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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY, BOMBAY PROVINCIAL FRANCHISE COMMITTEE, TO ALL
COLLECTORS, DATED THE 28TH JANUARY 1932.

I have the honour to say that one of the suggestions which the Provincial Franchise Committee has been asked to consider is the suitability and feasibility of the group system of indirect voting. It appears that the indirect method of voting has been tried in other countries, and that the All-India Franchise Committee are disposed to think that it should not be summarily rejected, but should receive very careful consideration. One advantage claimed for the group method is that while it is impossible to bring in adult suffrage at present, yet the group of indirect system does at least give some sort of voice in public affairs to all those classes and interests who cannot hope to get many direct voters, whatever qualifications for direct enfranchisement may be ultimately approved. It is also claimed that it provides the unenfranchised with some sort of political training and a means of leading up gradually to adult suffrage. Some Collectors have already given an opinion about the system in reply to a reference from the Reforms Office of Government. But at that time no detailed explanation of the scheme was placed before them and they must have had great difficulty in judging it.

2. The idea of the system is that all adults not qualified for the direct vote should be placed on a separate list of primary indirect electors, who would be asked to elect "spokesmen" in the proportion of one to 20 or 50 primary voters. These "spokesmen" would vote as direct electors at the Council elections with the direct voters, Muhammadan in the Muhammadan electorate, Depressed Classes in the Depressed Class separate electorate if there is to be one, and others in the General Non-Muhammadan electorate.

3. The concrete ways of working this arrangement which have yet been suggested are outlined below.

(i) *The Collective method.*—The village in rural areas, or if the village is too large, then some distinct section of it, e.g. the wada would be taken as the unit area. In urban areas some other convenient unit would be taken; the street, or group of streets, or the like. A primary register of unenfranchised adults in that unit area would be prepared for each kind of electorate, i.e., Muhammadan, Non-Muhammadan General, etc. Suppose the primary register for the Non-Muhammadan General of the unit area contained 800 names. Then assuming that the proportion of one spokesman to 20 primary voters had been approved, those 800 would have to elect 40 spokesmen to vote at the Council election for the Non-Muhammadan General electorate. It is a question however whether 800 persons, mostly illiterate, could succeed without hopeless confusion and uncertainty in electing 40 spokesmen. If not it would be necessary to so limit the size of the unit area that it should not give more than say, 100 unenfranchised adults, for perhaps 100 persons could probably elect five men even orally without too great difficulty. But would it be possible to form such small unit areas?

(ii) *The group system proper.*—

The adult unenfranchised population in each class (Muhammadan, Non-Muhammadan or Depressed Class, if these are to be the electorates), in each village or other unit area is divided into groups of 10, or 20 or 50 as may be decided. Each group would then select 1 spokesman voter, and they should have no great difficulty in doing this. The crux is how should the group be formed.

(a) One suggestion is that houses in the village or unit area be numbered and the adults of contiguous or neighbouring houses be taken in order and put into the groups, e.g., suppose house No. 1 held by 5 adults, house No. 2, by 3, house No. 4, 6 and house No. 7, 10. Then the first group would be composed of the adults of houses Nos. 1 to 4 and 6 adults out of house No. 7. The rest of house No. 7 would go into the second group with the inmates of houses Nos. 8, 9, etc. It would presumably not be impossible to lay down some sort of rough principle for the numbering of the houses as is done at the census, which would be applicable to scattered houses in fields as well as to those in fixed village sites or wadis. The preparation of the original lists would take much time and probably special staff. But in rural areas at least the revision of the lists, if carried out at fixed and frequent intervals, say every year or every second year, should not be difficult and could perhaps be done by the ordinary village officers, under the supervision of the Circle Inspector.

A note by Mr. Jadhav is attached showing the detailed working of the scheme, if the groups were very small, of 5 or 10 persons. The smaller the group the easier it is to work: but in that case the larger will be the proportion of the spokesmen voters to the direct voters, and the larger will be the number of voters to be dealt with in the mass at the actual Council election. The groups could under this scheme be formed mechanically by the village officers working under the Circle Inspector, and it would be desirable to make the Mamlatdar the final authority for all disputes about the formation of the groups and preparation of the primary register or the conduct of the primary elections.

(b) Another suggestion is that the groups should be formed by voluntary association of any 20 persons from the primary list for the village or other area unit so long as they belonged to the same class. The Mamlatdar or Circle Inspector would go to the village and wait for the members of the list to come up by twenties, take down the selection of each group and tick off the names of the persons composing it on the list. A modification of this is given in the accompanying note by Dr. D'Souza. This makes the preparation of the primary lists much easier, since there would be no need to trouble about the grouping; but the question is whether such an arrangement would not produce complete confusion on the day of electing the spokesmen.

4. It has been suggested that in Bombay City not only would the preparation of the original registers be very troublesome and expensive, but owing to the constant fluctuations of the population, the whole work would have to be done entirely anew at every revision, and the same trouble and expense would be involved each time. For this reason the possibility of applying the scheme in Bombay has been questioned. Would this difficulty arise in any urban or other area in your district?

5. The Committee would be grateful for your opinion whether any of the above methods of working the group system would be feasible in your district (1) in purely rural, i.e., non-municipal areas; (2) in the smaller municipalities and cantonments; (3) in the larger cities, if there are any. If not, can you suggest any other practical means of indirect election?

6. The Provincial Committee has come to the tentative conclusion that if the group system be adopted for the unenfranchised residuum of men, it should also be extended to unenfranchised adult women: but the women should be formed into separate groups of women only, and not mixed with the men. Would this create any special difficulty?

7. If the group system be unworkable for the whole unenfranchised residuum of adults, would it be possible to apply it to the depressed classes only, i.e., the untouchable depressed classes as defined by the Statute Committee?

8. Can you give a rough idea of the special staff that might be required for the original preparation of the primary register?

9. The Committee would be grateful if you could send your reply in a week, i.e., to reach this office by February 8th.

A NOTE ON THE GROUP SYSTEM BY MR. B. V. JADHAV, M.L.A.,
DATED THE 27TH JANUARY 1932.

The total population of the Presidency excluding Sind is roughly 22,000,000—3,888,308, i.e., 18,111,692. Of these 10½ millions are males of whom 778,821 are already enfranchised. The remaining 4,772,987 adults are without votes. Out of the 9,153,144 females nearly half are adults. Of these only 39,133 are enfranchised and the remaining 4,905,759 are without votes. The total number of adults without vote is 9,678,696. Of the total population between 7 and 22 per cent. are to be enfranchised. In other words between 14 and 44 per cent. of the adults are to be brought on to the register. I think 20 per cent. will be a good all round advance. This amounts to arrange for every fifth man to be invested with the vote. So a group of 5 adult unenfranchised persons will have to be formed. This number can be made up from two or at most three families.

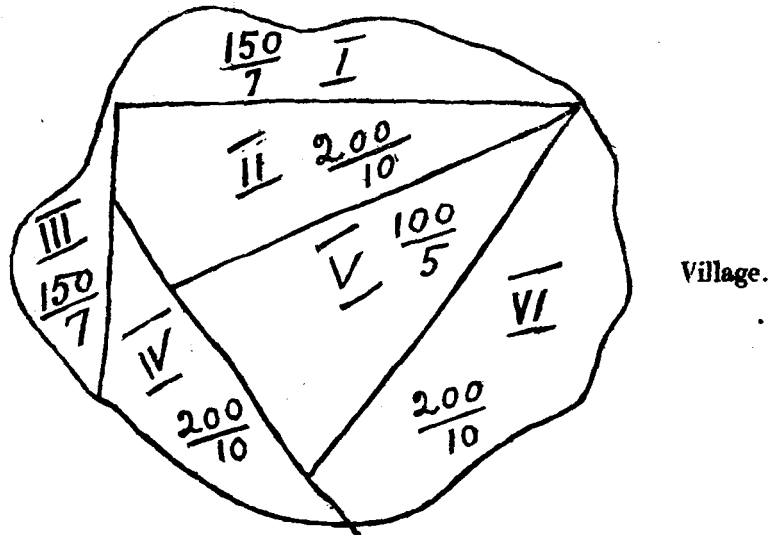
I think that the grouping will not be difficult. The houses within the municipal area are already numbered. So also are those within the village where Panchayats are started. In smaller villages they will have to be numbered. This need not be a difficult matter. Most of the houses are on a street. There are some which are straggling. But they too have paths to go to and if they be numbered consecutively the arrangement will be satisfactory. We have to bear in mind that a group will consist of at most 3 houses. Factions are generally formed between persons living in different parts of the village.

On a particular day the Circle Inspector should go to the village and with the assistance of the village Patil and Talati take the roll already written up by the Talati and call before him in front of their houses the adult persons to be grouped and take down the name of the person named by them as their Mukhi. The villagers will soon understand the business, and the work will be finished in a fairly big village within one day. The elders of the two or three houses will decide who will go to the poll, and the chances are that they may differ as to who should not go to the poll rather than who should go. One has to remember that the polling stations are at some distance and to go there is to have to sacrifice at least one day's work.

The numbering should be done more than six months before the date of the election and the names of the adults should be written down on the first occasion and corrected on subsequent occasions house by house. The election of the Mukhis will be done by the Circle Inspector at his leisure during that period on his visit to the village. If there are any complaints the higher authorities such as the Mamlatdar or the Fudnis will see to them. But I think that such complaints will not be many. These village elders so found out will be found to be of some use in the village development and other matters.

NOTE BY DR. A. D'SOUZA, M.L.C.

A scheme for bringing into effect the Zetland or Group System in Rural Areas of the Presidency.



1. A roll is prepared of all unenfranchised adults in a given village.

1-A. The unit for primaries is to be fixed at, say, 1,000 adult unenfranchised villagers (or any other suitable figure). If, for instance, a village contains, say, 1,500 of such villagers and the unit fixed is 1,000, then this village will hold 2 units, i.e., a block of 1,000 and another block of 500.

2. Taking it for granted that this village is divided into 6 sub-sections and the number of villagers in each section is as per diagram above :

3. The procedure of carrying out the group method of election will be as follows; 20 villagers constituting a group:—

(a) The Mamlatdar of the village will, say, during September, submit the names of 20 villagers to Government of whom 12 will be selected to be polling officers for purposes of the election. The Mamlatdar will then appoint 2 of these to conduct the election in each one of the sections under the supervision of a Returning Officer the Mamlatdar will nominate in consultation with Government.

