Agricultural Collectivization as the Developmental Model for Communist China

by

YUNG-HWAN JO

OCCASIONAL PAPER No.1
CENTER FOR ASIAN STUDIES
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

AGRICULTURAL COLLECTIVIZATION AS THE DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL FOR COMMUNIST CHINA

Yung-hwan Jo
Assistant Professor of Political Science
Arizona State University

Occasional Paper No. 1
Center for Asian Studies
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona 85281

November 1967

FOREWORD

In response to the growing importance of Asia in world affairs, the Center for Asian Studies was established in 1966 to encourage and coordinate student, faculty, and public study of the area through the support of public lectures, research, and curricular development. As one of its services the Center will publish Occasional Papers, of which this is the first, in support of research and instruction.

Complimentary copies will be distributed to selected libraries and scholars in the appropriate field. Additional copies for instructional or other purposes may be ordered from the Center for a nominal sum to defray expenses.

This study by Professor Jo seeks to identify and analyze the motivations behind the respective stages of agricultural collectivization in Communist China on the premise that political change was and is perhaps as important as the potential economic gains to the party leadership.

Guilford A. Dudley, Director
Center for Asian Studies

Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona 85281
November 15, 1967

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
FOREWORD		III
LIST OF TABLES		VI
LIST OF ABBREVIATED WORDS		VI
CHAPTER		
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	THE NEW "DEMOCRACY" AND RURAL CHINA	4
	1. Land Reform	4
	2. Mutual-Aid Teams	6
III.	COOPERATIVIZATION	9
	1. The Elementary (Semi-Socialist) Type	9
	2. The Advanced (Socialist) Type	11
	3. Results of Cooperativization	13
IV.	COMMUNALIZATION	17
	1. Consideration Behind the Advent of the Commune	17
	2. Communal Ownership: Collective to State	19
	3. The Communalization of the Productive Process and its Effect on the Family Institution	21
	4. The Organizational Structure and Function	24
	5. The System of Distribution	28
	6. The Probable Causes of Early "Successes"	32
V.	PROCESSES OF DE-COMMUNALIZATION	34
	1. The Commune's Failure	34
	2. The Retreat: Retrenchment in Structure	35
VI.	CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS	38
	1. Toward An Organizational Theory?	38
	2. Prospects for the "Cultural Revolution"	39
	3. Consequences of Misconceptions	40
	4. Prospects as a Model for Developing Nations	41

LIST OF TABLES

PAGE

Table I: Class Composition and Land Reform..... 5

Table II: 16 Alleged Guarantees Freely Given to All Members of the Commune..... 30

Table III: Labor Inputs in Man-Days per Hectare (Hungkuang Commune)..... 33

Table IV: Stages of Agricultural Collectivization..... 37

LIST OF ABBREVIATED WORDS

APC: Agricultural Producer's Cooperative

CCP: Chinese Communist Party

GLF: Great Leap Forward

MAT: Mutual-Aid Team

The following appear in the footnotes:

FLP: Foreign Language Press, Peking.

GPO: U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

JMJP: Jen-min jih-pao (The People's Daily), Peking. (Also can be romanized as Ren-min rih-pao).

JPRS: U. S. Joint Publications Research Service, Washington.

SCMP: Survey of China Mainland Press, Hong Kong.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Irrespective of the nature of their relations with each other, friendly or hostile, no nation today is immune to the influence of other nations in the world system. This interaction is becoming increasingly apparent as regards not only the relationships of Communist China and the United States but indeed those of Communist China and the rest of the world.

Needless to say, the study of the Chinese political system is becoming increasingly important. There are, of course, different approaches to the study of Communist China. However, inasmuch as the major changes in the Chinese political scene have been primarily the result of domestic developments, the Chinese collectivization of agriculture is taken in this study as the epitome of China's political development and can be viewed as basic to an understanding of the Communist political system in China.

About 85% of some 780 million Chinese mainlanders [1] still reside in rural areas. In spite of industrialization, the peasantry still continues to provide the party-state with its major source of income as well as its manpower for the armies and for corvée labor. Yet, few Western scholars have shown an interest in the study of agricultural development in Communist China.

China has always been an "underdeveloped," agrarian country. In spite of their social status, which was second only to the official literati, the Chinese peasants have been overburdened and most of them were tenants and/or in debt in pre-1949 China. In addition, poor technology and resources,

---

[1] This is an estimate as of August 1967. See United Nations, The Future Growth of World Population (New York: UN Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs, 1958) for the figure for the Asian "Big Three," the US, and the USSR, 1955-70, and compare with projections of Mainland China, 1966-85, in John S. Aird, "Population Growth and Distribution in Mainland China," An Economic Profile of Mainland China prepared for the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the US (Washington: GPO, 1967), II, 363.

plus the Confucian social system and its concomitant suspicion of new ideas and methods, seem to have hindered the agricultural development of China. Yet similar handicaps were overcome in Meiji Japan. Why? According to Professor Kuo-chun Chao, the most decisive factor lies in China's lack, and Japan's possession, of organizational leadership. Have the Chinese Communists, through their organizational skills, succeeded in breaking the vicious circles which have retarded agricultural modernization? Most of the history of the Chinese Communist movement can not be understood other than in the context of their belief in the power of organization not only in attaining, but also in sustaining, the Communist revolution. This study, therefore, emphasizes the organizational experience of the Communist collectivization of agriculture.[2]

Each new stage, which was imposed to effect economic development, is assumed to help gauge the regime's ability not only to utilize the human and material resources but also to engineer "mass mobilization and response to elite manipulation." These objectives are viewed here as directly relevant to the problems of political development in Communist China. A study of this nature may also prove a fruitful focus of research to determine whether political force in Communist China is an independent variable or a resultant of underlying socio-economic forces.[3]

This study may also serve to answer a question, To what extent, if any, have the Party theorists' own experiences in China changed their interpretation of the causal relationships in political and economic developments, even though their views on agricultural collectivization were influenced by Marx as well as the Russian version of Communism? Perhaps, one of the consistent elements in the thinking of the Chinese Communists is its treatment of collectivism as a supreme virtue, although this collectivistic (organismic) theory of the state in which the individual (component) is subordinated to the subgroup or the collective whole is not a

---

[2]Kuo-chun Chao, Agrarian Policy of the CCP, 1921-1959 (New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1960), p. 6.

[3]For a definition of political development that is more suitable to this study, see K. Von Vory, "Toward a Concept of Political Development"; The Annals, March 1965, pp. 14-19; and A.F.K. Organski, The Stages of Political Development (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 7; and for a suggestion regarding a study of purposive political behavior as an independent variable see G. D. Paige, "Political Science and the Macro-Organizational Analysis of Contemporary China," an Unpublished Material at Princeton, 1965, pp. 12-14.

monopoly of the Chinese system. Traditional societies as well as the Axis Powers have also practiced it.

An evaluation is included at the end of each chapter (stage) and often in each section of the chapter. Although this is a study of only China, occasional comparisons with other nations, especially the USSR, were made for illustrative purposes.

Also, an effort has been made, wherever possible, to use the Chinese Communists' own terminology in order not to lose the original meaning in translation, even if it may not have the same meaning for us. For instance, the Communist term, cooperative, should not be taken in the same sense that it is used in this country.

Turning to the limitations of this monograph, a few points must be made here. In spite of its totalitarian integration, Communist China has remained a land with regional diversities. Hence the pattern of developments differs from region to region. This applies also to the people's responses as well as to the institutions created and to the pace of collectivization. The examples cited in this study are, by and large, representative of the Chinese Communist system. Furthermore, the flow of materials especially on statistical information--rare to begin with irrespective of its reliability--has sharply diminished since 1959. Hence most studies of Communist China covering post-1960 development suffer from this handicap; mine is no exception. These are some of the factors which delay the development of research on Chinese Communist politics.

While scholarly objectivity is more desirable than feasible, an effort has been made to evaluate critically the official explanations of the Communist regime without seizing upon every evil as the sole product of the Chinese Communist system.

Finally, I am indebted for research grants from Arizona State University and the University of Denver Graduate School of International Studies and Social Science Foundation, a portion of which was used this summer in carrying out the research for this project at the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. I would like to express my gratitude to the following: the Orientalia staff of the Library of Congress and the ASU library staff (especially Tieh-cheng Chin) for the assistance they have rendered in gathering data; Robert Drake Moody for proofreading and for editing the draft. Also, a significant contribution was made by the ASU Center for Asian Studies (headed by Professor Guilford A. Dudley whom I would like to thank for his personal support) for financing this publication. Needless to mention, none of these individuals share any responsibility for the contents, and I alone remain the target of criticism.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW "DEMOCRACY" AND RURAL CHINA

1. Land Reform (1950-53)

In the arable part of rural China, where some 85% of China's population lives, "inequitable" land distribution was often a source of friction and disturbances. During the civil war the Chinese Communists seized every opportunity to exploit the grievances of the peasants. They stirred the peasants to resist rent and tax collections, and in "liberated" areas redistributed the confiscated lands. The agrarian policy of the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter CCP) paid rich dividends: many Chinese peasants supported, and identified with, the CCP; and many Westerners including Stalin to some degree naively saw in Mao Tse-tung an agrarian reformer rather than a professional Communist revolutionary.

The first step the Communist regime took and thereby effected an unprecendented change throughout China was the land reform based on the Agrarian Reform Law and the Common Programme.[4] The Land Reform had political and social purpose of destroying the landlord class. The reform was generally carried out in four stages: (1) reduction of rents and prohibition of advance payment of rents: (2) determination of the class status of all villagers thus "helping poor peasants to struggle" against the landlords: (3) confiscation of land and other assets from the landlords: and (4) redistribution with new landholding certificates.[5] The Peasants Associations at village or rural district levels adminis tered the redistribution.

As a result, landless tenants and hired laborers were transformed into landowners. But, not unlike the land policies of social democratic regimes, the redistributed land was individually owned. The old rural gentry as the elite of rural China was being replaced by the CCP cadres and the arms of the state apparatus. The amount of land and other productive assets transferred through land reform was too small as to be of an economic size,

---

[4]For full texts see The Agrarian Reform Law of the People's Republic of China (Peking: FLP, 1950); and "The Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference," in Jen-min shou-tse: 1951 or (for English translation) in China Digest, Supplement to Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 3-9.

[5]SeeChao, op. cit., pp. 117-24.

each peasant receiving on the average about one-third of an acre.[6] Nevertheless, the reform came as a welcome change to the "new landowners." By 1953 the land redistribution was completed throughout China except in areas of national minorities.

