

# Appendix C

## How to Analyze Class Status in the Countryside From: The Agrarian Reform Law of the People's Republic of China

### 1. Landlord

A person shall be classified as a landlord who owns land, but does not engage in labor or only engages in supplementary labor, and who depends on exploitation for his means of livelihood. Exploitation by the landlords is chiefly in the form of land rent, plus money-lending, hiring of labor, or the simultaneous carrying on of industrial or commercial enterprises. But the major form of exploitation of the peasants by the landlords is the exacting of land rent from the peasants. The management of landholdings owned by public bodies and the collection of rent from school land also belong to the category of exploitation in the form of land rent.

Some bankrupt landlords who, despite their bankruptcy and their ability to work, do not engage in labor, and whose living conditions are better than those of an ordinary middle peasant, shall continue to be classified as landlords.

Warlords, bureaucrats, local despots and villainous gentry are the political representatives of the landlord class, and are exceptionally cruel and wicked elements among the landlords. (Among the rich peasants there are also small local despots and villainous gentry.)

Any person, who collects rent and manages the landed property for landlords and depends on the exploitation of peasants by the landlords as his main means of livelihood, and whose living conditions are better than those of an ordinary middle peasant, shall be treated in the same manner as a landlord.

### *Supplementary Decisions Adopted by the Government Administration Council*

(A) Any person who rents large areas of land from landlords, who does not himself engage in labor, but sub-lets the land to others for rent, and whose living conditions are better than those of an ordinary middle peasant, shall be classified as a sub-landlord. Sub-landlords shall be treated in the same manner as landlords. A sub-landlord who cultivates part of his land should be treated in the same manner as a rich peasant.

(B) Revolutionary army men, dependents of martyrs, workers, staff members, professional workers, peddlers and others who rent out small portions of land because they are engaged in other occupations or because

they are unable to work, shall not be classified as landlords. Their class status shall be determined according to their occupations or they shall be referred to as small land lessors, whose landholdings shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 5 of the Agrarian Reform Law.

(C) The class status of any person who receives income from some other occupation and who at the same time owns and rents out a large area of agricultural land the size of which exceeds the average landholdings of each landlord family in the locality, shall be determined according to the major source of his income. He may be referred to either as a person of other class status and concurrently as a landlord, or as a landlord having other class status. The land and property used directly for his other occupations shall not be confiscated.

(D) The average landholding of a landlord family in the various localities shall be computed by taking one or several counties as a unit, and shall be determined only after the people's government of a special administrative district\* or of a county has submitted it to a provincial people's government and obtained the latter's approval.

## 2. Rich Peasant

A rich peasant generally owns land. But there are also rich peasants who own only part of the land they cultivate and rent the rest from others. There are others who own no land but rent all their land from others. Generally speaking, they own better means of production and some floating capital and take part in labor themselves, but are as a rule dependent on exploitation for a part or the major part of their means of livelihood. Exploitation by rich peasants is chiefly in the form of exploiting the wage labor (hiring long-term laborers). In addition, they may also let out part of their land for rent, or lend out money, or carry on industrial or commercial enterprises. Most of the rich peasants also manage the landholdings owned by public bodies. Some own a considerable amount of fertile land, engage in labor themselves and do not hire any laborers. But they exploit the peasants in the form of land rent and loan interest. In such cases, they should be treated in the same manner as rich peasants. Exploitation by the rich peasants is of a constant character, and in many cases the income from such exploitation constitutes their main means of livelihood.

### *Supplementary Decisions Adopted by the Government Administration Council*

(A) If the area of land rented out by a rich peasant exceeds in size the land cultivated jointly by himself and by hired laborers, he shall be referred to as a rich peasant of a semi-landlord type. The land and other properties of rich peasants, or of rich peasants of a semi-landlord type

\* A special administrative district is an administrative unit below the provincial level, consisting of a number of counties.

shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 6 of the Agrarian Reform Law.

(B) Where a landlord family has some members who are engaged in major agricultural labor all the year round, or at the same time hires laborers to cultivate part of its land, the said family shall be classified as a landlord family and not as a rich peasant family if the major part of its land is rented out and the rented-out land is three times or more the size of the land cultivated jointly by the family and by hired laborers (for instance, 150 *mou* of land rented out and less than 50 *mou* cultivated by the family and by hired laborers); or in a case where the family possesses large landholdings and the rented-out land is twice or more the size of the land cultivated jointly by the family and hired laborers. (For instance, 200 *mou* rented out and less than 100 *mou* cultivated by the family or hired laborers.)

The land and other properties of such a family shall be dealt with in accordance with Article 2 of the Agrarian Reform Law. However, the part of the land cultivated by the family's own labor shall, after appropriate readjustment, be mainly retained by the family. The status of those members who take part in labor, if their position in the family is not a dominant, but a subordinate one, should be appropriately determined as laboring people in order to distinguish them in status from other family members who do not participate in labor.

### 3. Middle Peasant

Many middle peasants own land. Some possess only a portion of the land which they cultivate while the remainder is rented. Some of them are landless, and rent all their land from others. The middle peasants own a certain number of farm implements. The middle peasants depend wholly or mainly upon their own labor for their living. In general they do not exploit others. Many of them are themselves exploited on a small scale by others in the form of land rent and loan interest. But generally they do not sell their labor power. Some of the middle peasants (the well-to-do middle peasants) practice a small degree of exploitation, but such exploitation is not of a constant character and the main income therefrom does not constitute their main means of livelihood. These people shall be classified as middle peasants.

### 4. Poor Peasant

Some poor peasants own inadequate farm implements and a part of the land they cultivate. Some have no land at all and own only some inadequate farm implements. In general they have to rent land for cultivation, and are exploited by others in the form of land rent, loan interest, or hired labor in a limited degree. These people shall be classified as poor peasants.

In general, the middle peasants need not sell their labor power, but the poor peasants have to sell their labor power for limited periods. This is the basic criterion for differentiating middle peasants from poor peasants.

### 5. Worker

Workers (including farm laborers) generally have neither land nor farm implements. Some of them have a very small amount of land and very few implements. They depend wholly or mainly upon the sale of their labor power for their living. These people shall be classified as workers.