(b) On the 1st of October the Mamlatdar will issue a notification in each section of the village to the effect that any groups of 20 villagers on the roll for the sub-section are at liberty, after conferring among themselves, to propose the names of any villagers on the roll to be their spokesmen, a particular day and time being fixed for the purpose, on which day the two polling officers for the sub-section will be the officials to receive and decide about the proposals received. The names of the group voters will be duly ticked off and the names of the spokesmen elected duly registered and notified.

To take a concrete case say by this method in sub-section 2 in the diagram containing 200 villagers in which 10 spokesmen have to be elected, only 7 are then elected. For the remaining 3 the following method may be adopted. The Mamlatdar will divide the balance of 60 villagers into 3 groups of 20 each and issue a second notification asking these groups to elect their spokesmen on a day fixed for the purpose. If for example only one villager turns up from a group to propose a spokesman it will be deemed that the spokesman is elected.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF KAIRA, No. A.D.M., DATED THE
6TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your circular letter dated 28th January 1932, on the subject of indirect voting, I have the honour to state that the system of indirect voting for unenfranchised may be tried in rural as well as in urban areas of this District. Lanes, streets, khadkis or such other geographical divisions in villages and wards in municipal areas may be constituted units for electing spokesmen of unenfranchised lot. The number of spokesmen for lane or wards, as the case may be, should be in proportion of one spokesman to about twenty unenfranchised, but in no case the number of spokesmen should exceed five for each unit or constituency. If the ward or lane is found to be too large, it may be cut up in such a way that the number of spokesmen for each division should not exceed five. In villages, the election of spokesmen can be made by a show of hands, as is now the case with Panchayat elections and in towns too, the same may be done. For the present, unenfranchised women-folk need have no separate indirect voting. They may be grouped along with men.

The group system is most suited to representation of depressed class as they are the most backward lot.

The staff of Municipalities, Local Boards, and such other local bodies, school teachers and honorary workers can be availed of in working the group system of election. Besides these, it would be necessary to employ special officers, say, two each for each Taluka to supervise the preparation of rolls of primary electors by Talatis of the villages concerned. Special officers might have to be employed for about a month and their pay may not exceed Rs. 40 per month. The Talatis might be paid a remuneration of Rs. 10 per head for preparing the rolls of primary electors, etc. The total expenditure thus incurred may come to about Rs. 5,000, including pay of special staff, remuneration of Talatis, stationery, travelling allowance, etc.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF PANCH MAHALS, No. A.D.M. 121,
DATED THE 20TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to state that most of the unfranchised persons in this district being illiterate, I am of opinion that the methods suggested for the group system would not be suitable. I would therefore prefer the collective method of group system. A preliminary register of unfranchised adult males and females for each kind of electorate may be prepared by the Talatis for each unit, viz., a small village or a recognised part of a village and then these persons in each unit may be called upon by the Taluka officer at their respective villages to elect their spokesmen in the proportion of 1 spokesman to about 50 persons in each group.

2. In smaller villages the work could be managed by the ordinary village staff who may be allowed a small remuneration. In larger villages and towns a special staff will have to be engaged. On the whole the cost is expected to be at Rs. 1,000.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF BROACH, No. A.D.M. 181,
DATED THE 7TH FEBRUARY 1982.

Of the alternatives suggested in your letter, the group system, worked on the basis of the contiguous houses in each village, appears to me to be the most feasible. Special staff would, however, be required to be engaged for the purpose. Hitherto operations like census, etc., have been done through Circle Inspectors and Local Board school teachers. The latter are getting less and less willing to assist in such extra duties, and the Circle Inspectors and Talatis' establishment has been so reduced in strength, as to make any such addition to their duties quite impossible.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF SURAT, No. A.D.M., DATED THE
4TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter without No. of the 28th January 1932 on the subject mentioned above, I have the honour to state my views as under:—

I agree that the proposed system would be a good beginning and would facilitate the ultimate introduction of adult suffrage in India. As regards the actual method to be adopted looking to the present state of the masses in India, I think the "Collective method" described in paragraph 3 (1) of your letter under reply is likely to cause confusion, as owing to factions in most of the villages, the villagers would quarrel about the selection of their joint spokesmen, however small the unit area may be. I venture to think that the Group system proper according to which about 20 persons would be asked to select one spokesman, would be less difficult. Indian villages are generally composed of separate families or groups which claim descent from a common ancestor. Each such family can form a separate group by itself or if it has much expanded, it can be divided into two or more groups according to the size of the family. Though the members of these families usually quarrel amongst themselves, they generally unite and find no difficulty in acting according to the instructions of a spokesman in matters of common interest. Instead of splitting up a house as suggested in paragraph 3 (ii) (a) of your letter, for the purpose of bringing the number of persons to 20, it would, I think, be preferable to form a group of a whole family or its sub-division. Perhaps dining from a common kitchen would be a better criterion, i.e. those who dine together should not be separated. It is true that if this method is followed, it would not be possible to restrict the number of persons constituting a group to one uniform figure. But I do not see why that should matter so long as all those who have not got direct voting, are entered on the primary register and get a voice in the election of their spokesmen. I think it would do if it is laid down that the number of persons constituting a group should not be less than 20 and more than 30. The village officers who are familiar with most of the residents of the village would I think be able to form such groups without difficulty under the supervision of the Circle Inspectors. Disputes, if any, should be decided by the Taluka Officer whose decision should be final. I do not think it would do to form groups in the order in which houses are numbered at the census. The numbering at the census is done according to continuity and vicinity, but it is a well-known fact that residents of neighbouring houses do not always belong to the same family, caste or even same race. I venture to think that it would not be fair to group such persons together and to ask them to select a common spokesman. In this respect therefore I beg to differ from the scheme outlined in Mr. Jadhav's note at least so far as the rural areas are concerned. For the same reason it would not do to divide a village into geographical groups as shewn in the diagram in Dr. D'Souza's scheme appended to your letter under reply. My scheme as described above will involve some more trouble in the initial stage, viz. in preparing the lists of primary indirect electors according to castes and families, but I think it would be in keeping with the past traditions of this country. The suggestion in your paragraph 3 (ii) (b) would not in my opinion be suitable, as it would waste much time of the Mamlatdars and Circle Inspectors as Indian people in villages have yet to learn the value of time. I do not anticipate in this district any difficulty due to constant fluctuations in population as in Bombay city. The scheme suggested by me is intended for the rural areas. As regards the Surat Municipal Borough and the Rander and Bulsar municipal areas I have no objection if the scheme outlined in Mr. Jadhav's note is adopted. There are no cantonments in this district.

As regards grouping of unenfranchised adult women, I venture to think that at least in rural areas, women should be entered on the same list in which their husbands are entered, otherwise the social life of villages would be much upset. Besides, I think Indian women at least in rural India are yet too backward and illiterate to come forward in a body to elect their spokesman for the legislature. It may be possible to introduce separate lists for women only after some years.

Paragraph 7 of your letter.—The group system can be applied to the Depressed Classes with much less difficulty.

Paragraph 8 of your letter.—As the qualification for the franchise will be substantially modified this time, it is clear that entirely new lists of voters will have to be prepared as in 1920. I am of opinion that the preparation of the primary registers of the unenfranchised persons which has to be done after house to house enquiry should be taken up by the village officers simultaneously with the preparation of the lists of voters. As noted by Mr. Jadhav, the numbering of the houses and preparation of the primary lists should be started more than six months before the date of the election. The village officers with proper guidance can do the work in addition to their ordinary work, but it would be necessary to give them some honorarium according to the quantity of extra work involved. To check the work of the village officers as well as to guide them, an extra Circle Inspector

will be required for each Taluka or Mahal for about three months and to control the work in the whole district as well as to secure uniformity, a special officer of Mamlatdar's grade should be attached to the Collector's office for about a year or 8 months as was done in 1920. This special work has already begun to increase in volume and is getting unmanageable by the Collector's ordinary staff which has been reduced. The special officer will require two extra clerks and two peons as he will have to visit the Talukas for instructions and check.

For the Surat City	...	...	15 Enumerators, one for each ward, on Rs. 35 per mensem each.	} For six months.
			2 Supervisors on Rs. 75 per mensem.	
For the Bulsar and Rander municipal areas.			1 Enumerator each for Taluka-extra Circle to supervise and guide.	four months. Inspector

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF THANA, No. I.C.R. 59, DATED THE 7TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated the 28th January 1932 on the above subject I have the honour to state as under.

In view of the appalling state of illiteracy of a vast section of the population, immediate introduction of adult suffrage is hardly feasible but there is no reason why the way for it should not be paved by adopting a system which will gradually create interest in them for public affairs, and at the same time afford some kind of political training. The system which naturally suggests itself is that of indirect voting. It is likely to produce the desired results but the question is how this system could be worked in practice.

Two methods have been put forward. The first is the collective method by which all the unenfranchised adults in a unit area would be collected together and asked to nominate their spokesmen. The second is the group method by which a village or other unit area will be divided into suitable groups and each group asked to elect its spokesman. The latter is in fact a particular kind of the former. Owing to backwardness of the people the collective method will fail as they will not be able to nominate the required number of spokesmen without considerable confusion, waste of time and friction. The group method will similarly be found difficult to work if based on any arbitrary principle. In my opinion it will be possible to obviate the difficulties by combining the collective method with the group method. I shall illustrate below how this could be achieved.

