Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION
The British left as their legacy a tenure system, which was inefficient and exploitative. Soon after independence, the Government addressed itself to the task of reorganizing the agrarian system so as to make it basic for future development. The problem of Land Reforms was viewed in two ways; 1. From the point of view of agricultural production, 2. From the point of view of different interests in land. The former referred to the land management while the latter to the Land Reforms.

Since independence, there have been four “waves” of Land Reforms. First, in the closing years of 1940’s and beginning of 1950’s, there were enactments for the abolition of intermediary tenures such as Zamindari and Jahagirdari tenures. Second, in the mid 50’s, tenancy legislations were introduced, which gave not only protection to the tenants, but eventually in almost all the States also gave the right to own land which the tenant cultivated. The third series of Land Reforms were at the close 60’s when ceiling on land holdings was introduced, although in some of the States such laws had already been in existence.

The Land Reform again came to the fore-front as the fourth wave in 1972. Land Reforms were viewed then in a different
perspective from the one, when they were initiated towards the close of 40's. The economic assumption on which the original policy was based was revised. New objective or rather redefinition of objectives like social equality and security was in order. These were more relevant now than twenty years ago.

Many factors had to be taken into account:

I. In the initial stages, it was thought that agricultural reorganization would be rendered easy, by the transfer of labour to other non-agricultural sectors as they developed. The census figures revealed that this assumption had been unrealistic. The percentage of population dependent on agriculture had remained practically the same. Farm labour had increased and was tending to increase. The total work force (15-59 years) increased by 39 millions from 162 million in 1961 to 201 million on 1971. The work force in rural areas increased by 30 million from 138 million in 1961 to 168 million in 1971. Even after twenty years, planned efforts had not been able to reduce dependence on agriculture. Agriculture still played and continued to play an important role for another two or three decade. It is difficult to reduce it soon. As Dovring stated, assuming population growth at 2 percent, if ratio of agriculture to non-agriculture, should change form 70:30 to 60:40, employment in industries and services had to grow at 3.5 percent if such a change was to occur over 50 years. In India,
population had been increasing at a higher rate and employment in non-agriculture sector has not been keeping pace with increasing pace of labour force.

II. Towards the close of 60's technological developments in agriculture started taking place. These developments, many economists, believed, had opened a new era in Indian agriculture. What could not be achieved in twenty years, could be done now in few years. Some of the empirical evidence suggested that agricultural growth rate had been substantial in Punjab, though it is a State with no impressive record in respect of Land Reforms. On the other hand, U.P which had a very good record of Land Reforms, suffered from a poor growth rate of agricultural output. This had lead many to conclude that there was no correlation between agricultural growth rate and Land Reforms. Land Reforms and technological improvements might be treated as alternatives. The road to tackling the problem is by new technology, high yielding varieties, green revolution etc., rather than by institutional changes. Any way, it is dangerous to generalize only on the basis of experience in limited areas. New technology itself has severe constraints. Nevertheless, the extent to which Land Reform measures help or hinder agricultural development needs to be closely observed.
III. Once it is clear that increased yields cannot be had by enlarging the holdings through the exodus of surplus farm labour, in the near future, it becomes imperative that higher level of output should be got by increasing investment in land. This could be done by the owner or the tenant cultivator (if the owner happens to be absentee land-lord). A better and healthy climate for increasing investment in land could be brought about by revising the Land Reforms policies and their implementation.

IV. There had been a cry that fruits of development had not reached all sections of the society, particularly the small farmers and the landless labourers. They had been kept outside the purview of technological change and its fruits. There had been a feeling that the rich had been enriched and the poor had been impoverished. It is realized that the momentum of agricultural revolution cannot be sustained unless more and more people are brought into its orbit. This has also led the planners to reconsider Land Reforms vis-à-vis agrarian structure obtaining today. The approach to Fifth plan, discussed at the N.D.C. (National Development Council) on May 30-31, 1972, maintained that the assumed conflict between growth and social justice in earlier plans, had been promised on arguments which asserted that whatever surpluses could be mobilized from richer classes were needed for investments primarily directed at raising the future rate of
growth. There might have been some justification for this view in the initial years of planning. However, the economy now has reached a stage where large availability of resources makes it possible to launch a direct attack on unemployment, and underemployment. Available projections suggest that if one were to rely on growth only without directly tackling the problem of unemployment and income distribution, it may take another 30 to 50 years for the poorer sections, to reach the minimum consumption levels. It will neither be feasible nor desirable to contemplate a waiting period of anywhere near such duration.

The technical changes and investments in agriculture will improve the resource base. But this improvement without suitable Land Reform measures may unfold a course development that not only aggravates the problem but inhibits full utilization of developmental resources.

