

Dates of Meeting:

10-10-1954 – 31-10-1954

Type of Meeting:

4th National Mutual Aid and Cooperation Conference

Place of Meeting:

Beijing

Attendance:

This meeting was convened by the Central Rural Work Department

Major Agenda Items:**Speeches/Reports:**

Deng Zihui: October 29 Summary reports

"Next year is the year when the foundation for the greater development of cooperativization in the future will be laid. If the 600,000 APCs are really run well, if the foundation is well laid and a good example is set, then a massive development of cooperatives can be expected and it will be much easier to run them well.³ If not, then the situation will be quite different and we may end up rewriting the whole plan despite our reluctance [to do so]." "Therefore, the whole party must be cautious and conscientious in running the cooperatives well. We cannot afford to be careless or act hastily." "We are only allowed to do it well. We are neither allowed to spoil it nor allowed to come up with any waste [i.e., poorly run cooperatives] to make up the numbers." He further said that if we run 600,000 APCs well, this batch of rural socialist strongholds will be a basic position for drawing the middle peasants and poor peasants toward triumphing over village capitalism. If we consolidate this position and build well this foundation, and afterwards again advance steadily, then we can obtain twice the result for half the effort.

Deng Zihui earnestly warned the participants at the conference [against undue optimism]: "Now there is some blind optimism. Deceived by shouts of bravo from the lower ranks, people think that everything is going wonderfully and therefore develop an appetite for big plans. Accordingly, they raise [the target] at each level. This [sentiment] tends to lead to acting impetuously, committing coercion and commandism, and disrupting the course of the movement. On this point everyone should pay full attention. I ask comrades from all places to keep a sober mind so as to handle development plans realistically, to avoid increasing the target at each level, and to strive for advancing prudently and running the cooperatives well. In any case we won't backtrack."⁴ Meanwhile, he advised that they should not care only about establishing, to the neglect of consolidating, cooperatives. The goal of setting up cooperatives is after all to run them well and get them consolidated. He emphasized that cadres must become experts on [cooperative].

Other Decisions and/or Actions:

Agreement on the target of basically complete the transition to lower stage APCs (70-80% of the rural population) by the end of the 1st 5-year plan. In the 2nd 5-year plan the higher stage of corporatization will be pursued.

Revision of the target see meeting [02-04-1954](#). The target for 1955 is raised to 600,000 before the ploughing season.

- Decided that the number of coops would expand from 100,000 to 600,000 by the spring of 1955. The party approved the report of this conference, as reflected in Mao Zedong July 31, 1955, speech "On the Cooperative Transformation of Agriculture"
- Proposal of basic steps for the progress of socialist transformation of agriculture: 1st step to accomplish basically elementary cooperativization around 1957. These APC's were to be successively changed into higher stage cooperatives during the 2nd 5 year plan in different places at different times. During this stage, only elementary technological improvement and partially mechanized cultivation would be implemented. 2nd step large scale agricultural mechanization would be implemented over roughly the 3rd and 4th 5 year plan by equipping agriculture on the basis of the development of industry

The meeting carefully summarized the successful experience of agricultural mutual aid and cooperation, the main contents of which are:

First, it should be clearly affirmed that the semi-socialist cooperative system is the main form of the cooperative movement at the current stage. This primary form of cooperatives can not only guarantee increased production, but also suits the psychological requirements of small private farmers.

Second, we should continuously expand the socialist political advantages in the countryside and overcome the resistance of class enemies. The party's policies gained the active support of the poor peasants, and the middle peasants gradually moved closer, which began to isolate the rich peasants and weaken the influence of capitalism.

Third, carry forward the tradition of the mass line in the work. In rural work, the party has always maintained a good traditional style of the mass line, that is, strengthening the party's ideological mobilization among the masses and the work of cultivating activists.

Fourth, on the basis of mutual assistance and cooperation, we must achieve year-round preparations and develop the policy of community building in batches. That is: prepare throughout the year and develop in batches; prepare a batch, develop a batch, consolidate a batch, and prepare another batch.

The meeting pointed out that the class policy in the cooperative movement is to rely on the poor peasants (including all the new middle peasants who were originally poor peasants, so that the poor peasants account for 50%-70% of the total rural population), solidly unite the middle peasants;

Gradually restrict and finally eliminate the exploitation of rich peasants. Mutual assistance and cooperation must implement the principle of voluntariness and mutual benefit. At this stage, certain remuneration is still given to private land and farm animals, and when it needs to be converted into public, it must also adopt a slow-moving approach.

The meeting demanded that the party committee leading the rural work must shift the focus of rural work to the mutual aid and cooperation movement in a timely manner, and maintain centralized and specific leadership over the movement to ensure the movement's rapid and healthy development.

Remarks: