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Land Reform in Egypt

Robert La F. Smith

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Land Reform: Egypt
Smith

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the land reform that took place in Egypt after the enacting of the Agrarian Reform Law on September 9, 1952.

In the first half of the Twentieth Century the need for land reform was made quite apparent. It was a subject that was frequently discussed by various politicians, and it was also advocated by several radical organized groups. Prior to the coup d'etat of the Free Officers no action was taken to relieve the conditions under which the fellahin were forced to live. But was a land reform necessary based on the distribution of the land holdings as of 1952 ?

After the seizure of power by the Free Officers it soon became apparent that they had formulated no master plan for implementation after the coup. Their policy evolved from day to day as they met different situations. Only on one thing were they in complete agreement on. Their country must have a land reform. In doing so, they could possibly achieve various other things. These included: the weakening of the position of the large landowners, re-distributing some of Egypt's agricultural wealth, and stimulating investment in industry.

Egypt has only a certain amount of cultivatable land on the banks of the Nile. The amount can only be increased very gradually by expensive reclamation projects. The growth in population in Egypt is far outstripping the increase in cultivatable land and in agricultural production. The solution seems to be a more equitable distribution of the arable farm land with a side effect of stimulating industrialization. In the new factories, labor would find more employment opportunities than previously existed on the farms.

After the implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law with the subsequent appropriation of lands of owners who possessed in excess of the legal limit, the redistributions to the fellahin have amounted to approximately 290,000 feddans, not including Wakf Khairi and State Domain lands which later came under the supervision of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform.

The agricultural cooperatives that were formed under the authority of the Agrarian Reform Law have taken the place of the former landowner who provided the small cultivator with loans of money, seed, etc. The cooperative provides numerous services to the fellah among these being the marketing of the crops for its members. As a result the fellah is receiving a higher price for his crop, with the resultant larger annual income. The tenant farmer is also benefiting due to lower rents being charged for the land. This has all been accomplished without loss in agricultural production.

One of the purposes of the reform was to curtail the capital investment in land, and to encourage it in industry. The reform has partially achieved this. The private capital investment by rich townspeople in land has nearly ceased, but the hoped for private capital investment has not occurred in industry to the amount that the government would like. Approximately 90% of private capital invested in Egypt since the reform has been in real estate property building, with a mere 10% flowing into industrial development.

Considering the population growth and limited amount of cultivatable land available the solution to the problem lies in industrialization.

Land reform in itself is not the solution to the increasing population pressure. But, coupled with industrial growth a more equitable solution is approached. The rapidity of industrial growth will largely determine the rate by which the population problem will be solved.

It is hoped that the reader will gain some insight into the problems that exist in Egypt with respect to agriculture and its effect on industry and the various factors which influence their growth.

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CHAPTER 1
BACKGROUND

With the growth of political and social consciousness in the first half of the Twentieth Century the age old problem of the equitable distribution of arable farm land to the individual cultivator has assumed special importance. In the particular case under consideration, Egypt, there is no exception. Although initially it is rather difficult to see any important trends that would lead to a definite land reform movement, some ideas on the subject were expressed at one time or another. In this investigation we shall pursue these; plus a description of the land reform that was carried out since 1952 in Egypt.

Agricultural Conditions Prior To 1952:

The highly fertile land of Egypt is worked by its millions of fellahin (farmers) who live at a bare subsistence level. The little surpluses that they produce help feed the large group of people who live in the urban areas.

Throughout Egypt's history the fellah (farmer) has been treated by the various rulers as an expendable economic resource. They have continually exploited him by taxing him or selling his products at a low price. The various former Egyptian governments have never been concerned with improving the lot of the individual fellah, they were concerned with their own self perpetuation.¹

Egypt is one of the most densely populated areas in the world. On a cultivated area of 6 million feddans (1 feddan = 1,038 acres), a nation of 24 million people is supported. Of this total only about 8½ million are engaged in agriculture. The remainder are dependent on it.

The rate of population growth is increasing mainly because of an increase in birth rates and a decline in death rates. The following table shows this point:

TABLE I

EGYPT: Live Births and Deaths

Year	Births (000)	Deaths (000)	Excess Live Births %
1920	559	370	14.4
1930	671	367	20.2
1940	698	444	15.0
1950	905	389	25.3
1952	969	381	27.4

(Source: Republic of Egypt, Vital Statistics Cairo, 1958) p.3.

Table II shows us that the increase in the cultivated area has not kept pace with this increase in population:²

TABLE II

EXPANSION OF THE CULTIVATED AREA IN RELATION TO POPULATION

Year	Cultivated area (Million acres)	Crop Area (million acres)	Population (millions)
1897	5.1	6.8	9.7
1907	5.4	7.6	11.2
1917	5.3	7.7	12.8
1927	5.5	8.7	14.2
1937	5.3	8.4	15.9
1947	5.8	9.2	19
1949	5.8	9.3	20
1958	6.0	10.1	24.0(1957 est.)

(Source: The Population Problem in Egypt, p.11.)

* The figures that represent the cultivated area are less than those that represent the crop area due to the fact that some of the land is cropped more than once a year.

Based on the above from 1897 to 1947 the population doubled, while the crop area increased only 36.3%. For the period 1924-1950 agricultural production rose 40% while the population increase was 43%. Agricultural production was falling short of population increase.³

Another problem that has manifested itself in Egypt is that of the fragmentation of properties. Some authorities place the blame of this on the Moslem laws of inheritance, where children of the same sex are entitled to equal inheritances. Dereen Warriner takes exception to this point, and states that if this were true why were not the larger estates being broken up in the same manner. "The real cause of the multiplication of the small owners", writes Miss Warriner, "is the increase in the numbers in agriculture and the desire of the fellah to acquire land even if he puts himself into life-long debt."⁴

Due to the rapid increase in population and the existant land tenure system extreme poverty among the population results. The fellah is very poor, and prior to 1952 he was becoming poorer. In 1914 the average daily wage an unskilled laborer would receive was 2½ piasters. 25 years later in 1939 this was still the daily rate although the cost of living had risen. This was for 12 hours work and for from 10-15 days a month. In 1934 the total earnings for a family for a month was around 60 piastres.⁵ A real indicator of the fact that incomes were falling, was the fact that the consumption of stable consumption goods between the period 1920-1938 declined, while the population increased 25%.⁶ During World War II the wages increased to 6 piastres per day, but there was also inflation in the country and the income situation of the fellahin became worse. Without a continued expansion in industry and a reform of the current land tenure system, it was impossible to hope for any bettering of the fellah's case in Egypt.⁷

The situation that existed immediately prior to the Revolution of 1952 with respect to the distribution of land is shown in Table III:⁸

TABLE III
 AGRICULTURAL LAND BY SIZE OF HOLDINGS (1952)

Size Class in Feddans	Owners		Area		Average Area in Feddans
	Number 000's	%	Feddans 000's	%	
1 and under	2018.1	72.0	778	13.0	0.4
over 1- 5	623.8	22.2	1344	22.5	2.1
" 5- 10	79.3	2.8	526	8.8	6.6
" 10- 20	46.8	1.8	638	10.7	13.6
" 20- 30	13.1	0.5	309	5.0	23.6
" 30- 50	9.2	0.3	344	5.7	37.4
" 50- 100	6.4	0.2	429	7.2	67.3
" 100- 200	3.2	0.1	437	7.3	137.2
" 200 & over	2.1	0.1	1177	19.8	550.9
TOTALS	2,802.0	100.0	5982	100.0	2.1

Source: Eva Garzouzi, Old Ills and New Remedies in Egypt (Cairo, 1958) p.79.

From the chart above the great disparity of land ownership becomes apparent, as it existed at the time of the Revolution of 1952, i.e., 94.2% of the land owners owned only 35.5% of the land while 5.8% of the landowners controlled 64.5% of the land.

Early attempts at land reform:

Prior to 1940 the important trends that were leading to a definite land reform movement can be limited to the pronouncement by the then Socialist-Communist Party of Egypt in their political credo. As a partial measure I include the actions of Kitchener in 1912.

The first time that we see mention of land reform as such; was in the political credo of the then Socialist-Communist Party published in December 1921. In 1922 this became the "Communist Party of Egypt." Of all

their proposals the most interesting to us, and the most specific was its agricultural affairs program. They considered that the widespread practice of renting the land for half the crop was to be abolished. If a fellah owned less than 30 feddans of land, and he was in debt, these debts were to be revoked. In addition all fellahin who owned less than 10 feddans of land would be exempt from taxes. The program also provided for a redistribution of the lands of the large property owners, and the maximum limit that any one individual could own was 100 feddans. It was forwarded that the proposals of the Communist Party were not based on a real study of the fellahin, but we can see the similarity between this very revolutionary proposal for 1921, and the amount of land a single individual can own under the 1952 reform, that is 100 feddans versus 200 feddans.⁹

A partial measure to attempt to alleviate the conditions under which the fellahin lived in Egypt was attempted by Kitchener in 1912.

In Egypt, the fellahin have always been under the influence of the unscrupulous money-lenders. The uneducated fellahin were easy prey for these people. Even after the establishment of the Agricultural Bank, where the fellahin were supposed to borrow money at a reasonable rate of interest, most of them continued to go to the money-lenders. This was because the moneylenders did not ask questions, or place the conditions on the loans that the bank did. "The fellah was helpless in the clutches of the private money-lender and many small-holders were in danger of being evicted from their lands for debt."¹⁰ To combat this, Kitchener, who had a real feeling for the conditions under which the fellahin were living, promulgated the Homestead Exemption Law., more widely known as the "5 Feddans Law". The law stated that fellahin who did not own more than 5 feddans of land could not have them seized for debt. This also included the necessary farm implements to cultivate

the land plus 2 draft animals. The dwelling house also could not be seized for debt."¹¹ There was naturally a great outcry by the money-lenders against this act. They attempted to stir up trouble among the fellahin, telling them that it was an encroachment on their individual liberty, and that they would no longer be able to get credit. This was completely false, as they could borrow money, using some form of collateral as security, whether it be their crop or something else,

Although this, and later the sale of state domain land was not an attempt at land reform as such, it was an effort to stabilize the holdings of the small land owner.

Attitudes towards land reform in the 1940's:

Prior to 1940 the problem of land reform in Egypt was completely ignored by the Wafd Party. In the report on the Wafd conference which was published in the Wafdist paper, al-balagh of January 8, 1935 no mention is made of this problem.¹²

After 1940 this attitude towards land reform changed considerably. The question of the distribution of land came to be a subject of public discussion. The members of the cabinet frequently dealt with this subject in public statements. Mustafa Nahhas, the Prime Minister in a speech dealing with the malaria epidemic raging at that time in Upper Egypt, "laid the blame for the poverty of the residents of the Aswan and Qena districts on the exaggerated concentration of property in the hands of the great landowners of the area."¹³

Senator Muhammad Bey Khattab tried to introduce a bill into the Senate in 1944-45 to help solve this problem. The bill had as its purpose the limiting of the size of the landholdings. He had been nominated as a Senator; he was not nominated again.¹⁴

During this period there was published various books on this subject. In 1945 there appeared three books worthy of mention. They are: mushkilat al-fallah by Sadiq Sa'ad; the second edition of The Economic Development of Egypt in Modern Times, by Rashid al-Barrawi and Muhammad Hanza. The first edition of this book appeared one year before but the second edition contained an additional chapter in which the limiting of the large landholdings was demanded. The Agrarian Reform of Mirrit Ghali also appeared this year. In this book there was a complete plan for land reform.

The attitudes of the peoples of Egypt on land reform, at this time can be summarized as follows:¹⁵ the upper class was generally against any change in the present system of land ownership. This is only natural in that it is from this group that most of the large landowners came from. The new middle class that developed out of the financial expansion brought on by World War II were generally not in favor of land reform. This is due to the fact that their interests were very closely tied to those of the large landowners. As for the fellahin who were in need of the benefits of land reform, there existed no organized movement for the improvement of their conditions. For this reason and the fact that there was no organization that could voice the opinion of the fellahin; and as a result, force the government to make changes in the existant system, it was unlikely that anything would come of any agrarian reform under traditional form of governments of Egypt prior to the revolution.¹⁶

The attitude that generally typified all of the political parties in Egypt with respect to proposed land reform was that they opposed it, even though some of the members did pay temporary "lip service" to it. They also believed that they could avoid a reform by the sale of state domain land to the small farmers, although this plan was never carried out.

In particular the attitude of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party was summarized by Muhammad 'Ali 'Alluba Pasha in his book, mabadi' fi-s-siyasati-l-misriya states that the limitation of the size of land holdings is not the solution to Egypt's problems. He goes on to say that "because of the large numbers who need land and the relatively small amount available, the breaking up of private estates and their distribution would not produce the benefits expected of it."¹⁷ This naturally led to the argument that was frequently forwarded that if the land was equally distributed among all the people, each person would be left with only a very small plot. The President of the party, Husein Haikal, was of the belief that if the government enacted land reform legislation a class war would be provoked.¹⁸

The Sa'adist Party like the Liberal Constitutionalist Party opposed any alteration in the distribution of land ownership other than the sale of state domain lands. During one of their periods in office they voted down, in the Senate, the proposal of Muhammad Khattab to limit the size of agricultural holdings to 50 feddans.¹⁹

As with the other parties, al-kutla al-wafdiya party was not in favor of any land distribution schemes. One branch of the Wafd (Gibhat Misr) published in 1946 as part of their political program the fact that it was demanding the imposition of a progressive land tax on the large landowners, and also prevent the further breakdown of small landholdings. However, this was only the opinion of a wing of the Wafd Party. The Wafd never did take any action to stop the breaking down of the small landholdings. But, with respect to the levying of progressive taxes on the larger estates it did ask parliament to agree to levy additional taxes on the larger estates in the Aswan and Qena districts at the time of the malaria epidemic. But this was only a partial action; it was not intending to effect the large landowners

as a group. But, when this partial measure came up for a vote in the parliament it was defeated, with a Wafdist majority. The entire trend in the Wafd was for non-interference with the large landowners.²⁰

Those people who were in favor of land reform can generally be divided into two groups. There were those who were essentially intellectuals, and there were those who were in extremist organized groups.

The first group was interested in enacting reforms within the framework of the existing governmental organizations and parliamentary institutions. The more well known of this group included Muhammad Khattab, Dr. Ibrahim Bayumi Madkur, and Mirrit Ghali.

The bill introduced by Muhammad Khattab into the Senate represents a mild form of reform. It basically was interested in preventing anyone from increasing his holdings in excess of 50 feddans.

As we can see this law was directed against only those who would purchase land in excess of 50 feddans sometime in the future. It in no way effected those large landowners who already possess in excess of 50 feddans. They were merely prohibited from purchasing more land.

The lack of support in the parliament for the reform can be attributed to the fact that the large landowners were the leaders of the parties. Although the reform might be in the interest of the country as a whole, their own selfish interests could not be served.

This intellectual group, in general, was interested in two things with regard to improving the conditions under which the fellahin lived. Mirrit Ghali in his book, al-islah az-zira'i, (The Agrarian Reform) discusses these points in some detail. They are: (1) the preventing of the further fragmentation of the smaller parcels of land and (2) the placing of a maximum limit on the amount that a person can own.²¹

Concerning the point of preventing the further fragmentation of the smaller parcels of land Ghali presents a solution by which the property will be maintained at a suitable size and also plans were forwarded by which no heir would be deprived of his right of inheritance. The minimum size of the property that was arrived at which could support a fellah family was 3 feddans. The property could not be subdivided below that minimum limit. With respect to inheritance Ghali's plan provided for the land to be subdivided down to 3 feddans, with the oldest brother having first priority. Those who did not receive any land would be compensated by those who did receive land in the form of money. This could be paid in installments up to an annual amount of not more than one third of the value of the produce of that land.²²

An example of this would be the case in which the property owner dies leaving 8 feddans of land to three sons and one daughter. (The value of all land is arbitrarily assumed to be L.E. 100 per feddan.) In this case the two older sons would receive 4 feddans each and accept the burden of paying to their brother L.E. 228 and to their sister L.E. 114, their rightful inheritances according to this plan and the laws of inheritance.²³

The next question to be asked is: What about the land that is presently owned by the fellahin whose size is less than 3 feddans? Ghali's solution to this is to join these small parcels together so that they can participate in greater economic production and social promotion. Considering that in 1944, one fifth of all the cultivated land in Egypt was owned by individuals possessing less than 3 feddans, this is no small problem.

The solution offered was one of encouraging the owners to sell or exchange their lands or allow them to contract for loans by which they could buy land and thereby be able to possess the minimum 3 feddans. It was also

presented that the individual fellah would be allowed to buy state domain lands with the money he received from the sale of his former holdings.

Another solution was that the state appropriate some of the small holdings and resettle the former owners on reclaimed land. Ghali added that this was not yet practical, but in a matter of time it might be.²⁴

The benefits of the first mentioned solution are: the eliminating of some of the small properties and the consolidation of others plus the encouraging of migration from the congested areas and the settlement of new lands.²⁵

With respect to the second point that was of interest to this group of intellectuals, that is: the placing of a maximum limit on the amount of land that a person can own, the figure was set at 100 feddans by Ghali.

This meant that in the future a man could not own more than 100 feddans. If he made a contract for land in excess of this, it would be null and void by law. The only exception to this was in the case of inheritance. The good points of this plan as envisioned by Ghali was that it aimed at the future, it did not effect the large estates, and it would not cost the government anything. He further reasoned that within a period of about two decades the large estates would be broken up due to inheritance.

The entire scheme described above was bent on gradual change. The effect would be felt in several years. He felt that it was a very natural matter. It is a reform from which there is no escape.

An alternative solution was for the government to appropriate the excess lands of those persons who owned more than 100 feddans. They would then receive approximately 1,100,000 feddans, and if valued at L.E. 100 per feddan, the value of the land would be L.E. 110 million, a value in excess of the public debt in Egypt in 1945. If this method of appropriating the land

was used it would be a reform of the most violent nature. Governments do not ordinarily accept such things unless they are being forced by the prospect of a social revolution.²⁶

All of the above plans, as set forth, seem to avoid the major point of contention among the fellahin. That is, their continual exploitation by the large property owners. No mention was made of the breaking up of the large estates by this intellectual group.

In addition to the above mentioned group that was interested in land reform there was also extremist organized group that were interested in more direct action in the solving of the problem of more equitable land ownership. In prominence among these extremist groups were The Moslem Brotherhood and Misr al-Fatat (Young Egypt).

In 1948, Shaikh Hassan al-Banna, the leader of The Moslem Brotherhood, had a circular distributed by the Brotherhood which discussed the problem of wealth. Hassan al-Banna declared that it should not be monopolized by one class. He continued in saying that this was contrary to the laws of Islam, and that it was the government's job to distribute agricultural lands in accordance with the prophetic traditions. He also drew the conclusion that no land should be hired or rented, and furthermore ownership of land should be limited to the amount of land a person can cultivate himself. All in excess should be given to those who do not possess land. He continued by saying that Islam opposes the present system of capitalism, which permits the ownership of land as it presently is, as against Communism where the state is the possessor of the land. He advanced a solution "that is midway between Capitalism and Communism in that the individual should own as much land as he can cultivate, and that the residue should be given to the landless, free of charge."²⁷

On April 12, 1948, Shaikh Hasanain Muhammad Makhluf, the Mufti of Egypt, in response to a request of the Ministry of the Interior answered Hassan al-Banna in the form of a fatwa (legal decision).

The Mufti strongly rejected the claim of Hassan al-Banna. In his fatwa he quoted extensively from the Qur'an and the traditions which supported the present capitalistic system concerning land tenure, leasing, share-cropping, etc. His position was one in which he did not believe that any Muslim should have to give up his property to anyone else, nor should he be satisfied with only as much property as would provide him with the barest of necessities. The Mufti concluded his findings "with the admission that the poor classes were in need of decisive treatment, but there was no remedy, except to follow the teachings of Islam with regard to financial and social order, the elucidation of which is another matter and God knows best!"²⁸

It is interesting to note that both persons used the same references²⁹ for their decisions; however, they differed on their interpretations.³⁰

The other organization that was interested in more direct action was Misr al-Fatat. In its published political program³¹ of 1940 it was not interested in the redistribution of landed property although it did touch on some subjects peculiar to agriculture. Among these was the distribution of undeveloped land to the farmers. However; later, in 1950-51 it began to favor the redistribution of village lands.³²

Although the above mentioned organizations had favored the appropriation and redistribution of the lands of the large landowners, when asked for a specific plan in order to implement this, their plans were vague and too general.³³ Only the group of intellectuals had produced something more concrete, in the form of Mirrit Ghali's book, which was completely unacceptable to the revolutionaries.

FOOTNOTES

1. George L. Harris, Egypt (Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, Conn., 1957) pp.193-4.
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7. Warriner, Op. Cit., p.40.
8. Statistics Administration, Statistical Pocket Year Book, 1953.
9. Walter Z. Laqueur, Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1957) pp.34-35.
10. Lord Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, Vol.III (MacMillan and Co., London, 1933) p.147.
11. Ibid., pp.148-9
12. Gabriel Baer, "Egyptian Attitudes Towards Land Reform 1922-1955" in The Middle East in Transition ed. W.Z. Laqueur (Praeger, New York, 1958) p.81.
13. Ibid., pp.81-2.
14. J. Heyworth-Dunne, Religious and Political Trends in Egypt (By the Author, Washington, 1950) Footnote 52, p.94.
15. Baer, Op. Cit., p.82.
16. Ibid., pp.84-5.
17. Ibid., p.86.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., p.87.
20. Ibid., pp.87-9
21. Mirrit Ghali, al-isiyah az-zira'i (Cairo, 1945) Note pp.62-3.

22. Ibid., pp.47-51
23. Ibid., Note p.48.
24. Ibid., pp.51-3.
25. Ibid., p.53.
26. Ibid., pp.60-5.
27. Heyworth-Dunne, Op. Cit., p.51.
28. Ibid.
29. A.J. Wensinck, A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition (EJ Brill, Leiden, 1927) pp.134-5.
30. When the author was checking the various traditions dealing with; "It is preferable to give land to others than to let it for a definite period" ^a it was noted that the reference given ^b could be interpreted either way, either yes or no.
- a. A.J. Wensinck, A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition (EJ Brill, Leiden, 1927) pp.134-5.
- b. Al-Bukhari, Sahih (Vol I, L. Korehi, Leiden, 1862-68 41, 18; cf.
31. Oriente Moderno, April 1940, "Il Programma del Partito Nazionalista Islamico (gia partito 'Giovane Egitte') p.186.
32. Baer, Op. Cit., p.93.
33. Ibid.

CHAPTER 2

LEGISLATION FOR THE REFORM

The Coup d'Etat:

On 23 July 1952, the Free Officers executed the coup d'etat which by 26 July had forced the abdication of King Farsuk and his expulsion from Egypt.

Ali Maher was selected as the new Prime Minister. Neguib in speaking of the selection of Maher stated that he was completely free to select the men he wanted for his cabinet provided that these men were prepared to help the Free Officers in the attaining of their goals. They wanted a purge of all government departments and political parties. They were going to prosecute all grafters and they were going to enact some very drastic social and economic reforms designed to improve the lot of the Egyptian people as a whole. Maher had long been advocating a land reform, and the Free Officers thought that he would be a good man to sponsor the type of reforms they had in mind.¹ As it later developed Maher was one of many who were only giving "lip service" to any type of agrarian reform. Neguib felt very strongly about agrarian reforms. He states: "the most important of all reforms, by far, are the agrarian reforms, on which the success or failure of the Egyptian Revolution will depend."²

Not one single measure had been passed by the parliament in 30 years for the benefit of the fellahin. In 1945 and again 1950 bills had been introduced into the parliament to limit the size of the holdings, but in both cases they were overwhelmingly defeated.³

It may seem strange that the Free Officers should take such an interest in land reform. One author believes that their motives behind the reform were

varied. The first being sincerely humanitarian in that it was an attempt to abolish feudalism. Secondly, they were interested in breaking the power of the old ruling oligarchy, which consisted mainly, if not completely of the large landowners. This was a revolutionary aim, but it was one that required a definite showdown. Thirdly, the fact that land reform was in the air internationally. The United States favored it and it is certain that the State Department influence played a part in the preparation of the decree.⁴ An additional reason may have been the breaking of the landholders' desire to hold wealth in the form of land and to encourage them to invest in industry.⁵

On 7 September 1952 it became apparent that Ali Maher, under the pretext of "studying the experience of other countries," was actually opposing the promulgation of a land reform law, the Free Officers decided that they had already learnt something from other countries, and that was, the danger of land reform on paper.⁶ On that day the Free Officers took things into their own hands and appointed a new cabinet with General Neguib as Prime Minister. On September 9th the Agrarian Reform Law with certain modifications was promulgated. Some of the modifications that had been recommended by Maher and his associates were considered.

The Agrarian Reform Law

Maximum Limit of Holdings:

In Article 1 of Decree Law 178 of 1952 (the complete text of the law may be seen in the appendix) allows no person to possess more than 200 feddans of land. Any contract made in contravention of this is null and void.

There are certain exceptions to this article. Persons can own in excess of 200 feddans of land providing that the land is desert or fallow and is to be improved. The law will then apply to this land after 25 years.

Industrial companies that existed prior to the promulgation of the law can own in excess of 200 feddans of agricultural lands which are necessary for industrial exploitation. Wakflands are also exempted from the provisions of Article 1 of the law.

Article 4 includes some of the points that had been modified upon the recommendation of Maher and his associates. In particular this article dealt with the transfer of lands within 5 years by persons who owned in excess of 200 feddans. This included the transfer of up to 100 feddans to the owner's children, each child receiving not more than 50 feddans. The landowners were also permitted to sell to graduates of agricultural institutes from 10 to 20 feddans of orchards.

Article 9 states that the lands that are requisitioned in every village shall be distributed among the small farmers so as to allot to each of them a small holding of not less than 2 feddans and not more than 5 feddans, according to the quality of the land. These to whom the land is distributed must fulfill the following conditions: (a) they must be Egyptians of age, who have not been convicted of any dishonorable crime (b) they must be working in agriculture and (c) own less than 5 feddans of agricultural land. Priority is given to the person who actually tills the land whether he be tenant or farmer, to the largest family among the inhabitants of the village, then to the poorest, and last to non-inhabitants of the village.⁷

Article 16 states that the owner of the land and his heirs shall not have the right to dispose of the land before having paid the price in full. Before this payment is effected, the land shall not be subject to expropriation in settlement of debts unless they are due to the government, the agricultural and cooperative bank or the cooperative society.

Minimum Area Provision:

One of the finer aspects of the law are the provisions against fragmentation of the farm lands (Articles 23 and 24). In cases where the land is to be divided up as a result of sale, exchange, inheritance, will, donation, etc., in order to avoid fragmentation into lots of less than 5 feddans the parties concerned must come to an agreement as to who will assume ownership of the land. In the case of disagreement, the matter is submitted to the Summary Court in whose district the pieces of land having the greatest value lies. Here the decision as to the ownership will be decided. In the case of land that cannot be partitioned, the Summary Court gives preference to the party whose profession is farming. If several parties fall into this category, lots are drawn among them. In the case of inheritance, however, preference in respect to ownership is given to the heir working in agriculture. If there are several such heirs, preference is given to the spouse, then to the children. If there are several children, lots are drawn among them. If no one is prepared to compensate the others for their share, the court shall order the land to be sold at public auction.

Landlord-Cultivator Relations:

With respect to the regulation of the relations between the tenants of the agricultural lands and the owners we refer to Articles 31 through 37 in the law.

The law provides that the land may be let only to a cultivator farming the land himself. Thus eliminating various agents and middlemen that existed prior to the reform.

In regards to the amount of rent that the tenant must pay over a year period, it could not exceed seven times the original tax assessed on the land. As tax assessments are low, varying between L.E. 2. and L.E. 4. per feddan, the rental value on this basis averages between L.E. 14 and L.E. 28. whereas it was

between L.E. 20 and L.E. 50. before the reform. In the case of rent based on sharecropping, the owner's share should not exceed one half after deduction of all expenses. Before the reform it was one half the gross produce.⁸

Concerning tenancy contracts, the period of the lease must not be made for less than three years. The contract must be in writing, regardless of the value. In the case where there is no written contract the rent shall be on a crop sharing basis for three years in which the owner's share shall be one half after the deduction for expenses.

The law provided for the fixing of agricultural wages (Article 38) in the different agricultural districts each year by a committee formed by the Ministry of Agriculture. The committee shall consist of one official from the Ministry plus 6 other members. Three of these members will be representatives of the landowners and tenants and three will be representatives of the agricultural workers.

After the Agrarian Reform Law had been promulgated, a ministerial order was issued establishing the minimum wage of the adult laborer at 18 piastres per-diem of 8 hours work in the various agricultural districts. The daily wages for women, boys, and girls were fixed at 10 piastres. No deduction for agents or foremen was permitted.⁹

Trade Unions:

Article 39 of the law also provided for agricultural workers forming unions for their common interests and protection.