At present Hindu society particularly in villages is divided into natural groups based on caste or profession. Almost every backward caste has a Panchayat of its own and grown up men composing it are accustomed to elect the heads of the Panchayat. Among forward classes a Panchayat is almost non-existent but it will generally be found that a large number of such persons are already enfranchised. I think it would be useful to take advantage of these guilds in electing the spokesmen of primary indirect electors. Suppose a village consists of 500 unenfranchised people. The village should be divided into four or five groups based on broad divisions of caste, such as Kolis, Thakurs, Mahars, etc. Care will have to be taken to see that the number of groups is not unnecessarily enlarged but only the prominent castes residing in the village are formed into groups. The miscellaneous castes could either be made into a separate group or combined with the group with which they have closer affinity. Each of these groups will then be called on by the Talathi in the presence of the heads of the Panchayat to elect the number of spokesmen required. This number will be obtained by dividing the total number of each group by the unit fixed. Half or more than half of the unit division remaining after the division will be entitled to elect one spokesman while less than that will have no voice. It will not be difficult for these communal groups to elect their spokesmen. If the heads of the Panchayat are already enfranchised they would instruct the members as to who should be elected as their representatives. Such elections will be understood by the villagers and will be easy to make by visiting particular localities and assembling the groups of those areas. So far as depressed classes are concerned this would be found very useful as they live in separate quarters on the outskirts of the village. The main objections that may be taken to this method are that it may accentuate the communal feeling and give no voice to communities smaller in number than the unit fixed. As regards the first objection I do not think there is much force, for this is only the first part of the indirect election and there is nothing wrong if representatives of particular communities are elected by their own members than by the general public. As a matter of fact this method will enable the more backward caste to elect their own spokesmen instead of depending upon the doubtful goodwill of other communities. Regarding the second objection it is true that communities smaller than half of the unit fixed will not be able to nominate any spokesman but this difficulty could largely be removed by suitable combination of such communities. If however the community is too small and no combination is feasible I am afraid it will have to remain without any representation. This will however occur under any other system of grouping because they being numerically small will not be able to nominate a spokesman from among them. This method will also work satisfactorily in the case of women who should in my opinion be allowed to have separate elections.

In respect to municipal areas however this method may not be feasible except in the quarters of depressed classes. In other areas also it may perhaps be possible to form groups by streets or lanes so as to bring into play the above method. Where this is not practicable, there is no other course but to divide the municipal area into suitable wards or streets and call upon the unenfranchised men and women of these parts to elect their own representatives. In urban areas the power of understanding of such persons will be found to be more developed than in villages and so long as the number in each ward is limited to the unit fixed, there should not be any great difficulty in holding the elections.

So far as Mahomedans are concerned they can be divided into possible groups such as Khojas, Borahs, Molesalams, Shias, Sunnis, etc. If this is not possible the area inhabited by them could be split up into separate wards of which each mosque will form

the centre. It will not be difficult for such groups especially as they frequent the same mosque to nominate their spokesmen. Owing to pardah system among their women, however there will be considerable difficulty in securing their representatives and for this the assistance of their men-folk will have to be taken.

In rural areas, particularly in villages having a population of less than 2,000, the preparation of lists of primary indirect electors would not present any difficulty. The work can be done by village officers under the supervision of the Circle Inspector. In the case of villages having a population of more than 2,000, the work would be somewhat heavy but even then it could be managed by the Talathi and the Circle Inspector. For municipal areas a separate agency will be required. To start with such lists could be prepared with the help of the information collected at the last census. So far as this district is concerned the preparation of lists would neither be difficult nor very expensive and their revision every year would also be possible without any extra staff except in municipal areas for which a special temporary staff will have to be engaged for a month or so.

After the preparation of the lists on the above principles or on any other that may be approved by Government, the election of the representatives of primary indirect electors should be held by the village officers with the assistance of two leading persons appointed by the Taluka or Mahal Officer for the purpose. The Circle Inspector will be present at these elections whenever possible. In municipal areas the officer and two leading persons in each ward or group of wards will be appointed by the Collector. Any complaints in respect to preparation of the roll, election of spokesmen, etc., in villages should be made to the Taluka or Mahal Officer whose decision should be final. In Municipal areas such complaints may be made to the Prant Officer whose decision should similarly be final.

It is difficult to give any rough idea of the special staff that may be required for preparation of original lists. Owing to retrenchment it may be necessary to employ discharged or retired clerks, Circle Inspectors, etc., to supervise the work of Talathis and assist them in their work as their sazas have now been enlarged and number of Circle Inspectors reduced. It is estimated that a special staff of about 60 persons would be sufficient for the preparation of such lists in villages and municipal areas for a month and that the expenditure would amount approximately to Rs. 2,500.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF AHMEDNAGAR, No. A.D.M. 179,
DATED THE 6TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter of 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that the group system of indirect voting as described by Mr. Jadhav appears to be more suitable for rural areas. The collective method might work better in large towns where people are expected to be less illiterate. No difficulty is anticipated as regards the extension of the system to unenfranchised adult women in separate groups. No special staff would be required in the rural areas for the original preparation of the primary register but a few clerks would be necessary for this work in municipal areas and larger towns.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF EAST KHANDESH, No. A.D.M. 99,
DATED THE 9TH FEBRUARY 1932.

In reply to your letter of January 28th respecting Mr. Jadhav's and Dr. D'Souza's suggested methods of voting by groups, I have the honour to state that it is very doubtful if any such system could be worked. The difficulty is that there exists no body of men of sufficient intelligence to explain to the electors what would be wanted and to make workable arrangements in the villages. In order to avoid rioting, the groups would have to be small—not more than 20 or 30. The only agency who could form such groups, so far as I can see, is the talati. Talatis however are too busy to be able to spare time either to count the adults living in contiguous or neighbouring houses and to divide them into groups, or to induce persons to come forward in voluntary groups. Circle Inspectors or Mamlatdars would be still busier, and would find it still more impossible. Moreover even if in a few villages such groups would be formed, yet between the day when they were formed and the day for nominating the spokesman, changes would have occurred (particularly in the willingness of men to be associated in voluntary groups) and hopeless confusion would result.

In my opinion, artificial groups of either of the two kinds proposed would have no cohesive force, and nothing but endless quarrels would come out of them. The villager has some respect for the village panchayat in matters which belong to its sphere of action, but he regards every one else in the village as no better than himself. All of them are strong individualists, and though perhaps an Organiser with a special gift for addressing villagers might be able to explain to them what the purpose of the proposed groups was, and to persuade them to work together in such groups, I am sure that the ordinary Mamlatdar, much more a talati or Circle Inspector, would be quite unable to form any useful groups.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF WEST KHANDESH, No. A.D.M.S.R.-6,
DATED THE 6TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state as under :—

In my opinion the suitable system for (1) purely rural (i.e. non-municipal) areas and (2) smaller municipalities, would be the one described as "the group system proper" in paragraph 3 (ii) (a) of your letter. It would not be very difficult to get the houses in the village or unit area numbered for the purposes of putting them into groups. The collective method described in paragraph 3 (i) of the letter would be appropriate for the larger cities like Dhulia.

There seems no objection to extend the group system to unenfranchised adult woman. It seems desirable to have separate "groups" only of women. If mixed groups are formed, it will hardly be possible for any woman to get elected as the spokeswoman of a "group". I do not anticipate much difficulty in arranging the separate grouping of women.

As regards paragraph 8 of the letter, it is not possible at this stage to state what special staff might be required for the original preparation of the primary registers. As a rough guess, I may state that a temporary addition to the existing Talathi staff of about 25 per cent. of the existing strength for a period of 3 months would be necessary in addition to the ordinary establishment available.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF NASIK, No. A.D.M./F. 422, DATED THE
3RD FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that in my opinion the systems of indirect election proposed are all of them entirely impracticable. They have evidently been proposed by people who have no idea of village life. Incidentally I would remark that the present voters in 90 per cent. of the cases have not the faintest notion what the elections are about and why they give their votes: all they know is that they have to put a mark on a piece of paper for someone or other but why they do not know. As for the Legislative Council they have never heard of it. In my opinion the extension of the franchise should be restricted at the present stages to the utmost possible limit. The larger the masses of the new voters the greater the confusion in the initial stages of the new constitution.

2. As for the schemes of indirect election proposed, I must protest strongly against the working out and the management of such schemes being placed upon the shoulders of the Revenue Department at the present juncture. The Revenue staff has just been cut down 10 per cent. in numbers: Circle Inspectors have had to be reduced and the number of their villages goes up to 60 in some cases. It is quite impracticable to burden them with the management of these complicated schemes in addition to their ordinary duties. Also most of them are men of low grade of intelligence who cannot be trusted to do any work other than that of simple routine. Mamlatdars too have no time for this kind of extra work. Their clerical staff is being reduced in addition to that of the Circle Inspectors staff and they can take up no more burdens. It is easy to say that Circle Inspectors and Mamlatdars have merely to do this or that when they visit a village but this simple statement takes no account of their ordinary work which is more than enough at present.

3. I am decidedly of opinion that for the present the franchise should be based upon the present system with some extension in the amount of land revenue or rent paid. These figures are at any rate available in the talatis' record. This extension will in itself be a sufficient burden for the Revenue Establishment in its reduced numbers.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF POONA, No. A.M.D. 782,
DATED THE 10TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter of 28th January 1932, regarding indirect voting, as you wish an immediate reply, I have no time to prepare a fully considered report, I submit some notes and statements on the subject.

NOTES ON INDIRECT ELECTION.

PROPERTY QUALIFICATION.

(1) It may be assumed I think that this is a mark of competence to exercise the franchise and not in any sense a measure.

(2) The whole scale of ownership of property is different for different classes, different regions and different localities. Therefore if a measure of quantity of property owned or held is to be a measure, it ought to be different for different classes and people.

(3) Equally, although the ideal of representation is 10 per cent. this is only as a definite figure to apply to the integral for the whole Presidency, and not to be applied to each constituency or village or taluka or town.

(4) With a compound electorate based partly on status, partly on the ownership or occupation or use of certain kinds of property, partly on representation of numbers of adults by indirect representation, the question of standard or fitness, and voting weight of the individual in each of these groups becomes important.

(5) If approximately 10 per cent. is aimed at, this means 20 per cent. of the adult population, or 40 per cent. of the adult male population.

Hence 20 per cent. of the adult population is to be directly represented or 1/5th.

What is to be the representation of these not individually enfranchised 1/10th or 1/20th as suggested casually in the note?

If so there is the immediate inference that a qualified person's vote carries ten or twenty times the weight of an unqualified person's and the total voting weight of the qualified 1/5th is five times or 2½ times that of the unqualified 4/5th.

Take an ordinary village of 500 people or 250 adults. Of these 50 will have votes, and 200 are to be represented by 10 or 20 electors.

It is dangerous to suggest close criticism of the arbitrary selection of voters on a property basis, by linking it with a system of indirect election based on the equal right of all adults to franchise.

It is always best to examine any possible system not on the basis of theory, or rules and forms, but on the basis of an examination of the effect of the system and the working out of these simple numerical rules (they are in the long run merely based on the numerical measurements of abstract characteristics connected with the existing property system) in practice.

