res which should be taken, especially in the cooperatives in hilly and mountainous zones, in order to improve the ratio between incomes from the collective economy and from the personal plots, and within 1964 present the results to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PLA for examination.

As we mentioned, our peasants also have income from work they do in the state sector, from pensions and other sources.

It can be taken for granted that in the future, too, the income which our peasantry secures from the state sector will continue to be an important source to improve its well-being. But our task is to have this income distributed as fairly as possible among the villages, indeed, even among families of the same village, avoiding a certain spontaneity that has existed up till now, as well as the trend that only some categories of people, who sometimes have less need than others, benefit from it. To this end, we should see to it that in assigning peasants to work in the state sector, we should always take into account the composition and the number of hands in the families, the needs they have, of course, without infringing the principle that all those who are sent to work outside their villages should be volunteers, and fully observing the regulations in force...

III

ON THE STANDARD OF LIVING AND WAY OF LIFE, CRAFTSMAN, COMMUNAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

So far we have spoken about work and production as the source of income, about income as the basis for raising well-being. Now let us see how this income is being used and whether it is being used as effectively as it should
be for raising the well-being and improving the way of life in the countryside.

The way of life and the services available constitute big and important social problems, which have to do directly with the further raising of the well-being in the countryside. However, sometimes a narrow and limited understanding of these problems and the role they play in the further socialist development of the countryside is observed. Sometimes it happens that the standard of living and way of life are conceived only as fulfilment of the needs for food. In some cases, this narrow concept has had the result that the party organizations and the organs of the state power have concentrated their attention mostly on the problem of production, while other important problems of the way of life and the rational use of the product produced have not been given the attention they deserve in their daily work.

In fact, the standard of living and the way of life is a very comprehensive notion which includes the economic, material and cultural conditions, communal, health, and craftsman services, in other words, all the socio-economic conditions which determine life in the countryside, in all its daily variety. There is no doubt that without raising these aspects of life in the countryside to a new and higher level, the rapid march forward towards the complete construction of the socialist society itself is unimaginable and inconceivable.

As we have already stressed, increased production constitutes the decisive factor for raising the well-being in the countryside. However, the way the material values are used, the way of life in the countryside, also plays an important role in this direction. The way of life exerts an influence encouraging increased production, because, by using the material values properly, by increasing the demands for a better life, the desire for work will be increased,
and there will be greater efforts to raise production and ensure as much income as possible.

Under the old feudal-bourgeois order the standard of living in the countryside was very low. The overwhelming majority of the peasantry suffered from lack of food, and food constituted the fundamental demand of its whole way of life. Many were the peasants, who, in order to get a few kilograms of maize, or a little salt or kerosene, had to spend whole days travelling to the town to buy them at speculative prices. At that time, depicting the tragic situation of the peasantry, our distinguished poet Migjeni wrote: «A grain of maize is a grain of pain, when there is much hunger and no maize at all... Today the first word the children prattle is not the name of god, but 'Maizel Maizel!', that is the word of the day, the synonym for life...»* In the old village, it was the church and the mosque, the feudal landowner's palace, and the clan chief's fortress which predominated, while the masses of the peasantry lived in lowly huts and cottages, breeding places for disease and epidemics which wrought havoc, taking a heavy toll of life among the people.

The deep revolutionary transformations carried out in the political, economic, social and cultural fields have raised the standard of living of the peasantry, too, beyond any comparison with the past. Now new, previously unknown requirements of life have emerged in the countryside. Today the village demands more electric light, radios, bicycles, sewing-machines, household equipment, beautiful clothing, and many other things. The look of the old village is receding further and further beyond the horizon, remaining only as a bitter memory of the past. Today, along with the new houses, schools, houses of culture, creches and kindergartens for the children, clinics and health cen-

* Migjeni, Selected Works, p. 114, Tirana 1969 (Alb. ed.).
tres, streets and gardens are being rapidly built in order to make the life of our new village better, happier and more beautiful.

The banning of buying and selling of land and the collectivization of agriculture to a large degree liberated the peasant from his old outlook on property so that he uses his income to raise his well-being. The phenomenon when peasants strove for years on end to save money to buy a plot of land and other means of production, and as often as not became slaves of the money-lender, has disappeared.

Now the correctness of the policy pursued by the Party in resolving the agrarian problem can be seen more clearly than ever. Life has completely confirmed that the road followed by the Yugoslav revisionists and their disciples on this question has brought them the preservation of capitalist relations in the countryside, the further ruin and impoverishment of the labouring peasantry. On the contrary, the wise policy of our Party has led to the triumph of socialism in the countryside and the continuous raising of the well-being of the peasantry.

The talks held with the peasants during the consultation with the people once again showed the correctness and wisdom of the policy the Party has followed in prohibiting the buying and selling of land. An old peasant from Vlora explained the improvement of his life in these very significant words: «Today we work and earn. The Party gave us everything we needed. Then what should we do with our money? Of course, we shall eat and drink better, will be better clothed and shod, and will even build new houses.»

Nevertheless, the discussing of the problem of the well-being in the countryside brought to light a number of problems, for the solution of which great work has to be done in the future.

What are some of these problems?
First, the socialist mode of production has triumphed in the countryside, while the way of life of the peasantry has lagged behind. The demands of the peasantry for improvement in its way of life are still limited and the mentality of «being satisfied with little» prevails. This does not urge the peasantry to extensive participation in work and slows the development of the forces of production in agriculture.

Second, in many cases, the rates of increase of income in kind and in money are higher than the rate of improvement in its administration to improve the way of life. The great backwardness inherited from past centuries and the old outlook on the way of life have had a strong influence in this disproportion.

Third, there are great differences in the way of life among villages and areas of the same district, and among districts themselves, which have almost equal incomes.

Fourth, socialist trade, communal services, craftsman and health services, although greatly developed in comparison with the past, still exert insufficient influence on the improvement of the way of life in the countryside, since their activity does not properly reflect the new demands on the fulfilment of which the change of the way of life is heavily dependent.

The successful overcoming of these contradictions will certainly lead to a further rise of the well-being and improvement of the way of life in the countryside. Of course, this requires time, requires further improvement in the work of the party organizations and the state organs so that the desire to live better and in a more cultured way and to make a more correct and thrifty use of its income becomes more deeply implanted in the consciousness of the peasantry.

Therefore, along with increased efforts from the peasantry for more income, the education of the peasantry to raise its demands concerning the way of life and better
administration of its income are very important problems at the present stage of the socialist development of the countryside. It is our duty to take all the necessary measures of an educational and organizational character, in order that these problems are more widely reflected in the daily work of the Party, the state and mass organizations, so that they are felt as a vital need by the masses of the peasantry themselves.

I. — WE MUST RAISE THE STANDARD OF LIVING AND IMPROVE THE WAY OF LIFE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Among the basic problems of the standard of living and way of life, which occupy an important place in this major question, the quantity of food-stuffs used per head, the way they are prepared and the structure of the diet, the quantity of industrial goods used per head and the manner of dressing, the equipping of the house with the necessary furniture, the manner of sleeping, etc., should be mentioned.