Class composition in rural China before and after the land reform (1954) was as follows:

Table 1. Class Composition before and after Land Reform

	Before	After
1. Poor peasants and farm laborers	70%	29%
2. Middle peasants	20%	62.5%
3. Rich peasants	5-6%	2.1%
4. Landlords	4-5%	2.5%

Source: Chu-yuan Cheng, Communist China's Economy 1949-62 (N. Y.: Seton Hall University Press, 1963), p. 28; and Chao, op. cit., p. 102.

1. Owned little or no land and obliged to work for others.
2. Owned a portion of land but seldom rented land or hired laborers.
3. Owned land but usually depended on hired laborers though taking a part in labor himself.
4. Owned land but did not engage in labor and lived from rent and other exactions.

On the basis of this Table, a major portion of the poor peasants and farm laborers was elevated to become "middle" peasants. Yet even by official admission many of them were unable to operate their farms successfully because they had not improved their means of production. Also, the new "rich" peasant class comprised a large number of the rural party cadres.[7]

Unlike the drastic Soviet land policies of 1918 and 1922, China's land reform avoided harsh measures such as denying any land to landlords. Rich

---

[6]Marion R. Larson, "China's Agriculture under Communism," An Economic Profile of Mainland China, I, 214.

[7]See JMJP, June 30, 1950, and January 8, 1952.

2. Mutual-Aid Teams (1950-55)

The CCP's close links with a peasantry so devoted to landownership could lead to a greater respect for the rights of private property. However, as revealed hereafter, the CCP has taken cautious steps to lead the individual ownership system onto the road of cooperativization, in an attempt to replace the private economy with a collective one. For instance, some of the functions of the Peasant Associations have been to carry out socialist reforms, to organize the peasants for production, and to raise the farmers' "political level." These features were incorporated into the functions of the subsequently organized Mutual-Aid Teams, the Cooperatives, and the Communes--all of which aimed, step by step, to obliterate the private sector, to collectivize and socialize the rural areas, and thereby to transform the whole of Chinese society.

Once the land had been redistributed and the farmers given title to their own plots, the Peasant Associations organized the Peasants' Mutual-Aid Teams (hereafter MAT) through which the regime took the first offensive to nullify the effects of land reforms. Also, the planners of agrarian reform probably anticipated that the size of the redistributed plots would be uneconomically small. As expected, the Chinese peasants could not hope to make an independent living upon such small landholdings with limited means of production. Also the new peasant landowners had reportedly shown capitalistic tendencies. Hence, the regime justifiably moved ahead with its program of MATs.

The MAT can be viewed as a preliminary step in the socialization process and the first stage of reorganization in rural China. Consisting of five to seventeen households, it utilized a simple division of labor. Individual members were selected to specialize in the areas with which they were best acquainted.[8] There were two types of MATs. First and simplest were the seasonal ones known as temporary MATs. Organized to meet seasonal and special needs, they made up for the shortage in draft animals, implements, and manpower. In fact, this type of MAT was no more than mere regularization of traditionally existing local mutual help practice, and had been practiced in the "old liberated areas" before 1949.

Second were the year-round MATs which were bigger and more "advanced" than the seasonal ones. This type of MAT was usually established after successful experiments with temporary MATs and was "better" developed in northern China and Manchuria which the Communists had controlled for a longer period of time. Members were compensated in

---

[8] Shansi jih-pao, October 4, 1959, quoted in SCMP, 2133, p. 4.

proportion to work and materials contributed; they were allowed to withdraw with their properties. Some MATs combined efforts in farm production and subsidiary occupations, adopting simple common production.[9]

Although the entire community shared in planting and harvesting, the members did not pool their land or, as a rule, own much in common. For some time peasant private property was affirmed as if it were the leitmotif of MATs. Po I-po stated in the Jen-min jih-pao, when he was Minister of Finance:

> . . . the peasant mutual-aid team is a kind of organization of voluntary exchange at parity-prices built on the foundation of private property, generally designed to protect and not to weaken or negate private property.[10]

If the mutual-aid practices protected private property, how could their development promote the growth of cooperative farms?

The writers for China Reconstructs rationalized that the MATs yielded poorly because the members of every household had previously been tied up with each item of work on their own land, and that experiences in the team convinced its members of the advantages of "working collectively" as well as of increasing common ownership, both of which were "the incipient signs of socialism."[11]

Yet evidence indicates that systematic introduction of a cooperative system was dictated from the start. Permanent MATs were encouraged to establish common property through land reclamation or pooling of tools and animals and to unify working of the land by the most efficient use of labor. All of their steps were close to the cooperative level of development. In other words, they were the first steps in virtually taking land back from the new landowners without disrupting economic rehabilitation.

Despite some advantages of the mutual-aid teams over the individual farms, however, the MATs were apparently unable to alter the continuing depreciation of labor in relation to capital. Where human beings were

---

[9]Chu Chi-ping, "Mutual Aid," China in Transition (Peking: China Reconstructs, 1957), pp. 86, 102.

[10]JMJP, June 29, 1951.

[11]Chu, loc. cit., pp. 86-102.

plentiful but draft-animals or other capital were scarce, human labor was subordinated to capital, as was the case of a mutual-aid team in North Anhwei.[12] This could lead to an interesting law of social change; that is, the productive forces of the society could change human relations in various ways.

By 1954 there were almost 10 million MATs covering over 58% of the peasant households.

---

[12] Gluckstein, Mao's China (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1957), p. 150.

CHAPTER III

COOPERATIVIZATION: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER'S COOPERATIVES

The year 1953 marked the end of New Democracy with the start of the First Five-Year Plan. It was at this stage that the "national bourgeoisie" were totally absorbed into the semi-socialist polity.

Since 1953, and especially after 1954, attention was paid to the formation of Agricultural Producer's Cooperatives (hereafter APC). An APC was formed through either amalgamation of several existing MATs or consolidation of 20 to 40 individual farms into a single unit, thus securing the advantages of large farms. Cooperativization proceeded through two stages: the elementary (lower) and the advanced (higher).

1. The Elementary (Semi-Socialist) Type (1953-56)

The first stage cooperative, also known as a land cooperative, evolved from the experience of the "advanced" year-round MAT, and was still built on the foundation of private ownership of property by peasants. Such production materials as farm tools and draft animals as well as land remained their private property even though they were pooled as investment and managed as a unit. Technically, the peasants could withdraw their investment from the cooperative. Thus the transfer of land, the major production material, from "private cultivation to common utilization"[13] and increase in size were the major changes in the movement from the MAT to the elementary APC.

It would be well to note, however, that most of main characteristics of the year-round Mutual-Aid Teams were integrated into the multiple functions of the cooperatives. For instance, some MATs had a certain amount of planning in production. Article 42 of Model Regulations for An Agricultural Producer's Cooperative provided that annual production plans should be set up and gradually include sowing plans, output targets, etc. When in some advanced MATs agriculture was combined with rural subsidiary occupations, the cooperative gradually developed a more diversified economy "which combines agriculture with handicrafts, transport, livestock breeding, fishing, forestry and other productive activities. . . ."[14]

When the cooperative was widely spread in the countryside, the emphasis

---

[13] JMJP, July 23, 1955. Cf. Decisions on Mutual Aid and Cooperation in Agricultual Production With Model Regulations (Peking, FLP, 1956).

[14] Model Regulations for an Agricultural Producer's Cooperative (Peking: FLP, 1956).

in the definition of an APC's role was shifted from the private property element to the "collectivist" element. The Model Regulation defined its essence as follows:

> An Agricultural Producer's Cooperative is a "collective economic organization. . . .
> It makes unified use of members' land, draft animals and farm tools and step by step turns these means of production into communal property. It organizes its members to perform common labor and divides the gains of members' common labor in a unified manner (Art. 1).[15]

As regards the rent paid to a peasant for his land, Article 18 showed its intricate relation to "the income from labour." At its preliminary stage, the APC must pay proper dividends to the "nominal" owners of land according to the amount and quality of their land turned over to the APC. The sum was paid, however, by the income derived from the labor, not from the land ownership, of its members. In order to encourage all members of the APCs to take an active part in the labor, the dividend for land was kept lower than the payment for agricultural labor. But it was not fixed too low lest the APCs should fail to absorb peasants with more or better land into the APC.[16]

Therefore, once peasants were absorbed into the APCs under the promise of "proper" dividends for land, and the income from labor increased along with higher production, then, the fixed rental for land probably became relatively insignificant. Further reduction of the land-rent was indicated in Article 19: "If members acquire a dividend for their land, they should pay agricultural tax. If agricultural taxes are paid by the cooperative, then the dividend for members' land should be correspondingly reduced." This can be construed as a step not only to discourage peasants from asking for rent, but also to virtually impose a joint ownership of land.

Toward the end of 1953 there were only 14,000 elementary APCs but this figure was increased to 633,000 by the end of 1955, nearly 80% of which were organized during the second half of that year.[17]

---

[15] Ibid.

[16] See Article 18 ibid.

[17] Shih Shing-t'ang, et al (ed.), Chungkuo nungyeh hotsohua "yungtung shihliao (Peking: Shanlien shutien, 1959), II, 14; and State Statistical Bureau, Ten Great Years (Peking: FLP, 1960), p. 28.

2. The Advanced (Socialist) Type (1956-58)

Since 1955, and especially in 1956, the elementary APC's were consolidated into advanced APCs. The advanced type was generally known as "a collective farm;" it was a Chinese version of the Soviet kolkhoz. It meant elimination of private property and the creation of a unified village economy; the private ownership of resources was assumed to contradict unified management. In this full-fledged collective, all the land pooled by members and the other means of production needed by the APCs became "common" property; remuneration was no longer based on the contributed property but was paid only according to the "work points" earned by the peasants. The "work points", a unit of payment for labor, was a system which applied the principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Despite the distinct advantages of being larger than the individual farms and of having much wider functions than Mutual-Aid Teams, the elementary APCs were said to be still too small in scale, too meager in manpower and material and financial resources, too low in their degree of collectivization. The Kuo-chuang APC, for instance, had an ample supply of iron ore but was short of coal, while the Tien-chuang APC had a reverse situation.[18] Hence the amalgamation of the two would benefit both APCs and would be easier for unified management. Unless the elementary types evolved into the advanced types, the cooperative would be presumably unable to achieve further progress in developing production, building irrigation facilities, and undertaking capital construction.

To meet this new demand, the Communist cadres claimed, the peasants showed enthusiasm for joining the bigger and advanced APCs. But they did so--voluntarily or otherwise--as "directed" in Mao Tse-tung's Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside. Mao's basic assumptions were: (1) that the lower-stage APC, though aimed at gaining experience, remained still too small to rationalize production due to the inadequacy of land, capital, and machinery; and (2) hence the larger the size of amalgamated APC, the easier it would be to increase not only the level of production but also the degree of collectivization.[19]

Turning to other reasons for "leaping" into the higher-stage APC ("collectivization"), much can be said, including speculation.

According to the Russian doctrine the purpose of collectivization was

---

[18] Hungch'i, September 16, 1958.

[19] Published in 1957 by Peking's FLP.

to facilitate mechanization. Indeed, to be politically feasible, collectivization of the means of production must follow the technical reform of agriculture. As demonstrated in the Soviet Union, a large-scale mechanized collective did "maximize" production. Mechanization in China, however, must wait until China's industry is at least capable of supplying the necessary machines. But the Chinese could not await such development and realized that the Soviet model was the reverse of the "truth" in their condition. The Chinese Communists, of necessity, decided to collectivize not as a means to mechanization but as a substitute for it. The Chinese party-state, therefore, organized the abundant manpower to raise productivity without, and ahead of, modern machines. In this sense, the collectivization via organization can be viewed as the Chinese Communists' approach to economic modernization ahead of industrialization.[20]

The shift from the lower APCs to the higher ones was, in many cases, no more than a mere paper transaction resulting from the change of land titles. However, the mere knowledge of the legal change should not lead to acceptance of the official interpretation that the leap into the socialistic APC, was a natural outgrowth of the semi-socialistic APCs. In fact, as the Communists admitted, there was growing polarization of rich and poor peasants and they felt that the peasants, if left alone, would give up socialism. Hence the socialist "collective" was in this sense imposed because there was a fear of the development of "capitalism" in the semi-socialistic APCs.[21]

The advanced cooperative has made extensive use of forced labor and collectivization of living. As the scope of the cooperative expanded in its activities, so did the use of corvée labor; and the methods of organizing the peasants into mass labor armies has been gradually perfected. Throughout 1957 and into 1958, masses of peasants were mobilized to work on non-farm projects when farm work slackened. When the doctrine of forced labor was put to a test in Honan, it proved to be successful and contributed to "Peking's enthusiasm for making a great leap forward in agricultural and industrial production."[22]

Peasant-members of the advanced APC became part-time industrial workers. According to data released by the State Bureau of Statistics,

---

[20] K. R. Walker, "Collectivization in Retrospect," China Quarterly, April-June 1966, p. 3. Cf. J. Robinson, "The Organization of Agriculture," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, June 1966, p. 28.

[21] Shih, op. cit., II, 14-15.

[22] William R. McIntyre, "Red China's Communes," Editorial Research Reports, I (1959), 213-214.

> Agricultural Producer's Cooperatives have started construction work this year (1958) on more than 800,000 small and medium sized factories and mines. . . . The New System was to produce "all-rounders" who would be peasants in the fields and workmen in factories; while administrative personnel . . . are to be both functionaries and workmen.[23]

They were fed in mess halls and their children were brought to nurseries. Some of the large APCs merged the farming, handicrafts, supply and marketing, and credit activities into one, and even set up their own schools.[24] All of these functions together with the militarization of labor, collectivization of living and industrialization of rural areas are an integral part of the communal system. This development was, in essence, already the start of the commune movement.

3. Results of Cooperativization

In early 1955 only 14.2% of the Chinese rural population had joined elementary APCs; by May 1956 this percentage suddenly increased to 91.2%, with 61.9% of the peasants being members of advanced APCs (collectives). Toward the end of 1956 90% of the farm population belonged to the collectives, going up to 97% by the end of March 1957.[25] These figures raise a question as to why the number of the cooperatives was so rapidly increased, while many of the APC's were "collectivized," from autumn 1955 to spring 1956. In his important speech on the "Question of Agricultural Cooperativization" of July 31, 1955, Mao Tse-tung called for nationwide intensification of cooperativization. This was Mao's response to the massive disintegration of the elementary APCs during the first half of 1955, which in turn was the Chinese peasants' response to paving the way for the advanced APCs. (Not unlike the massive resistance to the transformation of MATs to elementary APCs in 1953). Terminating the recurrent intra-party dispute over the nature

---

[23] Hungch'i, July 1, 1958.

[24] People's Communes in China (Peking: FLP, 1958), p. 33.

[25] Tung-chi kung-tso, No. 11 (1957), p. 13. Cf. J. Gray, "Agrarian Policies," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, June 1966, p. 36; and State Statistical Bureau, Statistical Materials on Agricultural Cooperativization and the Distribution of the Product in Cooperatives during 1955 (Peking: Statistical Publishing Co., 1957).

and timing of agricultural socialization, Mao urged the leaders to move ahead of the masses "in their attitude towards cooperativization," and to hasten the tempo of cooperativization in order to prevent de-Socialization. Mao might have taken comfort in noting that the 1955 resistance was far less violent than the Russians' at the time of original collectivization.[26]

According to Shansi jih-pao, the cooperatives in Wushiang and in Pingshun have, after two years of operation, produced more than previous MATs by about 27.6 per cent. The per unit yield of the APC was higher by 21 per cent than that of MAT and 38 per cent higher than that of individual peasants.[27] This account seems to be exaggerated unless "individual peasants" represent only a small number of small owner farms of very uneconomic size. Other sources from the mainland indicate that the progress in increasing yields was not impressive if comparison is made with well-to-do middle peasants.

Liao Lu-yen, Communist Minister of Agriculture, stated in February 1958 in Hsueh-shi that about 30 per cent of the cooperatives then in China had caught up with local well-to-do middle peasants in production level.[28] Another Communist author stated:

> From surveys of agricultural cooperatives of different types in various places, we find that the grain output per unit area of the well-to-do middle peasants is generally about 20 per cent . . . higher than those of the members of newly-established cooperatives.[29]

This must have been a perplexing outcome to the authors of APCs, particularly when we assume that the cooperatives were given aid in credit and other facilities which the individual peasant did not receive.

Despite the distinct advantage of being larger than the individual farm, the progress made by the cooperative in increasing yields was again not impressive if comparison of 1955 is made with the prewar period. Indeed,

---

[26] Walker, op. cit., pp. 1 and 30-42. Also, F. Schurmann and O. Schall, The China Reader 3: Communist China (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 178.

[27] Shansi jih-pao, October 4, 1959, quoted in SCMP, 2133.

[28] Chen-chih Hsueh-hsi, No. 11, November 3, 1958.

[29] Ibid.

the average yields of Nationalist China in kilograms per hectare of paddy, wheat, corn, kaoliang, millet, and tubers during 1931-37 were higher than the comparable figures of Communist China in 1955 with exception of paddy. [30]

Apparently, cooperativization failed to produce spectacular increases in the national average yields of the major food crops. However, it cannot be denied that the cooperative movement of 1956-57 produced some measurable increase in the average crop production. The foodgrains production in 1952 of 154.4 million tons increased to 182.5 million tons in 1956 and 185 million tons in 1957. This was a remarkable increase even when expansion of the total acreage is taken into account. [31]

Aside from productivity, cooperativization has experienced considerable resistance throughout the movement. The farmers' attitude toward it was clearly indicated by their large-scale slaughter of livestock. Despite Peking's assurance that the peasant's livestock would not be taken away from him, he still wanted to dispose of them before joining the advanced APC. Jen-min jih-pao in its editorials cried "Take Action Immediately to Protect Draft Animals."[32] Peasant resistance was indicated in the Honan jih-pao as follows: "those accustomed to capitalist ways of thinking agitated for withdrawal from their collectives, saying big co-op will turn into small co-op, then into mutual-aid teams, and then back to individual farms."[33] Consequently, as admitted in Hungch'i, all big co-ops in Honan province were broken down into small co-ops by mid-1958. [34]

The emergence of decollectivization in the face of great intensification

---

[30] T. H. Shen, China's Agricultural Resources, 1951; K'o-hsueh t'ung-pao, no. 5, 1954; Jen-min shou-tse, 1957, pp. 470-471.

[31] Deduced from my unpublished paper, "Stages of Agricultural Collectivization with Emphasis on the Commune System: An Econo-Political Study of Chinese Collectivism in Terms of Institutional Changes," January 20, 1960, Table II and III, p. 13. Also see Table on Crop Production, 1952, 1956, 1957 in State Statistical Bureau, Communique on the Results of Implementing the Plan for the Development of National Economy in 1955 (Peking: Statistical Publications Press, 1956) and New China News Agency, October 23, 1957.

[32] JMJP, December 18, 1955, quoted in SCMP, 1200.

[33] Honan jih-pao, July 4, 1958, quoted in G. H. Hudson, The China's Commune (London: The Soviet Survey, 1959).

[34] Hungch'i, September 16, 1958.

of physical effort may have been a source of disappointment to the party cadres, both from the point of view of increasing production and from that of socializing agriculture. Regardless of this development, however, Maoists assumed socialization was an invariable policy; thus some "new" approach was inevitable. Would this new approach then, retreat from the ladder of "upward" collectivization? Subsequent discussions of the commune demonstrate that the new institution would once and for all remove any possibility of "decollectivization."

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNALIZATION: THE HIGHEST FORM OF COLLECTIVIZATION AND THE "LAST" STAGE OF SOCIALIZATION

The People's Commune was introduced in 1958 with the ostensible purposes of completing the building of socialism and of carrying out the gradual transition to Communism.

The People's Commune can be distinguished from a cooperative by its elimination of all vestiges of private ownership of land and other properties and also by its amalgamation of the organ of governmental authority with the organization in charge of production. It is far more than an organizer of production, for it is at once a basic social unit and a basic organ of state power. It undertakes more fields of operation and extends its activities into a wider sphere than a cooperative. Politically, it involved a significant enlargement of the basic units of local administration. It has as its task the over-all development of agriculture, industry, trade, health, culture, social and political work, and military training under a single management. The collectivization of one's living appears to be carried out to the fullest possible extent, each member being simultaneously peasant, worker, soldier, student and expert. Thus the ideological, political, social, and, above all, economic impact of the commune as an institution cannot be ignored in any complete evaluation of the system.

1. Considerations Behind the Advent of the Commune

The new phase of Chinese communism may be reviewed in relation to the situation which was confronted prior to the onset of communalization. Politically, the period of the "Hundred Flowers" appears to have been extremely disturbing. The attempt to combine an ideological dictatorship with a measure of intellectual liberty was still premature. This bewildering situation was now attributed to a basic ideological defect tending toward the heresy of revisionism. Thus the remedy was to socially engineer the minds of the people to conform to the Party's "spiritual mobilization." Communalization was then to facilitate reshaping the Chinese society into a uniform mold by means of better indoctrination and dissolution of the family-clan system.