The effect on a great number of units could be worked out, but to demonstrate the heterogeneity of effects of the application of simple uniform rules, I have taken out the following figures :—

(1) Population per vote	...	{ Council,* District Local Board, Taluka Local Board,
(2) Land Revenue per vote	...	{ Council,* District Local Board, Taluka Local Board,

for each taluka in the District and for the whole district outside of Poona City and Cantonments both urban and rural.

(3) Population per vote for council in the urban municipal areas for the district as a whole, based on house occupancy (not land holding).

(4) Population per vote for each village in one typical taluka (Junnar).

Suggested methods of selection of electors—

(1) Collective method.

This is obviously administratively impossible.

(2) Group system—

(a) Arbitrary local arrangements.

(b) Voluntary association of groups.

* Vide Summary at Statement I.

All I have to say is that the system of division into groups must be absolutely arbitrary and based on rules which would admit of their simple application to any cases with certainty and without any chance of dispute or ambiguity.

You have a microcosm of all the problems of formation of constituencies or making of traditional or arbitrary local areas with varying numbers 1 — 2 — 3 member constituencies (groups) roughly in population to population "communal" or "sectional" electorates and so on.

Think of the gerrymandering of 1,000 — 1,500 villages in every district in the division of local areas or groups.

In large scale constituency forming, you accept traditional administrative areas as they stand. In Municipalities you work on an area and population, and mohalla basis, with main streets as natural boundaries. How are you to create acceptable local divisions in a bazar town or a village or a hamlet.

Think of the gerrymandering that is done or attempted at every readjustment of municipal wards in ward boundaries, and think of the unlimited possibilities of gerrymandering with no natural or traditional local divisions to start from.

My first impressions are—

- (1) Any system must be rigid and arbitrary and definite.
- (2) It cannot be left to be worked, informally by the village officers.
- (3) Making the formation of electing groups voluntary would be unsatisfactory.

To induce people to take part the system must be as easy and as nearly automatic as possible and require no voluntary effort or joint arrangement on the part of the people themselves.

(4) If it is worked on an arbitrary local house division of a village area, the uneven distribution of qualified electors will lead to inequalities. If the qualified electors are cut out, the division must be based on number of adults not on local divisions of groups of houses, or families or joint families, i.e., the arbitrary divisions would have to be of section of a record or list instead of division of ground area.

As to the working—

In a faction ridden village, I do not think it would be a good thing to have a separate election campaign (with perhaps three candidates for the constituency, and 20 for the primaries) in every group of four or five houses.

I

Summary indicating distribution of voting power under existing franchise, Council and Local Board.

Total population of District	...	...	...	10,09,033
Classes and castes adequately represented	...	...	...	6,89,460
Classes mainly unrepresented	...	...	...	3,19,573
<i>Bombay Legislative Council—</i>				
<i>Population per voter for District—</i>			i.e. in ratio of	
<i>Urban Constituency</i>	...	...	7.3	1
<i>District Constituency whole</i>	...	...	57.5	8
(a) Rural area	...	...	73	10
(b) Urban area	...	...	18.2	2.5
<i>Representation in different Talukas—</i>				
<i>Population per voter—Bombay Legislative Council—From 40 to 183.</i>				
<i>District Local Board—From 40 to 183.</i>				
<i>Taluka Local Board—From 10 to 25.</i>				
<i>Land Revenue per voter—Bombay Legislative Council—From Rs. 86 to Rs. 314.</i>				
<i>District Local Board—From Rs. 117 to Rs. 314.</i>				
<i>Taluka Local Board—From Rs. 21 to Rs. 40.</i>				

Bombay Legislative Council.

Junnar Taluka representation by villages.

There are 160 villages with a population of 98,826. Out of these there are 52 villages with a population of 14,432 with no voters, i.e., entirely unrepresented.

Taluka Local Board.

Population per voter.	Number of villages.
Up to 10 ...	35
10 to 20 ...	62
20 to 30 ...	18
30 to 40 ...	11
40 to 50 ...	9
50 to 60 ...	3
60 to 70 ...	5
70 to 80 ...	1
80 to 90 ...	3
90 to 100 ...	3
Over 100 ...	2
Unrepresented (no voters) ...	6

II

Statement showing population as per 1921 Census and Land Revenue as per Bombay Legislative Council, District Local Board and Taluka Local Board voter in the Poona District for the Rural Area.

Serial No.	Taluka or Peta.	Population per voter.			Land Revenue per voter.		
		Bombay Legislative Council.	District Local Board.	Taluka Local Board.	Bombay Legislative Council.	District Local Board.	Taluk Local Board.
1	Poona City Taluka	130	54	23	97	38.5	16.5
2	Haveli	79	58.5	14.6	114	84	21
3	Mulshi Peta	183	183	21	314	314	361
4	Mawal	40	133	24.7	62	205	38.5
5	Khed	60	66	11.2	122	133	22.5
6	Ambegaon Peta	104	107	13.8	196	203	26.2
7	Junnar	55	57	10.4	127	132	24.0
8	Purandhar	68	41	12.1	223	136	40.0
9	Bhimthadi	53	126	16.8	86.0	202	27
10	Dhond Peta	52	42	10.2	145	117	28.3
11	Indapur	84	92	14	178	193	29.5
12	Sirur Peta	36.5	50	10.1	106	147	29.4

III

Statement showing the population of Municipalities in Rural area in Poona District.

Serial No.	Name of Municipality.	Population as per 1921 census.
1	Lonavla	11,078
2	Talegaon-Dabhade	6,307
3	Alandi	1,750
4	Junnar	7,381
5	Saswad	5,019
6	Jejuri	2,326
7	Baramati	11,905
8	Indapur	5,367
9	Sirur	5,111
		<u>56,244</u>

Total number of voters for the Bombay Legislative Council Elections held in 1930.

Constituency.	Land holder.	Agricultural tenants.	Owners of houses.	Payers of rent.	Income-tax payers.	Military officers qualified to vote.
Rural	10,103	252	1,739*	1,356*	476	27
Urban ... ..	.....	.....	7,235	20,985	1,036	103

* In municipal limits.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF SATARA, NO. A.D.M. 599, DATED THE
19TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter of the 28th January 1932 asking me for my opinion regarding the feasibility of various systems of indirect voting in this district, I have the honour to say that I am handicapped by the fact that I have been in this district for less than three weeks after an absence of about thirteen years. My opinion must therefore necessarily be on general rather than local lines.

2. Another difficulty in estimating the feasibility or otherwise of any particular method is that, unless and until it is known what is likely to be the qualification for a direct vote, it is not possible to have an idea of the approximate number of persons who will have to be given representation by indirect means. If the present property qualification is to be materially reduced, the principal difficulties in the way of any method of indirect voting would be correspondingly diminished, if not entirely removed.

3. At present, without the assistance of any statistics or local experiment I am inclined to think that the most suitable and feasible method would be that which is described in your letter as the collective one. In rural areas separate lists of the unenfranchised persons for each class of elector, i.e. Non-Muhammadan, Muhammadan, Depressed Classes, women and such others if any as may be prescribed under the new electoral arrangements, should be prepared for each main village and for each hamlet. Assuming that the proportion of one spokesman to every 20 primary voters has been fixed, then if any of these lists for any particular village or hamlet contains less than 20 names that list will have to be combined with the corresponding list for a neighbouring village or hamlet. A small village or a hamlet may have 20 or more unenfranchised Non-Muhammadans but only three or four unenfranchised Muhammadans or members of the Depressed Classes. In such cases amalgamation with some other village or hamlet will be necessary, in so far only as the class or classes below the minimum of 20 are concerned. Of course, the number of such cases will decrease if the proportion is raised, e.g. if instead of one spokesman for 20 voters one spokesman for 10 is allowed. The original lists can be prepared by the Village Officers and checked by the Circle Inspectors and other Revenue staff. Amalgamation of these lists, when required as above, will require higher authority, say that of the Taluka Officer.

4. When these lists have been finally fixed, then the persons in each list will have to be called on a particular day to choose their spokesman. Assuming a lowering of the present property qualification and the prescription of at least the four different classes of voters which I have mentioned, and providing also for those persons who for various reasons will remain absent on the day of election, I doubt whether in many cases the number of persons on any particular list will be found to be unmanageable. This, of course, is only surmise and can only be verified by actual experiment after the property qualification is provisionally determined. Voting need not be on paper, but by show of hands. It can be on different days for different units and for different classes within that unit. I should think that the Circle Inspectors could conduct the elections in most cases, while really large villages might be dealt with by the Taluka Officer himself. There is, however, one difficulty which occurs to me. I have provided that no list shall contain less than 20 names. But it is obvious that many must contain less or more than exact multiples of 20. For instance a particular village may contain 799 or 801 unenfranchised Non-Muhammadans instead of 800 as assumed by you. The extension to all such cases of the system of amalgamation which I have suggested in the case of lists of less than 20 names would only tend to make the units unmanageable which is what we want to avoid. So some experiment will have to be adopted whereby such odd number shall either be ignored or else rounded off to the nearest multiple of 20. As I have said this experiment should be applied only to cases, where the list contains more than 20 names.

5. In urban areas the same system will, I think, be found feasible, with the modification that the unit should be the Municipal ward. The lists can be prepared by the Municipal staff.

6. I think that the above system would be more easily workable than the group system in either of its suggested forms. Numbering of houses in rural areas will be complicated and expensive. The same house will contain both franchised and unenfranchised persons and even unenfranchised persons of different classes. Houses containing unenfranchised persons of the same class will not necessarily be contiguous or neighbouring but scattered all over the villages and fields. The other method of voluntary association is in my opinion quite unsuitable for the average backward village community and would only lead to confusion.

7. As regards women, the number of the unenfranchised will be larger than in the case of men, and to this extent there may be more risk of the elections being unmanageable. However, that cannot be helped. The principal difficulty will be with those women who observe purdah. However, I do not see why this should be insuperable, any more than it is in the case of the census or elections at present.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF SHOLAPUR, No. A.D.M.S.L.-1668,
DATED THE 7TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter No. Nil, dated 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that opinion is asked for on the following systems of indirect voting :

- (i) collective method ;
- (ii) group system proper ;
 - (a) by grouping houses,
 - (b) by voluntary association,
 - (c) by Dr. DeSouza's method

in

- A—Rural areas,
- B—Smaller Municipalities,
- C—Large Cities.