Today in our country there are villages and entire zones in which the changes made in the above-mentioned aspects of the way of life over these 18 years are beyond all comparison with the past. Such, for example, are the villages of the Devoll region and the Korça plain, the villages of Gjirokastra, those of the Saranda and Vlora coast, of Shupenza and Maqellara in Peshkopia, of the Shkodra plain, etc., where the way they eat, their clothing and footwear, the way they sleep, as well as other aspects of daily life are not much different from the way of life in the city. I mentioned only a few zones, but there are others like these in other districts as well, and in general, the advance made in the way of life during the years of the people's power has affected all the villages.
A confirmation of the above-mentioned changes is the turn-over in retail sales of consumer goods. In the consumer cooperatives alone, which mainly serve the countryside, they have risen from 4 billion 800 million leks in 1955, to 7 billion 200 million leks in 1961, or 50 per cent more. At the same time, the structure of goods used in the countryside has also changed very much. Along with the traditional articles of mass consumption, more and more new industrial goods are being introduced in the countryside. Of course, an important factor in this direction has been the policy of the Party in the field of production and import of mass consumer goods, as well as the systematic lowering of their prices. With regard to this we mention the effect of only one of the measures which have helped increase the consumption of goods in the countryside: since the year 1956, 7 general reductions of prices have been made. As a result, in 1961 the prices of the mass consumer goods sold to the peasantry were 31 per cent lower than those of the same articles in 1956.

But the further improvement of the way of life in the countryside requires that the income of the peasant family must be used better and more correctly, and the structure of articles which the village consumes must be improved. On the spot studies show that expenditure for food and industrial goods takes 90-95 per cent of the income of the budget of the peasant family. Therefore, a rational administration of income for this purpose has special importance, and one of the reserves for a further improvement of the way of life should be sought in the improvement of the structure of this expenditure.

Now we shall concentrate on some of the main problems linked with the standard of living and way of life in the countryside...

The new conditions created in the countryside call for a more profound understanding of the task with which the
organs of production and trade are charged in improving the way of life of the peasantry. The time has come to put an end to the shortcomings observed in this direction and the party and state organs must seriously tackle the problem of the further development of trade and the production of the goods necessary for the countryside.

The consumer cooperatives, as economic organizations of the peasantry, should not concentrate their work entirely in the field of the exchange of goods between town and countryside. They should be always seeking and finding the most suitable forms of work to help their members in improving their way of life, too. To this end, it would be reasonable for the consumer cooperatives to help their members in the processing and preserving of agricultural and livestock products, either by taking over this task themselves, or by giving the members technical assistance in return for a given compensation in kind or in money. Besides this, the consumer cooperatives could help the women's organization or the village women themselves organize sewing, cooking, or housekeeping courses, by providing the technical staff and the necessary teaching equipment for these courses; they could organize film shows for the cooperative members and their families, and so on. In order to be able to carry out these tasks, the consumer cooperatives could use the funds they create for culture, or perhaps part of their profits. Such measures and others like these will link the cooperative members more closely with the cooperative and help to increase its organizational strength.

It is indisputable that the complete building of socialism in our country must necessarily be accompanied by the further improvement of the way country people dress and a radical change in their sleeping habits. This, of course, will take some years, but even now we must take a series of measures, both of an immediate and of a perspective character, of an educational and administrative character,
which will ensure that all party organizations and state organs at the centre or the base, without exception, take up these problems and activate the entire peasantry for their solution. To this end, apart from the all-round measures which the districts themselves must take, the following tasks must be born in mind:

First, work must be done to encourage the peasantry to increase its use of industrial goods. For this problem to be taken in hand better by the state organs and not to be left to spontaneity, within this year tasks should be set for the organs of production and trade to provide the market with new, simple goods, at reasonable prices, which are better adapted to the needs of the countryside, such as furniture and timber products, household equipment, enamel and glass ware, clothing, etc. Amongst these tasks, measures should be envisaged, also, to restrict the trade in goods that help maintain unsuitable habits of dress, and to replace the felt which the peasantry produces with types of industrial felt.

Second, it should be considered an important action of the party organizations and state organs to persuade the peasants not to sleep on the floor, to restrict to the maximum the custom of several couples sleeping in the one room, and to get livestock removed from the houses. Within the coming two-three years the party committees and executive committees of people's councils of the districts must take such measures as to completely solve these problems, and within 1966 they should report to the Central Committee of the Party about the fulfilment of these tasks.

Third, the Party and state organs and the mass organizations should draw up a 3-4 year plan for the creation of model villages. This movement should be spread on the basis of the preliminary work of persuasion, of the income of each family, and of the possibilities it has to make investments in furnishing its house, etc.
Employed at many production centres of our country, such as mines, construction sites, irrigation projects, etc., there are thousands of workers whose families are in the countryside. This has not only helped to improve the living conditions of these workers, but has, at the same time, had an influence on raising the well-being of their families who live and work in the countryside. Hence, these workers should exert an even greater influence on their families to improve their way of life and to introduce into the life of the village everything valuable that they learn at the work centres.

II. — WE MUST INTRODUCE COMMUNAL AND CRAFTSMAN SERVICES MORE DEEPLY INTO THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

Communal and craftsman services occupy a special place in the whole way of life in the countryside. It is difficult to achieve rapid and all-round progress in the life of the countryside without at the same time developing various kinds of services, especially those related to building, electric power, trees and gardens, roads and drainage, communications and craftsman services. The expansion of these services not only creates the necessary conditions for a more comfortable and cultured life in the countryside, but is also an important factor in saving time and freeing women from many tiring household chores.

In the past, the economic backwardness of our countryside was made even worse by the almost total lack of communal and craftsman services. The building of villages was left completely to spontaneity. The primitive house with earthen floor and often without windows or chimneys prevailed in them. Nobody thought about the roads, drainage, or drinking water, let alone electricity. Instead of plots of
green, everywhere in the village and around every house you ran into thorn-bush hedges.

Today the face of our village has changed a great deal. Within a relatively short period, from 1951 to 1961, apart from buildings for production and those of a social and cultural character, 55,500 new houses have been built, 300 villages have been electrified, and hundreds of new motor-roads have been opened, linking even the most remote regions and villages of our Homeland. Efforts have been made to build villages according to a plan, to plant trees and gardens which beautify them. All this has invigorated the life in the countryside and made it more beautiful and pleasant.

The problems of the communal and craftsman services in the countryside are many, but we shall restrict ourselves to some of the more important issues which are raised by the socialist development of the country at the present stage.

1. - WE MUST BUILD BETTER AND MAKE OUR SOCIALIST COUNTRYSIDE MORE BEAUTIFUL

In considering the question of new buildings in the countryside, the following main problems present themselves: drawing up the general design for each village, even a rough one, producing standard designs of houses, production or socio-cultural buildings, ensuring building materials, and the forms of carrying out the building work.

