

Conferência Nacional de Dirigentes Sindicais

Rio de Janeiro, 6 - 7 de junho de 1964

AGRARIAN REFORM

It is a well-known and a well proven fact that the Brazilian agrarian structure has 400 years of mistakes behind it. It is also an internationally known truth that, from the modern standpoint, land tenure must be regarded from its social aspect as well (article 147 of the Constitution of Brazil) - "The use of property must be conditioned to the welfare of the community."

International or continental bodies (inter-governmental), such as the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, FAO, ILO, OAS, CELA, ORIT, and more recently, the International Development Bank, have stressed the social aspect of property and the need for agrarian reform (CONTINENTAL TRADE UNIONISM AND AGRARIAN REFORM, published by ORIT, 1961, page 3).

Thus the NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF TRADE UNION LEADERS, being held in Rio de Janeiro, recommends that consideration be given to the following 16 conclusions drawn up by its Technical Committee, especially established for this purpose:

1. To press for urgent agrarian reform, in keeping with the requirements of Brazil.
 2. To give support to President Castello Branco in providing the nation with a Land Act.
 3. To recommend the reports submitted to and approved by the Brazilian Congress on 'The Outline of Basic Reform', publicized through the press by the 'Ferreiro da Manhã' and the 'Folha de São Paulo' with the help of the Institute of Brazilian Lawyers (see vol. II of the records, 1963).
 4. To declare itself in favor of the struggle against large and small scale landowners, large scale landowners being taken to mean ".....a large publicly or privately owned estate, when
 - I - not farmed to the extent of more than half its area
 - II - inadequately farmed according to local or lawful standards
 - III - operated for purely speculative motives
 - IV - larger than the maximum area legally permitted, allowing for local soil conditions, tilling and farming practices and distances from urban centers and markets.
- § 1 - For the purpose of this article, property containing virgin or other forest lands which represent up to 20% (twenty percent) thereof, shall be considered as farmed land
- § 2 - Forest lands, which come under this official description shall

..... not be considered large scale farms.

.....Small scale landowners are considered to be those whose property according to environmental and local conditions, covers an area which is inadequate for proper farming and the upkeep of a family, and hinders the social and economic well-being thereof."

5. To give support to the levying of a sliding-scale rural land tax as a sound step in the struggle against the owners of idle land and as an incentive to progressive landowners, the total sum gathered under such tax to be intended for the defraying of regional agrarian reform.
6. To declare itself in favor of the plan for carrying out agrarian reform on a regional and decentralized basis.
7. To press, in the first instance, for the taking over of the lands belonging to the federal, state and territory governments so that they might be justly sub-divided and so that equal opportunities might be open to all. Expropriation to come in the second instance, social well-being on the large unfarmed estates, close to urban centres, as the goal, so that communities of settlers might be directed thereto forthwith. Thirdly, priority expropriation of lands whose value has risen or will rise through costly undertakings such as paved or arterial highways, improvements to the great northeastern dams, etc.
8. To declare itself in favor of the three conventional types of settlement, viz: a) through trustworthy private concerns, b) through the government authorities, c) the mixed kind, namely, private enterprise plus government aid, as for example, Fazenda Holambra.
9. To condemn the leasing and the free granting of public or expropriated lands to those who wish to take up farming
10. To adopt intensive urbanization methods, making a start upon the communities of settlers and going on to the rural communities.
11. To press for the proper recording of public and private lands, making a start upon those of 500 or more hectares
12. Also to press for methodical regional and national classification of land, funds to be provided therefor according to article 16 of decree 38328 of 14.4.61 (Regulations governing the São Paulo Agrarian Review).
13. To recommend that the National Agrarian Fund be set up by making use of the provisions contained under the three draft projects referred to as Milton Campos, Ministry of Agriculture and National Economic Council, since each of them puts forward different but valuable suggestions.
14. To stress the need and the urgency for the full set of Regulations governing the Rural Worker Act (law nº 4214 of 2.3.63) so that the country worker may be entitled to the same rights as the urban worker.
15. To press for indispensable additional measures (education, health

transport, agricultural credit, etc.), as provided for by the group which drew up the Milton Campos draft project, where the establishing of a rural middle class is aimed at, whose productive efforts are to be stimulated and whose buying power is to be added to.

16. Finally, to stress the fact that the success or failure of the agrarian reform or reforms will depend almost entirely upon the experts to be selected by the Head of the National Executive, passed on by the Legislative, in order to avoid a repetition of the political and ideological evils brought on by SUPRA throughout almost the whole of Brazil