2. In Rural areas (A) the collective method in effect is followed in election of members of Grampanchayats. The villagers more or less settle among themselves, or have suggested to them by the Mamlatdar, suitable persons and these are then formally elected at the chavdi by such villagers as chance to turn up when the Mamlatdar is there on the appointed day.

3. The difficulty of applying the method to election of spokesmen voters is (a) that voters in their own right would have to be weeded out of the assembly in order to elect the representatives legally—a proceeding which would result in considerable confusion. (b) The class to be represented—i.e., the landless villager and those with small holdings—is the class that can least be expected to turn up at the chavdi for an election. The labourer will be about his masters business in the fields, and the small holder, employing no labour, will be about his own. It is a mistake to assume, as is so often done, that the villagers enthusiastically gather at the chavdi for any official business with the Mamlatdar. Most of them have to be more or less dragged there if wanted. This is even more so if it is merely a Circle Inspector at the chavdi. I do not suppose that the treat of electing spokesmen will be enough inducement to get a full voluntary gathering.

4. In rural areas (A) therefore I consider that a collective method would be possible in many cases, but would probably not provide really representative spokesmen.

5. In Urban (B) and City areas (C), I see no possible means of working a collective method as the difficulty of collecting the non-enfranchised, and of distinguishing them from the already enfranchised is too great.

6. As regards grouping houses in rural areas, (ii) (a) it is of course feasible, with time, money and staff, to arrange approximately equal areas in each village, from which the non-enfranchised adults should elect a spokesman. But the same difficulty of collecting the primary voters will exist as in a collective system. The Circle Inspector may find most of the first lot of primary voters at home when he starts work in the morning, but by the time he has got through a few groups, the other lots will have got tired of waiting and gone off to work. To do thing properly in any except very small villages will take several days ; a Circle Inspector on an average has 48 villages and has a mass of other work to do that cannot be neglected. I do not think Circle Inspectors could do this work as well.

7. In smaller Municipalities it might be possible to work a system of grouped houses, but the Revenue Department has not the staff for this work, and it might be undesirable to entrust it to low paid Municipal servants who from municipal, political or party pressure, might secure the "election" of spokesmen representing only one party.

8. In Cities such as Sholapur, the floating population, and the labourer's absence at work all day would make the plan useless. The difficulty of checking whether a person was, or was not, a voter and the extreme ease of personation are additional reasons against it. In such towns the system could only be eyewash.

9. Regarding voluntary association of 20 persons, this would be possible in small villages, where groups of 20 might be willing to come and give a spokesman at the chavdi and to remain there in their groups till the whole proceeding be over. Without keeping the groups present all the time, repetitive voting could not be avoided ; therefore the system could only be employed where numbers are small enough to keep an eye on all the voters.

10. In towns and cities, the difficulty of checking voluntary associations to prevent personation and repetitive voting would be insuperable.

11. Dr. De Souza's scheme relying on villagers as polling officers seems to me entirely unworkable, and likely to result merely in intensification of factions and corruption.

12. If an attempt at indirect voting is to be made, I suggest it must be on the simplest lines. It might in my opinion be possible in the smaller villages to use more or less the village panchayat method. For instance if a village has a population of

Marathas	...	...	...	...	...	700
Musalman	...	...	...	...	...	100
Advanced classes	...	...	...	...	...	200
Depressed classes	...	...	...	...	...	300

it should be possible to get "spokesmen" for these classes, taking a unit of one "spokesman" per 100 of the population, which from Mr. Jadhav's figures should be about one spokesman per 25 adult non-enfranchised males. A notice giving the number of spokesmen to be elected and the date and time of election would be given beforehand. On the date the Mamlatdar or a polling officer would ask such representatives of the classes as had turned up at the chavdi at the appointed time, whom they wished to have as their "spokesmen", rejecting of course the names of any persons already enfranchised. The villagers might have got a list ready, or the Mamlatdar in consultation with the village officers might have to suggest additional names. If faction exists, a show of hands from each group for each name for the group could be taken.

In practice this would probably mean that the village leaders, who are already enfranchised, would decide upon and put up the names. But it would at least in theory allow the non-enfranchised some say in the choice.

13. Such a system, however, could not be worked by Circle Inspectors as they would not have influence enough to secure even an apparently fair election, and Special Extra Aval Karkuns would have to be appointed for elections. A Mamlatdar as a rule cannot visit all the villages in his Taluka in under a year.

14. I confess, however, that I can see no means of applying such a system even to the smaller towns and much less to cities. In my opinion, however, indirect voting in towns and cities is not necessary, for an adjustment of the house rental qualification can enfranchise any desired number of the less wealthy, which is impossible in villages.

15. I see no possibility of applying any proper group system to women..... unless a sufficient number of lady officers to deal with all the women be appointed. The only way I have found of collecting together women in the villages even for infant welfare work is by the help of a lady Health Visitor and such are very scarce. If women are to be brought in, I think the men will have to nominate them.

16. In villages a group system as I have suggested, could in any case, I consider, be applied to the Depressed Classes who usually inhabit a definite quarter and are more amenable to official pressure for "remaining present for an election" than higher classes. It would not be workable in the towns and cities where the Depressed Classes are scattered and employed in various occupations.

17. As regards special staff that would be required for original preparation of a primary register, I assume it would be approximately the same as that required for a census. It will be entirely impossible to do this work through the already reduced Revenue Staff, now again reduced by 10 per cent.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR, BOMBAY SUBURBAN DISTRICT, No. I.C.R. 14,
DATED THE 6TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter, dated the 28th January 1932, on the above subject, I have the honour to state that I consider the proposal of franchising the adult unenfranchised population, feasible in rural as well as in municipal areas of this district and I anticipate no serious difficulty in preparing the primary registers of such voters. The group system described in paragraph 3 (ii) (a) of your letter appears to me suitable, the group of 20 being taken as a unit.

2. As regards paragraph 6 of the letter it seems that there will be no special difficulty felt, if separate groups of women are formed.

3. It would not be possible to cope with the work of preparing the primary registers without the help of additional staff involving an expenditure of about Rs. 1,000.

	Rs.
5 clerks at Rs. 40 per mensem for three months	600
5 peons on Rs. 24 per mensem do.	360
Miscellaneous	40
	1 000

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF BELGAUM, No. A.D.E. 15, DATED THE
8TH FEBRUARY 1932.

The Collector of Belgaum presents compliments to the Secretary of the Provincial Franchise Committee, Bombay, and has the honour to submit the following remarks in reply to the Committee's letter No. nil, dated the 28th January 1932.

The Committee cannot expect to get any sort of digested opinion upon these proposals, unless a great deal more time were available for inquiry and consideration.

The Collector does not know that an off-hand opinion will be of much value.

At first sight the scheme—for the indirect parliamentary representation of all adult disenfranchised males,—seems chimerical. One's mind adverts to the forest population and the nomadic population; the floating agricultural population of field-labourers and graziers, who, though not strictly nomadic, shift from one tract to another according to the season of the year—are to be found at one place in the rains and at another in the fair season.

But experience shows that most new schemes appear impossible till they are seriously attempted; and that they most frequently prove to be workable, though not in the precise manner in which they are projected.

The Collector would therefore be inclined to indicate, among the alternatives and variants suggested, the lines which appear to him to be least impracticable, by way of eliminating the others.

2. The scheme for formation of primary groups by voluntary selection he regards as utterly impracticable. As there will probably be a concensus of opinion upon this point, he will not labour it. In faction-ridden villages, such as are the rule in this District, any proposal for the voluntary formation of groups would set the whole village by the ears. The villagers would be beset, and their existing antipathies played upon, by the agents of the prospective candidates, working for groupings favourable to their respective chances.

3. A mechanical local grouping by official agency, somewhat on the lines of that depicted in Mr. Jadhav's scheme, is the best that we could hope for. But the Collector regards Mr. Jadhav's groups of 5 adults as by very much too small. He thinks that groups constituted of less than 20 would be unworkable from several points of view. And as an even number of constituents would frequently result in deadlock at the time of nomination, the number would have to be 21.

The drawback to this scheme is its rigidity, and the fact that the groups would inevitably divide houses and overlap the limits of local alliances and social associations. Great confusion would also arise where, as is sometimes found, the houses of different major communities were intermixed.

The work of grouping would not be a matter of a day or two for any one village, but would probably necessitate repeated visits by the official agents: and the whole work in a Taluka would, as Mr. Jadhav suggests, probably cover a period of some months. And the work would be most liable to be upset by intermediate shifting of the population, which is not a phenomenon found in the towns alone. If during the final enumeration in the Census a man is absent from his village, he is scheduled elsewhere, and no harm is done: but an absentee cannot be shifted from one group to another at the time of primary selection of representatives without upsetting the whole scheme.

4. Objections to specific groupings, that is, disputes arising out of the formation of groups, should, it is suggested, be referable to the Mamlatdar for decision. But how, and on what data, could he decide them? Is it supposed that there would be *any* village in which such objections would not arise? Could they be adequately decided otherwise than on the spot? Is it realized that there are talukas where it takes a Mamlatdar 2 years of touring to visit all his villages? If objections were raised in even half of the villages, could the Mamlatdar possibly cope with them within the time available?

5. The official agency would have to be a special one. The existing Circle Inspectors would not be able to undertake the work of grouping with the help of the village officers, unless their other work, of which they have a sufficiency and which is generally inadequately done, should be entirely neglected. Probably a special Circle Inspector would be necessary in each Taluka, on a pay of 60, for a period of not less than 3 months. He would require a peon on Rs. 14 per mensem, and he would be assisted by the village officers in each village.

6. Then as regards the business of nomination of representatives or group spokesmen—that could not, in all probability, be completed in each village within a day, or even within 2 or 3 days. The Collector thinks it would have to be conducted by the same official agency—but not simultaneously with the formation of the groups; that procedure would be altogether too summary, and a large percentage of the groups would probably not stand by the result. So here we have a further visit to the village entailed.

Dr. D'Souza has suggested the management of this part of the business by selected non-official volunteers. The Collector thinks that, as a scheme of general applicability, this would be a failure. Let us consider the case of an ordinary large village of 3,000 or 4,000 inhabitants—such villages are numerous in this District; under Dr. D'Souza's scheme, such a village would comprise perhaps 18 or 24 sections; that is to say, 36 or 48 volunteer polling officers would be required. It is not probably that so many volunteers of adequate intelligence and education would be forthcoming in rural villages.