The economic front also was confronted with difficulties. Having virtually expropriated the remaining private sectors of industry and fully collectivized agriculture, the regime was now overburdened with the administration of all branches of the national economy.[35] Hence the economy

---

[35] G. F. Hudson, "A New Phase in Chinese Communism," The New Leader, December 15, 1958, p. 12.

needed to be decentralized. Excessive concentration of industry was to be avoided and fuller use of dispersed workshop production including handicrafts was to be made because the under-capitalized, small-scale industries provided most of the industrial goods required by the countryside. A decentralized economic structure was, however, to be combined with central political control as required for a great production drive. In fact, local political control was greatly tightened to maximize local economic development.

Industrial development in China largely depends upon agriculture. Industry, which accounts for only a quarter of the national income, and which is mainly light industry, draws 80% of its raw materials from agriculture.[36] The tasks of establishing a base of heavy industry increased the demand for capital investment. The more the demand, the more contributions had to be made by the peasant as he is the chief supplier of state revenue. The logic of events, therefore, forced the Communist leadership to deploy their one abundant resource, manpower, to the entire productive process. The agricultural product, which lagged behind the over-all industrial output prior to the commune movement, was to be raised with minimal capital equipment or investment. This meant the universalization of forced labor and "better" use of human resources including the release of women for active labor.

Consequently, when the communes are made self-sufficient in industrial and consumer goods, the regime would be able to withdraw surplus funds and savings for state purposes. Only when the total national output is increased without any prior net increase in investment, might the level of both investment and consumption be raised.

Furthermore, Mao and his "cohorts" appeared to be anxious to catch up technologically with Japan and England. But such an ambition, even with Russian and East European assistance, was probably handicapped by the mounting demands of a rapidly expanding population and also by the embargo of the West and the shortage of suitable exports for earning a sufficiency of foreign exchange. Thus it became a sine qua non for China to find a way of raising the margin of national income above the subsistence level of the population, almost without outside aid except that of the Soviets. Hence the commune was launched as a new method to step up the drive for work output. This was to be done by the efficient use of even larger, militarily organized units.

Was there no other alternative? Has the commune movement been successful in terms of production, organizational set-up, and other aspects?

---

[36] Accumulation and Consumption in the National Income of China (Peking: China Youth Publishing Institute, 1957).

2. Communal Ownership: Collective to State

A commune was claimed by the Maoists to be of a "more socialist nature." This meant that a commune was the best form of organization for effecting the transition from collective ownership to "ownership by the whole people" of the commune and contained the beginning of communism.

By communalization, the remnants of individual economy were further reduced. All land reserved for private use, private house sites, livestock and tree holdings owned by individuals were step by step turned over to common ownership.[37] According to Jiro Yokogawa, a Japanese researcher on duty at the Agricultural Office of Chengtu in Szechwan province, plots of land privately held in the cooperative were turned over to the commune without compensation and were termed "communal property." Privately owned hogs, large farm implements and the means of production for side industries were, however, taken into the commune with compensation, and were called "collective property."[38] Steps used in the obliteration of individual ownership varied with different communes, however.

With regard to transferring these holdings to the commune, the Draft of the Weihsing (Sputnik) Commune makes a distinction between the cooperative members and the individual peasant households. In the case of the former, means of production turned over to the commune were counted as the private investment of the cooperative members. In the latter cases, they were evaluated as share fund payments and only the balance was regarded as investment by the owners.[39]

The transition from collective ownership to "ownership by the people as a whole" was to be completed in three to six years. Even then, communes, like state-owned industry, were to remain socialist in character whereby the principle of "from each according to his ability and to each according to his work" prevailed.[40] The December Resolution of the Party warned against too

---

[37]See Appendix B of my "Stages of Agricultural Collectivization. . . ." for Article 5 of the Tentative Regulations of the Weihsing People's Commune. The full text is published in JMJP, September 4, 1958.

[38]Jiro Yokogawa, "People's Commune in China," Chugoku shiryo geppo (Tokyo), No. 133, pp. 1-44.

[39]See Article 5, supra.

[40]For full text see "Resolution of Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the Establishment of People's Commune in the Rural Areas (August 29, 1958)," in People Communes in China. Henceforth The August Resolution.

rapid conversion of the present status of collective ownership into so-called "communal" ownership. But the intent was to facilitate such transformation, although gradually, rather than to prevent it.

When the entire means of production within a certain commune were publicly owned by its members as their communal property, the ownership of such property could be assumed to belong to that particular commune. Since each commune managed its own affairs, the system had the appearance of economic decentralization. However, since state organs were entrenched within the productive organizations controlling the system of distribution, the system was politically centralized.

Various kinds of state-managed enterprises, institutions, and those cadres sent to the communes have remained as terminal organizations of the state-managed sector. These enterprises received operational guidance from upper-echelon organs of the state. Commune profits must be remitted to such organs. To this degree, part of the commune receipts entered directly into distribution relationships of the state ownership system. By regulating the amount of enterprise profits and taxes remitted, the state was able to participate directly in the commune's distribution of income.[41] Thus communal ownership meant virtually "state" ownership, which was in Maoist terms, "ownership by the people as a whole."

It was noted in The December Resolution that the transformation from collective ownership to ownership by the people was "not the same thing as the going-over from socialism to communism." Still less was the change from the cooperatives to the communes the same thing as the change from socialism to communism.[42] This seems to be a clear admission that the extravagant claims made for the commune in August 1958 have not been realized and that the transition to communism will take more time than was previously expected.

---

[41] See Yokogawa, loc. cit.

[42] "Resolution on Some Questions Concerning the People's Communes," adopted by the 8th Central Committee of the CCP on December 10, 1958, Peking Review, December 23, 1958. Hereafter The December Resolution.

3. The Communalization of the Productive Process And its Effect on the Family Institution

(1) The "Five-Togethers" System

In order to step up work output the collectivization of means of production was accompanied by the collectivization of productive processes, for the greater results of which communalization of living appeared to be necessary.

Among the Chinese Communists there arose the conception of "the five togethers"--the ideal of a group of human beings who work, eat, sleep, study and play together without any personal privacy or private possessions. According to G. F. Hudson, this reflected the practice of the guerrila army whose wartime habits continued so long as to become a permanent way of living.[43] Within the commune, every person, both male and female, was a worker and was subject to strict discipline. He or she might be directed to engage in productive activities either within or outside of the commune, and might be fed in communal dining halls.

At the onset of communalization, members of the commune had to work ten hours and engage in ideological studies for two hours a day. Outside of this twelve hours, the CCP ruled, they were free to use their time as they wished.[44] Nevertheless, since 8 hours of sleep a night and 4 hours off daily for meals and recreation were generally to be guaranteed, the entire 24 hours of a day left no hours for personal use except the time for after-meals recreation. In the Yangchuan coal-miners commune of Shansi, even meal-times and off-hours were spent in intensive indoctrination sessions idolizing the cult of "big family," the system of which was called the "five-togethers." Here party control reached its ultimate. Defamilized male miners were housed by work-shifts. Living with each shift was one party, one trade union, and one Young Communist League official.[45]

Collective living has social and ideological significance. It was, according to Edward Hunter, a desperate measure to intensify "brainwashing," i.e., capturing the minds of the people. The communes were fundamentally

---

[43] Hudson, op. cit.

[44] New China News Agency, November 20, 1958.

[45] S. Rich, "Mao's Big Family," The New Republic, January 5, 1959.

a control project.[46] The system bore an imprint of utopian extremism, which, in the words of Professor Hudson, went beyond anything currently practiced in Soviet Russia:

> In the USSR, the early visions of a perfect society without personal private property, family ties or the use of money have faded with the passing of time. In China, on the contrary, there is still a fanatical faith in the early attainment of the utopian paradise of primitive Marxism. . . . The new, intensive attack on individualism is also conceived as an end in itself and might be continued even if it were to prove economically a mistake. The propaganda of the current campaign has been full of a quasi-religious exhortation to collectivist virtue.[47]

It may be noted that these austere initial measures were later modified in an attempt to develop enthusiasm for working. The December Resolution reduced the working hours from 10 to 8, claiming that the change brought more personal freedom to the members. The revised rules permitted them to take their food rations home for individual preparation. Houses and furnitures were restored to their original owners.

(2) Collectivization of Domestic Labor

The compulsory assignment of millions of peasants to non-farm labor, added to the usual work in the fields, tended to create a shortage of unskilled labor. The shortage was worsened by the fact that the villages were obliged to cover their own industrial needs. This unusual phenomenon--shortage, instead of surplus of Chinese labor--has been cited as an important reason for collectivizing and socializing domestic labor. Hence, total mobilization of women into the labor armies. It was claimed that the collectivization of domestic labor would not only emancipate half of 650 million Chinese from "troublesome" domestic work, but also would save a great deal of labor otherwise expended in domestic tasks. Some advanced cooperatives had

---

[46] U.S. Congress, Senate Judiciary Committee, Effects of Red China Communes on the U.S., hearing before subcommittee to investigate administration of Internal security act and other internal security laws, 86th Congress, 1st session, March 24, 1959, [Testimony of Edward Hunter] (Washington: GPO, 1959), pp. 42-59.

[47] G. F. Hudson, "A New Phase in Chinese Communism," The New Leader, December 15, 1958, p. 14.

already established public dining halls, kindergartens, nurseries, and organizations for tailoring, shoemaking, laundry, rice-hulling, flour-grinding. A fantastic claim in advancement of collectivization was made by an "advanced" cooperative in Teng-feng County of Honan:

> . . . by using a machine with two iron grinders, it fulfilled the daily needs of 4,900 members of the entire co-op . . . 40 people prepared food for 356 households in the entire co-op, and a tailoring team of 5 people could supply clothing for the four seasons for the 1,050 people etc.,[48]

(3) Dissolution of the Family System

Since the members of a family were distributed among different labor groups, taken up by different tasks, often at different times of day and in different places, they were unable to care for their domestic property, to say nothing of their own children. Thus their gardens, fruit trees, barnyard and animals "become the de facto charge of the commune before being turned over to it de jure. The same applies to the children. . . ."[49]

The assignment of women to different places and a system of boarding schools for their children was to free the young from parental control. Justification for such a change was made in an editorial of Kuan-min jih-pao;

> Emphasis should be laid on social, not home education. . . . Home education often breeds spoiled children indisposed towards labor. If a child receives communist education at school and non-communist education at home the result is unsatisfactory . . . . in this respect flaws in home education are becoming increasingly conspicuous.[50]

Thus the parents were declared to be unfit to educate their children not only in an academic sense, but also in labor experience and morals.

Contrary to some published accounts, the Communists generally

---

[48] Hu Sheng, "Collectivization and Socialization of Domestic Labor," Hungch'i, September 1, 1958, in JPRS/DC-383.

[49] Problems of Communism, Jan.-Feb. 1959, p. 12.