Cooperatives:

In the past the big landowners or their agents used to advance loans to the individual fellah to enable him to purchase seed, fertilizer, equipment, etc. This service is still needed, and has been taken over by the Agrarian Reform Cooperatives. The composition of the cooperatives and their function

are given in Articles 18 through 22 of the law. The members of the cooperatives will come from the fellahin who have taken over seized lands in each village and do not own more than 5 feddans of land. Other farmers who do not own more than 5 feddans of land can also join the cooperative.

In general the functions of the cooperative consist of obtaining loans for its members based on the needs of their lands, providing the farmers with the necessary tools and equipment, fertilizer, seeds, means of storage, transport, etc., for the necessary exploitation of the land. They also organize the cultivation of the land by selecting certain seeds for planting, grading of crops, pest control, and the digging of canals and drains. The cooperatives also sell the crops for their members subtracting the various debts that the individual fellah has contracted during the year. They also render various other agricultural and social services to the members. The cooperatives are run under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

FOOTNOTES

1. Mohammed Neguib, Egypt's Destiny (Gollancy, London, 1955) pp.125-6.
2. Ibid., p.157.
3. Warriner, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East, Op. Cit., pp. 11-12.
4. Ibid., p.13.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.12.
7. Eva Garzeuzi, Old Ills and New Remedies in Egypt (dar al-maaref, Cairo, 1958) p.81.
8. Ibid., p.82.
9. Ibid., p.83.

CHAPTER 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM

Organization for the Reform:

At the time of the implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law there had been established no organization to carry out the provisions of the law. A Higher Committee was established at ministerial level to carry out the many and varied functions that would be required of it in the distribution of the lands. Sayed Marei was appointed its Executive Director. He began assembling a staff of personnel to aid him in enforcing the provisions of the law.

Efforts to gather a nucleus of trained personnel met with some success, as a few men were obtained from the Ministries of Social Affairs and Agriculture. On October 26, 1952 the first land requisition orders were issued to 112 landowners. The group of employees of the HCAR that moved into the field to enforce these orders were hardly prepared for the difficult task that faced them.¹

Needless to say, chaos followed. The landowners did everything possible to make the job of these men difficult to do. Through the landowner's complete lack of cooperation, a breakdown of the landowner-tenant relations and a suspension of local credit the large landowners were trying to sabotage the Agrarian Reform Law. They succeeded, but only momentarily.²

The Ministry of Finance refused to back the operations of the HCAR because, at that time, they were not a part of the state budget. The Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Bank likewise refused because the HCAR could not produce any collateral.

It soon became clear that matters would not be able to be handled within the existing governmental bureaucratic framework. This became apparent in 1952 when various governmental departments failed to meet the personnel and

monetary requirements. "Wing Commander Gamal Salem, who claimed authorship of the Agrarian Reform Law, brought the matter before the Free Officer's Executive Council. The issue was simple: the 'old order' was sabotaging the regime's most highly publicized reform, and unless drastic measures were taken, the entire program would collapse."³

Drastic action was taken to put the organization on a more firm basis. A one million pound advance was made by the Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Bank, guaranteed by the government. More significant was that the Higher Committee for Agrarian Reform (H.C.A.R.) was allowed to recruit employees without regard to civil service regulations. This ruling was of great help to the Director with respect to his personnel problems. When a person was hired he could be offered more money than a regular civil service employee. And secondly, the employee could be dismissed with equal ease.

As a result of these actions the H.C.A.R. could proceed ahead with the efficient implementation of the law.

Land Requisition Problems:

A number of problems appeared at the outset. One of the first was just how much land was there for appropriation and subsequent redistribution. The official figures of the government were hopelessly out of date. "A cadastral survey of Egypt was completed before the Second World War."⁴ At the outset of the reform the figures varied as to the actual amount of land that was to become subject to the law. It was first estimated that, excluding Waqfs, over 700,000 feddans would change ownership. This figure has undergone several downward revisions.⁵ Sayed Marei in his book in one place mentions that there were 2,136 owners of 1,176,801 feddans but later in the same book he mentions 1,786 landowners possessing the same amount of land.⁶

In another one of his publications he mentions that the amount of land that would be available for distribution was 655,640 feddans.⁷ This was not a completely accurate figure and in 1955 the official government figure was 566,736 feddans.⁸

This figure does not represent the actual amount of land that could be redistributed to the fellahin. This is due to the fact that in the text of the law, Article 4 contains the provision that a landowner could sell small parcels of land of 5 feddans each to fellahin who owned less than 10 feddans, providing that they were not related. It soon became apparent that the landlords were not only taking advantage of this part of the law but actually abusing it. On July 15, 1954, a decree was issued which prohibited the approval of any sale of land which was transferred under the provisions of Article 4 of the law if they had not been registered in court by November 1, 1953.⁹ The amount of land that had changed ownership in this way was officially set at 145,000 feddans. This figure was confirmed by the H.C.A.R.¹⁰

One of the effects of the mass selling of this land was that the price of land fell almost 50%. Some of the ways that the landowners abused the provisions of Article 4 were instead of selling their land to the small farmers, they sold the land to larger farmers, commercial interests, and civil servants.¹¹ If this disposal of land by the landowners had not been halted it was quite possible that the entire reform could have been sabotaged.

Land Distribution:

The figures with respect to the number of feddans that were available for expropriation vary from source to source. Also, the official figures of 1955 are not necessarily the same as 1959, in referring to the same thing. But, in general the differences are not so great that we might form a completely false picture of the reform.

At the outset of the reform there were 566,736 feddans available for expropriation (about one tenth of the cultivated area), from this total we can subtract 145,000 feddans that were sold under the provisions of Article 4. At that time there was 421,736 feddans available for distribution. Of these totals approximately 180,000 feddans were the lands that were confiscated from the former royal family. The remainder of the lands were from private individuals. However, additions were made from various other sources later.¹²

In 1957 the government issued a law (152/1957) which made all of the Wakf Khairi¹³ lands subject to the provisions of the Agrarian Reform Law. The area affected was approximately 150,000 feddans, of which 64,853 feddans had been requisitioned by the Ministry of Agrarian Reform in July 1959. In addition to this land, the government took steps in May 1959 to transfer from the administration of State Domains to the Ministry of Agrarian Reform 135,000 feddans of state land. This area is to be sold to the small farmers within the next two years.¹⁴

With respect to the physical distribution of the lands to the fellahin, and the implementation of the scheme, the country was divided into 22 districts, 14 of which are located in the Delta and 8 in Upper Egypt.

During the course of the distributions some difficulties were encountered. These included the evaluation of compensation due to the big landowners and also the confirmation of property. There were also difficulties over what should be considered fallow lands, also about the lands that were within the boundaries of cities, which generally cannot be considered agricultural lands. All cases of this type had to be decided on the basis of individual circumstances and their own merits.¹⁵

For the process of land distribution the HCAR asked a group of social workers to undertake a socio-economic study of farmers eligible to own land.

The study undertook to check the number of tenants in 1951-52 from farm registers, and to find out their living conditions, to assess the return of each feddān according to the three year system of crop rotation, and the average cost of living of each family.

In distributing land to eligible persons the following points were taken into consideration:

1. Location. The proximity of the holding to the residence of the new owners.
2. Crop rotation. The three year crop rotation practised in Egypt divides the land into three parts. Every farmer is allotted a strip in every one of the three big parts. This makes it possible for the new landowners to cultivate the land cooperatively.
3. Possibility of construction of dwellings. Sufficient ground was left around the dwelling center for future construction.¹⁶

Concerning the amount of land that has been distributed to the fellaḥin there is a lack of official figures. "Since 1955, Agrarian Reform officials have been conspicuously reticent about giving details of the distribution program."¹⁷ But from the sources available the picture of how much land has gotten into the hands of the fellaḥin can be vaguely seen. There are some exact figures and there are some approximations, the following table gives us some idea of the distribution picture:¹⁸

TABLE IV

LANDS DISTRIBUTED TO THE <u>FELLAḤIN</u> (IN <u>FEDDANS</u>)		
Date	Amount	Cumulative Total
23 July 1953	18,402	18,402
During April 1954	5,000	23,402
Until October 1954	-	101,299
During 1955	145,941	247,240
Until June 1957	-	282,000
23 July 1957	20,578	302,578
During July 1958	15-20,000	320,000
Until November 1958	50,000	370,000

Based on the fact that the requisition goal of 420,000 feddans was reached in 1957¹⁹ the redistribution program of the lands to the fellahin appears to be progressing along quite well.

However, using figures that appeared in a memorandum prepared by an Agrarian Reform official that appeared in January 1959²⁰ an obvious discrepancy appears when comparing them with those in Table IV above

TABLE V

AREA AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION (IN FEDDANS)

Total area affected by land reform	566,736
Less: Area sold privately by ex-owners, under the provisions of Article 4:	145,000
Area retained by HCAR as not fertile, to be used for public utilities, etc.	<u>130,247</u> <u>275,247</u>
<u>Area available for distribution:</u>	<u>291,489</u>

From the above there is available for redistribution to the fellahin 291,489 feddans. Based on the figures that up until November 1958, (See Table IV, above) 370,000 feddans had been distributed and the fact that in January 1959, only 291,489 feddans were available for redistribution, a rather gross discrepancy to the amount of 78,511 feddans, is seen.

Compensation of the Former Landowners:

In accordance with the Agrarian Reform Law the landowners were to be compensated for their appropriated lands in the form of Agrarian Reform Bonds. The value of the land is based on the tax assessment for the year 1944 or if the land was acquired after that year, the earliest taxable year. It is set at 10 times the rental value and the rental value is set at 7 times the basic tax assessment. From these figures we have the land value being set at 70 times the basic tax assessment.

The bonds by which the former landowners receive as compensation for their lands are repaid over a period of 30 years with 3% interest. On September 29, 1958 this was changed when it was announced that the bonds would be repaid over 40 years at 1.5% interest.

It was originally planned to have these bonds negotiable. As was pointed out, "one object of the reform, on which Dr. Emary, the Minister of Finance (who served in Aii Maher's Cabinet) lays great emphasis, is to stimulate greater investment in industry by breaking down the tendency to hold land which absorbs so great a part of the savings of the country; for this reason the bonds to be issued by the State will be negotiable."²¹ The bonds are non-negotiable, it is possible they were made so in order to reduce possible inflationary effects of a large number of negotiable Agrarian Reform Bonds on the market. The non-negotiable bonds can only be used to pay certain land taxes, to purchase fallow land and in the settlement of death duties.

The landowners had an extremely low opinion of the financial worth of the bonds. In some cases it was questioned whether the bonds would ever be redeemed. Considering this attitude it is no wonder that the landowners took advantage of disposing of their lands thru the provisions of Article 4 of the law.

The Ministry of Finance was at the outset authorized to issue L.E. 200 million in bonds to finance the government's purchase of lands.²² In 1954 the total compensation due to the expropriated owners was estimated at L.E. 200 million.²³

This figure has afterwards undergone several downward revisions. One author mentions these revisions, the first being to 150 million pounds of bonds. Then an official publication of the HCAR states that at least 120 million pounds of bonds will be issued. Since 1954 well informed sources have

further cut these figures. The Director of the Economics Department of the HCAR stated that he expected 75 million pounds of bonds to be issued of which 4 million would be compensation for requisitioned buildings and equipment. In 1957 all of the land had been requisitioned, but only 22.3 million pounds of Agrarian Reform Bonds had been registered with the government by December 31, 1957. Delay was caused by difficulty in verifying land ownership. The HCAR expected to have issued 30 million pounds in bonds by December 1958.²⁴

Cultivator Purchases of the Redistributed Lands:

The fellahin who received lands as a result of expropriation were required to pay for their new lands in 30 annual installments plus an annual interest of 3%. This is equal to the amount that the government pays the former landowners. Added to this there is a 15% over 30 years to cover the HCAR's administrative and handling expenses.

In practice, the fellah does not start making payments on the land the first year that he tills it. "The first year, the beneficiary pays the fixed rent (7 times the basic land tax). In the following year he gets a provisional title to the holding and starts paying the installments on the purchase price. He also pays his fee to the cooperative society and land tax!"²⁵

Those fellahin who received benefit as a result of the reform did so, generally at the expense of the former large landowners. On September 29, 1958 it was announced that the maturity of the bonds was extended from 30 years to 40 and the interest was lowered to 1.5%. Similarly the HCAR administrative and handling charges were reduced from 15% to 10%. It seems that the fellahin are going to benefit again at the expense of their former landlords. It has been speculated by various sources as to what was behind the government's move. One source believes that this move was made to placate some future criticism of the reform by the fellahin. Another source believes that there must have

been an extremely compelling reason for the move, "because the reduction, cost the government millions of pounds in expected revenue."²⁶ Another source has the opinion that this move was taken by the government, at this time, in an attempt "to allay some criticisms which were being leveled against Agrarian Reform Cooperatives."²⁷

In general it appears that this move was taken by the government for purely economic reasons. By reducing the annual interest and the overall administrative and handling costs they were simply giving additional benefits to the fellahin financed partly at the expense of the landlords and partly by government subsidy.

Finances of the HCAR:

After the enactment of the Agrarian Reform Law the HCAR was advanced a loan by the Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Bank for the amount of L.E. 1 million to cover the first years expenses. By June 4th, 1953 the HCAR showed expenditures of L.E. 820,000 against an estimated income of L.E. 2,513,000.²⁸

Under the provisions of Law 131 of 1953 gave the HCAR financial autonomy from the government. Also at this time the HCAR changed their financial year from 1 July - 30 June to 1 November - 31 October, to coincide with the beginning and ending of the agricultural year.

At this time the Director also obtained from the government a ruling exempting from payment of the land tax all lands that had been requisitioned but had not yet been redistributed.²⁹

At the time that the HCAR requisitions the land it accepts the responsibility of making the payments on the Agrarian Reform Bonds plus the interest, but until the requisitioned land is finally redistributed the HCAR is permitted to charge rent for the land, at a rate of normally 7 times the land tax value.