The implementation of various Land Reform measures in different States leaves much to be desired. Number of loopholes exists in legislation. Implementation has been greatly diluted and delayed as to defeat the very purpose of legislation.

Thus, a reconsideration of content and implementation of Land Reforms, becomes necessary against the background of pressure of farm labour on land, need to create employment opportunities in agriculture, need to step up investment in agriculture, as to ensure
continuous and steady growth of output and to provide for social justice. In other words, making life of small farmers and landless labourers more secure and comfortable. It is true that Land Reforms by themselves cannot bring the desired change, but they may create an environment, an institutional framework in which agriculture could be more labour as well as capital-intensive. Many of the improvements that are being tried now are both labour and capital intensive. As for example the National Commission on Labour gave an idea about the extent of increase in labour use consequent upon the application of HYV (High Yield Varieties) technology and multiple cropping.

The classic definition of Land Reform was primarily in terms of equity and political. In the 19th and early 20th century, it was common to assume that production techniques and possibilities were uniform over large areas and were primarily a function of land base. An emphasis on land redistribution was appropriate, given the assumption that land was of overwhelming importance. But current and impending pressure of population on land resources in many countries and the advances of scientific agriculture in recent decades remove Land Reforms from the classic context. Now Land Reforms can no longer be considered as the distribution of holdings on the basis of political and equity considerations. Land Reforms conceived only as a redistribution of rights in property may fail to
generate forces that will achieve the sharp breaks with old customs, traditions and technologies, needed to promote development.

In devising Land Reforms, to encourage capital and labour intensity, two factors have to be considered. (i) Size, (ii) Incentive. Size of the holding has to be reasonably big as to generate surplus from the enterprises. Due to technical improvements, size in terms of acreage has receded into the background. Otherwise even in India, at the time of First Five Year Plan, it was the consensus that no efficient agriculture could be carried on unless agrarian structure was reorganised. The present technology is neutral to scale. Even the small plots too can take to new technology. So by fixing a size of the farm, sufficiently small encouraging all possible improvements and investments on it, considerable surplus could be generated. Greater the emphasis on intensity of cropping and utilization of other inputs, smaller will be the size of the farm in terms of acreage, to obtain a given income. The case of Japan clearly illustrates, that growth rate of agricultural output could be got even from small plots.

The second consideration is that of incentive. Increased investment in farm can take place, if the investor (whether owner or cultivator) enjoys the security of tenure, till he reaps the benefits or fruits of such investment. The accretion benefits of investment in agriculture take longer time to materialize. This is more so in livestock rising and plantations. The use of productive asset should
be the preclusive right of an individual or group. In traditional agriculture, it is by land that economic and social position are measured still the significant and interesting input is labour. The impact of Land Reform measures is to influence the allocation of labour time. Now, investment essentially involves a decision in favour of consumption due to limited income. With adequate security the cultivator can make a choice. He can balance between long term, slow but high yielding enterprises, and short-term quick but low yielding enterprises. In traditional agriculture, as labour is the only surplus available, cultivator's leisure time could be used for such productive work. Improvement in water supplies, drainage, soil improvement practices, dry farming techniques are some of the examples, where this leisure time could be used with advantages. Land tenure structure, exercises a powerful influence on the disposition of leisure time, whether it is enforced leisure due to little productive resources or cyclical leisure resulting from biological nature of agricultural production. Needless to say, it is necessary to make people work when capital is in short supply. Apart from tenure security, other measures can also be thought of to increase labour intensity in the production process. It is in this context that smaller holdings are desirable. Though uneconomical from the long run point of view, they provide for effective use of one of the nations important resource work time. If it is unused there is not only an opportunity foregone but an actual reduction in the capacity of
nation to yield a surplus of investment. The problem is how to use these resources effectively and not to “save” it. Human labour is the resource with greatest potentiality.

Land Reform measures may generate new attitude towards debt and credit. A person is looked down in society, if he runs into debt. It is not the credit but the wrong use of credit which makes the person continue in perpetual debt.

In sum, as Raup puts it a well designed Land Reform can increase both the opportunity and the incentive for capital formation in agriculture. In doing so, it can capture for the economy the investment potential of labour time, otherwise wasted. It not only has direct impact on capital formation, through the incentive it provides but can also work with and through associated influences such as the rising income expectations to which it contributes and the proper use of production credit, which it facilitates. It's effect is cleanly visible in owner operated farms, but can also be accomplished, under leasing agreements.”

OBJECTIVES :

The study has set the following objectives.

