
**Report of the Committee appointed
to enquire into the advisability
of extending the period
of Settlement in Sind
from 10 to 30 years.**

1916

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The extension of the period of settlement in Sind from 10 to 30 years is, in the opinion of the Committee, a question of expediency, to be decided after due consideration of the advantages and disadvantages which will result therefrom to Government and the zamindar respectively. But since a great number of the witnesses examined have insisted that it is a question of right that Sind is entitled to a settlement period of 30 years and that the Government of Bombay has shown unreasonable obstructiveness in denying them this boon in the past, it seems necessary in the first place to examine the arguments upon which this claim is based. These have been set forth by the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri in a pamphlet, of which a copy is attached to this report. The Committee has singled out this pamphlet for special attention because it was printed and published during the course of the Committee's enquiries with the evident intention of educating the public, and because it has had considerable influence in shaping the views of other witnesses, who have for the most part reproduced its arguments in their evidence and written opinions. At any rate it sums up exhaustively all the arguments employed by non-official witnesses and may be regarded as the fullest available exposition of the zamindars' case against the short settlement. The first 25 paras. are historical and endeavour to prove that the 10-year period has been thrust upon the Province by the Government of Bombay in spite of the opinions in favour of a 30-year period expressed by local experts. The bulk of the pamphlet is taken up with the argument that 30 years has been fixed by the Government of India as the normal period of settlement and that as Sind is in no way peculiar, its settlement should be guaranteed for 30 years. The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri, followed by other witnesses, has gone so far as to protest against the procedure of the Committee in proposing questions for solution which seem to throw the burden of proof upon the zamindar. He claims that Government should be called upon to show that Sind requires especial treatment in the matter of settlement, and feels aggrieved at being requested to prove a case which he considers to be self-evident. This view is held also by the Hon'ble Shaikh Ghulam Husain Hidayatalah, the Hon'ble Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas, Mr. Mathradas, Mr. Kauromal and Rao Bahadur Hiranand Khemsing. The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri further maintains that Sind has a higher incidence of assessment per acre than any other part of India, and that this is mainly due to the shortness of the period of settlement. The Committee is of opinion that these claims and assertions are due to lack of acquaintance with certain elementary but important facts and that they can best be refuted by a brief statement of the history and nature of the settlement prevailing in Sind.

2. As regards the history of the decennial period, the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri truly states that it is a legacy from the first or 'Fallow diffused' settlement, which was introduced in 1862, modified and renamed 'the Revision settlement' in 1875, and finally abandoned in 1887. The reasons for so short a guarantee, as stated by Colonel Francis who organized the first settlement, were the experimental nature of the proposals, the backward state of the Province and the likelihood of its rapid development. The question of extending the period first arose in the years 1873 to 1875 when certain settlements became due for revision. The settlement officer recommended that the 10-year period should be retained. Government accepted his view, though the Commissioner in Sind was in favour of a 30 years period, and his opinion obtained some support from His Excellency the Governor himself. The considerations which led to the retention of the shorter period were the likelihood of the rapid development of the Province and the fact that the Indus Valley Railway was then under construction. Again in 1880 the Survey Commissioner, Colonel Anderson, recommended that the settlement should be guaranteed for 30 years instead of 10. The Commissioner in Sind, while demurring to so long a period as 30 years, was in favour of extending the decennial period to 15 or even to 22 years.

3. These opinions, expressed in 1874 and 1880, have been quoted at length in the pamphlet of the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri. He says that "recommendations of officers who possessed a first-hand and intimate knowledge and experience

of the Province were overruled by Government and the old period of 10 years clung to with uncompromising tenacity. He speaks of 'the deliberate and inflexible attitude of Government towards this question.' But he overlooks the following facts. In 1875, one year after the Commissioner in Sind had proposed to guarantee the 'Fallow diffused' settlement, it was found necessary to abandon it. Again in 1881, one year after the Settlement Commissioner and the Commissioner in Sind had recommended that the Revision Settlement should be guaranteed for 15, 22 or 30 years, the said settlement followed its predecessor into the melting pot. The fact that each system broke down immediately afterwards surely discredits to no small extent the opinions of those who wished to extend the period of guarantee and vindicates the action of Government in refusing to accept their recommendations. Apart from this, the opinions refer to systems of settlement which have been abandoned and not to the present irrigational settlement. We cannot assume, therefore, that the officers who expressed them would be in favour of guaranteeing the latter for a period of 30 years. The settlements of which they were speaking were more or less close copies of the Bombay settlement and it was natural that they should wish them to be guaranteed for the same period. The opinions quoted by the Hon'ble Mr. Bhurgri, besides being discredited by subsequent events, are irrelevant to the present enquiry.