The biggest source of income of the HCAR comes from the rent of the land not yet distributed. Their second source of income is from their cooperative societies. Originally the HCAR obtained loans to finance its operations from the Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Bank. This lasted for two years. It was changed when it was realized that when it lent this money through the local cooperatives at nearly the same rate of interest that it paid the bank, it was losing money. So it decided to use some of the HCAR reserves "along with installment payments on bonds to finance its own credit system, keeping the 3% interest return on loans for their own purposes. Every June, it would deposit the bond installments with the Ministry of Finance, after having used those funds for up to 10 months without interest. Of course, there also was income from various service charges. A separate fund established for Agrarian Reform Cooperatives never failed to show a net gain, partially as a result of the commissions received from cotton and fertilizer sales."³⁰

To get an appreciation of the scope of the activity of the HCAR, its budget for 1957-58 is given below:

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>(L.E. 000's)</u>
Salaries, allowances, indemnities, etc.	1,315
Current Expenses	2,034
New Works	1,262
Other Expenditures	10,759
	<hr/> 15,370
 <u>INCOME</u>	
Rent on nondistributed land	6,320
For Agricultural Services rendered to Beneficiaries and Tenants	3,050
From Sale of Seeds, Fertilizers, etc.	1,000
Amount Due by the Cooperatives	5,000
	<hr/> 15,370

(Source: Eva Garzouzi, Old Ills and New Remedies in Egypt (Caire, 1958)p.99.)

Minimum Pay Rates:

The wages of the agricultural workers will be fixed annually by a committee that will be formed by the Ministry of Agriculture. The president of the committee will be an official of the Ministry. Of the six members of the committee, three will represent the landowners and the tenants, the other three will represent the agricultural laborers.³¹

A decree was later issued that set down the minimum wage rates. They were set for all districts at 18 piasters per day for men and 10 piasters per day for women and children.³² These were about 50% above the existing rates of pay.

FOOTNOTES

1. Keith Wheelock, Nasser's New Egypt (Praeger, New York, 1960) p.77.
2. Ibid., p.78.
3. Ibid.
4. United Nations, Progress in Land Reform (U.N., New York, 1954) p.209.
5. Harris, Op. Cit., p. 217.
6. Sayed Marei, Agrarian Reform in Egypt (Societe Orientale de Publicite, Caire, 1957).
7. _____, Outline of Land Reform in Egypt (Higher Committee for Agrarian Reform, Caire, undated) p.9.
8. William Thweatt, "The Egyptian Agrarian Reform", Middle East Economic Papers (Beirut, 1956) p.149.
9. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 79.
10. Ibid., p. 80.
11. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 34.
12. Gabriel S, Saab, " Rationalization of Agriculture and Land Tenure Problems in Egypt, "Middle East Economic Papers (Beirut,1960) p.73.

13. Wakf means the permanent dedication by a person professing the Muslim faith of any property for any purpose recognized by Muslim Law as religious, pious or charitable. Wakf Khairi are endowments to institutions that are definitely of religious or public nature (mosques, schools, hospitals, bridges, waterwerks, etc.) these are distinguished from wakf shii or dhurri which are family endowments, for example for children or grand-children or other relations, or for other persons. For details see: Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers (EJ Brill, Leiden, 1953) p. 624.
14. Saab, Op. Cit.
15. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p.88.
16. Ibid., pp. 88-89.
17. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p.81.
18. Ibid., pp.80-81.
19. Ibid., p. 80.
20. Ibid., p. 81.
21. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 4.
22. Thweatt, Op. Cit., Footnote 53, p. 157.
23. United Nations, Op. Cit., p. 80.
24. Wheelock, Op. Cit., pp. 86-87.
25. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p. 89.
26. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 87.
27. Ibid.
28. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p. 96.
29. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 88.
30. Ibid.
31. Article 38, Agrarian Reform Law (178/1952)
32. Warriner, Op. Cit., p.40.

CHAPTER 4

THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

Authority for Formation:

Articles 18 through 22 of the Agrarian Reform Law provide for the formation of Agricultural Cooperative Societies in areas where land has been redistributed to the fellahin under the provisions of this same law.¹

The members of the cooperatives are those fellahin who have benefited from the Reform and do not own more than 5 feddans of land. The functions of the cooperatives consist of obtaining loans for its members based on their needs, providing its members with the necessary equipment to till the land, plus fertilizer, seeds, means of storage, transport, etc., for the exploitation of the land. They also organize the cultivation of the land by selecting certain seeds for planting, grading of crops, pest control, and the digging of canals and drains. In addition the cooperatives market the crops for its members, plus rendering them other agricultural and social services.

Cooperatives Prior to the Reform:

The agricultural cooperatives that the law directed to be formed, were not the first organizations of their type in Egypt. The first agricultural cooperative was founded about 1912. During World War I the people lost interest in the movement but it was revived when Egypt became politically independent. Under the laws of 1923 and 1927 the societies were placed under the supervision of the government who placed a credit of L.E. 350,000 in Misr Bank for their use. The various cooperatives could borrow the money at 4% and in turn re-lend it at 7%.

The number of societies increased rapidly during the 1920's due to the enthusiasm of the fellahin. They finally could get cheap credit. In 1931

there were 539 agricultural cooperatives with a membership of 53,000.²

In 1930 the Credit Agricole d'Egypte was formed. It would loan money to the cooperative societies at 3% and to other individuals at 5%. By this action it was no longer necessary to be a member of a cooperative society to obtain a loan at a reasonable rate of interest. So as a result, the expansion of the societies declined. In 1939 there were 792 cooperatives with a membership of 78,000.

Since the Credit Agricole lent money to cooperatives at a cheaper rate of interest than to individuals some of the large landowners joined cooperatives, eventually securing control over them so that they could exploit this possibility.³

During World War II the membership in the cooperatives increased greatly, due to the government relying heavily on them for the distribution of supplies and fertilizer. After the war the membership held steady. There was no noticeable increase in membership. In 1948 the situation is as shown on the chart below:⁴

TABLE VI

Kind of Society	No. of Societies	No. of Members
Cooperative societies for supply and agricultural loans	1,654	527,073
Consumer Cooperatives	328	241,930
Cooperative Industrial Societies	3	516
Cooperative Societies for the production and supply of petrol and drugs	2	2,886
Cooperative societies for the supply and marketing of vegetables, fruits, potatoes, and onions	6	1,701
Total	1,993	774,106

(Source: Egypt, Ministry of Social Affairs, Social Welfare in Egypt (Cairo, 1950) p. 44.)

From the above we see that most of the cooperatives are of the supply and credit type. There are only 6 marketing cooperatives. The individual fellah could borrow the money to buy his supplies, seed, etc., but when it came to the selling of his crop he did not have the advantages of a cooperative that did this for him.

In 1949 the Banque du Credit Agricole was reorganized and renamed Banque du Credit Agricole et Cooperatif. Because of the government supervision and the dependence on the Credit Agricole, at present, "many societies---600, said one authority---merely act as post offices between the bank and their members."⁵

The major accomplishment of these societies prior to 1952 can be limited to the fact that "it has replaced the indiscriminate lending of the professional money-lender by a system of controlled credit, linked moreover with marketing."⁶

With the enactment of the Agrarian Reform Law there will be in addition to the various multi-purpose cooperatives shown in table VI above, the cooperatives of the Agrarian Reform estates plus various other special types of cooperatives.

Organization of the Agrarian Reform Cooperatives:

The estates that were requisitioned under the provisions of the Agrarian Reform Law are grouped into administrative districts throughout Egypt. In July 1959 there were 40 districts. Each district varied in size from 10-15,000 feddans. Within each district, and directed by a manager appointed by the HCAR are local cooperative societies. Each one of the cooperative societies covers an area of about 1,000 feddans. In July 1955 there were 125 cooperative societies⁷ and in July 1959 there were 276⁸. The manager of the cooperative society is generally highly trained and experienced, and may have been a

manager of an estate formerly. Under his control he has a staff consisting of agronomists, accountants, mechanics, storekeepers and foremen.⁹ Although the society carries out its functions through a board of Management which consists of 11 members of the cooperative who have been elected by the fellahin, in reality the manager supervises the operation. He is not a member of the board but he can refer decisions which he does not approve of, to the HCAR. In practice disagreement does not arise,¹⁰ the manager operates the cooperative. "This is hardly surprising: it could not be expected that the peasants, so long accustomed to acquiescence, could immediately develop the power to manage their own affairs."¹¹

Sir Malcolm Darling forwarded the point that the Egyptian village was good ground for developing the cooperative spirit if a strong educational effort was made. This is based on the characteristics of the villagers who have informal mutual-help arrangements, and also their close family ties. In the meantime, the aim of substituting the cooperative society for the landlord is not realized;

"for the time being, the State must take his place, with the infant societies led paternally by the hand until they can learn to walk by themselves. The teacher is therefore all important, and if not properly taught himself, paternal may never develop into cooperative control, may even harden into bureaucratic!"¹²

One of the final steps with respect to the management of the cooperatives is being taken whereby the HCAR appointed manager is removed from the cooperative and the local appointed board of management runs the cooperative. This has occurred in 2 cooperatives. When this occurs throughout the cooperatives of the Agrarian Reform, it may be said that they are achieving satisfactory results.¹³

Functions of the Cooperative Societies:

The function of the cooperatives as enumerated in the Agrarian Reform

Law consist of the following: (i) obtaining of all types of agricultural loans for members of the society according to the needs of the land, (ii) providing the farmers with the necessary seeds, fertilizers, cattle, agricultural machinery and means of storage and transport of crops, and (iii) organizing the cultivation of the land by seed selection, grading of crops, fighting of pests and digging canals and drains. In addition they sell the principal crops on behalf of their members, and render various agricultural and social services.

Agricultural loans are provided to the fellahin through the cooperative from the Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Bank. For the agricultural year ending in 1953 it was reported that L.E. 610,000 had been lent to the tenants on a short term basis.¹⁴ By 1956 this figure had been increased to L.E. 1,243,791,¹⁵ and by 1958 it had soared to L.E. 12,280,000.¹⁶

In regard to the furnishing of seed and fertilizer, the form of loan that is used is the loan in kind. By using this method the lender has more control over the use of the loan. In this case the loan is made for a certain specified amount of money, but the fellah receives a certain amount of seed, fertilizer, etc.

The problem of providing agricultural machinery to the cooperatives in Egypt has its own particular problems. In general, the very small size of the farms and the intense cultivation, do not favor mechanization. Furthermore, with the dense population and the subsequent cheap labor force available the inducement to mechanize appears not to be there.¹⁷ In Upper Egypt there is more mechanization than in Lower Egypt. The cheap cost of labor in the Delta area is not the reason, it is the permanent drains of the irrigation system that impede still further the use of machines there. In fact the labor is cheaper in Upper Egypt, but there are no permanent drains.¹⁸

The HCAR authorized the use of requisitioned machinery. In addition it has purchased machinery when necessary. Machinery has been sold to the cooperatives for the use of its members. Maintenance service is provided at local workshops, although the possibility of establishing 'mechanical centers' where the maintenance of all cooperative machines would be done, is under study.¹⁹

The cooperatives organize the cultivation of the land by efficient seed selection, grading of crops, pest control plus the digging of canals and drains. In regards to better seed selection the Ministry of Agriculture has undertaken intensive programs for extracting new varieties of Egyptian cotton. Some of these include: Giza 59, which has a better yield, long staple, and is resistant to plant diseases. Giza 66, gives the highest yield in Upper Egypt; in certain cases it reaches 15 cantars per acre.²⁰

Concerning the maintaining and digging new drains and canals one source believes that the cooperative societies are not fully meeting their responsibilities, in so far as the upkeep of the very delicate drainage system is concerned.²¹

Another responsibility of the cooperative is the marketing of the produce. Although it is required that the members of the cooperatives, market their products through the cooperatives, it was deemed unwise to force them to do so at the outset. Instead of coercion, incentives were offered. Everything possible was done to get the farmer the best prices possible. For a long time the small farmer had been literally robbed by the many middlemen who sold his crop for him. He was never allowed to enjoy the full fruits of his labor. In 1953 only 9,000 cantars (1 cantar = 99.05 lbs.) of cotton were sold through the Agrarian Reform organization. But, because of the elimination of the middleman these fellahin received over L.E. 2 more per cantar of cotton than these fellahin who used other marketing methods. In 1954 the HCAR

marketed 86,000 cantars of cotton, in 1956 237,000 cantars of cotton and in 1957 over 300,000 cantars were marketed for the members of the cooperatives by the HCAH.²²

As an example of what one cooperative has done we have information on a cooperative in the Zafaran area. It consisted of an area of 4,938 acres. For the period 1952-1954 production increased nearly 20% due to the using of better seeds and fertilizer. The cooperative aided in reducing the cost of irrigation. It also provided other services to its members such as providing better breeds of poultry, tractor service, etc. In this same period of time the average income of the individual fellah rose from L.E. 12.5 to L.E. 41.5.²³ This all cannot be attributed to only the action of the cooperative. The fact that the yearly payment, depending on whether the fellah was buying or renting the land was less than prior to the Reform. This fact effects these figures considerably.

When the fellah receives his land as a result of the Agrarian Reform Law it is divided up into three equal parts. Each one of these plots is located in the area of one of the three main crops, entering in the crop rotation. The crops that are planted from November to May are wheat and Egyptian clover, June and July the land is fallow, from August to November maize is planted, December and January the land is fallow, and from February to November cotton is planted. There is one area that is not subject to the crop rotation scheme. That is the area in Upper Egypt where they plant sugar cane.²⁴ Initially when the crop rotation scheme was worked out the fellahin were asked to join voluntarily in the consolidation of the crops. But on their own individual lands they were left free to work as they pleased. They were asked to comply with the rotation in as much as it effected the crop that was to be planted

in that particular part of the village where his property was. If for some reason a fellah did not wish to have all his property in a particular part of the village under one crop he was encouraged by the Board of Management of the local cooperative to work an exchange agreement with some other small landholder.

Other cooperative activities:

The cooperative societies have rendered numerous other services to the new landowners. One of their recent experiments involved the building of houses on former royal property in the Inchass area. 80 homes were built and during the month of November 1957 they were distributed. These houses were of one and two storeys, and were built with pointed roofs so that the fellah could not use it for the storage of straw. This was done as a fire prevention measure. The cost of the homes varies from L.E. 300 to L.E. 400, and payment is made in from 15 to 20 yearly installments.²⁵

In November 1957 the General Cooperative society was established in Cairo. Its first job was to complete the distribution of all the land expropriated. In addition it grouped together under one central organization all of the newly created cooperatives of the Agrarian Reform plus all other cooperatives that existed previously. Their capital consists of L.E. 300,000 in cash and about L.E. 6 million in property. The provisional board of directors of this organization is under the chairmanship of the Minister of Land Reform.