7. Then as regards revision of the electoral roll for future elections, it is suggested that in rural areas this could be done by the ordinary establishment. The Collector gravely doubts it. Since it is essential to the principle of the scheme that the groups should be numerically equal, either a completely fresh grouping or a most elaborate contrivance of adjustments would presumably be requisite after the interval of 3 years, in almost every section. The population of villages is not so constant and unshifting as seems to be supposed; and it is clear that the attainment of majority by a single minor in the interim would upset the numerical balance of the group to which his family pertained.

8. And finally, as regards *Women*. The Collector would say, "let it alone!" Almost every difficulty, of these dwelt upon in this report, would be exaggerated in the case of women's electorates. What theorist is it who wishes to enfranchise, even indirectly, the women of India's villages at present disenfranchised? No doubt the members of the All-India Franchise Committee will, before their deliberations are concluded, have had opportunities of seeing these women in their natural surroundings.

One of the minor difficulties may be indicated: every woman will clamourously insist that the limits of the female group to which she is assigned shall coincide, house for house, with the limits of the male group to which her men-folk belong! The women of Indian villages have not as yet advanced beyond the life of the household.

9. The question is raised, whether, in case the scheme appears impracticable for general adoption, it could be applied to the Backward Classes.

Its application to the Backward Classes would of course be a labour of less *extent* than its general application; but the Collector sees no reason why it should be a labour of less intrinsic *difficulty*.

And the counter-question arises, why the Backward Classes should enjoy universal adult suffrage in case it is denied to the other classes. That they should obtain fair and equitable representation is undoubtedly an axiom of abstract justice; but on what ground ought they to obtain unfair and overwhelmingly preponderant representation out of all proportion to their numerical strength?

**REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF BILAPUR, No. A.D.C.-8, DATED THE
5TH/6TH FEBRUARY 1932.**

With reference to your letter No. nil of 28th January 1932 on the subject noted above, I have the honour to state as follows :—

2. At the outset I would deal with the question whether the system of indirect voting is suitable and feasible. I believe the adult suffrage is the goal ; but it cannot be introduced all at once. It is therefore necessary before that goal is reached to give some sort of training in voting to the adults who have no direct vote, and the proposed group system will be of great use in this direction. No doubt, it involves much labour and expense in the preparation and maintenance of the register of adults as well as in the election of their spokesmen. But in any case it is less labourious and expensive than the adult suffrage. It can be worked with the aid of the village and taluka officers. It is, in my opinion, suitable and feasible.

3. (1) *As to its working.*—There are the two schemes, one of Mr. B. V. Jadhav and the other of Dr. D'Souza. Mr. Jadhav's scheme is simple and easy while Dr. D'Souza's is somewhat cumbrous in that there will be no fixed groups of adults to elect their spokesmen and there is to be second election by those adults who failed to elect for the first time. Objection is however taken to the former scheme on the ground that it aims at groups of smaller number. But I do not suppose there will be under this scheme any difficulty in making groups of even larger numbers. The strength of the group will depend mainly on the percentage of the franchise to be enlarged. When once this question is decided the question of grouping is automatically decided. Supposing the strength of each group is to be greater than 5, say 10, 15 or 20 or even 50, I think even such a group can be formed from the number of adults entered in the serial order in the primary register. The only difference will be that the number of families to make a group of a particular size will be proportionately increased.

(2) I am however of opinion that there should be no rigid rule that each group should be of an even number. It is to be noted that there are factions in majority of villages and each group is to elect only one spokesman. Some of the people in a group may not be on speaking terms with the other people in the group. It may not also be desirable to separate a man of one family and take him to the next group in order to make the former group of an even number. I am afraid these two factors are likely to create much trouble in the rural area. They ought to be solved in a satisfactory manner. It would not, I think, matter much if each group is to consist of a number within a given limit, say from 4 to 6 in case a group is to be of 5 adults, 8 to 12 in a group of 10 adults, 18 to 22 in a group of 20 adults and so on. The village officers and the Circle Inspectors know the feelings in the villages well and the groups can very well be adjusted within the prescribed limits. This arrangement will tend to avoid friction among the indirect voters if they happen to belong to different factions and there will be no need to divide the members of a family among two groups.

(3) As regards the election of spokesmen it would be desirable to prescribe a nomination paper in the following form which can be filled in by the indirect voters themselves and presented to the Circle Inspector or any other officer appointed for the purpose, so that the election work may be easy and give less scope for complaint :—

Indirect voters in the group.		Their spokesman or representative.		Signature in token of assent to the election of the spokesman.
Serial No. in the list.	Name.	Serial No. in the list.	Name.	
1	2	3	4	5

It is possible that the persons in a group may differ in the election of their representative. In that case the spokesman for the group can be determined by majority of voters or in case of equality of votes by the casting vote of the officer authorised to receive the nomination paper. This paper will also be a proper record to decide complaints about the election of the spokesmen. Further details can be specified if the scheme is approved.

(4) Under this scheme it would not be necessary to divide the village in sections or wards.

4. As stated in paragraph 3 (i) of your letter under reference it would not be convenient to ask a large number of voters to elect their spokesmen. Such a procedure will not only lead to confusion but will also entail much labour and expense as it is practically an election by so many people in each and every village. I fear it will be unmanageable with the establishment at our disposal.

5. Now as to the difficulty referred to in paragraph 4 of your letter, I do not suppose there is any urban or other area in this District where similar difficulty arises.

6. As regards the proposal to form female adults into separate groups, I do not think it would be necessary in the rural area. But it would be desirable to have such separate groups in the urban area and big villages. Discretion may also be given to the Collector to extend this system to any village if there are good reasons for such a course.

7. As I have said above the group system is not unworkable. If however it is considered necessary to extend it to the depressed classes alone I do not think it will at all be necessary in a large number of small villages since their number in those villages is not sufficient enough for the purpose. It is however workable in the urban area and big villages.

8. Lastly coming to the question of the cost of the original preparation of the primary register. I am not in a position to give an approximately correct estimate since I had no time to consult my subordinates. I would however base my calculation on the data of the census operations and on that basis the cost may not exceed Rs. 1,500 for the whole district.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF DHARWAD, No. E.S.C./FRANCHISE,
DATED THE 15TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your No. Nil of 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that out of the 3 methods suggested therein in regard to indirect voting, the one described in paragraph 3 (b) appears suitable for this district and may be tried. In order to bring this method into effect a village or town will be divided into blocks consisting of 200 unenfranchised adults on the primary register. On 1st October or on any other convenient date a notification will be issued for each block of the village to the effect that any group of 20 villagers on the roll for the block should attend a particular polling station on a day and at a time to be fixed for the purpose and after conferring among themselves propose the name of any villager on the roll to be their spokesman. If on the day appointed only 120 men turn up and elect 6 spokesmen there remain 4 spokesmen still to be elected. Then the remaining 80 villagers in the block will be divided into 4 groups of 20 each and another notice will be issued to them to elect their spokesman on a date to be fixed.

2. The same scheme may be applied to smaller municipalities and larger cities without any modification as the population of any big village in the district is not subject to such constant changes as in the city of Bombay.

3. If women are to be included, there would be no objection to form them into separate groups, though it cannot be said that they would ever agree to any particular spokeswoman.

4. The special staff that may be required for this purpose is as mentioned below :—

One Officer of the grade of Mamlatdar to work in the District headquarters with two clerks, and also to move about for supervision.

One clerk in each of the Taluka and Mahal Office, i.e. 13 clerks.

One Supervisor in the senior clerk's grade to check the primary registers in villages in each Taluka, i.e. 13 Supervisors. As the ordinary Circle Inspectors are being cut down, they would be unable to carry out this work in addition to their present duties.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF KOLABA, No. A.D.E. 4,
DATED THE 9TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter of 28th January 1932, I have the honour to say that I entirely agree with the proposal for the *group system* of indirect voting. I feel strongly that the principle of adult franchise should be definitely accepted, and that this group system be clearly declared to be merely an intermediate stage, to be used only till a competent agency for managing elections and recording votes can be trained up. In paragraph 2, it is presumed that "adults" includes women also.

2. *Paragraph 3.*—The unit might be a ward or a section of a ward and village or section of a village in the urban or rural areas respectively, the number of spokesmen for each unit varying with the total number of adults in each unit. In municipal areas, smaller sections may be made up of wards predominantly inhabited by the unenfranchised population, e.g. labouring, depressed or other special classes. This will make the preparation of the primary register for special classes practicable. The suggestions in paragraph 3 (ii) (a) to have groups for an equal number of adults and even to place one house partly in one group and partly in another might lead to complications. Formation of grouping by voluntary associations would be ideal but hardly practicable. I would suggest that the group might consist of 100 adults, when available, who would elect 5 spokesmen in the 1st election, 10 in the next and so on, until direct adult franchise is reached at the end of, say, 30 years. Where 100 adults are not available, a proportionately smaller number of spokesmen would be elected.

3. *Paragraph 4.*—In view of the variable nature of the primary units, it will be desirable to revise the primary list annually. The difficulties of a fluctuating population would not be very great in this district.

4. *Paragraph 5.*—The group system would be possible in this district in all rural and small municipal areas. There are no Cantonments or large cities.

5. *Paragraph 6 : (Unenfranchised adult women).*—A separate list for women seems neither necessary nor desirable at present. Such a list might create difficulties besides throwing a lot of extra work on village officers and Circle Inspectors. Besides, it is difficult under present conditions for women to go to the voting unless accompanied by men. Further, it is most undesirable to make any distinction on the ground of sex.

6. *Paragraph 8.*—In view of the volume of work and drastic reduction of staff already made, a temporary special establishment consisting of about 55 Talathis and 10 clerks would be necessary, for a period of one month for the first preparation of the lists of primary indirect electors. Circle Inspectors can very well be trusted for the initial as well as periodical supervision of this work. No additional staff will be needed for the *annual revision of the lists*.