4. The irrigational settlement which is now in force was introduced as an experiment in 1881 and adopted for the whole of Sind in 1887. The question of the period for which it should be guaranteed remained in abeyance until the new settlement had taken root: but it arose in 1892 and Government ordered the Commissioner in Sind to submit a report on the subject. The upshot was that in 1893 the decennial period was adopted for Sind under Government Resolution No. 6522, dated the 9th September 1893. Since then Settlement and Revenue Officers have from time to time expressed their opinions in favour of extending the period, as will be shown hereafter: but since the introduction of the present irrigational settlement no official opinion is recorded in favour of a longer settlement than 20 years. Nor can it be said that the attitude of Government has been uncompromising and inflexible. Where Government has refused to accept the proposals of Settlement Officers to extend the period, it has done so for particular reasons and not in accordance with any general principle. Further, Government has accepted such proposals in the case of seven talukas for which the settlement period has been extended to 15 years.

5. We next proceed to examine the contention that "the case of Sind stands on all fours with the Presidency proper and therefore what is considered or found suitable for the rest of the Presidency must also be suitable for Sind" (para. 56 of the pamphlet). Owing to the want of assured rainfall, cultivation in Sind is almost entirely dependent upon irrigation from Government canals. There are exceptions to this rule, such as the barani tracts, lands cultivated on wells and the kacha lands which adjoin the river and depend upon floods: but these have assessment rates of their own and may be disregarded for the purposes of this enquiry. Broadly speaking, we may say that cultivation in Sind depends upon Government canals. This is an important feature in respect of which Sind differs from the Presidency, and, so far as the Committee is aware, from all other parts of India. The peculiarity in the natural conditions is reflected in the system of settlement, which differs from all others known to the Committee in that it combines a payment for water supplied and a tax on land under the name of assessment. Of the combined rate, which is called assessment in Sind, by far the larger portion is a charge for water, as is evident from the fact that the Public Works Department receive nine-tenths of the revenue upon canal cultivation. It may be argued that this division of assessment between the Public Works Department and the Revenue Department is purely arbitrary. The proportion allotted to the latter might possibly be increased; but unless the lion's share of the assessment is credited to the Public Works Department it is impossible for the latter to meet the cost of maintaining irrigation works. If any further proof is required that assessment in Sind is rather a payment for water than a tax on land, the Committee would point to the peculiar features of the Sind irrigational settlement which has abandoned all classification of land within the settlement groups and bases its various rates of assessment solely upon the mode of irrigation. It is quite clear that assessment in the Sindhi sense is mainly

a charge for water and that the land revenue proper is only an insignificant portion of it.

6. Let us now compare the case of Sind with that of the Presidency. In the former a charge for water and a tax on land combined, under the name of assessment, are guaranteed for ten years. In the latter the land revenue proper is fixed for a period of thirty, while the water rate is commonly not guaranteed for any period, but remains liable to enhancement from year to year. Where a guarantee is given at all, it seldom exceeds five years and never exceeds ten. Clearly such conditions would not be acceptable to the Sindhi zamindars. It would be cold comfort to him that one-tenth of his present assessment was fixed for a period of 30 years, if the remaining nine-tenths were liable to annual or even quinquennial enhancement. The Committee does not consider that such a system would be wise or equitable. Canal water is a luxury in the Presidency; it is a necessity in Sind. In the former the irrigation supply is to a greater extent the creation of Government and the profits are comparatively small. In the Presidency Government may sell its canal water to the highest bidder, but in Sind the rates must be adjusted with caution or the existence of the zamindar is imperilled. It is clear that the case of Sind is not "on all fours with that of the Presidency" and that what is suitable to the latter may be fatal to the prosperity of the former. It is also clear that the demand for a 30 years' settlement period in Sind is not a demand for what the Presidency enjoys but for something quite different. In fact the words "assessment," "settlement," "settlement period," as used in Sind, have a meaning peculiar to Sind; and this point, which has been overlooked by most of the witnesses, is fatal to their main common argument. The statement of policy by the Government of India to which Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri appeals in his 43rd and following paras. refers to a tax on land, not to charges for supplying water of which assessment in Sind mainly consists. The same remark applies to the dicta of Mr. Dutt and all other authorities quoted in the pamphlet. The question has been misconceived and the case for extension has been misstated. Instead of labouring to prove that Sind resembles the rest of the Presidency and is therefore entitled to similar treatment, those who desire extension should insist on the fact that Sind is radically different in its conditions and requirements. The 30 years' settlement period of the Presidency is of little value to Sind because it affects the land revenue only. What Sind mainly requires is an extension of the period for which the water rate is guaranteed.