The function of the General Cooperative will be to furnish the various societies with seed, fertilizer, equipment, etc. It will advance loans; participate in various projects with the aim of improving the member societies, and participate in marketing. It will also sponsor various cultural programs. It is permitted to deal directly with the government departments and the banks. In the past, social insurance had only been limited to the urban population, thru this organization it will be extended to the rural population.

The work of the cooperatives is thus centralized under one management in Cairo, and will be done by this group, delegating authority to the cooperatives whenever necessary.²⁶

As mentioned above initially the fellahin were asked voluntarily to participate in the triennial crop rotation scheme. Since the officials of the HCAR desire to control the production in the various areas that have come under the provisions of the Agrarian Reform Law, crop rotation is now required in the majority of these areas.

FOOTNOTES

1. Agrarian Reform Law, Articles 18-22.
2. Charles Issawi, Egypt at Mid-Century (Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 1954) p. 132.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 133.
5. Ibid., p. 134.
6. Sir Malcolm Darling, "Cooperation in the Middle East", Yearbook of Agricultural Cooperation (1951) (Blackwells, Oxford 1951.) p. 46.
7. United Nations, Progress in Land Reform, Second Report (U.N., New York, 1956) p. 102.
8. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 84.
9. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 42.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 43.
12. Sir Malcolm Darling, "Land Reform in Italy and Egypt", Yearbook of Agricultural Cooperation (1956) (Blackwells, Oxford, 1956) p. 20.
13. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 84.
14. United Nations, Op. Cit., p. 91.

15. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p. 92.
16. Gabriel Saab, "Egyptian Agrarian Reform", Middle East Forum, (V 36, No.7, Beirut, 1960) p. 18.
17. United Nations, Progress in Land Reform, Op. Cit., p. 251.
18. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 45.
19. United Nations, Progress in Land Reform, Second Report, Op. Cit., pp.111-112.
20. "The Story of Egyptian Cotton", The Arab Review (V I, No.7, Cairo, 1960) p. 14.
21. Saab, "Rationalization of Agriculture and Land Tenure Problems in Egypt", Op. Cit., p. 75.
22. Wheelock, Op. Cit., pp. 83-84.
23. United Nations, Op. Cit., p. 103.
24. Saab, Op. Cit., p. 74.
25. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p. 92.
26. Ibid., p. 94.

CHAPTER 5

ECONOMIC EVALUATION OF THE REFORM

Effects of the Reform on Distribution of Land Ownership and Wealth:

The effect of the Agrarian Reform Law on the distribution of land ownership is shown in the following table:

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND OWNERSHIP IN 1959 IN EGYPT

Size of Property	Owners Number 000's	%	Area Feddans 000's	%
Less than 5 <u>feddans</u>	2869.88	95.	2945.06	49.3
From 5 to 10 <u>feddans</u>	79.26	2.6	525.90	8.8
From 10 to 50 <u>feddans</u>	69.12	2.3	1281.42	21.5
From 50 to 100 <u>feddans</u>	6.38	.21	429.49	7.2
From 100 to 200 <u>feddans</u>	3.18	.01	436.77	7.3
200 <u>feddans</u>	1.77	0.058	353.60	5.9
Totals:	3029.58	100.	5972.26	100.0

(Source: Republique Arabe Unie, Annuaire, 1959, p. 312.)

In comparing the above table with Table II we see the changes that have taken place with respect to land ownership as a result of the Agrarian Reform Law. In 1952 94.4% of the landowners owned 35.5% of the land. In 1959 95% of the landowners owned 49.3% of the land. Where in 1952 5.8% of the landowners owned 64.5% of the land, in 1959 5% of the landowners own 50.7% of the land.

The redistribution of the lands in Egypt has resulted in a redistribution of income. The fellahin who benefited from the reform have generally received an increase in yearly income.¹ The amount of the increase in income can only be speculated due to the lack of official statistics of income distribution.

The annual income of the former wealthy landowners who had their land expropriated has generally decreased.

Concerning how well the former landowners were being compensated for their lands, Doreen Warriner states: "under the old regime, landowners kept the tax level low, so that they are now the victims of their own devices. This rate averaging about L.E. 250 per acre (compensation price paid to former owners) does not, of course, satisfy the landowners, for it is much less than the market value of the land, which may, in the most densely populated regions, amount to as much as L.E. 700 per acre. It would be impossible, in a country so densely populated, to expropriate the land at anything approaching its market value without making the operation ruinous."² Mr. William Thweatt stated that the average land tax was about L.E. 2.3 per feddan. In this case the expropriation price is L.E. 161.³ A figure less than that quoted by Doreen Warriner. Estimates of the actual loss of income to the landowners were made by Mr. Thweatt. His estimates, however, were based on 30 year bonds bearing 3% interest.

According to this writer, the 3% bonds represent but a fifth of the market value of the expropriated land, and also the return on the bonds is lower than the previous capital invested in land. This appears insignificant when placed beside the L.E. 35 million previously received in yearly rents. When the entire 450,000 feddans have been expropriated the landlords will possess about L.E. 73 million in government bonds. (L.E. 161, the average indemnity times 450,000). At a 3% return, it yields L.E. 2.1 million yearly, making the net income less at about L.E. 33 million. The income of the landed class was estimated at L.E. 150 million yearly, their total income would be reduced about 22%.⁴ It must be considered that these bonds were changed in 1958 to 1½% over 40 years, so the loss to the landowner will be greater.

Based on the above, those owners who have had their lands appropriated appear to have suffered a capital loss of from 60-80%.⁵ Mr. Thweatt also mentions, that land values have dropped considerably based on three reasons: (1) cash rents fell one-third between 1951-52 and 1952-53 season. (2) land subject to expropriation, but not actually sequestered as yet, is subject to a tax five times the normal land tax. (3) there is the fear that there may be another round of expropriation at a lower level of maximum size.⁶

Productivity of Land:

When the large estates in Egypt were broken up as a result of the enacting of the Agrarian Reform Law the question of the productivity of these small holdings assumed special importance, comparing or speculating the probable effects of the agrarian reform in Egypt with what actually happened as a result of land reform in Mexico and Eastern Europe.

Mr. Charles Issawi says that in Mexico the distribution of the land to the farmers did bring them many social benefits, but it also brought to the surface some problems in that

"if agrarian reform is to be successful in economic terms, it must form part of a general scheme for agricultural development, involving the provision of credit facilities, the organization of production cooperatives, and, under Mexican conditions, the resettlement of farmers in new areas. Also, the Mexican experience is significant in relation to the condition of rural over-populated countries: it shows that reform can improve the conditions and status of the farm population and raise the rural standard of living, but that it is not likely to provide full employment opportunities where the rural population is increasing at a rapid rate."⁷

In Eastern Europe when the large estates were broken up and the small land holders were allowed to engage in mixed farming as compared with the previous mass cultivation of grains the economic results were good. This occurred in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and parts of Poland.

In Egypt, continues Mr. Issawi, the situation differs in two important respects. First, agriculture is to a great degree under state control, the

Irrigation Department determines the cycle of agricultural operations while the Ministry of Agriculture controls the cotton, wheat, and maize seed. Secondly, the large Egyptian landowners generally rent out their lands to small farmers, rather than manage their holdings centrally. (This does not include the large sugar-cane plantations). A redistribution of this land effects very little the method of farming; however, it does bring about a re-distribution of income.⁸

Based on a survey that was carried out in 1938 we have figures that show the gross and net return per acre of different sized holdings, in different parts of Egypt.

TABLE VIII
COSTS AND RETURNS ON LARGE, MEDIUM, AND SMALL HOLDINGS, 1937
(In L.E. per feddan)

	Gross Returns	Costs	Net Returns (Before payment of Taxes)
<u>Lower Egypt (perennial)</u>			
Small (about 5 feddans)	14.414	5.204	9.201
Medium (about 50 feddans)	14.366	5.827	8.539
Large (about 300 feddans)	14.012	6.914	7.098
<u>Upper Egypt (perennial)</u>			
Small	19.353	7.488	11.865
Medium	16.047	7.447	8.600
Large	17.466	7.778	9.688
<u>Upper Egypt (Basin)</u>			
Small	13.101	6.783	6.318
Medium	12.606	7.053	5.553
Large	12.461	8.074	4.387

Source: Charles Issawi, Egypt: An Economic and Social Analysis (RIIA, Oxford, 1947) p. 78.

From the above we can see that the highest gross returns are by the small farms. This would indicate that a breakup of the large estates into small holdings need not decrease productivity. This is counter to the opinion that has been forwarded that production would drop as a result of the breaking up of the large holdings.⁹

As was predicted, agricultural production per feddan after the reform has increased and the production of nearly all crops, except cotton, has increased. The area under cotton has declined as a result of the fall in prices. Doreen Warriner mentions the fact that "the overall production results cannot, however, be attributed to the redistribution, which up to the present has affected only a small proportion of the land. But the reduction of rents, which affects a very large proportion of the land, has been accompanied by heavier use of fertilizers, so that the reform has certainly contributed to the increase in production."

The following table shows comparative yields per feddan of some of the staple crops from 1935 to 1959.

TABLE IX
COMPARATIVE YIELD PER FEDDAN OF SOME STAPLE CROPS

Crop	Unit	Average 1935/39	1947	1950	1955	1958	1959
Cotton	Cantar ⁺	5.21	5.08	4.30	4.10	5.21	5.75
Wheat	Ardeb [*]	5.90	4.27	4.95	6.35	6.61	6.54
Beans	"	4.85	4.42	3.59	4.73	4.67	3.83
Onions	Cantar	158	147	126	135	128	229
Sugar-Cane	"	760	644	691	831	831	-
Rice	Dariba [†]	1.67	1.74	1.88	2.31	2.21	2.23
Maize	Ardeb	7.45	6.23	6.43	6.67	6.42	-
Millet	"	9.11	7.61	7.73	8.78	9.17	-

+ Cantar-measure of weight = 99.05 lbs. or 44.9 kgs.

* Ardeb - unit of capacity = 5.44 bushels or 1.980 hectoliters.

† Dariba - measure of capacity, a dariba of rice in husk = 945 kgs. approximately.

(Source: 1935-1958, Economic Bulletin, National Bank of Egypt, Vol. XII, No. 2; 1959, No. 4, 1959.)

Increase in yield can be attributed to several factors, among these being a greater incentive to work, the establishment of cooperatives in various areas, which have introduced improved methods of cultivation, plus provision for seed, fertilizers, insecticides and machinery. In areas where land reform has been carried out, production of wheat is estimated to have risen 30%, cotton by 10% and sugar by 15%, over previous yields.¹⁰

Income of Peasants:

Doreen Warriner states, one of the basic factors in the raising of the general level of the fellahin is income stability. The mere fact that an individual owns land does not provide this. He needs more. In a country where there is continual pressure to sub-divide the individual property until you finally arrive at a point where it is no longer economically feasible to lend them seed, fertilizer, etc. They are not good risks. This problem has been remedied in this reform. But the problem of providing the individual cultivator with income stability is still present. This is where the cooperative steps into the picture. This type of organization does provide this. The individual cultivator does not become financially independent but he does receive a larger annual income. This income is larger than the guaranteed minimum and the individual is able to "consume the income gain, since the management looks after the investment." In addition to this "overall financial control has been used to build up a stabilization fund to maintain farm incomes in years of bad harvests or low prices." This is very necessary in Egypt where the economy depends so much on one crop, cotton. But to obtain this the individual fellah had to sacrifice something. In this case "the lack of independence is the price of greater social and economic security."¹¹

The rent of land according to the Agrarian Reform Law was based on the low tax assessment figures. In 1951 the fellah may have paid L.E. 30 for a

particular piece of land but in 1953 the same piece of land rented for L.E. 14 per year. This was one way of increasing the income of the small landowners and at the same time reduce the wealth and influence of the large landowners. In the case of tenants the landowner was now permitted to claim only up to half the crop, after all expenses had been deducted. Previously the large landowner deducted one half of the gross product.¹²

During 1952-1954 cotton prices fell. As a result of the reform land prices fell. This is due to the fact that cash rents fell by a third between 1951-52 and 1952-53 season, also land subject to expropriation but not yet requisitioned was subject to a tax, five times the normal land tax, and there was fear that another round of expropriation might occur at a lower level of maximum size.

By 1955 land prices began to rise again, so also did the agricultural rents. Due to the pressures of supply and demand, violations to the rent law began to occur.¹³ The practice became quite widespread so on July 14, 1956, al-shaab, newspaper announced that a law was being drafted, providing for very strong action to be taken against those who charged rents in excess of the official rent values. This campaign against the offenders was climaxed by an amendment to the Agrarian Reform Law in 1958 which authorized imprisonment of all lessors who deliberately received rents in excess of those provided for in the law.¹⁴

A further aid to the small landowners is that a basic exemption to the first L.E. 4 of land tax has been introduced which helps those fellahin whose total land tax does not exceed L.E. 20.¹⁵

Overall the reduction in rents affecting two-thirds of the cultivable area in Egypt has, according to an estimate of the Ministry of Agriculture, added L.E. 40 million annually to the income of the tenant class. Approximating

the number of farms cultivated by tenants at 140,000, the average increase in annual income per farm is about L.E. 286. This is easily understood when it is realized that the rent per feddan has been reduced under the reform by over 50%, in some instances, for example in Upper Egypt from L.E. 40 to L.E. 19.¹⁶ "This improvement in income and legal status for a very large section of the farm population is by far the most valuable achievement of the reform, greatly exceeding in importance the benefits of redistribution."¹⁷

The provision of the Agrarian Reform Law that deals with minimum wage rates was found difficult to enforce. As a result of the population growth, there was a great supply of labor available and the pressure of demand for work was great. Employment opportunities on the land did not increase proportionally as more land became available for cultivation. In fact in some cases some of the farms reduced their demand for labor. This is the case of some of the former large landowners who are now managing their land more economically. This is also true within the framework of the Agrarian Reform Cooperatives, not as much labor is needed because the cooperatives are able to provide their members tractors and other labor saving devices.¹⁸

For the period 1953-1956 the agricultural wages have increased by less than 10%, not the 50% that the decree provided for. Comparative figures are given in the following chart:

TABLE X

COMPARATIVE NUMBERS AND WAGES OF AGRICULTURAL LABORERS

	1953-1956					
	Total number		Total yearly wages		Per capita yearly	
	(000's)		(L.E. 000's)		wage L.E.	
	1953	1956	1953	1956	1953	1956
Men	1,245	1,352	31,477	37,220	25.283	27.522
Boys	1,590	1,595	20,100	12,054	21.640	13.200

(Source: Eva Garzouzi, Old Ills and New Remedies in Egypt (Cairo, 1958) p.91.)