1. To study the change in economic status of new owners brought about by the implementation of Land Reforms Act 1974.
2. To study the effect of Land Reforms on the old owners.
3. To study the impact of Land Reforms on Social Justice.
HYPOTHESES:

Keeping with these objectives, the following Hypotheses have been framed.

1. By and large the new owners are now better off than they were earlier.

2. Among them the new owners belonging to the weaker section are not benefited much.

3. Property nexus to productivity nexus has been only a slogan.

4. Mere ownership will not turn sand in to gold as Mr.Young suggested. Along with ownership availability and access to infrastructure facilities are necessary.

5. There are many loopholes in the law and in implementation.

6. There are many instances of flouting the provisions of the act.

METHODOLOGY:

The section deals with the depreciation of study area, details of techniques method of survey, analytical tools employed in fulfilling the objectives of the study have also been presented in the thesis.

Primary Data: The methodology of study involves collection of data through schedules canvassed to the old and the new owners.

Secondary Data: the secondary sources like Books, Articles, Gazetteer, Ph.D. Thesis and Reports etc, are consulted in support.
Analytical Tools: Tabulating them and drawing conclusions on the basis of statistical tools.

SAMPLING DESIGN:

The present study focuses the attention on land losers and land gainers in the 8 percent of the net sown area of the State.

The study has conducted in three stages. They are preview, post-view and review of the situation. The study examines the conditions prevailing in the agricultural seen before 1974 act and the situation which prevails at the end of 2004, and compares them and critically assesses the legislation in review.

The study has selected few villages in two talukas namely Harihara and Jagalur of Davangere district. While Harihara is in irrigated tract, Jagalur is in dry tract. The study of these two talukas gives contrasting evidence in regard to the implementation of the Land Reforms and its impact on “New owners”.

The study has depended on field investigation with the help of a schedule prepared for the purpose, canvassed to the old and new owners. A total of 200 respondents are drawn from 18 villages lying in Jagalur and Harihar talukas of Davangere district in Karnataka.
IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY:

Like air and water, land is basic and fundamental factor for human existence. Little or more all human activity has land as the base more so in agriculture. Ultimately, all goods for human consumption must come from land. Hence, land has to be effectively utilized and conserved so as to be economically kept intact temporally. Unfortunately land is limited and irreproducible. It has competitive claims from different economic activities of human beings like agriculture, industry, organization, forest, transport etc.

Land Reforms are necessary to ensure effective utilization and conservation. Land needs to be put to the best use among different alternative uses and allocated to the best uses among alternative users so that it would maximize output without degrading its sustainability. The history of Land Reforms in India, and in Karnataka is not a happy one. The Land Reforms initiated in the country are criticized as defective by purpose, and inefficient and tardy in implementation by lack of will on the part of the Government.

At the national level, the record of Land Reforms programme has been depressing and frustrating. Appu, who was the champion of administering Land Reforms noted that "The programme of Land Reforms, implemented since independence, did not lead to any significant redistribution of land or the removal of all obstacles in
increasing agricultural production. In the case of tenancy reform the policies adopted were ambivalent and there were large gaps between policy and legislation and between legislation and implementation as a result the implementation of the tenancy laws, the tenants became owners or acquired rights in only about 4 percent of the operated area.”

Karnataka has been praised for its bold and revolutionary programme of Land Reforms and its implementation since 1974. The tenancy legislation has been viewed as very impressive, since more than 60 percent of the tenants have obtained occupancy rights on lands they were cultivating. However, it is argued that the dominant class of cultivators have taken maximum advantage of the tenancy legislation. It is the small land-owners and tenants, who were the losers, critics like M.V. Nadakarni (1976) have argued that the dominant class of tenants, had leased in lands from small and marginal land-holders with the opening of irrigational facilities.

According to Aziz and Krishna the total net sown area of the State was 250 lakh acres. About 17 percent of the states agricultural land was claimed to be under tenancy. By mid 1993, a little over 47 percent of the land claimed was found to be handed over to tenants (tillers). Thus tenancy laws granted ownership rights on only about 8 percent the net sown area”. 

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LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

This study is micro level study, which covers all two talukas and 18 villages from them. Therefore, the results of the study may or may not be applicable to the other parts of the country. The data obtained by fieldwork is based on the memory of the respondents. The sampling respondents have spent more time for interview and the do not have habits of keeping accounts.

CHAPTER SCHEME:

The thesis consists of six chapters namely;

CHAPTER I  Introduction

CHAPTER II  Over View of Land Reforms in India

CHAPTER III  Land Reforms in Karnataka

CHAPTER IV  Socio-Economic Profile of the District

CHAPTER V  Pre-View, Post-View and Review of Land Reforms.
           (1974)

CHAPTER VI  Conclusion and summary of the findings.