

AGRARIAN RELIEF

(In Foreign Countries.)

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CHOWDHRY MUKHTAR SINGH

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AGRARIAN RELIEFS

(IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES)

BY

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FOREWORD.

Many people have the impression that the problems of India are peculiar to her and totally unlike the problems of other countries. To some extent this is true, for, each country has its own special problems and, what is even more important, its particular background out of which these problems have arisen. And yet fundamentally this is not a true impression.

We all recognize now that agrarian problem is the dominant problem of India. We argue about the Zamindari system and various tenures and land laws. Yet few of us take the trouble to find out how similar problems have been dealt with in other countries; few of us even realize that such problems have been faced and solved elsewhere. We have a faint recollection that the French Revolution of 1789 was due to the feudal land system and the Revolution swept this way. Can we not learn something from this and seek to eliminate feudal relics in land which have become completely out of date?

But to come to more recent times. There have been vast agrarian changes in Soviet and by the method of trial and error, the Soviets have evolved a

new system based on Collective farms. Surely one can learn much from this great and seemingly successful experiment. In other parts of Eastern Europe there have been also considerable changes in the land system as an aftermath of the Great War. All these have a lesson for us for our problems are essentially the same.

Then we have Spain where bloody and ruthless war has been going on largely because of an attempt to change the old feudal land system.

All this required deep and systematic study and I wish that this was undertaken by our experts. Meanwhile Chaudhri Mukhtar Singh has touched this subject and done some pioneering work. He has told us of various changes and agrarian reforms in European countries, in Canada and Australia. I congratulate him on this work and commend it to all those who are interested in agrarian reform in India. They can learn much from it.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD :

February 12, 1938.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya
writes—

“You have rendered further valuable service to our suffering countrymen, the agriculturists by your well-timed publication. I sincerely hope that the book will be widely read by those who are interested in the welfare of the agriculturists and particularly by those who have got the power to adopt measures of real relief for our people”.

Swami Sahjanand Saraswati, President, The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha :—

“I have very carefully studied your book “Agrarian Reliefs in Foreign Countries” and I must admit it is very useful and timely publication. For a long time past I have always been in search of such a book with a view to enlighten myself and the people about the detailed information as regards the measures adopted by the various independent countries to meet the extraordinary situation created by the world-wide terrible depression so far as the peasantry is concerned.....
..... Your book has fulfilled the object and places the whole picture in a nut-shell. The conclusions drawn by you in the midst of the book and in the end have proved most helpful in

reaching some definite decisions to apply the same formula to the unfortunate Kisans of India. I gladly recommend the book to all who are interested in the real welfare of the Kisans and the country”.

J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary and Organizer, All India Village Industries Association, Wardha :

“It is a timely publication. Very few have any idea as to what can be done for the agriculturist. I must congratulate you on bringing within so short a compass such a mass of information of what is being done in foreign countries to tackle the problems”.

INTRODUCTION

We have attempted in this small book to give a description of the different relief measures adopted in different countries. The main idea with which we started this work is that at a time when both the Government and the people are trying to help the agriculturist, it will serve a very useful purpose for them to get in a small compass sufficient details of the methods adopted for agricultural reliefs in other countries. We have tried to select countries which are (1) mostly agricultural, (2) semi-agricultural, and (3) industrial so that the readers may have no difficulty in assessing the value of the different measures adopted. Towards the end of the book, we have, in a few pages given a sort of a summary of all the different measures adopted in foreign countries, discussing at the same time their relative position as regards our own country. We have avoided giving description of such of the measures adopted in foreign countries which we consider unsuitable for India so that the time and space at our disposal might be best utilized. If any of the measures, the description of which has been given in this book, are found to be useful and applied for the betterment of the people, we shall consider ourselves to be repaid.

Though the work of the real uplift of the masses is a very baffling question, yet sometimes people deal with the subject rather light-heartedly. In fact it requires a very deep and serious consideration before a man can claim that he could add a pie to the resources of the poor man. We hope the material available in this book will at least give sufficient material for thought to those who are feeling for the farmer and are trying to better his lot.

We are highly indebted to the International Institute of Agriculture, at Rome, for most of the material available in this book. Their annual publication for different countries has helped us a great deal. Our visit to the Institute and discussion with the Secretary have been very valuable assets for us and we express our sincere gratitude for the courteous help that the Institute and the Government of Italy gave us in our last visit. We are indebted to Mr. Walsh who travelled with us and explained everything to us in English.

MUKHTAR SINGH.

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