From the above chart the increase in mens wages was approximately 8.8% and for boys 4.4% over the 1953 figures.

It appears that the hired agricultural laborer has failed to materially benefit as a result of the reform.

Effects on Industrial Development:

Up until 1954 the process of industrialization had been slow in Egypt. During World War II industry gained some advantage due to the lack of imports. But, during the post-war years this rate did not continue.

Industry suffered slow expansion because people were wary of investing in something that was not completely assured of success. As a result they invested in agricultural land. With the enacting of the Agrarian Reform Law with its property holding restrictions, plus the general drive for industrialization by the government, capital turned to other outlets. Still wary of industry it went mostly into buildings. From January 1954 to October 1956 private investment in new industrial concerns is as follows:¹⁹

TABLE XI

PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN NEW INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES BETWEEN
JANUARY 1954 AND OCTOBER 1956.

	(in L.E. 000's)
Extraction and Metals	1,490
Spinning and Weaving	1,025
Chemicals	2,290
Food	200
Electricity	80
	<u>5,085</u>

(Source: Industrial Bank Bulletin; Vol. 1 No. 1, 1957)

From the above we see that only L.E. 5.1 million was invested in new industrial concerns.

The government began taking steps to encourage the investment of private capital in industry. It began a systematic cutting of imports, where

they could be replaced with local products. It raised customs dues on manufactured goods but reduced them on raw materials and on equipment needed for industrial development. The lending capacity of the government sponsored Industrial Bank was increased, and in some cases it helped to finance some of the large industrial concerns.²⁰

The following table shows the participation of the government and government institutions in providing financial aid to industrial companies created in the years 1954-1956:

TABLE XII
INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES CREATED IN
1954-55-56

	<u>Total Subscribed Capital</u>	<u>(in L.E. millions) Government Contribution*</u>
Iron and Steel	11.4	4.2
Fertilizers	8.0	5.6
Cement	2.0	0.4
Hotels	1.8	0.1
Paper	1.2	0.6
Railway equipment	0.5	0.2
Extraction and Metals	0.5	0.4
Housing	0.5	0.2
Others	0.7	0.2
	<u>26.6</u>	<u>11.9</u>

Government's share of total: 45.1%

* Includes also contributions by Government institutions.

(Source: Industrial Bank Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1957.)

From the above we see that the government contributed L.E. 11.9 million, other sources L.E. 14.7 million for the total of L.E. 26.6 million. The other

sources that contributed 14.7 million are: The Industrial Bank - L.E. 2.6 million; other banks and companies - L.E. 5.4 million; and private capital - L.E. 6.7 million. If we add this private capital investment of L.E. 6.7 million to the L.E. 5.1 million that was invested in new private industrial companies we have the total of L.E. 11.8 million.

The Federation of Egyptian Industries had calculated the rent of private new buildings from the taxes levied on them and has worked out their capital value on the basis that the yearly rent is 10% of the capital. For the corresponding period the estimates of the amount of private capital invested in new buildings is in excess of L.E. 100. million. A comparison of the figures: L.E. 11.8 million versus L.E. 100. million indicate the trends as far as private investment is concerned.

The Five-Year industrial Plan as announced in 1957 contains 125 projects at a cost of L.E. 240 million. A new organization, headed by the Ministry of Industry, has been formed to implement it.

The plan will be implemented in three stages. The first stage consists of 32 projects, the second 20, and the third 73. It is believed that the plan will provide employment for an additional 40,000 workers. A large number of the projects provide for an exploitation of Egypt's mineral wealth. Other projects provide for the building of 5 airports and 4 radio stations in these new mining areas.

The basic objectives of the Five-Year Industrial Plan are to provide the country with the manufactured products it needs and as a result save foreign exchange which is spent on importing them. It is also expanding the production of those goods that are likely to have a market outside the country, and further the building of basic industries necessary for industrial development.

It is expected that as a result of the Agrarian Reform Law that there will be an increase in industrial demand based on the fact that what the improvement in the agricultural environment in which agricultural incentives and productivity have raised, a higher level of agricultural income will be obtained. Since Egypt is essentially an agricultural country, the level of agricultural income act to a certain extent as an indicator of internal industrial demand. The higher this income the greater are the chances for expansion in the industrial area.²³

Concerning industrial costs, as a result of the reform, they may be lowered if (i) increased yields and productivity by lowering costs in the production of raw materials required by Egyptian industry will make possible some fall in agricultural prices. (ii) The Agrarian Reform by encouraging the expansion of wheat production has reduced the cost-of-living of industrial workers living in the towns. Thus bringing about a reduction in labor costs. This was brought about in 1954 when Egypt became less dependent on the outside world with respect to wheat. The buying price of wheat fell by 11% (iii) There is also likely to be a redistribution of taxes from industry to agriculture. The influence of the large landowners prior to 1952 had the heavy tax burden placed on industry.²⁴ As an example: "L.E. 20 million was collected in taxes on industry in 1945, compared with L.E. 5 million from agriculture, although agriculture net income was 4 times as high as industrial."²⁵

In conclusion the first outstanding consequence in the economic field is the direction of the private capital of the townspeople away from agricultural land. The rush on the land has been stopped and new capital will be invested, not in acquiring more land, but in other ways.

Sound economy is the basic means of power in any state. Sound economy in a country such as Egypt, whose cultivable land is limited and whose

population is very rapidly increasing, has only one meaning, creation of new industries. This needs capital. Foreign capital cannot be wholly relied upon. Domestic capital has to be found, and by the new law a great step was taken in this direction. At the same time new laws were passed to encourage the establishment of new industries.²⁶

Other effects:

The Egyptian governments major direct benefit from the land distribution scheme came from a supplementary tax that was imposed on January 1, 1953. Article 25 of the Agrarian Reform Law provides for the imposing of a supplementary tax on all land holdings in excess of 200 feddans that are scheduled for expropriation but as yet have not been requisitioned. It is set at 5 times the basic land tax. Article 28 provides for strong sanctions to preclude persons attempting to evade payment of this tax. When a tax evader is discovered his fine is fixed at 5 times the amount that the individual was attempting to cheat the government out of. Fallow lands and lands owned by companies and societies that are to be improved and then sold are not subjected to this tax.

There are no reliable figures available to indicate how much money accrued to the government as a result of the imposing of this tax.

One aspect of the financial picture of the Agrarian Reform Law is open to criticism.

Article 4 allows owners to dispose of land subject to expropriation to fellahin whose total holding does not exceed 10 feddans, and that the size of the parcel of land sold to each individual does not exceed 5 feddans. But since land held in excess of 200 feddans is subject to the special land tax, landowners will have a strong inducement to sell in this way. Apparently, the object of this provision is to reduce the financial burden of the State, and it is believed that it was introduced to secure the support of the Ministry of

Finance.²⁷ "But from the standpoint of the fellahin this provision is not likely to be beneficial, since if much land is sold directly the purchasers will be the larger peasant farmers, and the area available for sale to the landless will be reduced."²⁸ A point in fact which actually happened to the amount of 145,000 feddans.

FOOTNOTES

1. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 90.
2. Doreen Warriner, "Land Reform in Egypt and its Repercussions," International Affairs (V.29, Jan.1954) p. 4.
3. Thweatt, Op. Cit., p. 149.
4. Ibid., pp. 156-7.
5. Ibid., p. 155.
6. Ibid., p. 156.
7. United Nations, Dept. of Economic Affairs, Land Reform: Defects in Agrarian Structure as Obstacles to Economic Development (U.N., New York, 1951) p. 70.
8. Issawi, Op. Cit., pp.136-7
9. _____, Egypt: An Economic and Social Analysis, Op. Cit., p. 78.
10. United Nations, Progress in Land Reform, Second Report, Op. Cit., p. 136.
11. Doreen Warriner, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East, Op. Cit., P. 48.
12. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 91.
13. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 39.
14. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 91.
15. United Nations, Op. Cit., p. 116.
16. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p. 90.
17. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 39.
18. Wheelock, Op. Cit., p. 92.

19. Garzouzi, Op. Cit., p. 56.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 58.
22. Ibid., p. 61.
23. Thweatt, Op. Cit., p. 168.
24. Ibid., pp. 169-171.
25. Issawi, Egypt at Mid-Century, Op. Cit., p. 170.
26. Hasan Abu al Su'ud, "A Study on Land Reform in Egypt," The Islamic Review, April 1957, V.XLV, No. 4, p. 17.
27. Warriner, "Land Reform in Egypt and its Repercussions," Op. Cit., pp.4-5.
28. Ibid., p. 5.

CHAPTER 6

SOCIAL-POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE REFORM

Social Effects:

"In as far as the redistribution of the land is concerned the impact of the reform is mostly social."¹ This is due to the fact that the reform is creating a new agricultural class, the members of which are acquiring economic security thru land ownership. In addition their membership in the cooperative societies are giving them a new sense of personality. Also, the individual fellah has a larger income and as a result he is presently satisfying a long established desire to purchase various food and other commodities that were previously not purchasable because of their relatively high price. Generally he is eating better but, at present he is saving little. The one thing that has effected the large mass of tenants was the lowering of rents, thereby providing money for more consumer purchases.

As a result of the reform the way of life of many fellahin has been changed considerably. Those who cultivate redistributed lands now have a tangible possession, which cannot be lost except under extreme circumstances. Those fellahin who rent their lands have greater security in three-year leases. This is something that never existed prior to the reform.

The membership in the cooperative societies has given the fellah a new sense of personality in that he has become a member of a society in which he has the right to voice his opinion. Thru this cooperative effort greater production is being achieved.

The one point that indicates to the fellah that something has been achieved by this reform is that he, himself, has a larger annual income. He physically has more cash in his pocket than he had before the reform. As was mentioned by Sir Malcolm Darling in a discussion on the effects of the reform in the Maremma, was that each individual owner had more spare cash. With this

money he might be buying more buffaloes, eating more meat, or spending more on his wife and family.

Within the cooperative societies the average per capita income increase has been considerable. In one case it went from L.E. 9 before the reform to L.E. 32 after the reform. Within this same society of 1000 members, 200 persons have bought radios, 300 had got married and spent an average of L.E. 100 each.² On this same estate the shopkeepers were stating that they were now selling five times as much as before - more food, cigarettes, and jewelry, and better clothes.

In speaking of another estate that was large enough to have 9 cooperative societies the opinion was the same. "Before (the reform) we had to give up our crops at a low valuation. We can now do what we want. We used to mix maize and wheat for our bread; now we eat more wheat, and meat twice a week instead of once. Our extra money we spend on soap, food, and clothes, on four shirts instead of two. Ten of us have bought wirelesses at L.E. 20 to L.E. 25 each, but first of all we buy buffaloes."³ On this same estate twenty fellahs have recently been married, without waiting the usual four or five years to do so, now they simply borrow or sell cattle to do so. "Ten per cent have more than one wife, one has just taken a third."⁴ The number of shops have increased from four to nine, and because of the greater consumption of meat, butchers were killing several times a week instead of once or twice.

The increase in marriages and the subsequent higher birth rate could nullify the increase in the standard of living. However; more is being spent on education and more schools are being opened, which is very important.⁵

The government has been helping to improve the social conditions under which the fellahin live. On March 16, 1954, the Permanent Council for Public Welfare Services adopted a resolution to provide combined medical, educational,

social and agricultural services to the rural population thru local units each providing services to 15,000 persons.⁶

From the social point of view the purpose of The Combined Rural Centers is to give each rural area a separate personality, to promote initiative, desire for work, and the spirit of cooperation, and the coordination of the efforts of the various activities.⁷ The combined centers are meant to be one of the fundamental instruments with which the long-needed rural social reform is to be achieved.⁸

Doreen Warriner states that the reform did not benefit the casual laborers, but it was a real gain for the majority of the fellahin, either those who received benefit from the Agrarian Reform Law in the fact that their status as tenant farmers was made more secure or their status as cooperative farmers was made more secure. No reform can benefit all the population, in this case the casual workers have not achieved anything. This is not a result of the reform policy, but it is because of population pressure. The government can do no more than to continue on with its plans for more land and industry.⁹

Miss Warriner continues to say that jealousy is expected to crop up between the various groups. Whether it be between tenant and landowner, or beneficiary and landless. The attitude of the fellahin is not known.¹⁰ Some authorities say that there is unrest, the HCAR believes that "as long as the redistributions are carried out equitably between the claimants, no new antagonisms are created."¹¹

Political Effects:

Prior to the reform the political position of the fellah was such that it had no effect in Egypt. The powerful landlords, wealthy merchants, the palace, etc., controlled political life within the country. They occupied the

positions in the Parliament and since there was no organization that could present the position of the fellahin, it went unheard. What could be termed a palace struggle for power, or interaction between political factions was of no interest to the fellah. This is true because first of all, he generally did not hear about it. The scope of his life was limited. The various political maneuvers and machinations did not effect him, irregardless of their outcome. What occurred in Cairo had generally as much effect on a fellah tilling 2 feddans of land in Kena, as if had occurred on the moon.

As a result of the reform the former big landlords have lost their power and control over the government. With the complete change in the political organization of the country in that it is now governed from above, and not from the people, it seems unlikely that if free elections were again reinstated, that this group of former large landowners could ever regain their former position in the government.

After the reform the position of the fellahin has also changed somewhat. Under the new regime he is becoming more politically aware, if only for the reason he may have been able to purchase a new radio from the funds that have been made available to him. He not only listens to this but he also is a member in an agricultural cooperative where he can voice his own opinion. Under the provisions of the law he has also been given the right to form agricultural unions for common interests and protection. This is another outlet by which his opinions could be heard.

However, under the present regime no attempt has been made to organize the fellahin as a group. There has occurred a wider diffusion of political consciousness among this group, but being unorganized its potential is being left untapped.

In passing it should be mentioned that the present regime did form in

1956 a "National Union" that has the sole authority to present candidates for membership in the National Assembly. In theory the candidates came from all of Egypt. There was a set pattern in which a candidate from a small village would pass through until he possibly reached the "National Union." The executive committee of this organization checks the list of proposed candidates for the National Assembly, weeding out those undesirables. Those remaining can compete in the elections. In this way it would be possible for a person, who might only be a fellah, to advance to membership in the National Assembly.