Of the Schemes before us, I would give my support to Dr. D'Souza's.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF RATNAGIRI, No. A.D.M. 107,
DATED THE 11TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated the 28th January 1932, on the subject noted above, I have the honour to state that the idea of introducing indirect voting appears to be a good one and worth trying especially when it is considered as a stepping stone to complete adult suffrage. Of the total population of 1,301,694 of this district, about 5 lacs are adults of whom only 23,646 plus 2,690 = 26,336 are voters under the existing qualifications. This means that a greater number of adults is left out of the political machinery without any voice in the public affairs. Also there is bound to remain a comparatively larger number of the adults without any franchise whatever qualifications may be finally settled. The indirect adult suffrage will for this reason go to redress this grievance as it is impossible to bring in adult suffrage at present. There cannot be any two opinions as to the advantages under this system of indirect adult suffrage. This will give some voice and training in political affairs to the masses in general, who have been quite apathetic towards this subject. The number of spokesmen that may be qualified to direct vote will depend upon the strength of groups that may be finally approved.

2. The way of working this system must be as simple as anything, as we will have to deal with the illiterate masses, who know nothing of the matter. The regular holding of elections to select spokesmen will therefore be a hopeless job attended with uncertainty and confusion. For this reason I do not think that the collective method of indirect voting would be useful in any way in the rural area. The group system outlined in paragraph 3 (ii) (a) of your letter under reference appears to be suitable and workable from administrative point of view. I agree with the proposal of Mr. Jadhav in working out this system. Firstly the houses will be numbered and the primary register of adults in each house will be prepared. The Circle Inspector should then visit the village, take a round in the village in the same way as done by the Talathi for the preparation of the primary register, call the adults in front of their houses and ask them to elect their own spokesmen. He will call such a number of adults as may be finally decided for electing spokesmen and will in this way complete the election of spokesmen of the village. This procedure will cut short the work and avoid all confusion that may be caused by calling adults to a particular spot, such as temple or Dharmashala for the purpose of holding election. The illiterate mass cannot at this stage be expected to understand and quietly undergo all the preliminaries of election as suggested by Dr. D'Souza. In this connection it is enough if the Circle Inspector gives information of his proposed visit to Police Patil who will then ask (by beat of drum) to the adult to remain in the houses. They will be at liberty to move out of their houses as soon as the Circle Inspector takes down the names of their spokesman. The scheme proposed by Dr. D'Souza is easier, no doubt; but it presupposes a somewhat trained and educated electorate. He has proposed a regular form of election which, I think, will not be worked out successfully in the illiterate rural areas. As suggested by Mr. Jadhav, the Mamlatdar should be made the final authority in the preparation of primary register and election of spokesmen. I submit that there would be no necessity of grouping adults actually on the primary register as the number of adults is likely to be changed. Even the initial numbering of houses can be foregone, if so desired. What is required is that the Circle Inspector should take round in the village and while so doing call 10, 15 or 20 adults (as may be fixed), tick off their names, take down the name of spokesman and proceed further. The spokesmen so selected will vote for the Council election that may be held next—their names will be current for the term of that Council only. The difficulty anticipated in the working of this system in the City of Bombay will not be experienced in this district, as the primary register once prepared will be kept up-to-date by obtaining information through the Village Officers.

3. The method of working the group system suggested above will be feasible in this district including the Municipal areas. There would be no difficulty if the primary registers are prepared separately for women, but I do not think it desirable to have separate lists when all male and female adults of a particular constituency are to record their votes in that constituency and that when there is no special representation for women in the Council, they can, I think, vote for spokesmen along with the male adults of the same family. Separation of registers would be rather troublesome though not difficult.

4. As regards the special staff required to prepare the primary registers, I may state that it is rather difficult at this stage to form even an approximate estimate. It is not known what the proportion of adults to spokesmen will be. It is also not definitely known whether primary registers for women will have to be prepared. Out of the total villages of 1,327 in this district, 312 are Khalsa for which Talathis are appointed who will do this work if sufficient time is at their disposal. Remaining 1,015 villages are held by Khots and Inamdars for which special staff will have to be appointed. The Police Patils will not be able to do this work properly. Taking into consideration the fact that houses in villages are scattered and the great distance that will have to be traversed by the men to be appointed about 60 hands of Talathis' grade for one month will be required to prepare primary registers. In addition to this equal number of Circle Inspectors will be required to hold elections of spokesmen. They will have to be given travelling allowance and supplied with stationery.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF KARACHI, No. 8836-G, DATED THE
10TH FEBRUARY 1932.

In reply to your letter, dated 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that for rural areas the collective method as outlined in your para. 3 (1) seems to me the only feasible system, taking, not the deh or village, but the goth or collection of houses within the village as the unit area. The primary register in such a unit area should not as a rule contain an unmanageable number of names. The group system proper, as described in your para. 3(ii) does not seem to me feasible for the rural areas of this district. The conditions visualised in Mr. Jadhav's note are not applicable to Sind. The system of forming groups by voluntary association of any 20 persons from the primary list would inevitably disfranchise most people at once owing to lack of any interest or inducement to form their groups.

2. *Your para. 4.*—There is no doubt that in Karachi City the preparation and revision of the registers would be very expensive and troublesome, for the same reasons as in Bombay City.

3. In the smaller municipalities and bigger villages, such as exist at Taluka Headquarters, the group system might be easier to work than the collective method. But there would be considerable difficulties. For instance, the system would work more easily for the Hindus who usually live in the larger villages and are mostly shopkeepers having a fixed place of residence which is usually a fairly *pukka* and permanent structure. Moreover, they have their Panchayat and Mukhi system and would thus find little difficulty in electing spokesmen. But the case of Muhammadans, who form the great bulk of the rural population, is very different. Most of them are agriculturists and/or graziers and their villages are of varying sizes, scattered all over the countryside, and many of them unauthorised and shifting. There is little or no corporate life in Sind villages as there is in the Presidency proper, and even if it be assumed that one tribe will not be at loggerheads with another, as they usually are, I do not think that 12 adults of, say, the Baluch tribe would agree to combine with eight of another tribe in order to elect a spokesman. Care would have to be taken to form group from the same tribe, and this would often mean either very small groups or enlarging the unit of area in order to get groups of the approved size. For this reason also, I think the collective method would be the best for purely rural areas, and the group system for the smaller municipalities and larger villages.

4. *Your para. 6.*—The system would be very difficult to work for Muhammadan women, even in urban areas, owing to the backward condition of Muhammadan women and the purdah system. My personal Assistant, himself a Muhammadan, opines that so few, if any, will take advantage of it, that it will not be worth while introducing the system at present, either in urban or rural areas. He also considers that women should be on the same roll as men and form groups with them, as it would be easier for them to appear with their husbands than alone.

5. *Your para. 7.*—The number of the untouchable depressed classes in this district is only 4,689, scattered all over the district, and probably very small groups would be the only way of dealing with them.

6. *Your para. 8.*—As regards special staff for the original preparation of the primary register, I suggest two Tapedars per taluka for a period of three or four months, and for Karachi City 8 or 10 Tapedars for a similar period. There should also be two special officers of Mukhtiarkar's rank for supervision of the Tapedars' work, since it will be quite impossible to put this additional burden upon the ordinary Mukhtiarkar who already has more work than he can properly deal with.

7. In conclusion I can only express my regret if most of this report is not found of any great practical value, as to which I have no illusions. But it has been largely a process of making bricks without straw, and owing to the urgency with which a reply was required and the pressure of urgent work entailed by the present political situation, it has been quite impossible to give the matter the enquiry and thought that its importance demands.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF DADU, DATED THE 11TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter, dated the 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that the proportion in the case of indirect voting should, in my opinion, be 1 to 50 and that a "parra" should be the unit in each case. Any number of persons less than 25 in any "parra" should be disregarded while 25 and number below 50 should be taken as 50.

The preparation of primary lists of such indirect electors in the rural (non-municipal) areas will require a great deal of labour which the present village staff, the strength of which has already been reduced owing to the present emergency cut, will not be able to do without detriment to their other important work. A special staff consisting of one Circle Inspector and two Tapedars (with kotars) for each such division will be required for two months for the preparation of these primary registers. After the lists have been so prepared the Mukhtiarkars will require the residents of each "parra" to elect their spokesmen, to vote at the Council elections, along with the direct voters. These lists with the names of the spokesmen will then be published along with the lists of direct voters. The work of revising such registers annually afterwards can be taken from the existing village staff.

In small Municipalities the work can be done by the Municipal staff as is done in the case of direct voting. There are no large cities in this district.

Similar procedure will have to be adopted for the preparation of registers relating to unenfranchised adult women. There will be no special difficulty in forming separate groups of women, similar to those of men.

There is no large number of untouchable depressed classes in this district.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF LARKANA, No. L.C. 5152,
DATED THE 5TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter of the 29th January 1932, I have the honour to say that the time allowed for replying to this important and somewhat complicated question is so short that I have not been able to give it the amount of consideration that it deserves. But my general impression is that the Group System is worth a trial, and that Dr. D'Souza's method of working it is the more feasible, if only for the reason that it is the simpler, and therefore more likely to be successful.

2. In the rural areas this method will probably not present much difficulty. More than half the villages in this district contain less than 500 persons each, and if the adult males are reckoned as a fourth of the total, the primary registers of these villages will not contain more than a hundred names. The remaining villages for the most part contain populations varying from 500 to 2,000, so that in the majority of cases the names in the primary register will not exceed 500. If the size of the village demands it, the village can be split up into two or more unit areas; in any case the smallness of the village electorates will facilitate the working of the method in rural areas.

3. The towns will offer some difficulty, which could be minimised by taking a street or part of a street as a unit area; each such area should comprise not more than 500 names, and a polling station should deal with a maximum of 1,000 names. By keeping the numbers as small as possible, the likelihood of the confusion which has been anticipated will be reduced.

4. The proposal to extend the system to separate groups of women is wholly impracticable in this district. 83 per cent. of the population are Muhammadans of the agricultural class, whose women will have nothing to do with elections for some time to come, while even among Non-Muhammadans the number of women politically conscious is not large enough to justify such extension. If, however, it is considered that a beginning must be made, the system may be given a trial among the Non-Muhammadan groups.

5. The special staff that would be required for the original preparation of the primary register would be two enumerators on Rs. 40 per mensem each for each of the seven talukas, four for the Municipal borough of Larkana and one each for the Municipal towns of Kambar and Ratodero, making a total of 20 enumerators. If the talukas now transferred to the Dadu district are to be included in my report, the staff will have to be increased by 12.

REPLY FROM THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, UPPER SIND FRONTIER, No. G. 1848,
DATED THE 5TH FEBRUARY 1932.

I have the honour to invite a reference to your letter dated 28th January, and to express my views as under on the subject of group system of voting.

Let me state at the outset that in my opinion the system of indirect voting is the best and the most just means of extending the franchise. To reduce further the limits of the enfranchised classes will produce a sudden crop of difficulties, disputes and enquiries, which will fall very heavily on the shoulders of the subordinate establishment which will have to cope with them. For example a person owning a house value Rs. 1,500 is at present entitled to a vote. The disputes as to whether a house is worth Rs 1,500 or not, are rare, because the percentage of houses of that value is small. But reduce the limit to Rs. 300 and you will have endless disputes, and probably have to value nearly every house in the whole of India: moreover the standards of valuation differ so much in different places, and this fact, coupled with the human element, which must never be left out of consideration, means that however fixedly you keep your eyes on the ideals of justice and fairness many who ought to be enfranchised will not get a vote, and *vice versa*.

I therefore think that the present limits of qualifications ought to be maintained and the franchise extended by the system of indirect voting. But here my agreement with the present proposals ends.

The group system as outlined in your letter whether by the collective method or by the group system proper is impossible. It stands condemned because it violates the first principle of the ballot system of election, viz. secrecy of ballot. It is suggested that each group elect a spokesman. On what ground will he be elected? Simply and solely because he will vote for one candidate and not for another. This will be the only criterion for his election. You may reply that this does not matter, because the spokesman will have the advantage of the secret ballot when he gives his vote in the actual election. That is true: but he goes to the poll as the representative of 10 or 20 people, or whatever is the number of persons of which the group consists. If he does not vote for the candidate for whom the group wishes him to vote, he is not representing them and you will fare no better and get no more representative votes than if you increased the franchise by seizing a number of people by the scruff of the neck on polling day, taking them to the polling booths and making them vote. But if, as is obviously intended, the spokesman votes for the candidate favoured by his group, what is the result? A perusal of paragraph 1 of Mr. B. V. Jadhav's note on the group system shows that the total adult population of the Presidency excluding Sind is 10,496,150. He suggests that 20 per cent. should be enfranchised: that means 2,099,230 voters. At present there are 817,454 voters, so the new voters, or spokesmen, will number 1,275,780, i.e., 50 per cent. more than the present voters; and if the spokesmen vote as representatives of their respective groups, it means that the result of the election is known before it takes place. If they do not vote as representatives of groups then as I have said above, you might just as well not have groups, but apportion the increased votes amongst the various polling stations and let the first comers record their votes. I have left out of consideration the fact that the reduction in the present limits of qualifications will considerably reduce the difference between the above figures of voters and spokesmen. But even with the suggested reduction of limits, the number of voters and spokesmen will be practically the same. The net result is that the spokesmen will either not be representative, or that they will be representatives and the result of the actual election will depend upon the appointment of spokesmen, and will be decided before the actual election takes place. In addition the sanctity of the secret ballot will have disappeared.

On these considerations I hold that the methods of working the group system mentioned in your letter are not feasible. The only feasible practical system of indirect voting I can suggest is a simple one, roughly as follows:—

For each constituency there should be two lists. A list will contain the names of enfranchised voters, B list the names of the remaining unenfranchised adults. On polling day, all adults will vote. All the votes given by voters in B list will be sent separately to the returning officer and the votes for each candidate counted, divided by 20, 10, or whatever unit Government fixes, and the resulting number will be added to the votes in list A. For example X and Y are candidates. In the constituency there are 1,000 voters in list A and 10,000 in list B. Government have ordered that franchise should be given to the unenfranchised adults to the extent of 1/10th of their numbers. At the counting of votes given by persons in list B the Returning Officer finds that 6,000 have been given for X, and 4,000 for Y (assuming all have voted). He will then divide 6,000 and 4,000 by 10, and record 600 votes for X, and 400 in favour of Y, and add them to the votes given by voters in list A. The points in favour of this scheme are that in the first place, the sanctity of the secret ballot is preserved, secondly, the voting is absolutely representative for each constituency. Thirdly, Government can extend the franchise of the at present unenfranchised class, or restrict it, simply by altering the unit by which

their votes are divisible. Fourthly it is economical, as there will be no expense in the preparation of new lists, etc., whenever the franchise is altered. The group system would entail the preparation of new lists and fixing of new group every time this occurred.

Is the scheme practical? I think it is; it is, in my opinion, at any rate much more practical than the schemes outlined in your letter. The preparations of lists will not be difficult, because they can be based on the recent census lists. There should be no difficulty about separate polling booths and vote boxes. But in the few hours that have allowed me to give remarks of your letter I have not been able to go into details; nor probably do you want them.

Finally my scheme does give a definite voice in public affairs of those classes and interests who cannot hope to get many direct voters; it does not leave their representation simply to the whim of a spokesman; and it does give the unenfranchised a sort of political training, and a means of leading up gradually to full adult suffrage, which is the final goal. It will be many years before this goal can be reached or should be reached. At first the votes of the present unenfranchised will be few, because of the lack of interest and the lack of knowledge of political machinery. But with the spread of education, and the dawning of the realisation of the power which a political vote means, greater interest will be evinced and Government can by a stroke of the pen increase the value of the vote of this class. In the meantime the reduction in the limits of qualifications for full votes can proceed on carefully thought out and systematic lines.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF SUKKUR, No. 606-R., DATED THE
6TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated 28th January 1932, I have the honour to state that so far as the present state of extensive illitracy in Sind is concerned, the indirect method of voting when actually put into practice will cause a great deal of confusion in view of its being tedious and tiresome. Besides this, the haris in Sind which form a majority of the rural Mahomedan population are tenants-at-will. They can at any time be asked by the Zamindar to walk off and the haris themselves also if they cannot find sufficient livelihood in the vicinity or have some other grievance, migrate to better places; moreover, at the time of harvest, they shift from place to place in search of their livelihood. If, inspite of these difficulties, it is found possible to introduce the indirect voting, I think the collective method is the better of the two. In Municipal towns, a ward should be the unit and in the mofussil a Deh should be the unit. To prepare the primary register, the special staff will be the same as required for census but will be for shorter period.

2. In Sind, where parda is the rule rather than the exception, I am strongly opposed to the enfranchisement of women in this way (quite apart from the general objection to it). The difficulties are too great.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF HYDERABAD, No. 6433-R., DATED THE
13TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your No. X dated 28th January 1932 I have the honour to state that in my opinion, so far as this district is concerned, the system of group voting will not be practicable, even if it were desirable, and I doubt very much if it is desirable. I do not think the people will be interested in it or that there will be any kind of political training if the system were adopted. People voting directly do feel that they have some power, and even if they are not in a position to exercise that power properly at once, it is to be hoped that they will do so in course of time. It is however too much to expect that they will show any tangible interest in electing one, whose only function will be to record a vote in favour of some third party.

2. In the case of direct voting the candidates will at least try to approach the individual voters. It will be too much to expect that they will assist in forming groups to elect the electors and I do not think that the village or even the higher official staff will be sufficiently interested to agree voluntarily to incur all the trouble that the formation of groups will entail. Not only will there be much labour involved in the work but there are bound to be many complaints about the formation of these groups later. In Sind besides, there is no village organization, and there is little of the corporate feeling of village community which prevails in the Presidency. Voluntary association of persons to form groups of twenty will be difficult. While the formation of such groups living near each other may be possible though involving great labour, such formation will be artificial and I doubt if many of the persons so grouped together will come forward to select persons to vote jointly on their behalf.

3. The system will, I think, be possible in the towns, as there are more literate people there, and the candidates for election will themselves be able to help in forming groups in their own interest and on account of the compactness of the area they will be able to do so.

4. The proposal in paragraph 6 of your letter to make the system applicable in the case of women is almost impossible to work in Sind. It is difficult to imagine the women in the villages here grouped with each other and apart from their men folk. Difficulties are experienced even at the time of the ordinary census and these will be increased a hundred-fold if an attempt is made at grouping.

5. I am afraid the same difficulties as are mentioned above will operate even if the system were made applicable to depressed classes only.

REPLY FROM THE COLLECTOR OF THAR PARKAR, No. 5238-R.,
DATED THE 7TH FEBRUARY 1932.

With reference to your letter dated the 28th January 1932, I have the honour to offer the following remarks. There is no reason whatever why the group system should not be workable. There will be difficulties of course, but none that can be said to be insuperable. The one great objection to the system is the cost of working it; the original preparation of the primary register will be a task of almost as great a magnitude as the census and one that will have to be performed with much greater care. For this district, roughly speaking, a special staff of about 50—one for each circle plus five spare hands would be required for a period of about 2 months.

2. The difficulty of forming women into groups will be particularly difficult owing to the more or less general prevalence of the *pardah* system in both the major communities, combined with even greater illiteracy than is to be found among men in this district.

3. In both the (1) purely rural and (2) the small municipal areas, the group system proper, ii (a) with certain modifications will be feasible.

(i) The *deh* will have to be the unit area. This is necessary because here as a rule the major portion of the unenfranchised class lives—in the purely rural area—in villages of extremely small size, usually half a score of houses constituting a village; a fair number of the unenfranchised lives each in his own field—whether in his own, or in some one else's that he may be cultivating—; besides this there is the purely nomadic class of people, known as "maldars", who are continually on the move and never at one place for more than a few months.

The houses may be given consecutive numbers; each group to be composed of say 50 adults, but it would be well to make it a rule that the adults of one house shall be in the same group. The preparation of the original lists will take much time. But subsequent revisions will neither be very troublesome nor very costly. The ordinary village staff or—wherever the field-work has now been delegated to the *abdars*—the *abdars* can do the checking quite easily under the general supervision of the Supervising *tapedar* (corresponding to the circle inspector) or the canal assistant as the case may be, and of the *Mukhtiarkar*. The *Mukhtiarkar* will necessarily have to be made the final authority for all disputes about the formation of the groups, the preparation of the primary registers, the conduct of the primary elections, etc.

4. I have said above that the *deh* should be the unit in the rural areas. But there should be this exception to it; villages with sanitary committees should be treated as units in themselves. In rural areas the bigger the group the easier will it be to work it.

5. This same method should work very well in the smaller municipalities. There are only two such in the District, one at *Mirpurkhas* and the other at *Umerkot*.