

FARMING and COOPERATIVES

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FARMING AND COOPERATIVES

FARMERS DECIDE TO ORGANIZE

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FARMERS DECIDE TO ORGANIZE

(Continued from page 1)

rather than later they come to an end. The decline in prices after an uncontrolled inflation could not always be arrested so as to stop at what is considered a normal level. Prices continue to fall, and as the saying goes, the higher you go the harder you fall.

The whole world is at present girding to confront deflation that most authorities predict will follow after the present emergency. What happens during the period of deflation is the opposite of that of inflation. The debtor class bears the brunt while the creditor class receives all the benefits. Because of this, it is often thought that deflation is to be deprecated because it is the rich that are mostly benefited, the rich being synonymous with the creditor class. This is a conception that is not entirely in accord with actual facts, for most creditors are people who have small income or savings accumulated over a long period of time from meager earnings; creditors are composed mostly of people who belong to the middle class, in many cases widows and retired employees who are providing for old age, while debtors are chiefly large corporations, large farmers, industrialists and substantial businessmen who owe the banks or investors. These groups are adversely affected by deflation, but they could easily make the necessary adjustments to take care of any emergency. It is the people who are least able to protect themselves from the orgy of inflation or the harshness of deflation that are the worse hit and suffer the greatest injustices that follow these two economic ills.

Need for a Stable Currency System

The fact that in the long run nobody is really benefited by fluctuations in the value of money, it should be a prime objective of all governments especially in the postwar period to establish and maintain a stable currency system. The Bretton Woods agreement laid the groundwork for a stable international currency system. While stable prices as an aim of monetary policy are quite unattainable and of doubtful utility, what is needed in the Philippines is a more modern currency system that could meet the requirements of trade and industry during the period when reconstruction and rehabilitation are the dominating consideration in any economic program drafted and carried out by the government. For it must be admitted that the present currency system is outmoded to cope with the demands of a remodeled Philippine economy. The principle upon which the currency system as at present constituted is based belongs to the nineteenth century when the gold standard was the predominant monetary standard. To continue under that system during the second half of the twentieth century is to close our eyes to the lessons painfully learned by other progressive nations during the last generation. To insist upon a 100 per cent backing at this time when most countries are on managed currency, to insist that we have an "automatic" currency system today, is to hang on to a tradition that would be a definite drawback to our economic progress.

A comprehensive reform of the currency system is clearly necessary and

At a recent meeting of the Central Luzon farmers who are in Manila, it has been decided to form the Philippine Farmers Association in order to pool the efforts of all the farmers of the country in cooperating with the government in the speedy rehabilitation of the farmers, the farms, and the rural districts in general. The names of those who are heading this important movement are listed on page 1. Due to difficulties in transportation and communication it was not possible to contact many others before the November issue of *Farming and Cooperatives* goes to press. We are passing the information to all the farmers and former colleagues in the movement for improvement of agriculture and request that they contact us in our headquarters at 1001 Oroquieta, Manila. Mr. Ricardo Gonzales, of Pangasinan, has been designated as temporary Chairman and Treasurer, until the Association can meet for election of regular officers.

The need for a strong and militant organization among the farmers of the Philippines is now imperative. In view of the complex problems of agricultural rehabilitation and the urgent demand for adequate production of food and raw materials for local industries and for export the farmers should organize to be able to meet their concrete needs and problems.

It has been the ordinary experience during economic depressions to find the prices of farm products always to be first to come down in the downward movement of prices of commodities. On the other hand during booms when the prices go upward, the prices of farm products remain last at the bottom of the rising trend. In both cases the farmers suffer. During the recent economic disturbance in our community brought about by war, the farmers suffered from destruction of farms, equipments and work animals, unfair prices, poor distribution channels, lack of transportation and meager credit facilities.

Unless the farmers therefore get to-

should be undertaken immediately after the political situation has cleared. Amendments to the currency law undertaken merely as an incident in the search for more funds to balance the budget are futile to remedy a major problem. The chief features of a comprehensive monetary reform would be (1) the creation of a single currency reserve fund instead of the two separate funds at present which in fact function as a unit, and at a lower percentage to the total circulation, and (2) the establishment of a Central Bank to manage the currency system in accordance with the needs of industry and trade. A modern Central Bank Act would, to my mind, constitute a much needed amendment to our present currency law. A Central Bank Act should be one of the first laws to be passed by an independent Philippines.

gether and do something for themselves it is likely that during this period of national economic reconstruction and rehabilitation aid due the farmers may not be made available on time.

The Philippine Farmers Association is organized so that there may exist an official private organ to voice the need of our farms, that there may be established a working agency which may cooperate with the government to keep the farmers abreast with the progress of the fast changing economic world. It shall inform the farmers of valuable improvements in farm practices, create interest among them for concerted action to secure protection and favorable sympathy from the public that is due the most fundamental of human calling in the Philippines, farming.

In order to make the association viable and able to render the fruitful services contemplated in its charter of organization, it was decided to make the association a stock corporation.

The scope of work of the association is outlined in the following program of activities.

1. Membership Drive

To secure within one year as many farmers as possible to be members.

2. To establish in Manila a headquarters of the Association which will serve as:

(a) Information service office for members on prices, land values, farm machineries, farm practices, agrarian problems, etc.

(b) Agency for members on procurement of essential commodities, sales of farm products and employment.

(c) Publish an Agricultural Journal.

3. Organize farmers' convention and farmers' cooperatives.

4. Promote a militant representation of the farmers' interest and welfare in the rehabilitation and reconstruction movement, both in Government as well as private commercial and industrial circles.

5. Organize the Associations' income producing projects to provide a stable financial support for the activities, and create investment opportunity for farmers.

First in line of these undertakings is the construction of the Farmers Building in Manila which shall stand as the monument of the farmers unity and firm resolve to make farming a stable occupation. Farmers all over the country are asked to help this movement in order to realize the erection of the much needed Farmers Building within the earliest possible time. The Farmers Building will serve as the firm foundation of the organized efforts of the farmers to make agricultural production stable.

★ ★ ★
Join the Philippine Farmers
Association Now!

★ ★ ★