Repercussions of the Land Reform:

In discussing the repercussions on other Arab states of the land reform Doreen Warriner states that "Egypt-----has taken the lead in reforming its land system, is likely to undermine some strongly established positions in other countries of the region; and possibly repercussions may force the pace of social change in the other Arab countries."¹²

In Lebanon the effect of the reform in Egypt was felt when trouble that was brewing was brought into the open. Since the end of the mandate the government had been run in such a manner that it had been brought under attack by various factions. These various factions, which included the Sunni Muslims of Beirut and Tripoli plus other groups looking for a better government, headed by Kamal Jumblatt, the leader of the Socialist Party, succeeded in ousting the President and the government. This occurred after a three day strike in Beirut and Tripoli. Camille Chamoun was elected President, but it became impossible to form a government with the liberal and socialist elements in the opposition, because Jumblatt, had as a condition of his participation in the government a program of social reform in Lebanon, which included a scheme for the distribution of land ownership. An administrative cabinet was appointed to carry on until the next election. The question whether land reform would be carried out

in Lebanon would depend on whether or not Jumblatt could get enough votes to end up as the leader of the majority party at the election.¹³ Nothing more was heard of land reform in Lebanon as a national issue, although Jumblatt did distribute the land of some of his villages to the peasants. "Property, he believes, must become a social responsibility: some individual property must remain, but the land in part will have to be collectively cultivated and irrigation schemes communally used. To reform the land system on these lines it will be necessary to kindle this sense of responsibility, difficult among Arabs who, in his view, are individualists."¹⁴

Kamal Jumblatt did not emerge as the leader of the majority as a result of the election. As a result the social reforms that he was demanding were not enacted.

The 1952 Revolution in Egypt has had definite effect on certain factions of Lebanese. In what direction the effects on these groups will lead them, only time will tell.

The reaction to the Egyptian reform by the Syrians was still different. At that time Syria was under the military dictatorship of Colonel Shishakli.

In an attempt to get the support of the workers and the peasants, land reform legislation was first enacted on January 30, 1952, and when this bill was found to be defective another was issued on October 29, 1952.

Prior to this, in July 1952, Colonel Shishakli in a statement made no reference to the land reform law. Later, at the time of the enactment of the Agrarian Reform Law in Egypt, the official policy was that Syria did not need a land reform as Egypt does, because it is not over-populated. Doreen Warriner takes exception to this and believes that it would be truer to say that it is because that the country is not over-populated that a land reform in Syria could achieve far more than any reform in Egypt.¹⁵

A later statement by Colonel Shishakli suggests "that the course of events in Egypt may lead to reconsideration of the new attitude, and promote the implementation of the law."¹⁶

Throughout the Shishakli regime attempts were made of one type or another to redistribute some lands. The attempts were weak and the results poor. Very little was accomplished in respect to land reform in Syria at this time.

The first definite step towards land reform in Syria was taken after the formation of the United Arab Republic on February 1, 1958. On September 30, 1958 Decree Number 1181 was promulgated in the Northern Region of the U.A.R. (Syria).¹⁷ This decree provided for an agrarian reform based on that of Egypt. One of the many points of similarity of the two laws is that the maximum amount of land that a person can possess in Syria is the equivalent of 200 feddans in hectares.¹⁸

The situation in Iraq at the time of the reform in Egypt was definitely unsettled. The Iraqi Government passed a reform law in 1951. But due to opposition to land reforms by both members of the Parliament and the various sheikh landowners it was difficult to spread this type of resettlement scheme. As was the case in Egypt, the large landowners had considerable influence in the Parliament in Iraq. No legislation that would infringe on their property rights had any chance of approval.

In Iraq large land resettlement schemes could be undertaken with every chance of success. There is sufficient land plus water, and what with the oil revenues the Government would have ample capital for such an investment. Dereen Warriner states "whether or not the large-scale developments contemplated under the Five-year Plan will bring about a rise in the general standard of living, will depend to a great extent on whether new settlement schemes provide

more equitable tenure conditions, and a more equal distribution of income."¹⁹

After the Egyptian coup some peasant unrest had been reported. Also at a dissolution of Parliament, the four opposition parties addressed a letter to the Regent, demanding drastic political and economic changes, including a land reform on the Egyptian model.²⁰

In the case of Iraq the breakthrough with respect to land reform came after the July 14, 1958 Revolution of Major General Abdul Karim Kassim. On September 29, 1958 the implementation of an Agrarian Reform Law was announced.

The land distribution problem in Iraq varies with that in Egypt. Under the law the maximum area that a person could possess was set at 1,000 donums of flow irrigated land and 2,000 donums of rain irrigated land.²¹

The effect of the agrarian reform legislation in Egypt has definitely been felt outside the country. Whether this trend will effect other countries in the area of the Middle East only time will be able to tell.

FOOTNOTES

1. Garzeuzi, Op. Cit., p. 100.
2. Darling, Op. Cit., p. 23.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Garzeuzi, Op. Cit., p. 128.
7. Ibid., p. 129.
8. Ibid.
9. Doreen Warriner, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East, Op. Cit., pp. 48-49
10. Ibid., p. 49.
11. Doreen Warriner, "Land Reform in Egypt and its Repercussions," International Affairs, Op. Cit., p. 6.

12. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
13. Ibid., pp. 7.
14. Ibid., p. 8.
15. Ibid., p. 9.
16. Ibid.
17. La Direction Generale de L'Information, Republique Arabe Unie (La Direction Generale de L'Information, Damas, 1959) p. 207.
18. Administration d'Information, Annuaire, La Republique Arabe Unie (Administration d'Information, Le Caire, 1959) p. 295.
19. Warriner, Op. Cit., p. 10.
20. Ibid.
21. The Higher Committee for the Celebrations of the 14th July Revolution, The Iraqi Revolution in its Second Year (The Times Press, Baghdad, 1960) pp. 255-258.

CHAPTER 7

C O N C L U S I O N

It has become apparent that the land problem in Egypt is not only a problem of the inequality of the distribution of the arable farm land but it is also a problem of the pressure of population on the land, which is due to the limited area available for cultivation.

The Agrarian Reform of 1952 has made a big step forward with respect to reducing the inequality of the distribution of farm land. Approximately 290,000 feddans have been redistributed to the fellahin. The individual fellah landowner is receiving a larger annual income, while the tenant farmer is also benefiting due to lower rents being charged for the land. This all has been accomplished without less in agricultural production.

However, the daily wage laborers who make up more than one third of the agricultural population, as of now, have not benefitted from the reform to the extent it was believed. With so many new landowners tilling their own land and tenants getting renewed options on their leases, the opportunities for the workers has been reduced; under those conditions it was difficult to keep wages at a high level. Their lot is not a comparatively happy one but it is hoped that it will be improved through the drive for land reclamation projects, which will create new opportunities for employment.

Another problem that manifests itself is that of the pressure of the population on the land, which is due to the limited area available for cultivation. Only 4% of the total land area of Egypt is cultivable. The population of Egypt in 1937 was 15,933,000 and in 1958 it was approximately 24,402,000. An increase of nearly 53%. The amount of crop area in 1937 was 8,280,000 feddans and in 1958 it was 10,090,000 feddans. An increase of only 22%.

Land reclamation projects are being carried out, but they in no sense can keep pace with the increase in population.

The effect of redistribution of land, reduction in rents and other measures taken in connection with the reform have been to provide a stimulus to agricultural output. Expansion in agricultural production is attributed to a greater incentive to work and to the establishment of cooperatives which introduced improved methods of cultivation, extended technical services and provided marketing and credit facilities.

Land reform, therefore, cannot be considered apart from the problems of production. For a general policy of expansion in agricultural production rational planning is essential. And based on the agricultural policy that is developed in Egypt and the manner in which it is able to attain the far reaching objectives of the land reform and the ability to win the farmer's confidence, will the success of Egypt's agricultural policy be gauged.

One of the purposes of the reform was to curtail the private capital investment in land, and to encourage it in industry. The reform has partially achieved this. The private capital investment in land by rich townspeople has nearly ceased, but the hoped for private capital investment has not occurred in industry to the amount that the government would like. In spite of various governmental incentives, no great amount of capital has flowed into industry. As mentioned above approximately 90% of private capital invested in Egypt since the reform has been in real estate property building, with a mere 10% flowing into industrial development.

Considering the population growth and the limited amount of cultivatable land available the solution to the problem lies in rapid industrialization. This should be coupled with an increased intensification and diversification of agricultural production.

Land reform itself is not the solution to the increasing population pressure. But, coupled with industrial growth a more equitable solution to the

problem is approached. The rapidity of industrial growth will largely determine the rate by which the population problem will be solved.

APPENDIX

THE AGRARIAN LAW

In the name of H.M. the King of Egypt and Sudan,

The Provisional Regency Council,

Having seen Article 41 of the Constitution, and the opinion of the Council of State, and in accordance with the proposal of the Ministers of Agriculture, Finance & Economy, and Social Affairs, and with the approval of the Cabinet,

Decreases the following:

CHAPTER 1

ON LIMITING AGRICULTURAL LAND HOLDINGS AND THE EXPROPRIATION OF CERTAIN LANDS FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG SMALL FARMERS.

Article 1

Limitation:

No person shall be allowed to possess more than 200 feddan of agricultural land. Any contract involving contravention of this provision shall be considered invalid and cannot be passed for land registration.

Article 2

Exception:

The following are excepted from the foregoing provision. (a) Companies and Societies may possess more than 200 feddan of lands under improvement for sale of same and in conformity with the laws and regulations; (b) Persons may possess more than 200 feddan of fallow land or desert land for improvement;

Article 1 shall not apply to these lands except after 25 years from the date of possession thereof. This shall not prejudice disposing of these lands before the termination of this period. (c) Industrial Companies existing before the promulgation of this Law may possess an area of agricultural land necessary for industrial exploitation even exceeding 200 feddan.

Wakf is similarly excepted.

Article 3

Seizure of Surplus Farm Land:

During the five years following the date of enforcing this law, the Government shall seize holdings in excess of 200 feddan which the proprietor retains for himself, provided that the seized land each year shall not be less than one-fifth of the total of the lands to be seized.

Seizure shall commence with the big land holdings. The proprietor shall retain the existing crop on the land and fruits until the end of the agricultural year in the course of which seizure has taken place.

Inoperative Transactions:

The following shall not be taken into consideration in the application of the provisions of this law:

(a) Transactions by the proprietor and mortgages, the dates of which were not confirmed before July 23, 1952.

(b) Transactions by the proprietor in favor of his descendants, his wife and spouses of his descendants the dates of which were not confirmed before January 1, 1944.

(c) Division of agricultural land owned by one person which may take place after the enforcement of this law through inheritance or will. The Government shall in this case seize the property in excess of 200 feddan of these lands from the heirs and beneficiaries after the settlement of the inheritance tax.

Article 4

Land Transfer:

The proprietor may, however, transfer within five years after the enforcement of this law the ownership of agricultural lands not seized by the Government and in excess of 200 feddan as follows:

(a) To his children, no more than 50 feddan per child provided that the total to be so disposed of to his children shall not exceed 100 feddan.

(b) To small farmers possessing 10 feddan or less who are not relations of his up to the 4th degree provided that the lands disposed of to each shall not exceed five feddan. The proprietor cannot contest in any way the validity of this act on the grounds of its being unreal, even by presenting a document to the contrary. The act of disposition shall not be valid until it has been confirmed by the Summary Court in whose district the property is found.

Land so disposed of cannot be taken by preemption.

Article 5

Assessment of Land Value:

The person whose land is seized by the Government in conformity with the provisions of Article 1 shall be entitled to a compensation equivalent to ten-times the rental value of this land, to which shall be added the value of any installations, fixed machines and trees. The rental shall be assessed at seven times the original tax. In case the land has not been taxed because it is barren or has been taxed at a reduced rate at least three years before the enforcement of this law, the rental value shall be assessed in the manner specified by Law No. 113 for 1939 relative to land taxes.

If the ownership of the land belongs to one person and the usufruct to another the owner shall be entitled to two-thirds of the compensation and the usufructuary to one-third.

Article 6

Nominative Bonds:

The compensation shall be paid in Government Bonds at an interest of 3% redeemable within thirty years. These bonds shall be nominative and cannot be disposed of except to Egyptians. They shall be accepted in payment for

fallow lands purchased from the Government, in payment of taxes on lands which have not already come under taxation before the enforcement of this law and in payment of inheritance tax and the supplementary tax on lands imposed by this law.

A decree shall be promulgated at the request of the Minister of Finance and Economy fixing the dates, the terms both of redemption and circulation of these bonds.

Article 7

Land Servitude:

If the land seized by the Government is under a mortgage, servitude or concession, the equivalent of the whole debt shall be deducted from the amount of compensation due to the land owner. If the Government does not replace in subrogation the debtor in regard to the debt, it may exchange this debt with Government Bonds at an interest equivalent to that of the debt provided that these bonds be redeemed within a period not exceeding 30 years. If the rate of interest of the debt exceeds 3%, the Government shall bear the difference in the rate of interest after deducting the expenses of collecting and the responsibility for bad debts.

Article 8

Partitioning:

The areas seized in each village shall be limited. In case of extreme necessity these areas may be joined together by seizing the land separating them and allotting the proprietors of these lands other lands in compensation.

Article 9

Distribution:

The lands seized in every village shall be distributed among small farmers so as to allot to each of them a small parcel of not less than two feddan

and no more than five feddan according to the quality of the land.

Persons among whom the seized land is distributed must be:

(a) Adult Egyptians, who have not been previously convicted of a dishonorable crime;

(b) Farmers by profession;

(c) Owners of less than five feddan of agricultural land.

Priority shall be given to those who actually cultivate the land whether as tenants or farmers, then to those who have the largest family among the inhabitants of the village, then to those of least wealth, and lastly to non-inhabitants of the village.

Lands so distributed cannot be taken by preemption.

Article 10

Land Allotments to Agronomists:

Exception from the provisions of the above Article shall be made in respect of the distribution of lands designated for gardens among the graduates of agricultural institutes after their having been divided in a manner befitting proper exploitation, provided that the plot should not exceed 20 feddan and provided furthermore that no graduate benefiting by such distribution of gardens should possess more than 10 feddan of agricultural land.

Article 11

Land Value:

The value of distributed land shall be estimated at the amount of compensation paid by the Government for the land seized plus the following:

(1) An annual interest of 3%.

(2) A general sum of 15% of its value for the costs of seizure, distribution and other expenses. The total price shall be paid in equal annual installments within 30 years.

Article 12

Supervision Committees:

A higher committee under the presidency of the Minister of Agriculture and the Under Secretary of State for Agriculture, Social Affairs, Finance & Economy, Public Works and seven other members to be appointed by order of the Cabinet, shall be formed to supervise the seizure and distribution operations.

