

SOME ASPECTS OF THE SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION IN HUNGARIAN AGRICULTURE

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DURING the past two decades, Hungarian agriculture has been radically changed, mainly in respect of the conditions of property in land, and in its working-structure. Before the World War II, the feudal elements had a very strong influence in Hungarian agriculture. The feudal conditions had been maintained in the country for more than 800 years, and the capitalist development in the Hungarian economy had taken place much later and also at a much slower pace than in Western European countries. However, the peasantry was not able to achieve complete liberation even in the capitalist society, because the Hungarian capitalist class was in alliance with the land-owners. This alliance preserved the feudal conditions in respect of landed property and thus a great part of the peasantry was unable to acquire land.

Due to these factors, the main structure of the agriculture was as follows : farms with 0-5 Kad. holds* accounted for 10.1 per cent of the territory of the country and 72.4 per cent of all land properties. The small and middle peasant farms of 5-20 Kad. holds consisted of 21.8 per cent of the territory of the country and 21.4 per cent of all landed properties. The larger peasant farms between 20 and 100 Kad. holds were around 20 per cent of the territory of the country, and 5.4 per cent of the land properties. The medium and big estates over 100 Kad. holds consisted of only 0.8 per cent of the total number of land properties which extended over 48 per cent of the territory of Hungary. This distribution of landed property was the consequence of the continued system of large feudal estates. It means that only 30 per cent of the territory of the country had passed into the hands of the working-peasantry, while 70 per cent was retained by the large estates.

The land area acquired for the land reform in 1945 represented more than 30 per cent of the cultivable land in Hungary. Nearly

* 1 Kad. hold = 0.575 hectare.