[50] Kuang-min jih-pao, October 24, 1958.

did not move men and women into separate barracks.[51] In building residential quarters, the December Resolution says, "attention should be paid to housing suited to the living together of men and women and the aged and the young of each family."[52] Possibly the expense and difficulty of feeding peasants, children and old people, and the discontent of the masses led the party cadres to retreat from their earlier doctrinaire insistence on the full collectivization of living. However, the Chinese party-state did not abandon in principle the assault on the family or the military style of living and working.

> The Chinese have destroyed a feudal, patriarchal system, which generally disappeared long ago in capitalist society and that was a progressive step. But we go a step further and establish a democratic, united family impossible without the socialist revolution.[53]

This amounts to saying that during the period of feudal society the family served as a living unit for both the exploiting and the exploited classes; capitalism did not permit the working class family to remain as the unit of productive labor; therefore only socialism has enabled the working class to have their own "families" again.[54] The term "family" means in this case, "big, united family" comprising more than several households, in which each single-family household works as a member of the "family". Thus the concept of the family consisting of father, mother and children was theoretically to be abandoned.

Through the disruption of China's old family system, a peasant would find himself no longer able to invest his personal labor for the future economic well-being of his family. His children were no longer taught to venerate their elders. The whole intent was to make everyone think of himself as part of the collective, never as an individual.

4. The Organizational Structure and Function

An average rural commune comprised 4,500 to 5,000 peasant

---

[51] See Hideo Yamamoto, "Jinmin-kosha no shoyusei," Chugoku jinmin-kosha no soshiki to kino (Tokyo: Ajiya keizai kenkyujo, 1961), pp. 117-120.

[52] The December Resolution.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Sheng, loc. cit.

households with a labor force of 10,000.[55] The common type included one or more hsiang (villages); some communes were formed by combining several hsiang. The establishment of communes, bigger than 10,000 families, was discouraged in the August Resolution.[56] Instead, it suggested that communes gradually group into hsien (county) federations of communes, which were regarded as a transitional step toward a second type of communes. Through amalgamation of state and society, the Chinese commune was to level the differences between a natural village (an earlier socio-economic unit) and an administrative village (a political unit). Thus the territorial size was determined more by considerations of political integration than by water sheds and topographical features. In areas of ethnically mixed habitation, such as the Red Flag Commune of Lotu hsien in Chinghai province, not only geographical limits but even traditional ethnic boundaries were broken through to facilitate cultural and political assimilation. Hence communalization was designed to advance communist political development in China.[57]

Since Communist China was divided into 1,958 counties, the number of communes, which had been 26,578[58] at the end of 1958, could be theoretically reduced considerably, if these communes were later amalgamated into hsien federations of communes. Yuan-li Wu claimed that between the end of 1958 and late summer 1959 these communes were already consolidated into 24,000 units.[59] However, instead of grouping into a federal type of commune, the existing commune has proven to be too large and cumbersome and was gradually divided into new ones based on customary geographical and marketing areas. Apart from geographical considerations, the communes were sized to be large enough for diversified projects but small enough for centralized management.

---

[55] Akira Toi, "Jimmin kosha no hatsei to hatten-katei," Chugoku jinmin-kosha no soshiki to kino, p. 47.

[56] The August Resolution.

[57] Franz Schurmann, Ideology and Organization in Communist China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 484-490. Cf. A. Ravenholt, "The Chinese Communes," Foreign Affairs, July 1959, p. 581.

[58] See my "The Development of Local Government in Communist China," Public Affairs Bulletin, Summer 1957, Table I.

[59] Yuan-li Wu, "The Communes in a Changing China," Current History, December 1959, p. 346.

A commune merged with a hsiang government into one organizational structure. The process of integration was generally patterned as follows. The Hsiang People's Congress became the People's Congress of the Commune; the Hsiang's Committee of the CCP became the Commune's Committee of the CCP; the Hsiang People's Council became the Commune's Administrative Committee. In the case of the model Weihsing Commune, under its Administrative Committee were departments of agriculture, water-conservation, forestry, animal husbandry, industry, communication, internal affairs, labor, armed security, finance, food, commerce, culture, public health etc. Each department established large, small, and specialized operational units according to the demands of production.[60]

A comparative examination of Article 73 of the Model Regulations for an APC with that part of the August Resolution concerning the methods of transformation from the elementary cooperatives through the advanced into the commune demonstrates that the basic organizational principles and arrangements of the APC were well integrated into those of the commune. Like the cooperative's administrative committee, the commune's administrative committee managed the affairs within the entity and controlled the operational units under it.

When merging into a commune, according to the August Resolution, the cooperatives were to jointly elect an administrative committee for the merged cooperatives (the basic form of the commune) to unify planning and the arrangement of work and to submerge themselves into a production brigade under the management of the commune's administrative committee. However, the December Resolution stipulated that a production brigade would emerge as a separate administrative district, directly manage industry, agriculture, trade, education, and military affairs, and form an economic accounting unit, pooling gains and losses. It would entrust the Commune Administrative Committee with over-all leadership and organization of production, capital construction, and welfare.[61] Thus the "departmentalism" which had previously been denounced, lest each cooperative keep what was its, was now resuscitated. The new directive was, therefore, a step backward.

Despite apparent differences between the August and the December

---

[60] Current Background, No. 517 (September 5, 1958), pp. 23-30. Cf. The Weihsing Draft.

[61] The December Resolution.

"directives," it cannot be denied that the commune exercised rigid control in all fields of its functioning as it set certain production targets and assigned annual or quarterly construction tasks to the organizations at various levels. The commune head and his staff negotiated contracts for the sale of produce to state purchasing agencies.

As a Military Organization

Although the history of forced labor in China is as old as that of the Empire,[62] the methods of organizing the peasants into mass labor armies were perfected with the cooperative movement. From 1957 on, the figures of those mobilized climb rapidly and spread over the countryside. In August 1958 the military organization of the commune members was officially promulgated, and later the militarization-technique was introduced into industry, the mines, and public works.[63]

In the commune, peasants were grouped into regiments, battalions and platoons roughly at corresponding levels of the production organizations. In principle, the commanding officers of the various levels of the militia could not be concurrently leading bodies of the production organization,[64] so that they would concentrate on the militarization of the commune. Militarization, however, did not mean that all militiamen, which included the entire able-bodied population, were armed with weapons or trained regularly. Only a militia nucleus of "tough" characters called "people's militia" was entrusted with arms.[65] Thus it was the minority who underwent regular military training, while ordinary militiamen received "appropriate" training only after work. The former appeared to have more political than military significance. Consisting of trusted young activists, these armed units were organized within the large unarmed labor armies, "encouraging" the f orward march of production.[66] The militia was organized around a core of Red Army.

---

[62]See K. A. Wittfogel, Oriental Despotism (New Haven: Yale University, 1957), p. 414 ff.

[63]David Rousset, "The New Tyranny in the Countryside," Problems of Communism, Jan.-Feb. 1959, pp. 10-11.

[64]The December Resolution.

[65]Robert Guillain, 600 Million Chinese (New York: Criterion Books, 1957), p. 6.

[66]Rousset, loc. cit., p. 11.

The December Resolution noted that the Commune militarization was to prepare conditions for turning "the whole nation into soldiers," and to enable them to overcome armed counter-revolution, whereas in the editorial of Hungch'i, September 1, 1958, militarization was claimed to be being effected in order to fight the "battle against nature."[67] While it might not be impossible to shift from one type of fighting to the other, actually militarization was largely effected in order to make full use of labor power including women and young adults. By forcing the people to work as hard as though "in combat," productivity was bound to rise somewhat, with or without incentives. Since the organization subjected all members to strict discipline, this also facilitated the mobility of labor both on a geographical plane and across occupational lines. Militarization is one of the ways to facilitate the policy of "Politics Takes Command."

The organizational set-up along a military line was claimed to produce the "highest" form of "democratic centralism",[68] where "democratic" was supplementary to "centralism." In other words, the "democratic" aspect (feeling impulses from below, elections of the higher public organizations by the lower bodies, etc.) of this Communist organization theory was never to be tolerated at the expense of "centralism" (the submission of the lower levels to the higher levels).

5. The System of Distribution

Another characteristic of the commune system is its system of distribution. Under the "socialist" cooperatives, a work-point system of remuneration was used. The system fixed targets for output, workdays, and costs with bonuses calculated in the form of either extra output or extra workdays on the basis of output. This method allegedly became unsuitable, because when the commune members worked day and night it was difficult to calculate who worked more and who worked less.

(1) Wage System

The commune was to gradually substitute the "wage plus reward" system for the former "workday reward" system, when it acquired stability of income and adequate funds. On the methods of computing wages, Communist sources are annoyingly so obscure that they could well be subject to arbitrary administrative decision. Articles 14 and 15 of the Draft of the

---

67"Greet the Upsurge in Forming People's Communes," Hungch'i, September 1, 1958, in Peking Review, September 2, 1958, pp. 6-7.

68Ibid.

Weihsing commune bears this out:

> The wage of members will be fixed by the masses though discussion, taking into account the intensity and complexity of the work, the physical circumstances, technique, and attitude to work. . . . Technical allowances may be paid to the people who possess special skills. One month's wage may differ from another. . . . Those who work energetically and do well should be rewarded, while those who work in a slovenly way and fail to carry out their assignments may be penalized through deductions from their wages. The awards distributed in the commune in a year may amount to a maximum of 1/4 of the total basic wages.[69]

Thus a worker who failed to work the requisite number of days would not only lose a portion of his basic wage, but also be demoted to a lower wage grade. Wage scales in the rural areas were divided into six to eight grades, and the highest grades were probably four or more times as much as the lowest grade.[70] Furthermore, since the regulations prescribed that the rate of wage increase must be slower than the rate of increase in production, the real hourly wage was gradually to be reduced in terms of man-hours spent at hard labor. These measures were to result in greater accumulation for industrial investment.

(2) Supply System

Tied to the wage system was the new pattern of food distribution in the communes. Article 15 states that, when the growth of farm production and the unanimous consent of the members of the communes permit, grain-supply will be put into effect "in accordance with standards laid down by the state, irrespective of how many of the family can work." But since families with more labor power get more income, the system of part-payment in kind and part-payment in money accorded with the principle of "according to his work" rather than that of "according to his need." Nevertheless, complaints were made to the effect that families having more labor would lose and share the burden of large families with little labor power and the system, therefore, would diminish labor enthusiasm. Hence, while such "bourgeois" thinking (complaints) were allegedly being replaced by the

---

[69] See Articles 14 and 15, The Weihsing Draft.