The committee may seek the help of any experts and technicians it may choose. (See Article 12A, added by Decree Law 264 of 1952, below.)

Article 13

Supervision Committees:

Sub-committees shall be formed to seize and delimit the seized lands and if necessary to combine and distribute them among small farmers.

A decree shall be promulgated at the request of the Minister of Agriculture regarding the way of forming these committees, regulating relations between them and the higher committee, determining measures and formalities to be taken in seizure operations, assessing the value of installations, fixed machines, and trees, and the distribution of seized land. Also arrangements to be taken to meet the transition period between seizure and distribution.

Article 14

Holdings Free from Servitude:

The land shall be handed over to the small farmers free of debts and tenants' rights and shall be registered in their names free of charge.

The proprietor of the land shall cultivate it himself and give it the necessary care and attention.

Article 15

Time Limit:

The distribution of land shall be completed at the latest within the five agricultural years following the date of the enforcement of this law in

conformity with a program drawn up by the higher committee. This program shall provide that seized lands shall be distributed each year at the end of the agricultural season.

Article 16

Measures:

The owner of the land and his heirs shall not have the right to dispose of the land before having the price in full. Before this payment is effected, the land shall not be subject to expropriation in settlement of debts unless they are due to the Government, the agricultural and cooperative bank or cooperative society.

However, if it is necessary to expropriate any part of the land for public utilities, it is permissible by order of the Minister of Public Works to exempt from the provision of Article 1 of Law No.5 of 1907, which concerns the expropriation of the said property. This order shall have the force of the decree stipulated in the aforementioned article.

Article 17

Penalties:

Any person obstructing the enforcement of the provisions of Article 1 shall be liable to imprisonment in addition to confiscation of the price of the land seized. Every land owner that is to be subject to the provisions of this law who intentionally impairs its minerals, weakens its soil or destroys its appurtenances with the object of rendering it useless for exploitation at the time of seizure shall likewise be liable to imprisonment. Also any person who intentionally violates Article 4 shall be imprisoned.

CHAPTER II

AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Article 18

Agricultural Cooperative Societies:

An agricultural cooperative society shall, by the force of the law, be constituted from among the farmers who have taken over the s-eized land in each village and who own no more than five feddan in that village. If required by circumstances, a single cooperative society may be formed to serve more than one village by an order of the Minister of Social Affairs.

The Cooperative Society shall be subject to the provisions of Law No. 58 of 1944 concerning Egyptian Cooperative Societies and to the provisions of the following articles.

Article 19

Functions of Cooperative Societies:

Cooperative Societies shall perform the following functions:

- (a) To obtain all types of agricultural loans for members of the Society according to the needs of their lands.
- (b) To provide farmers with the necessary requisites for the exploitation of their land such as seeds, fertilizers, cattle, agricultural machinery and means of storage and transport of crops.
- (c) To organize the cultivation of the land and exploitation thereof in the most efficient manner including the selection of seeds and grading of crops, fighting agricultural pests and digging canals and drains.
- (d) To sell the principal crops on behalf of their members deducting installments on the land, Government taxes, agricultural loans and other debts from the price of the crops.
- (e) To render all other agricultural and social services required by the members.

Article 20

Ministerial Control:

Agricultural cooperative societies shall discharge their duties under

the supervision of an official selected by the Minister of Social Affairs. This official may supervise the activities of more than one cooperative society.

Article 21

Agricultural cooperative societies shall participate in the formation of general cooperative societies and cooperative federations in conformity with the provisions of Law No. 58 of 1944 concerning Egyptian cooperative societies.

Article 22

The minister of Social Affairs shall issue the necessary decree to regulate the work of the aforementioned cooperative societies in accordance with the preceding provisions.

CHAPTER III

LIMITS OF DIVIDING UP AGRICULTURAL

Article 23

Restrictions to Subdivisions:

Should the occasion arise to divide up agricultural land into less than five feddan whether through sale, exchange, inheritance, will, donation or any other means of acquiring land ownership, it is incumbent upon those concerned to agree as to whom the ownership of the land is to go. In case of disagreement, one of the parties concerned or the public prosecutor shall request that the matter be submitted for a decision as to ownership to the Summary Court in whose jurisdiction lies the piece of land having the greatest value. If there is no one able to pay for the remaining shares, the court shall order the sale of the land by auction.

The court shall decide on this demand without fees.

Article 24

Restrictions to Subdivisions:

The Summary Court shall, in cases of ownership of indivisible lands,

give preference to those whose vocation is agriculture. If all concerned are equal in this respect, lots shall be drawn among them.

Should ownership, however, arise from inheritance, preference shall be given those heirs who work in agriculture. If all concerned are equal in this respect, priority shall be given to the husband, then the son; and if there are numerous sons lots shall be drawn among them.

CHAPTER IV

SUPPLEMENTARY TAXES

Article 25

Additional Taxation:

As from January 1st, 1953, a supplementary tax shall be imposed on land holdings in excess of 200 feddan at the rate of 5 times the original tax.

Article 26

Additional Taxation:

The supplementary tax shall be assessed on the basis of the ~~total~~ land taxes imposed on the tax-payer all over the country on January 1st of each year.

If the tax-payer has a share in joint obligations as a result of inheritance or any other reason, the total taxes paid by him on his personal obligations plus his share of the taxes on the joint obligations, shall be taken into consideration in assessing the supplementary tax.

In the application of the provisions of this Law no deduction shall be made from the supplementary taxes imposed on the tax-payer in the case of land disposed of in the manner stipulated in Article 3.

Article 27

Declaration of Land Property:

Every tax-payer subject to the provisions of this Law shall submit to the collector of the district in which he pays the major part of his land taxes within 2 months of its coming into force and in the month of January of each

year a declaration of the acreage of lands, owned by him exclusively or in which he shares, in all parts of the country together with the amount of taxes imposed thereon. (Amended, see, Decree Law 271 of 1952, below)

Article 28

Sanctions:

Should the tax-payer not submit the declaration indicated in the preceding article on the prescribed date or should he give false information in his declaration with the object of evading payment of the supplementary tax or part thereof, a fine of 5 times the tax lost or which would have been lost to the Treasury, on account of his not submitting the declaration at the prescribed time or on account of false information given in his declaration, shall be imposed on him in addition to the tax itself. The fine shall be determined by one of the committees formed by the Minister of Finance & Economy for this purpose and its decision shall not be subject to appeal.

Article 29

Collection of Additional Taxes:

The supplementary tax together with the fine indicated in the preceding article shall be collected with the last installment of the original tax. In collecting the supplementary tax and the fine, the Government shall have the same privilege of priority as in collecting the original tax.

In case of delay in payment, the supplementary tax and the fine shall be collected through administrative seizure.

No supplementary tax shall be due on lands disposed of by a legally approved contract until the date of the last instalment of the original tax.

Article 30

Exceptions:

Fallow lands owned by individuals and lands owned by companies or

societies for the improvement and sale thereof in accordance with laws and regulations shall be exempt from the supplementary tax.

CHAPTER V

RELATIONS BETWEEN TENANT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND AND OWNER

Article 31

Land Owners and Tenants:

As from the beginning of the agricultural year following the coming into effect of this Law, the relation between the tenant and proprietor of agricultural land shall be regulated in accordance with the provisions of the following articles:

Article 32

The Land is his Own:

Agricultural land cannot be rented except to those who cultivate it themselves.

Article 33

Rent and Amodiation:

The rent of agricultural land may not exceed 7 times the original tax assessed on that land. In case of the rent being on a crop-sharing basis, the owner's share may not be more than one half after the deduction of all expenses.

Article 34

Rent and Amodiation:

The tenant of agricultural land has the right to a refund from the owner of any sums paid in any way in excess of the maximum limit set in the previous article. He must fully prove the fact of excess payment.

Article 35

Contracts:

A lease of agricultural land must not be made for less than 3 years.

Article 36

Lease Duration:

The contract must be made in writing, regardless of its value, and two original copies, one to be kept by the proprietor and the other by the tenant.

Should there be no written contract, the rent shall be on a crop-sharing basis for three years during which period the owner's share shall be one half after deduction of all expenses.

Article 37

Tenant Rights:

In conformity with the previous provisions and notwithstanding the provisions of articles 598 and 599 of the Civil Code, no one cultivating the land himself whether he be an original tenant or a subtenant can be expelled from the land. In the latter case relations shall be direct between the subtenant and the proprietor. (Abrogated, see Decree Law 197 of 1952, below.)

CHAPTER VI

RIGHTS OF THE AGRICULTURAL WORKER

Article 38

Agricultural Wages:

The wages of the agricultural worker in the different agricultural districts shall be fixed every year by a committee formed by the Minister of Agriculture and presided over by one of the high officials of the Ministry and consisting of six members chosen by the Minister, three of whom shall represent the land owners and tenants and the other three the agricultural workers.

No decision of this committee shall be effective until approved by the Minister of Agriculture.

Article 39

Agricultural Workers Unions:

Agricultural workers may form unions to defend their common interests.
(See Article 39A, added by Decree Law 197 of 1952, below.)

Article 40

Enforcement:

Ministers are charged, each within his jurisdiction, with the enforcement of this Law.

It shall be effective from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Abdin Palace, the 19th Zul-Hedjeh, 1371, (September 9, 1952)

By order of the Provisional Regency Council

MUHAMMAD 'ABD AL-MONAYM

MUHAMMAD BAHI AL-DIN BARAKAT

MUHAMMAD RASHID MIHANNA

Prime Minister, Minister of War, Navy MUHAMMAD NAGIB

DECREE LAW 197 of 1952

RELATING TO THE AMENDMENT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF DECREE LAW NO. 178 OF 1952
ON LAND REFORM AND THE ADDITION OF A TEMPORARY PROVISION.

In the name of H.M. the King of Egypt and the Sudan

Whereas by Article 41 of the Constitution,

and Whereas by Decree Law 178 of 1952 concerning Land Reform,

Pursuant to the view of the Council of State and following the proposal of the Ministers of Agriculture, Finance & Economy, and Social Affairs and the approval of the Cabinet,

Now, therefore, the Provisional Regency Council have decreed as follows:

Article 1

Article 37 of Decree Law 178 of 1952 referred to hereabove is rescinded.

Article 2

A new article No. 39A is added to the above-mentioned law under the heading "Temporary Provisions" to read: Taking into consideration the provisions of Article 33, the leases that terminate at the end of the current agricultural year on the coming into effect of the present law, if the tenant cultivates the land himself, be he the original tenant or sub-tenant. In the latter case the relationship between sub-tenant and owner shall become a direct one.

Article 3

The Ministers, each within his jurisdiction, are charged with the enforcement of this law which becomes effective from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Abdin Palace, the 27th of Zu'l-Hedjeh, 1371 (September 17, 1952)

By order of the Provisional Regency Council

MUHAMMAD 'ABD AL-MOYNAYM

MUHAMMAD BAHI AL-DIN BARAKAT

MUHAMMAD RASHID MIHANNA

Prime Minister, Minister of War, Navy MUHAMMAD NAGIB (and seventeen other ministers).

DECREE LAW 264 of 1952

RELATING TO THE ADDITION OF A FURTHER ARTICLE TO DECREE LAW 178 OF 1952

CONCERNING LAND REFORM

In the name of H.M. the King of Egypt and the Sudan,
Whereas by Article 41 of the Constitution,
and Whereas by Decree Law 178 of 1952 concerning Land Reform, as amended by Decree Law 197 of 1952, Pursuant to the view of the Council of State and following the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture and the approval of the Cabinet, Now, Therefore, the Provisional Regent has decreed as follows:

Article 1

The following article under No. 12 A is added to the hereabove Law 178 of 1952, to read: Article 12A - It is to the Higher Committee to interpret the provisions of the present Law. Its decisions on this matter shall be considered legal and compulsory and shall be published in the Official Gazette.

Article 2

The Ministers, each within his jurisdiction, are charged with the enforcement of this Law which becomes effective as from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Abdin Palace, the 15th of Safar, 1372 (November 3, 1952)

MUHAMMAD 'ABD AL-MONAYM,

Provisional Regent

Prime Minister, Minister of War, Navy MUHAMMAD NAGIB (and seventeen ministers).

DECREE LAW 271 OF 1952

AMENDING DECREE LAW 178 OF 1952 ON LAND REFORM

In the name of the King of Egypt and the Sudan,

Whereas by Article 41 of the Constitution,

and Whereas by Decree Law 178 of 1952 on Land Reform as amended by the two Decree Laws 197 and 264 of 1952, Pursuant to the view of the Council of State and Following the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture and the approval of the Cabinet, Now, Therefore, the Provisional Regent has decreed as follows:

Article 1

Article 27 of Decree Law 178 of 1952 referred to hereabove is amended as follows: Article 27 - Every taxpayer to whom the provisions of the present law apply must, within three months following the effective date of the present law and in the course of the month of January each year, submit to the tax

collector of the locality in which he pays the major part of his land taxes a declaration in which he shall state the area of the land he possesses or in the usufruct of which he has a share in the whole territory of the Kingdom (of Egypt) and the amount of the taxes borne by it.

Article 2

The Ministers, each within his jurisdiction, are charged with the enforcement of the present law which becomes effective as from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Abdin Palace, the 22nd of Safar, 1372, (November 10, 1952)

MUHAMMAD 'ABD AL-MONAYM,

Provisional Regent

Prime Minister, Minister for War, Navy, and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs MUHAMMAD NAGIB (and fifteen other ministers).

DECREE LAW 298 OF 1952

DESIGNATING THE DATE AS FROM WHICH THE SEIZURE OF CERTAIN LARGE ESTATES IS TO BE CONSIDERED EFFECTIVE

In the name of the King of Egypt and the Sudan,

Whereas by Article 41 of the Constitution,

and Whereas by Decree Law 178 of 1952 of Land Reform as amended by Decree Laws 197, 264 and 271 of 1952, Pursuant to the view of the Council of State and following the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture and the approval of the Cabinet, Now, Therefore, the Provisional Regent, has decreed as follows:

Article 1

The landed properties, the owners of which have been advised of seizure before the aforesaid date, are considered seized as from 13 Safar, 1372 (November 1, 1952).

Article 2

The Ministers, each within his jurisdiction, are charged with the

enforcement of this law.

Abdin Palace, the 5th of Rabi al-Awwal, 1372, (November 23, 1952).

MUHAMMAD 'ABD AL-MONAYM,

Provisional Regent

Prime Minister, Minister of War, Navy, and Acting Minister of Foreign
Affairs MUHAMMAD NAGIB (and fifteen other ministers).

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