Up till now, building in the countryside in general has been carried out in a haphazard way, wherever each family wanted, without any defined overall scheme or guiding plan for the placing and future expansion of the village. Even those few sketch plans which have been drawn have been incomplete and not in conformity with the guidelines laid down by the central organs of the state power. Thus,
instead of the 400-500 square metres allotted to each dwell-
ing-house, up to 1,200 square metres have been envisaged. The building of the best houses on the outskirts has been permitted, while storesheds and stables have been built in the centre. It is also to be deplored that from lack of care and control, new constructions, sports grounds, and brick kilns, in many cases have occupied the best agricultural land. These shortcomings have marred the appearance of the village, have hindered its concentration, and led to waste of agricultural land, which is already very limited.

In many villages and various areas of such districts as Korça, Vlora, Peshkopia, Saranda, the new houses have been built with two storeys, large windows, with floors and ceilings. This is a good thing since it saves space, makes for better and cheaper, cleaner and more hygienic houses, and a more beautiful village. But many houses and other new projects are still not built according to the conditions and the demands of the time. There are cases where the houses are all of one type, with two rooms and a porch, without floors and ceilings, with small windows and with animals being kept in or near them. Such buildings are unsuitable since they lack the necessary conditions for hygiene and habitation, lack adequate ventilation, are damp and difficult to heat...

As is known, the possibility of expanding building in volume and value depends to a large extent on the quantity, the kinds of building materials, and the way they are procured. Of course, this is not a new problem. The Party has long been strongly emphasizing that both in the town, and especially in the countryside, local resources and cheaper, light materials should be used in building, first of all. But what occurs in fact? In many cases buildings in the countryside are still going up in heavy, costly materials, building with cane and sun-dried brick is not known or used to the proper extent, and timber, which is very costly and in
short supply, is used for roofing. The agricultural cooperatives, in general, have not organized local production of building materials and are compelled to procure them far from their villages, very often in other districts, incurring heavy expenditure.

Building work in the countryside is organized in different forms. Many agricultural cooperatives have set up building teams which serve the cooperative and its members. However, the organization of building in the countryside still has shortcomings. In most cases the building teams are made up of old men, and nothing is done to train young tradesmen. Sometimes building work is done with tradesmen from other districts.

The new buildings which have gone up in the village have improved its appearance. But it is clear that the overall appearance of the village is not determined by the buildings alone. It depends to a great extent on other factors, such as the streets, drainage, trees, parks and gardens.

Now in almost every district you will find spic and span villages, beautified with trees and gardens, where, as a result of the care shown by the villagers themselves, the houses are whitewashed, surrounded by gardens with trees and flowers, while the yards and roads are paved with cobblestones...

But while touching on this problem, I must stress that, despite all the work done, the local organs of the state and the people's councils of the villages, in particular, are still concerning themselves very little with building or with beautifying their villages, planting trees and gardens, looking after the streets and drainage disposal. As a result of this shortcoming, in certain villages of the Shkodra, Elbasan and Berat districts the problems of maintenance of the countryside have not been given due importance, and there is lack of greenery, beautification and drainage, the streets are generally bad, rough and unpaved.
At this stage of the country's development, the task of building our socialist village better and making it more beautiful is more important than ever. In order to carry out this task, these main questions should be borne in mind:

First, the central communal problem for the future development of the village is the problem of establishing a detailed overall plan, and where such a thing is impossible, there should at least be a sort of rough plan. This problem remains still unsolved. Therefore, it is necessary that within 1964, the relevant instructions should be issued and the time schedule, order and criteria defined for the final solution of this problem. In drawing up the overall plans these basic criteria should be kept in mind: the prospects of the development of villages, and this is linked with the unification of cooperatives, the maximum saving of the fund of arable land, the defining of an area in the centre of each village in which all the buildings of the socio-cultural institutions and the trade network should be concentrated, the fixing of places for sports grounds, ensuring supplies of drinking water, etc. This work should begin first in the enlarged agricultural cooperatives, and then be extended to other cooperatives and villages.

Second, to make for more beautiful, comfortable and cheaper types of building, in the countryside, state organs are recommended to approve within 1964 a number of standard designs of comfortable and beautiful houses, as well as of production and social and cultural buildings for mountainous, hilly and lowland areas respectively, taking account of the climatic conditions and the sources of building materials available in each area.

Third, in order to handle the question of the external appearance of the villages in a more correct and organized way, the people's councils, guided by the executive committees and led by the party committees, each year, beginn-
ing from 1964, should draft a concrete program of the work to be carried out for the beautification of their own villages, for the repairing and paving of internal streets, the construction and maintenance of drainage systems. This program should be based entirely on local actions, mobilizing all the internal reserves and resources of the villages themselves.

2. - WE MUST SPREAD ELECTRIC LIGHT, ENSURE DRINKING WATER, AND EXTEND OTHER COMMUNAL SERVICES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Our Party has devoted special attention to the distribution and use of electricity in the countryside. Electrification and the level of consumption of electric power are one of the most important indices of the rise in the standard of living and cultural level in the countryside. For this reason, the Central Committee of the PLA has approved a perspective study on the electrification of the countryside by the year 1985.6

On the basis of this orientation given by the Central Committee of the Party, some results have been achieved. Today, more than 23,000 houses in the countryside are supplied with electricity. But since we mentioned the results, it must also be said that some districts are lagging behind with regard to the distribution of electricity in the countryside and have not made use of all the possibilities they have had in this direction.

6 Proceeding from the instruction of the 5th Congress of the PLA on the rapid, all-round development of the countryside, following the complete collectivization of the mountain areas in 1966, in December 1967 the plenum the CC of the PLA decided to complete the electrification of all villages in the country 14 years earlier than envisaged in the original plan, on the 30th anniversary of the founding of the PLA, on November 8, 1971. This decision was carried out as early as October 1970, i.e., one year ahead of schedule.
The general orientation should be that the electrification of the villages should be achieved by building small hydro-power stations for individual villages or groups of villages, since hydro-resources exist in the majority of our villages, or can be created by digging canals, or building small reservoirs. At the same time we stress that the mechanical power of these resources should not be used to produce electric power only, but in complex, for irrigation, for saw-mills, flour-mills, and for other purposes.

In order that the electrification in the countryside can be carried out according to the time schedule set by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, each year the state organs must plan to import the necessary equipment, while with our own forces, we must expand the production of small turbines and spread more widely the use of clay, timber and ferro-concrete pipes, being as sparing as possible with steel pipes and other imported materials. Along with this, the executive committees and the people's councils of districts should take measures to ensure better administration and use of the power stations existing in the countryside.

Water is one of the most important elements for the life of man. At present, the peasantry is supplied with drinking water through almost 11,000 springs and fountains, 4,600 artesian wells, besides thousands of bucket wells. In general, care for the maintenance and expansion of these resources has steadily increased.

Nevertheless, the supply of drinking water for the villages remains one of the main communal problems over which the party organizations and the local organs of state power should show great concern. It is a fact that the existing sources of drinking water do not meet the needs of the rural population, and on the other hand, the maintenance of them is very primitive. Often the wells, fountains and springs are not isolated with walls of stone or cement to protect the drinking water from the surrounding en-
environment, thus becoming a source of infection and disease. While the drinking water supply in the mountain villages is more or less satisfactory, in the villages of the plains the situation is not good. Most of the lowland villages are supplied with river water, which, being used without any strict control, represents a health risk for the people. Whereas there is a very strict regime in the cities for the protection of water supply systems, the disinfection and bacteriological analysis of the water, nothing is done about these problems in the village, and what is more, it has become a habit that nobody is responsible for them.