[70] The December Resolution states that the era of communism will be getting near when these wage-grade differences become unnecessary in the future as a result of the tremendous rise in production.

communist thinking of "one for all, all for one," the compromise system of "half-supply, half-wage" was reportedly accepted by the commune members.[71]

The half-supply may be translated, "to each according to his needs," which was determined by the state bureaucracy. The half-wage means that he who does more work shall receive more pay. As to the first, Finance Minister Li Hsian-nien stated that;

> They apply either the system of the 'seven guarantees' in the following fields . . . . food, clothing, medical care, child birth, education, housing, marriages, and funerals . . . or a system of five or six guaratees according to the economic state of the commune. . . . In some communes, the supply portion is greater than the wage portion, and in others the opposite is true.[72] (See Table II).

Thus the arbitrary character of the wage-food distribution system was well confirmed by the above statement.

Table II. 16 ALLEGED GUARANTEES FREELY GIVEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNE

---

1) Clothing--the same "drab" work cloths for men and women.
2) Food--often sweet potatoes.
3) Transportation--largely eliminated, for the peasants live where they work.
4) Housing.
5) Maternity benefits.
6) Sick leave and free medicine (usually herb).
7) Old-age care at special homes. (Edward Hunter alleges that the old and the enfeebled were constantly given injections which reduced their life span.)
8) Funeral and burial.
9) Education--party cadres, model workers, labor heroes, or anyone else considered experienced may occupy a "professor's" seat.
10) A marriage grant and a free reception.

---

[71] Kungjen jihpao, October 25, 1958, quoted in A. V. Sherman, "Peoples Communes", The China Communes (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1960), p. 37.

[72] Rousset, loc. cit., p. 13.

11) 12 haircuts a year.
12) 20 bath tickets a year--at communal bath house.
13) Child rearing.
14) Recreation --after-meals (according to Hunter, this consists largely of sitting-up exercises performed in a street and everywhere is done within the hearing distance of blaring radio speakers).
15) Tailoring.
16) Electricity.

Source: Above lists from an AP dispatch citing Dr. Chandrasekhar, Indian Social Scientist, W. R. McIntyre, Editorial Research Reports, I (1959), 209. Cf. U.S., The Effect of Red China Communes on the U. S., pp. 42-59 and 63-64.

However, the adoption of the combined systems of supply and wage was claimed to be actually the beginning of the gradual transition to the Communist stage of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."[73] Such transformation was to be achieved by progressively augmenting the part distributed for needs, and by progressively reducing the part paid for work performed. One result of such a tendency would be that the peasants would be afforded less and less opportunity to buy and sell, thereby progressively eliminating money.

However, this trend was reversed by the winter of 1958. It proved necessary to slow down the tempo of communalization. The December Resolution now contended that the question of incentive had become so serious that the emphasis needed to be shifted from free-supply to wages:

> In the absence of this (abundance of social products), any negation of the principle of 'each according to his work' will tend to dampen the working enthusiasm of the people . . . the wage paid according to work done must last years and be increased at a rate faster than the free-supply.[74]

The free-supply which was previously to be augmented under "demands for equal sharing" was later denounced as a "petit bourgeois trend."

---

[73] Lin Tieh, "The People's Commune Movement in Hopei," Hungch'i, October 1, 1958. See also Robert Guillain, "The Revolution of Communes in China," Le Monde, November 22, 1958, p. 18.

[74] The December Resolution.

6. The Probable Causes of Early "Successes"

The production of food grains in 1958 was initially estimated at 375 million metric tons, while over 3,000 kilograms was asserted to be the average yield per hectare, thus virtually doubling the corresponding figures for 1957. The same story was told of cotton production. The bumper figure was subsequently lowered to 250 million tons of grain.[75] Nevertheless, compared with the 1957 output of 185 million tons of grain, even the lower estimates represented large increases. Since this development coincided with the onset of communalization, would it not be likely that there existed some causal relationship between the commune as an institution and the reported increase in agricultural productivity?

There were, of course, modest statistical reasons that boosted the yield. In addition to inaccurate reporting such as failures to distinguish optimums from averages and claims from actual results, the tubers were included among food grains; since the increment in the 1958 grain output over that of 1957 consisted partly of sweet potatoes, the increase in unit area yield was apparently given a boost by the large-scale planting of this crop alone. Moreover, in computing unit area yield for small areas, probably no clear distinction was made between the land that bore two or more crops and that which bore one. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that exceptionally high yields of experimental farms such as the existing ones in Honan province were often given wide publicity without explicit mention of the small scale involved.

Apart from these statistical boosts, other factors contributed to that portion of the reported advance which appears to be plausible. The expansion of the area under irrigation probably increased the double-cropping area. The area of irrigated fields was reportedly increased by 32 million hectares between October 1957 and August 1958.[76] In addition, the application of fertilizers, increasing use of implements of improved designs, and on-the-spot supervision should be credited with an important part of the

---

[75] New China News Agency, October 5, 1958. For the revised figures see The Wall Street Journal, August 27, 1959. Cf. UN-FAO, Yearbook of Food and Agricultural Statistics Production, 1956. The revised 1958 figure (250 million tons) appears to be reliable; see also Table 5. 64 in Nai-Ruenn Chen (ed.), Chinese Economic Statistics: A Handbook for Mainland China (A Monograph of the Committee on the Economy of China of the Social Science Research Council) (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 338-39.

[76] Hsueh-hsi, No. 22, August 1957. See also Table 3. 4 in Chen, Chinese Economic Statistics, p. 289.

accomplishment.

However, no other factor has contributed to the rise of output as much as has the intensive application of manpower. Hence the "Politics Takes Command" rather than dialectical materialism has proved effective. The scale of the greatly augmented demand for labor inputs is shown in Table III. It should be noted that, at the early stages of the communes, work hours per day ranged from 10 to 12 and peasants were often required to sleep beside their crops in order to toil uninterruptedly.

Table III. Labor Inputs in Man-Days Per Hectare
(Hungkuang People's Commune)

	1958 - 59 (Commune)	1956-57 (Co-op)
Irrigation	90	none
Deep plowing	30-45	3-4.5
Fertilizer Application	90	22.5
Yield per Hectare	9,090 (Kilograms)	3,075 (Kilograms)

Source: JMJP, April 18, 1959. The commune in question is located in Ningchin hsien in Hopei.

In order to boost production, the total available labor force was mobilized and applied intensively, while its level of consumption was being effectively controlled. To facilitate further the application of manpower, control machinery was set up throughout the country. The productive means as well as the productive process were totally controlled by the state apparatus, and military discipline and the substitution of communal living for traditional family life were taking place. At whatever sacrifice of peasant welfare, forced collectivization was being carried out. However, Mao perhaps understood later how much of a loss the peasant was willing to trade for whatever amount of economic security the commune did offer. A greater supply of labor could not long be maintained with the element of coercion. Imponderable is the human factor in the form of popular resentment--overt or otherwise--and this should not have been overlooked.

CHAPTER V

PROCESSES OF DE-COMMUNALIZATION

1. The Commune's Failure

It soon became obvious that much of the early successes of the commune system was short-lived and exaggerated. Although little is known since 1959 of the official statistical information on agricultural production, most evidences indicate that the production rate was drastically reduced during 1959-1961. (In 1960 Communist China became for the first time a net food importing country;[77] most of the imported grains came from non-Communist countries such as Australia and Canada.)

There were three major reasons for the failure of the Great Leap Forward: (1) unwillingness on the part of the peasant to adjust to the excessive tempo of collectivization; (2) three years of bad weather and its after-effects; and (3) inept policies and the resultant chaos.

The Communist regime attempted to do "too much too soon for too many people" in disregard of the limits of human capabilities. It proved impossible to step up or even maintain the already relentless work pace when the peasants lost incentives such as rewards related to work done and crops produced. Furthermore,with such drastic social transformation, the peasants could not enjoy the customary satisfaction obtained from working for his family and clan. In too many areas of China, the communes were considered too "advanced" and/or crude. Many peasants including those who had little to lose in joining the communes were later demoralized and politically alienated when their incomes and living standards did not rise to the level of their expectations as generated by the promises of the Great Leap Forward.

While the Chinese Communists explained away the crop failures as the result of climatic conditions, mainland China did not have in 1959-60 "the most unprecedented natural calamities of the century," as they would have us believe. The drought, floods, typhoons, and crop diseases reportedly damaged in 1959 about 600 million mou or one-third of the crop acreage and they affected about one-half of the crop acreage in 1960.[78] (The calamities of 1960 were probably worse than the preceding year and also

---

[77] Larson, loc. cit., p. 221.

[78] "Emergency Import of Food and Agricultural Problems in Communist China," ECAFE Tsushin, No. 263 (May 1, 1961) in JPRS, No. 8909 (September 21, 1961), p. 7.

their impact was apparently heightened by the 1959 calamities.) Taken at face value these figures demonstrate that the calamities were of unprecedented proportion in the short history of the Communist regime. However, of the total areas affected in 1959 and 1960, only one-half to two-thirds seemed to have suffered severe weather conditions. Hence the Chinese obviously exaggerated the scope and intensity of the disasters. Yet even the lower figure cannot deny the fact that the agricultural difficulties were intensified by the unusually adverse weather conditions. Labor was generally over-extended during the natural disaster.

Could China have avoided the communal failures if no natural calamities had struck the mainland in 1959-61? The answer would be affirmative if one accepted the official explanation of the severity of the weather to deny human responsibility for the crisis. Yet the open criticism by the CCP of the communal cadres confirms the view that the crisis was also caused by human errors. This the CCP could not deny, but the Party, as usual, shelved its responsibility by exaggerating the evils of rural cadres.

The combination of local autonomy and centralization of power in the hands of communal authorities probably provided them with the opportunity to abuse power. Operation through "commandism" rather than persuasion; widening, rather than narrowing, of the social barrier between the cadres and the masses; and corruptions and dysfunctioning within the commune system: all of these did occur in China as in other developing nations. Yet they probably contributed less to the fiasco than the inept decisions made by the top leaders. On the basis of the initial production increase brought about by communalization, the CCP not only assigned a large portion of farm workers to millions of semi-industrial enterprises but also reduced the 1959 grain acreage by 11%.[79]

The results of the attempt through communalization to substitute labor for capital were disappointing; large, long-term investment in agriculture was long overdue. Also in most of the areas, the commune was formed into a unit too large for the efficient management of production. Not only because of inadequate machinery but also because of the traditional type of farming and the peculiarities of rice production, the decisive advantage seems to lie with the smaller unit.[80]

2. The Retreat: Retrenchment in Structure

Peking has responded to the commune crisis by adopting a series of

---

[79]H. J. Lethbridge, The Peasant and the Communes (Hong Kong: Green Pagoda Press, 1963), pp. 117-118.

[80]Ibid., pp. 114-115.

steps aimed at the partial decollectivization of agriculture--reverting from (1) the commune via (2) the brigade into (3) the team ("three levels system of ownership").

During 1959 the commune was reduced to merely a federation of production brigades while retaining the civil functions of the former hsiang government. The brigade--the administrative level immediately below the commune--emerged as the key functioning unit of the "all-village" collective economy assuming a critical role in its ownership, accounting and distribution. Comparable to the former advanced APC, the brigade is based on the natural village.[81]

Since the summer of 1960 the production team has become the de facto unit of ownership and the key functioning unit. The team has full rights of disposition over ways to do things even though it is required to contribute labor to the brigade economy. In 1961 the team was given even more autonomy and power in implementing farm policies. Concomitant with the devolution of communal authority was the inauguration of a "period of economic consolidation and liberalization." Steps were taken to improve the morale of the rural peasants through private plots, subsidiary occupations, and rural trade fairs. The private plots and free markets were allowed to return in 1960 and reportedly even encouraged to do so in 1961.[82] In bad years when there was a shortage of food, the government probably liked to see the peasant supplement his livelihood by his own efforts on his private plot of land.

A major step in the direction of economic liberalization was the short-lived "responsibility farm system" under which all or a significant part of the land was contracted out to individual households to cultivate. This system was apparently strongly pushed by Teng Hsiao-p'ing, the Secretary-General of the CCP, and supported by President Liu Shao-ch'i, both of whom have fallen into political disfavor in the current Cultural Revolution. Evidently Mao Tse-tung resisted the Teng-Liu move toward decollectivization.[83]

In spite of the continued, firm official commitment to the commune the conduct of farming today in practice remains at the level of the production team: that is, the level of collectivization reached before the

---

[81]Larson, loc. cit., p. 220; Shinichiro Sato, Jinmin kosha no soshiki kozo (Tokyo: Ajiya Keizai kenkyusho, 1964), Table 1, p. 14.

[82]Schurmann, op cit., pp. 491-94.

[83]Dwight H. Perkins, "Economic Growth in China and the Cultural Revolution," The China Quarterly, April-June 1967, pp. 34-35.

advanced APC was launched in 1956. Since 1963, there have been more than 74,000 communes in Communist China. (See Table IV). This number is three times the number of communes in 1959 (24,000), meaning that today's commune probably averages one-third the size of the 1959 commune. A commune consists of five to 30 brigades; a brigade consists of five to ten teams, and a team comprises 20 to 40 families.[84]

Through the measures of decollectivization, accompanied by the post-1960 emphasis on agriculture, Chinese agriculture has recovered from the poor harvest years of 1959-61. Otherwise, the Mao-Lin group could not dare launch the Cultural Revolution. The estimated total grain output in 1965 or 1966 of about 200 million metric tons indeed exceeds the figure for 1957 of 185 million metric tons which is about the best year preceding the Great Leap Forward (hereafter GLF). However, the rate of increase from 1957 through 1965 (or 1966) has been no more than one per cent annually, a rate inadequate to feed a rising population.[85]

Table IV: Stages of Agricultural Collectivization

year	MATs	Lower APCs	Higher APCs	Communes
1950	2,700,000	19	1	
1952	8,030,000	3,640	10	
1954	9,030,000	114,000	201	
1956	--	681,697	311,935	
1958(Aug.)				8,730
1958			740,000	
1958(Dec.)				26,578
1959				24,000
1962				70,000
1963				74,000

Sources: H. J. Lethbridge, The Peasant and the Communes (Hong Kong: Green Pagoda Press, 1963), p. 189; Ten Great Years (Peking: State Statistical Bureau, 1960), p. 43; Shin chugoku nenkan: 1963 (Tokyo: Chugoku kenkyu sho, 1963), p. 156; Socialist Industrialization and Agricultural Collectivization (Peking: FLP, 1964), p. 24; Shin chugoku nenkan: 1966, p. 185.

[84]See Table IV and also Robinson, loc. cit., pp. 29-30.

[85]Perkins, loc. cit., pp. 44 and 36-39.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

1. Toward an Organizational Theory?

In terms of the organizational changes that have occurred, it appears that each stage of Chinese agricultural collectivization was gradually approached through an intermediate step of transformation. The lower APC, evolving from the year-round MAT, was transformed into the higher APC which in turn was preparatory to communalization. The commune later reverted to the team through the intermediate stage of a brigade. In other words, the lineal progression (upward) of collectivization through 1958 was followed by the lineal regression (downward) of decollectivization.

Even during 1949-58, however, there was no inevitable evolutionary process leading from land reform to the MAT and then from cooperativization to communalization. It is true that from the CCP standpoint one stage facilitated transformation into another stage while eliminating the "undesirable class" at each stage. Land reform eliminated the landlord class; the MAT assisted the poor at the expense of the "rich" peasants; and the APC broke the socio-economic power of the traditional village leaders. Landownership, too, was gradually shifted from individuals to the state (i.e., "the ownership by the people as a whole"). Yet a careful study of the process, rather than the result, of each stage-transformation indicates that a period of retreat (decollectivization) preceded the imposition of each new stage.

Thus far, the pattern of agricultural collectivization has displayed a dualistic tendency to swing back and forth between pragmatic moderation (liberalization) and revolutionary radicalism (adventure). When radicalism resulted in excesses it was denounced as "left-wing deviation"; and when moderation brought about a revival of "bourgeois" tendencies, it was denounced as "right-wing deviation." Thus the pendulum of dialectic was manipulated from one extreme to the other probably in emulation of traditional "yin-yang" dualism.

When the campaign for the advanced APC was launched in 1956, peasants resisted and the wholesale slaughter of livestock occurred. But political pressure was lifted in 1957 through the "Let a Hundred Schools Contend" movement, which in turn was in a way a calculated retreat in preparation for the GLF. The political pressure that was increased during the latter campaign was again lifted in the following years resulting in the "Great Leap Backward" (a period of liberalization).

At the end of each round through the period of cooperativization, the "leaper" who imposed a new collective stage emerged as a gainer. After "two steps forward (leap) and one step backward", the net gain for the

"leaper" could still be as much as half of what was attempted. But the net gain for the GLF was far less than half, and, in fact, according to some estimates it amounted to seven years of retreat. This demonstrates that the greater the adventure the lesser the harvest, parallel with the law of diminishing returns.

Turning to the Chinese misconception about the optimal size of organization, it appears that the Chinese Communists, like Marxists elsewhere, erroneously regarded small-scale farming as economically inefficient and politically reactionary. Their theory of amalgamation was based on the assumption that the greater the size of the amalgamated organization--be it APC or commune--the higher would be the degree of collectivization. During the GLF, the Chinese cadres tended to associate all the advantages of farming firstly with large-scale organization. It is true that the greater the area the greater will be the comparative advantages for production. Nevertheless, China's limited land and unmechanized agriculture, among other factors, tended to mitigate the advantages of large-scale farming. There is a distinct possibility, however, that the Chinese planners through the organizational processes of collectivization and decollectivization have come close to the optimal size of farming in today's China, which reconciles the requirements of large and small scale.

2. Prospects for the "Cultural Revolution"

Will the current Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution represent an even greater "Leap Forward"--this time in ideology? If so, will it be followed by an equally greater "Retreat" (readjustment)? It follows from the foregoing discussion that the current turbulence, if and when it results in greater setbacks than the GLF, is likely to have more disappointing consequences than the latter.

To conclude, the following are a few prospects for current and future developments. The Maoists, perhaps a minority among the leaders, may have come to the view that their mistake in the GLF lay in trying to attain the substructural revolution (change of the mode of production) before laying a firm foundation for the superstructural revolution (ideological mobilization). Hence the goal of the Cultural Revolution, which is the culmination of the Socialist Education Program started in 1962, is to make the "reaction" of the superstructural revolution effect the substructure.[86] In other words, China's so-called dialectical materialists hope to initiate economic change through prior ideological change. This would be as Professor Lindsay stated, "turning Marx upside down on exactly the point

---

[86] R. Kurai, "Basic Problems of the Revolution in China," Japan Quarterly, April-June 1967, p. 157.

where Marx claimed that he had turned Hegel the right way up, but it does explain the present procedure."[87] Thus, it may be convenient to see the background of the current "ideological" leap forward in relation to the apparent failures of forced agricultural collectivization.

If the current revolution, which appears to be more radical than the GLF, is immediately followed by another "leap forward" in economic development, it may very well prove to be the end of the long-suffering peoples' response to the CCP's ability to manipulate them, even though Chinese industriousness defies imagination in the West.[88] It will be indeed difficult for an ideological leap, lacking material incentives, to succeed. However, if, on the other hand, the current Cultural Revolution subsides within the near future, resulting in a period of retreat followed by a modified economic leap forward, the consequence may not be as drastic as often predicted. In fact, a stable and sustained economic growth is a distinct possibility. Yet, with their ambitious and expensive goals for national defense, the main task would still be to find the means of increasing the food supply by two percent annually while holding population growth below two percent.

Turning to the adverse effects of the Cultural Revolution on the Chinese economy, there is little evidence to support the often-mentioned thesis that the recent turmoil has set back China's economic development by a decade. It would appear that direct interference with the rural economy has been slight and that the damage inflicted upon the urban economy has not been as serious as often reported in the American press.[89]

3. Consequences of Misconceptions.

As a result of their personal experience and Communist ideology, the Chinese leaders have tended to place great faith in the methods of mass organization and political campaigns (indoctrination). Treating people as though they were endlessly capable of change and labor, the political leaders,

---

[87] Lord Lindsay of Birker, "The Great Cultural Revolution and the Red Guards," World Affairs, January-March 1967, p. 231.

[88] An interesting observation was made on Chinese industriousness by a Canadian student of Chinese affairs. Charles Lynch stated "Certainly . . . Canadians who say they would rather be dead than Red may derive some cheer from the fact that one week after being Red they would be dead, if they were forced to work as the Chinese." Quoted in "Trends in China's Development Process," Pacific Affairs, Spring-Summer 1966, p. 148.

[89] See An Economic Profile of Mainland China.

at the onset of each stage, attempted to do too much too rapidly, often in disregard of known social and behavioral theories.

Due to their excessively utopian view of human nature, the leaders, especially Maoists, have tended to stress ideological exhortations more than material incentives and have also looked upon unfavorable popular opinion as the sign of a lack of "ideological consciousness." Even partial adoption of the distribution system based on one's need met with resistance, indicating that non-material incentives could not easily become the main motive behind the Chinese work force. The spirit of the "Long March" and its present day variant, revolutionary romanticism, have proven to be less applicable as solutions of the practical and economic problems of modernization. In fact, evidences indicate that the relationship between ideological fervor and the acquisition of technical and administrative skills has almost reached the point of a "zero-sum game"[90] in Communist China.

