied, to centralization of land belonging to all agricultural organizations to which, in accordance with the clauses of this law, the lands incorporated into agrarian fund may be resigned.

On consignment of land an agricultural organization may request the centralization of its lands, regardless of art 1, of the Decree on centralization, in order to achieve the grouping of single plots into a composite whole.

The clauses of article 2 of the said decree become non-valid on the day of this law coming in force.

Article 42

With the coming in force of this law all rules contrary to it are declared non-valid.

As to the persons who do not practise land-working as occupation, possessing more lands than the legal maximum fixed by actual laws on agrarian reform and colonization the surplus of their land shall be versed into agrarian fund as the property of the people.

Article 43

This law comes in force on the date of publication in "Official Gazette of FFR Yugoslavia".

PR No. 8
27 May 1953
Beograd

The president of the Republic
Josip Broz Tito, signed

The President of Federal Council
Vladimir Simic, signed
The Vice-president of the Council of Peoples
Mitra Mitrovic, signed