At a time when, as we mentioned above, a prospective study on the electrification of the countryside exists, there is almost nothing definite about supplying the villages with drinking water. Considering the great importance of this problem and with the aim of getting ahead of it, a comprehensive study must be undertaken, and on this basis, a perspective program should be drafted, giving priority to the lowland villages. This program should be drafted and approved within 1965.

In order to avoid the danger of infection and the spread of disease in the countryside through polluted drinking water, as an immediate measure, repeated bacteriological checks should be made of it, while also carrying out disinfection measures, and so on. This work should be organized and directed by the bacteriological centres of districts.

With regard to the communal services in the countryside, the problems of fuel supplies, flour-mills, and funeral services also require attention. The problem of fuel for our countryside has been discussed several times by the Central Committee of the Party and the relevant tasks have been defined. Now it remains to get on with the job of putting them into practice... In regard to flour-mills, it would be a good thing to plan the production of hammer mills...
In many villages, graves are scattered at random, near houses, without fences, and in some cases they are placed in personal gardens. For this reason the respective local organs of state power should be instructed to fix the place for new burials within the year 1963 and allow no burial outside this place. At the same time village people’s councils should also think about the undertaker service.

3. - WE MUST EXPAND THE NETWORK OF ROADS AND COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN TOWN AND COUNTRYSIDE AND BETWEEN VILLAGES

The improvement and expansion of the network of roads and communications between town and countryside and between villages is an important factor for the further development of the agricultural economy, for bringing the village nearer to the town, and assists in the creation of better material and living conditions in the countryside.

The process of the construction of socialism has also included the expansion of the communication network in the countryside. The number of localities and villages linked with the town through highways, built by the state and with actions by the peasants themselves, has been increasing from one year to another.

Although a great deal of work has been done, we are still far from the final solution of this problem. There are villages which are not yet linked with motor-roads or even secondary roads. Very often, especially in the lowland areas, the roads have been created spontaneously, with many bends around the boundaries of private property. Part of the roads are in bad condition and unusable since no attention is paid to their maintenance.

Therefore this problem must be taken in hand by the party and state organs, and special studies and programs carried out with the aim that this problem should be
solved in general within the next 10-15 years. Certainly, this great and difficult problem cannot be solved successfully without a broad mobilization of the peasantry. Perhaps it might be reasonable to entrust the building of roads to the youth organizations, which in the past have made a valuable contribution in this field. In deciding the course and construction of new roads, the army, also, can and should help with topographers, engineers, etc...

Another important question related to the rapid solution of the problems of improving life in the countryside is also the further extension of the post and telegraph network. In comparison with the past, the results, achieved in this direction are very encouraging. Today all localities have post offices and telegraph and telephone services, and many agricultural cooperatives are linked with the telephone. However, the perspective development of the countryside demands a further expansion of this service. Apart from this we should see to it that internal telephone connections are established between the villages of the enlarged cooperatives. On the other hand, for the expansion of the post and telegraph services, the relevant organs should be charged with the drawing up of a detailed prospective program, envisaging the connection of most of the villages with the telephone network by 1980-1985. Finally, in order to improve the post and telegraph services in the countryside and to enhance the sense of responsibility of this institution in the delivery of mail, the couriers of localities should become post office employees again, as in the past.

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7 The extension of the telephone network to all the villages of the Republic was completed in 1974, 10 years ahead of schedule.
4. - WE MUST EXTEND CRAFTSMAN SERVICES TO THE MOST REMOTE VILLAGES

The countryside is in daily need of various craftsman services, which are connected with the needs of production, socio-cultural needs, as well as with the needs of the peasant families themselves. For these reasons, the extension of craftsman services should be considered an indispensable condition for the improvement of the way of life in the countryside.

In the recent years, especially since the collectivization of agriculture, based on the decisions of the Central Committee of the Party, satisfactory work has been done to set up and extend the various production activities, repair services and handicrafts in the countryside. Parallel with the co-operated, private and cottage handicrafts, the handicrafts of the agricultural cooperatives have emerged and are being extended.

At the present period it is essential that the handicrafts of agricultural cooperatives should be strengthened and extended even more. So far, the handicraft sectors which are linked with the needs of production, such as smithies, carpenters' shops, etc., are more or less developed in the agricultural cooperatives. Of course, this is a good thing, and it must be encouraged. But the agricultural cooperatives should also be thinking about other handicraft services in which we are more backward. As a rule, our peasants everywhere are compelled to come to town to have even the simplest garments sewn, to get their hair cut, or to have their shoes repaired. Therefore the time has come for some agricultural cooperatives gradually, according to their conditions, to begin to set up various service sectors such as footwear repair shops, dressmaking and tailoring shops, etc.

The further extension of craftsman services in agricultural cooperatives cannot be achieved without securing the
necessary specialists. Since the training of village craftsmen by sending craftsmen from the town is not giving results, it would be reasonable for the agricultural cooperatives, acting on the basis of plans drawn up by executive committees, to send, at their own expense, trainees to the handicrafts cooperatives or the state enterprises to learn various trades.

Independently of these measures, the co-operated handicrafts should continue to help the countryside. Within 5-6 years, we should have managed to set up or extend repair and service departments covering all specialities, in all the centres of localities, which meet the needs of the rural population. Apart from this, from time to time, the co-operated handicrafts must organize the sending of mobile brigades of various craftsmen to the countryside.

The consultation with the people brought to light that there have been many complaints made, of more or less the same nature, about the problems of building and communal services in the countryside. This shows that, with regard to these problems, the situation is the same everywhere. It seems that here we have to do not just with shortcomings of the comrades in the countryside, although of course, these do exist to a certain extent. This state of things is perhaps explained, first of all, with the fact that there has been a lack of conscious and organized guidance of these problems from the top down to the village, and that the proper attention has not been given to them. In short, the leading role and activity of the state organs in the problems of communal services and building in the countryside have scarcely been felt.

Now that the collectivization of the agriculture has been completed in general, and we are facing new tasks in the socialist development of the countryside, the problems of construction and communal services should be taken in hand by the organs of state power, from the centre
to the base. In so many years both the knowledge and experience in regard to the problems of communal services and building has been accumulated and it must be applied by the organs of state power in the countryside as well.

To this end the competent state organs must be charged with completing, within 1963, a study about the best way of reorganizing the communal sector at the centre and the base, which will ensure the management of problems of communal services and building in the countryside. Here, the competences of the village communal sector, the cadres required, the method of planning and the scale of participation of the state through its funds for the solution of these problems in the countryside should be clearly defined. This study should also examine the possibility that in the future the village will draw up its own plan and budget for all the matters of communal services, in which the needs, the expenditure, the possibilities and resources to cope with them should be envisaged.

III. — WE MUST ORGANIZE THE HEALTH SERVICE TO THE LEVEL OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FURTHER IMPROVEMENT OF WELL-BEING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The well-being of the people is meaningless without the protection of their health. The health situation of a people depends not only on the level of their economic development, but on many other factors, such as the concern of the state over this question, the level of culture and, on the whole, the way of life. Naturally, the organization of the health service in the countryside plays a special role in this direction.

The centuries-old backwardness which we inherited from the past could not fail to be accompanied by grave
consequences for the state of health of the peasantry. Many diseases such as malaria, typhoid, syphilis and rickets had become chronic afflictions of the peasantry, crushed it physically, and made it feeble and incapable of work. The protection of its health was left entirely to chance.

Faced with this situation, the Party and the state had to take urgent and comprehensive measures. For this reason, immediately after Liberation, the health service was organized on entirely new foundations and given a marked prophylactic character. For the first time the state was engaged in an organized way in the liquidation of many infectious and epidemic diseases.

The aid the peasantry receives today is beyond any comparison with the past. From the 14 out-patient clinics in 1938, today there are 746 of them, not including the 32 maternity homes, 28 hospitals and 9 dental clinics. With the expansion of the network of health institutions in the countryside, the medical staff working in them has also increased continuously. Today 47 doctors, 144 assistant-doctors, 86 midwives and 580 nurses work in the village health institutions. With the measures taken for the further increase of medical cadres, in 1966 there will be 230 doctors, 324 assistant doctors, 700 midwives and 825 nurses working in the countryside. Apart from these cadres, great help is given the peasantry by the doctors and other health service personnel working in the district centres.

Our peasantry receives out-patient medical aid, treatment of infectious diseases, tuberculosis, and tumours, as well as qualified obstetrical assistance, free of charge. Children up to the age of four years are treated free of charge in the health institutions, while those up to one year get medicines prescribed for home treatment free of charge.

The effect of the measures taken by the Party to protect the health of the peasantry is apparent in the demographic
data, which are a reflection of the life of each people. In 1961 as against 1938, the principal demographic figures for the villages of the entire country were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1961</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total for the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countryside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Births per 1,000 inhabitants</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths per 1,000 inhabitants</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural growth per 1,000 inhabitants</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures show that the countryside has made great progress in comparison with the average of the entire country in 1938. On this basis, a very much more rapid natural growth of the population has been ensured, from 16.9 per thousand for the whole country in 1938, to 34.1 per thousand in 1961, or twice as much in the countryside alone, while the average life expectancy in our country today is above 62 years.

While, in general, we have achieved great successes in the protection of health in the countryside, the fact that in regard to deaths, especially among children aged less than 1 year and from 1 to 4 years, there are still perceptible discrepancies between town and countryside, cannot fail to attract our attention...

The health organs should take such measures as to ensure a radical improvement of their work in the coun-
trayside. In cooperation with party organs, the local organs of state power, the mass organizations and the Red Cross, they should intensify the propaganda to raise the level of health education in the village, to consolidate the prophylactic character of the health service, as well as to extend it further.

In the future we should gradually, but resolutely, narrow the gap which exists between town and countryside in the level of the health service. Therefore, in the work for the preservation of the health of the peasantry we should strengthen the health institutions in the countryside, dealing in town only with the cases that need more difficult specialized medical treatment. In this way, the medical service will be brought closer to the patient in the countryside as well.

To attain this aim it is necessary for the health service in the countryside to be organized in a way more in conformity with the times and with our requirements and possibilities. In this sense, basing ourselves on the present health network, we must work towards setting up a medical centre for each group of villages, especially in the remote regions, which will be the nucleus of the health service and will be gradually equipped with the necessary means to carry out more highly qualified work. It is desirable that within the year 1964 the state organs should carry out a special study on this question, envisaging the gradual setting up of these centres, in conformity with the possibilities permitted by the state plan or the contribution the agricultural cooperatives themselves may make.

The principal tasks of these centres must be: First, they should spread health education among the mass of the peasants; teach them the most suitable ways of eating, dressing and sleeping, and of protecting themselves from illness, and implanting in them the conviction that they must seek the doctor’s aid in time. They should carry
out this major job together with the best activists of the village, by organizing courses, conferences, various demonstrations, etc.

Second, through their diagnostic work they should study the causes of the most widespread diseases in the village and then organize an effective struggle against them.

To cope with the major tasks connected with the health service in the countryside, greater numbers of able doctors should be sent to the village. It would be much better to have a doctor for each group of villages than to receive all the patients at the city hospitals. Therefore a more correct proportion in the distribution of doctors in town and countryside must be established by sending doctors first and foremost to those regions where the frequency of diseases and deaths is greatest.

Apart from these measures, in order to assist the peasantry even more in the protection of their health, beginning from January 1, 1964, the fees the peasants pay today for treatment in the health institutions will be cancelled. The adoption of this measure once again shows the concern of the Party for the protection and strengthening of the health of the working peasantry. Such measures can be adopted only there where the people are in power, where everything is done for their benefit. This measure and others adopted previously by the Party and the people's power in the field of health protection are among the great victories of our working people, which the workers of even the most advanced capitalist countries in the world can only dream about.

But the improvement of the organization of the health service in the countryside would not yield the desired results if it were not accompanied with the raising of the work for the dissemination of health culture to a higher level. The health propaganda must be aimed at the improvement of hygiene, at the care of parents for raising their children, at
acquainting the population with the danger of infective diseases and the manner of combating them. In this work the main role must be played by the medical cadres who should concentrate all their social activity in this direction. But it is self-evident that the raising of the level of health culture is not a task for the medical cadres alone. The organizations of women, the Front, the youth, the Red Cross, all of them, without exception, should be involved in this problem.

Comrades,

The analysis of problems connected with the standard of living and way of life, communal, craftsman and health services in the countryside shows that we have made great strides forward in the elimination of the centuries-old backwardness inherited from the past. In this field, our program for the future is great. The complete construction of the material-technical base of socialism will inevitably lead to raising well-being in the countryside to a new, higher level. The fulfilment of the tasks of the 3rd Five-year Plan will mark another victory in this direction.

But, as is known, the tasks set in the program of the Party for raising well-being in the countryside during the 3rd Five-year Plan period are big ones. The study of this problem revealed a series of shortcomings and contradictions which arise from our rapid advance and which can and must be overcome. But for this to become reality, the conscious activity of the Party, the peasantry and all the working masses of the country must be mobilized.

We should keep well in mind that the implementation of the decision of the 4th Congress of the Party on the further improvement of the well-being of our people is largely dependent on its being carried out first of all in the countryside, where the bulk of the population works
and lives, where 45 per cent of the national income is realized, and where the level of well-being is lower than that in town. This then, is the reason that we must tackle much more thoroughly and courageously these problems, from the things which may appear small to the biggest ones, because in this way our whole overall cause will be carried forward.

IV

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

So far we have made a general analysis of one aspect, the main aspect of the problem of raising the well-being of the working masses of the countryside, that of improving their material well-being. Now we need to dwell on the other aspect of the problem, on its second aspect, that of enriching the spiritual state of those masses, of raising their educational and cultural level. These two aspects constitute one whole, are closely linked in a dialectical way, and influence each other reciprocally. The material well-being is the basis for raising the educational and cultural level, but the latter might help or hinder the further raising of the material well-being. Because how can the fulfilment of the above-mentioned tasks, the further development of the forces of production, the increase of incomes, the improvement of the way of life, the introduction of the new into the countryside, be conceived without the necessary knowledge and culture? That is why, since the very beginning, after the triumph of the people's revolution and along with the struggle for the great revolutionary economic transformations, the Party launched the slogan of and began the struggle for the development of the cultural
revolution. Proceeding from the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and the reality of our country, utilizing the ancient cultural-educational traditions of our people, which it enriched and raised ever higher, and basing itself on the boundless thirst of our people for education and culture and their iron determination to achieve them, the Party set about the work with full consciousness, with courage and unshakeable confidence that everything would work out well. And as always, the Party triumphed. Today we all are witnesses to the colossal achievements in this field.

It is well known that, due to the age-old oppression and the anti-popular obscurantist regimes which deliberately strove to keep the people in darkness, we inherited very great backwardness in the field of education and culture, especially in the countryside. More than 90 per cent of the peasant population was illiterate. In 1938 there were elementary schools in only 529 villages, or one fifth of the villages of Albania. For this reason, only one quarter of the children of school age attended elementary schools in the countryside. The sons and daughters of peasants who received secondary schooling could be counted on one's fingers. In the whole of Albania, at a time when there were hundreds of mosques, churches and tekkes, there was not a single cultural institution in the countryside.

But the implementation of the program of the Party made it possible, in an historically short period, to carry out a thorough-going all-sided cultural revolution, along with and on the basis of the great political, economic and social transformations. This revolution, which swept the whole country, raised the cultural and educational level of the peasant population and exerted its influence in changing their world-outlook and mentality.

As a result of these achievements, illiteracy was wiped out among the young and the bulk of the adult population in the countryside. Compulsory elementary schooling was
fully achieved throughout the country. Starting from nothing, a broad network of 7-year schools was set up, in which 75 per cent of the village pupils who had completed elementary school enrolled this year, while in certain districts, like those of Gjirokastra, Saranda, Fier and Durrës, this figure is as high as 90 to 95 per cent. This year 56 per cent of the pupils who had completed their 7-year schooling in the countryside were enrolled in the general or vocational secondary schools, and this is a brilliant victory of our cultural revolution. Now the doors of the higher schools have been flung wide open to the sons and daughters of the peasantry. At the same time, thousands of village boys and girls, as well as men and women, are attending part-time schools. Thanks to all these achievements, now one person out of every five in the countryside is attending school regularly.

While carrying out the communist education of the younger generation, our school has served and is serving as an important centre for the introduction and dissemination of the new in the life of the countryside in general, and in the way of life in particular. It is linking itself ever more closely with all aspects of the life of the people.

But besides schools, a broad network of other cultural institutions has been created, a mass amateur cultural-artistic and physical culture movement is developing in the countryside, and newspapers, the radio, books, films, and other means of ideological and cultural education are entering village life in ever increasing proportions.

The deep-going cultural revolution that is being carried out has released the energies and talents of the peasant and has further increased his thirst and love for culture. It has brought about great changes in the spiritual life of the peasantry, which is being freed from the heavy burden of ignorance, from prejudices and superstitions. The peasant woman is breathing more freely. A start has been made on
reducing the gulf in the educational-cultural development between town and countryside. All these things have exerted their influence in changing the peasant's way of life.

The great achievements of the cultural revolution in the countryside have been attained thanks to the correct line and leadership of the Party, to the all-round help our socialist state has given the countryside for the solution of this vital problem, as well as to the material contribution and the all-round interest of our progressive peasantry itself in gaining education.

I. — WE MUST RAISE THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL AND THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE PEASANTRY STILL HIGHER

The problems of education are many-sided and the 4th Congress of the Party has clearly defined the tasks for their solution. Therefore, here we shall dwell on those problems of education which have a direct influence on the development and all-round socio-cultural progress of the countryside, the further raising of the educational level of the younger generation and the whole rural population, the further improvement of the way of life in the countryside.

It must be said that, despite the colossal results we have achieved in the extension of education in the countryside, despite the rapidity at which they have been achieved, and although the trend of further development in this direction is constantly upwards, right now we have many unresolved problems and unutilized reserves. The network of existing schools in the countryside does not fully respond to the ever growing demands of the rural population for education. There are marked disproportions in school attendance between boys and girls, men and women. Likewise, there are disproportions in the extension of 7-year schooling among the different districts, within the
districts themselves, between the lowlands and the highlands, between the numbers who commence 7-year schooling and those who complete it. At the same time, the broad network of elementary and 7-year schools which we have in the countryside is very little used for the organization of part-time schooling for the village youth and the relatively younger men and women. Concrete knowledge of these problems and of the unutilized possibilities is an indispensable condition for defining the necessary measures for solving the problems and for the proper mobilization of the organs of education and the teachers, the party organizations and local administrations, social organizations and all the peasantry in this work.

Now we are starting the transition from compulsory universal 7-year schooling to 8-year schooling, which will be completed in four or five years in the city. At the same time we have set the task that we must extend it all over the country within the next ten years. This is the most important step in the development of the people's education and the cultural revolution in general, and especially, the greatest achievement of our peasantry in the field of education and culture. Within this decade every country boy or girl will have the possibility to receive at least the incomplete secondary schooling at the 8-year school. In this way an appreciable uplift in the educational-cultural level of all the peasant population will be achieved.

But the achievement of compulsory universal 8-year education in the countryside is a difficult task, especially if we take into account the disproportions, the shortcomings and the still unutilized reserves in the 7-year schooling. It is clear that in order to realize the 8-year schooling we must open new 8-year schools even in remote mountain regions. But it is senseless to open these schools where there are only very few children. Hence, the opening of new schools must be combined with the opening of small hostels
both by the state and by the agricultural cooperatives or the country population themselves. At the same time, it is essential that all the other possible reserves should be utilized.

The transition to 8-year schooling requires a radical improvement in compulsory attendance at school, and preventing pupils, especially girls, from leaving school without completing the course. With one more year being added to the existing school system, the children will have to attend it at least up to the age of 15-16 years. Bearing in mind the backward mentality still prevailing among part of the peasantry, the keeping of children, especially girls, at school up to that age will encounter difficulties. Therefore, the teachers, state and party organs, and all the social organizations must wage an even greater struggle for all the girls to complete their 8-year schooling, considering this one of the important ways of raising the all-round role of the woman in the life of the village, for uplifting the figure, personality and dignity of the woman.

Now a start has been made in extending the network of middle schools to the countryside...

II. — WE MUST MAKE CULTURE AN ORGANIC PART OF THE NEW SOCIALIST LIFE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Culture is an important aspect of the life of our village. It plays a prominent role in the ideological education of the working people, in imbuing them with the socialist consciousness, with the new attitude towards work, property and society. It makes the life of the working people more beautiful and pleasant.

Today the new culture, national in form and socialist in content, is flourishing in the countryside. There is a
broad network of cultural institutions extended throughout the country, and about 1,300 houses and centres of culture have been put at the service of the peasantry alone. The Albanian book, for which our patriots fought so hard, is more and more becoming the property of the masses.

However, we are aware that the cultural level in the village is still low and a serious hindrance to the all-round rapid development of the countryside. At the same time, as a result of the rise of the material well-being, the demands of the peasantry for a more cultured life are increasing. Only a few years have passed since the establishment of the cooperativist order, and how much the demands for a cultured life in the countryside have increased! But these demands will be much greater after 10-15 years, when the agricultural cooperatives will be stronger, more prosperous, when electricity, the radio, and the cinema will have entered more deeply into the life of the village, and there will be more cadres of medium and higher schooling in the countryside. For these reasons, we are faced with the more urgent task of taking all the necessary measures to make culture the property of all the peasantry, an integral part of the socialist life in the village.

1. – WE MUST EMANCIPATE THE PEASANTRY FROM THE PREJUDICES AND HANG-OVERS OF THE PAST

We have achieved satisfactory results in the emancipation of the peasants from the prejudices and hang-overs of the past. This is expressed in all the social and economic activity of village life. Now, in general, the religious division is not felt, the barbaric custom of vendetta has been wiped out, as well as many other backward customs that shortened people's lives and damaged the family economy. In particular, the attitude towards the woman has changed a
great deal. Her role and personality in the political, economic and social life of the village are being enhanced with each passing day.

But can it be said that the peasantry has been completely liberated from the prejudices and hang-overs of the past? Certainly not. To attain this objective, we still have to carry out a great deal of continuous ideo-political work with all the masses of the peasantry, and especially with the youth, to whom the future belongs.

More strongly here, less so there, religious prejudices are still preserved in the countryside. Attendance at church, mosque, or tekke, the religious ceremonies on occasions of deaths, the participation in religious fairs, and all the like, cause great damage to agriculture, because they take the peasants away from work and spread religious views among them, which poison their minds and feelings.

A number of backward customs that humiliate the woman and restrict her ever more active participation in political, economic and social life are still strong in the countryside. Legally the woman has won all her rights, but there are still customs that run counter to her new position in our socialist society. In the Peshkopia, Durrës, Gramsh and Librazhd districts, infant marriages, and marriages imposed by the parents between persons of disproportionate ages and for money still occur, not to mention other manifestations which do not conform to the juridical norms and communist morality.

Comrades, we have often spoken about work with women, the role and the place they occupy as active and worthy participants in the construction of socialist society. And the Party has always raised this problem strongly, because it is aware that at no time, and even less today, has the Albanian woman ever lacked either the desire or the ability to work, to make her life more beautiful, to carry the Homeland forward. Today, as never before in
our socialist country, she has all the possibilities and objective conditions to display her personality and what she is capable of doing in every field of life, at work, in society and in the family, as a worker and leader, as an educator, housewife and mother. And we are all seeing the hundreds and thousands of women who, with unrivalled heroism and talent, are working in factories and workshops, in cooperatives, in fields and stalls, in nurseries and schools, in trade, finance and the health service, in laboratories and in their families, setting a great example to all.

However, the role of the woman is still not properly appreciated by everybody and everywhere as the Party requires. The shortcomings and weaknesses mentioned above are clear evidence of this. The prejudices and hangovers of the past are still a drag on a good many people, even including cadres, especially in the countryside, and hinder them from facing the question squarely. Today the Party is strongly emphasizing that, in the new stage of the complete construction of socialist society, the question of enhancing the personality of the woman at work, in society and the family arises as another objective necessity. We are examining the question of raising the well-being in the countryside. Well, then, let it be clearly understood that without the participation of the woman, without raising her personality, this will never be achieved: production cannot be increased, incomes cannot be raised, the handling of them cannot be done correctly, neither food nor clothing will be in order, the home cannot be made more comfortable, the child cannot be educated and life cannot become happier. Therefore, all of us, first of all we men, who should have a thorough and correct understanding of this problem, and the women themselves, who should struggle harder and have more confidence in their own strength, the party organizations, the organizations of women and youth, etc., the state organs, in other words, the whole society, should
strive to speed up the creation of all the subjective conditions for the further enhancement of the role of the woman, for raising and strengthening her personality, getting rid of any prejudice or hang-over from the past which is a hindrance to this. Then, we shall see how rapidly the tasks which this plenum will set for raising the material and cultural well-being in the countryside will be resolved.

We have succeeded in doing away with many prejudices in other directions as well; we have liquidated many backward customs. For example, we have uprooted from among the majority of the peasantry the evil custom of the vendetta which, in the past, destroyed hundreds of peasant families every year. But here and there, there are still people who go as far as the use of fire-arms over petty quarrels.

The preservation to a still considerable degree of religious prejudices and backward customs of the past also has its source in the insufficient work which the party organizations are doing for the formation of the socialist consciousness among the peasantry. There are some party organizations that replace active educational work with the peasantry with administrative measures, the method of persuasion with that of compulsion, that put the stress on the economic damage of prejudices and backward customs, without proving on an ideological basis the need to eradicate them from the peasants’ consciousness. Setting out with the aim of combating the celebration of religious feasts there have been cases when the consultative meetings of the Democratic Front have called on the peasantry to celebrate these feasts, or funerals, not with meat, but only with beans. Moreover, in some villages proposals have been made that the Front membership cards should be taken from those who infringe this rule.

Naturally, it is naive to think that such measures could yield the slightest beneficial results for the elimina-
tion of religious prejudices, empty beliefs and backward customs. The struggle to root out these remnants of the past inherited from centuries on end, is above all an ideological struggle, which has as its aim the spiritual liberation of people. If people have such hang-overs, this is simply a misfortune, but not their fault. Hence, a very patient, friendly and comradesely stand should be maintained towards them.

In the struggle against religious prejudices, empty beliefs and backward customs, scientific atheist propaganda should occupy an important place. It should patiently educate people with the scientific world outlook, without insulting them or directly offending their sensibilities. The eradication of these remnants is a difficult and delicate job. They cannot be wiped out either with decrees or with rallies. This work requires intelligence, patience and tact. All the forms of party propaganda, all our cultural institutions, schools, teachers and all other intellectuals, the press and the radio, literature and the arts should be activated better to this end, and should regard the struggle for the education of the masses of the working people with the communist morality and world outlook as one of their main tasks. Great importance should be given to the correct scientific explanation of natural phenomena, the popularization of the successes of science and technology, and criticism of religious dogmas, pointing out to the peasantry the emptiness of them and the harm they do. In this regard, the schools, the youth organizations, and the cultural institutions should pay special attention to the education of the youth.

More concern should be shown for the preservation and further development of the good customs and the lofty virtues our peasants have inherited generation after generation, such as bravery, fidelity, hospitality, honesty, and generosity, while instilling new content into them. At the
same time, the new customs emerging from the socialist life, and connected with important events of the political, economic, social and cultural life of the country or district, the village or cooperativist family, should be developed and spread more widely.

2. GREATER EFFORTS MUST BE MADE FOR RAISING THE CULTURAL LEVEL OF MOUNTAIN VILLAGES

The deepening of the cultural revolution in the countryside has the general uplift of the cultural level in all aspects of the life of the peasantry as its main objective. This important task will be carried out successfully, if among other things, the disproportions existing today in the cultural development between various villages and areas are taken properly into account and appropriate measures are adopted to eliminate them within the shortest possible time.

The Party has always been concerned about this problem and has devoted special care to the development of culture in the mountain villages. The expansion of the network of schools and cultural institutions and other such measures have served this end.

However, disproportion in cultural development, especially between the villages of the highland zones and those of the plains, still exists. Apart from objective reasons, such as the economic and cultural differences, difficulties of the terrain, etc., this has come about also because of the insufficient concern which the party and state organs have shown, and the lack of work differentiated in conformity with the special features of these areas.

But should these special features of the mountainous areas hamper the cultural development of this part of the peasantry? Are these difficulties insurmountable?
We are convinced that despite the above-mentioned special features and difficulties, all the possibilities exist for us to raise the cultural level of the villages of the mountainous areas to a higher level, to carry culture to the remotest villages and thus eliminate the disproportion which exists between them and the villages of the plains as quickly as possible.

To achieve this we must strengthen the work of the party organizations and state organs in these areas. They should carry out differentiated work, concentrating especially on the cultural problems with which these zones are most concerned and utilizing all the possibilities and the most appropriate means and forms. Cultural work should not be confined only to work within the walls of the houses and hearths of culture, which in the concrete conditions cannot draw in the whole mass of the village population. Cultural activities with small groups of a given hamlet or a few families should be practised, making use of the good tradition of our peasants of visiting one another, while social gatherings, talks on various political and cultural problems, recreations, games, etc., should be organized.

More help should be given to these villages by the cultural organizations of the city. But in order to achieve the desired results, a radical improvement must be made in the work of the cultural institutions of these areas themselves. Along with the schools, the houses and especially, the hearths of culture, there are the basic institutions which should be totally engaged in the organization of cultural work in the countryside. There are 668 such institutions in 1,515 mountain villages, or nearly one in each two villages. This is a powerful base for undertaking more extensive cultural activity, but in fact it is being utilized to an inadequate extent. Therefore, in the future the party committees and executive committees of district people's councils
must pay greater attention to the organization of the work of these institutions, so that they wake themselves up and carry out all-round activity with the masses of peasants and extend amateur artistic activity in the countryside.

At the same time, special attention should be paid to the selection and training of the cadres of culture for these villages. The weaknesses in cultural work also stem from the fact that the cadres charged with these tasks do not have the necessary training. Out of 591 people in charge of houses or hearths of culture, only 157 have secondary schooling, whereas the others have 7-year or elementary schooling. Experience has shown that in those villages where the village teachers have been charged with the cultural activities and where they have been given more help and supervision by the party organizations, the leading bodies of the agricultural cooperatives and the state organs in the district, the results have been greater. Therefore, in the future, along with the measures which the Ministry of Education and Culture and the district executive committees should take for training people responsible for houses and hearths of culture, wherever possible, the cadres charged with these tasks should be people with secondary schooling and especially teachers...

V

ON THE WORK OF THE PARTY AND STATE ORGANS CONCERNING THE PROBLEMS OF WELL-BEING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

... Our Party is the leading and directing force of all the political, economic and social activity of the country.
Life has shown that all the changes effected and progress achieved by our people, whether great or small, have been made under the leadership and guidance of the Party. Therefore the carrying out of the program of work which we are putting forward in connection with the further socialist development of the countryside depends to a great degree on the all-round organizational work of the Party and its levers.

As we stressed above, we have undoubtedly achieved great historic results in the socialist transformation of the countryside, in the general transformation of the main aspects of its life. But we are aware that on the road traversed we have also encountered difficulties by no means small, and that in the work of party and state organs and mass organizations there have been shortcomings and gaps which hinder our advance at the pace of the time. These shortcomings have been expressed mainly in the insufficient attention devoted to the complex of problems concerning improving the way of life in the countryside, in the leading work of the party and state organs.

The problems which we presented above, concerning the well-being and way of life in the countryside, require that the work of the party and state organs must also be raised to a new, higher level. For the party organizations to cope with these problems, they must become better and more thoroughly acquainted with the all-round socialist development of the countryside, with the tasks arising from this development, and seek the ways to their solution. And the whole success of this work depends greatly on whether the party organizations make these problems clear to the peasant masses and whether they mobilize them in time to deal with them. As always, in this case, too, the strengthening of the bonds of the Party with the masses and its consulting the masses remains the master-key to every victory in the future...
In our examination of the economic, social and cultural situation in the countryside, we indicated some of the main contradictions characteristic of its development at the present stage. They stem from the objective reality, from the laws of development of our society, and as such, they are inevitable. Our duty is to uncover these contradictions, to have a thorough knowledge of the causes of their emergence and, basing ourselves firmly on the concrete conditions of our socialist construction, to correctly define the most effective ways to overcome them quickly. The recognition and correct solution of them constitutes a motive force which assists and accelerates our advance, it is an essential condition for successful use of the economic laws of socialism and for avoiding errors in practice.

We are also aware that overcoming the present contradictions will, without fail, lead to the emergence of new contradictions, because our historic mission to carry the country continuously forward towards the lofty peaks of socialism and communism will continuously come up against contradictions. But we are convinced that our Party will always know how to find the correct way to overcome them, and will successfully lead the working masses in the complete construction of socialism, because it is always enlightened by the triumphant ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and bases itself firmly on them.

The victories achieved so far, and the new tasks which we are putting forward today, which have their source in and are entirely based on the far-sighted line of our Party, show once again how right is our road, and with what realism, wisdom and courage our Party acts in every field and at any time. The difficult situations which the imperialists and their tools — the revisionists of the Khrushchev-Tito group, etc., are trying to create for us and the struggle they are waging against us, are quite unable
to stop our Party from taking its well-measured and sure steps, as usual. We are marching forward. Marxism-Leninism, which the modern revisionists fight openly or try to distort on the quiet, will smash them mercilessly. As for our Party, which is firmly based on Marxism-Leninism, which stands eternally loyal to it and applies it in a truly creative manner in all directions, its victories will be inevitable.

Comrades, in presenting this problem to the Plenum, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee is fully confident that it will be crowned with success and will render a still greater service to raising the well-being of the peasantry and all our people. The entire history of our Party shows that, despite all obstacles and difficulties, everything it has undertaken, it has carried it through to the end, because it has always responded to the vital aspirations and interests of the working masses and has found their unreserved support. And the tasks which this Plenum will set, also, are for the good of the peasantry and all our people, and express their aspirations and ideals. Therefore, the Party must take the management of these problems firmly in hand, must more and more arouse the conscious activity of the masses of town and countryside and all the political, economic, social and state organizations, institutions and organs, and always guide it wisely, so that all the efforts are concentrated on well-defined objectives.

We are confident that this time, too, the working masses of the town and the countryside will respond, as always, to the call of the Party with their self-sacrificing work to carry out the new tasks that this Plenum lays down for the countryside, thus, scoring another victory in the struggle for the fulfilment of the 3rd Five-year Plan, the brilliant perspective opened to our people and our
country by the 4th Congress of the Party, on the long but
glorious road of the construction of socialism and com-
munism.