Another obstacle to a steady rate of economic development was the misconception that Chinese agricultural problems could be solved by organizational changes and the mass mobilization of labor alone. Although the latter two inputs had contributed to the record of modernization achieved during the First Five-Year Plan (1953-57), which was impressive compared either with China's rate of development in the past or with India's in the same period, the output even in 1957-58 was rising only at a progressively diminishing rate. Yet the law of diminishing returns in agriculture was viewed by Maoists as a "bourgeois fallacy."

In spite of the inadequate infrastructure and lack of investment in agriculture, such as chemical fertilizers, ambitious Maoists probably have found no alternative but to industrialize through the cheapest method available, i.e. by means of turning labor into capital. Yet communalization has proven that labor and political means were not so useful as substitutes for capital and incentives.

Maoists, however, may still think their "depression" in economic development can be compensated for by the achievements they have made in political education as well as in the irreparable changes they have imposed upon China's social structure. Hence, the impact of the "mass line revolution from below" will probably remain the most significant element for the future political development of Communist China.

4. Prospects As a Model for Developing Nations

At the current rates of production and investment, it is indeed

---

[90]It is a game in which what one gains, the other necessarily loses or vice versa.

difficult for Communist China even to absorb the annual growth of population, let alone to raise living standards or to transform the society from agricultural to industrial. It would appear, therefore, that to treat the Chinese agricultural development as a model would be absurd, if not irrelevant. Yet to developing nations with conditions similar to pre-1949 China, even the record of difficulties is likely to arouse interest and thereby have an effect upon them. Many countries in the Southern Hemisphere confront the same problems of traditional hinterlands, backwardness in agriculture and landlordism, an increasing rate of unemployment or underemployment in a rising population, modest or negligible industrial development, illiteracy and political instability, and foreign economic "influence."

Mao's strategy of rural-based guerrilla warfare (that is, the twenty-eight years of the CCP struggles beginning from a group of little more than 50 in 1921 to the seizure of power over almost one-fourth of the world population in 1949), of revolution before the development of an economic basis, and of socialist transition under a "people's democratic dictatorship" rather than a proletarian dictatorship is said by the Chinese to be a model for developing nations. All of these stages are parts of the Chinese model which Communist revolutionaries in the developing areas have imitated and are likely to emulate in the years to come. Added to this model is the Chinese model of Communist transition; in a less industrialized and agrarian country a highly collectivized economy, such as people's communes, could lead to communism. Thus the Maoist model dispenses with the importance of a highly industrialized economy as the main precondition for communism.[91] Agricultural collectivization was being introduced in China along with, if not prior to, industrialization and mechanization. This " law of proportional development" has led to insistence on increases in agricultural production as a prerequisite for industrial expansion.

While much of the above mentioned model is more adaptable to the needs of developing Communist party-states, Communist China's art of economic and social "take-off" from the retarded state of a tradition-bound Asian setting has captured the imagination of even non-Communist Asians.[92] It demonstrates the success of a revolutionary effort in shaking off the so-called "bondage" of the past and proceeding to a new era of "progress." Also, Communist organizational skills and social engineering (more

---

[91]See A. A. Cohen, The Communism of Mao Tse-tung (Chicago: U. Chicago Press, 1964), Chapters 4 and 6.

[92]W. Klatt, "Chinese Agriculture as a Model for Asian Countries," in E. E. Szezepanik (ed.), Symposium on Economic and Social Problems of the Far East (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1962), p. 206.

thorough than the Bolsheviks) techniques could be emulated by one or two "anti-Communist" states with the intention of outdoing the Communist party-states.

Adoption of the Chinese model has probably been complicated by the introduction of super-collectivism, i.e., the fiasco of the commune. Several uncommitted nations in Asia which have followed Chinese cooperativization with keen interest have begun to lose interest in super-collectivism. Today, there appear signs of an increasing awareness on the part of the leaders of developing countries that Communist China has not provided any magic solution to the problems of its own modernization. Yet the Chinese experience since 1958, by indicating its sources of failure, seems to have taught the Communists in North Vietnam and North Korea a lesson of "what not to do" to avoid similar pitfalls. (Mao has benefited from Stalin's errors, as he did from some adverse effects of the Soviet Russians' outright nationalization of land in 1917).

Psychologically, what is probably more attractive to the nationalists of poverty-striken societies is Communist China's heroic attempt (motive power) at nation-building in the absence of foreign assistance. China's full utilization of its natural resources and of surplus manpower as a source of capital are cases in point. (Indeed, it can be argued with the weight of accumulated evidence from non-Communist and/or Communist sources that Communist China has not received any DIRECT economic aid, such as grants, from the USSR.)

The history of the organization of Chinese farming, building on small units associated in larger bodies in successive layers and carrying out the communal projects with investment funds of its constituent teams and brigades and the problems of determining the most appropriate size for different purposes: all of these are, in the opinions of J. Gray, and Harry Hamm parallel to the problems which community development experts face elsewhere.[93] It remains to be seen whether community authorities in other parts of the world will model their community development after the Chinese communal development. Even Communist China has not quite succeeded in shaking the Chinese rural population free from its intensely personal family and local loyalties. Instead of extension workers, China has too many cadres who are strong on politics but weak in technical knowledge. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the commune has evolved into a Chinese version of Community Development guiding the life of teeming millions in the villages.

In contrast to the models of the Soviet Union, India, Japan, and Taiwan, where changes were initiated from above (but without coercion in case of

---

[93] J. Gray, loc. cit., p. 39. See also Harry Hamm, China: Empire of the 700 Million (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday Co., 1966), pp. 98-107.

the last three), Communist China's "mass line" concept of leadership seems inclined toward revolution from below with compulsion when necessary. Chinese community development, for instance, aimed at changes in economic, social, and political attitudes in the countryside.

The Russian revolution took the form of a coup in the cities and spread toward the countryside whereas the Chinese revolution started with protracted conflict in rural areas and worked toward seizing the cities. The CCP has been preoccupied by rural questions which its Russian counterpart had almost neglected. Furthermore, the Soviet Union, a status quo power (the "arrivée"), is more inclined toward reform than revolution; in addition to its new responsibilities as a world power it has much to preserve in its "embourgeoisé" society. On the other hand, Communist China, a revolutionary power (the "arriviste"), is in the raw, militant opening stage of its nation-building; it must maintain its revolutionary momentum.[94] From this comparison it is obvious that the Chinese model would be more adaptable to the needs of emerging nations that are predominantly agrarian. Yet a pro-Chinese party in southeast Asia may still find it expedient to use some Russian methods.

In spite of being the more impressive of the two in terms of achievements, the Russian model is less applicable to the developing nations than the Chinese model. In the words of Professor Geoffrey Hudson:

> Few newly emerging countries today have in their capital cities an industrial proletariat as strong as that of St. Petersburg in 1917, and none can count on the special circumstance of a prolonged and unpopular foreign war which causes troops to turn against their officers. In this situation the example of China may appear more generally applicable. A revolution which grows to maturity in the countryside and only conquers the cities after it has worn down the forces of the central government by guerrilla warfare may be thought suitable in any country which has extensive jungles or mountain areas, much agrarian discontent, and an irresolute, incompetent or corrupt administration. The Chinese model was successfully copied by Castro in Cuba and it is being followed by the Vietcong in South Vietnam and by Mulele in the Congo.[95]

---

[94]My "Continuing Thorns in Sino-Soviet Relations," Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal, October 1965, pp. 145-146.

[95]His "Conclusion," in W. Klatt (ed.), The Chinese Model: A Political, Economic and Social Survey (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1965), p. 208.

The contemporary and future significance as well as the challenge of the Chinese model vis-a-vis the Southern Hemisphere will become apparent when one takes into account the fact that, in contradiction to Marxism, thus far Communism has succeeded in seizing power only in predominantly agrarian countries with relatively backward economic and social infrastructures.

By the criterion of its performance China is not in a position to match the models of Japan or Taiwan. However, it has out-performed, especially in the 1950's, the Indian pattern of development, though not by a considerable margin as generally believed by a number of economists in the past.[96] Even if China has excelled India in its annual economic growth rate, per capita income, and rate of saving, it is debatable whether it has satisfied its people as much as India has in view of the greater price paid by the Chinese masses. On the other hand, the elites of some newly emerging nations could still be attracted to the Chinese type of "democratic centralism" more than to the Indian type of "parliamentary democracy." For the future of world politics, the outcome of the contest between opposing models for development of India and China might be just as decisive as the outcome of the different models of Russia and China.

The Chinese regime also utilizes its machinery, media of communication and other methods, such as cultural exchange, invitation to foreign visitors, commodity exhibition, and economic and technical aid, to make a display of its model of national reconstruction. Different visiting dignitaries from Asia as well as from Africa and Latin America have often acknowledged the applicability of the Chinese model of agricultural development--collectivization, agro-technology, village industry, etc.--to their respective nations, although their zeal to adopt the Chinese model has decreased in recent years. For instance, Blas Roca, the General Secretary of the People's Socialist Party of Cuba, was outspoken in praising the Chinese model. In the 1960 publication of Professor Peter Tang, it is stated that in Latin America alone over 20 books have been published by returning visitors from China. It appears that the Chinese have been doing a task that is impossible for the Russians to do, namely, creating common sympathy by inculcating the idea of amity among all former victims of "imperialism."[97]

---

[96]See Sidney Klein, "Recent Economic Experience in India and Communist China: Another Interpretation," The American Economic Review, May 1965.

[97]Peter S. H. Tang, Communist China as a Developmental Model for Underdeveloped Countries (Washington: The Research Institute of the Sino-Soviet Bloc, 1960), pp. 102-110.

The Chinese accomplishments under the "command economy" and "command politics" often created respect and admiration on the part of many of those who have toured China. This is understandable as they often compared them with the performance of the politically unstable pre-war China which in 1933 had hardly any savings.[98] Yet many of these observers appeared to be unaware of the cost or the alternatives that have been forgone.

Today, a good many developing nations have similar economic, though not political, goals as China, such as turning labor into capital, developing industries in the villages, increasing agricultural output and thereby maintaining autarky. However, it must be noted that the resemblance of these goals does not necessarily enhance the applicability of the Chinese model. To adopt the Chinese model of development in a country without the Chinese type of political leadership, organization and goals would be an invitation to failure.[99] Hence another limitation of the Chinese model.

---

[98] See Liu Ta-chung and Yeh Kung-chia, The Economy of the Chinese Mainland: National Income and Economic Development, 1933-1959, RAND Memo. Rm-3519-PR (Santa Monica, California: 1963), Table 8, p. 94, and Table 71, p. 355.

[99] Yuan-li Wu, The Economy of Communist China (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1965), p. 204.