7. Inasmuch as assessment in the Sindhi sense is a combination of land revenue and water rate, it is obviously unfair to compare it with land revenue proper, exclusive of the latter. This mistake has been committed by the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri in para. 51 of his pamphlet and in the comparative statement at the end of it. He says, "Sind has a place of pride in the whole of India as regards the incidence of assessment per acre; and it is obvious that one of the main reasons for this unenviable pre-eminence is the short duration and consequent frequency of settlements each of which only brings enhancement in its train." This gentleman has admitted in his examination that the comparison is unfair. The wonder is that the extravagance of his conclusions had not drawn his attention to the unsoundness of his premises. It is a fantastic notion that a Province like Sind, backward, half developed, with a scanty, lazy and unskilful population, should be paying a higher assessment than any Province in India. An illustration of the fallacy involved is afforded by one of the witnesses, a Mr. Sundarsing, who owns land both in Sind and in the Punjab. In Sind his assessment is Rs. 4, in Punjab Rs. 2; but whereas the former includes the water rate, an addition of Rs. 7 has to be made to the latter on this account, so that the combined rate in the Punjab is Rs. 9. The rate in Sind is less than half of the Punjab rates, though double the assessment in the usual meaning of the word. But it is unnecessary to labour the point, which is sufficiently obvious.

8. It has been shown that the demand for the extension of the settlement period differs fundamentally from such demands in other parts of India. Sind requires peculiar treatment on account of the peculiarity of its conditions. The first step towards a proper understanding of the subject is the recognition of this fact.

9. And now having cleared the ground of the numerous fallacies with which it has been unwittingly strewn, we are at length enabled to proceed to the

consideration of the real question. The Committee is of opinion that the decennial period was adopted under conditions which have long since passed away, that it is inconveniently short from the administrative point of view, has become a grievance to the more intelligent zamindars and is in fine ripe for extension. The period was fixed in 1893 and the wording of the Commissioner's report in the previous year shows the doubt and confusion prevailing on the subject in those days. He remarks, "all (the Collectors and Deputy Commissioners) are of opinion that a guarantee for a certain time should be given": which shows that the very question of giving a guarantee was in debate. The irrigational settlement was yet young and the breakdown of one system after another had probably led the authorities to be cautious in regarding any settlement as final. The irrigational settlement has now stood the test of 30 years and taken firm root. Apart from the question of settlements, the Province itself has largely developed its resources since 1893. Many irrigational projects, then under contemplation, have been carried through, of which the most notable example is the Jamrao Canal. Communications have been improved by the bridging of the Indus at Kotri, the construction of the broad gauge railways from Hyderabad to Rohri and Badin, the linking up of the Jodhpur-Bikaner Railway with the North-Western Railway at Hyderabad, and the opening of several Light Railways. Lastly, there has been a considerable increase in population, which is one of the principal requirements for the development of the Province.

10. In the next place, the decennial period causes unnecessary inconvenience to the administration and, for this reason amongst others, is frequently extended in practice. As settlements continually fall due for revision the most experienced revenue officials are withdrawn from their ordinary duties in order to deal with the settlement work. The 10-year period is seldom adhered to. The average period in practice since the introduction of the irrigational settlement is 16 years; and it need hardly be pointed out that where Government for its own convenience has so frequently to extend the period it would be good policy to make the extension general and give the zamindar the comfortable assurance of a guarantee. The fact that the period is often exceeded does not at present give a sense of security to the zamindar, who cannot foresee whether such will be the case in any particular instance. There is another fact to be considered which bears hardly on the zamindar. Owing to the defective irrigational system in Sind he can as a rule cultivate no more than one-third of his holding annually. Thus the whole holding is cultivated once in three years and thrice in the decade. The 10-year period really is equivalent to little more than 3 years of cultivation.

11. Many revenue and settlement officers of experience have felt that the 10-year period is inadequate and that the frequent revisions are calculated to shake the zamindar's sense of security, arouse discontent and discourage enterprise. Some of the opinions on record deserve quotation. In 1898-99 Mr. Giles, the Collector of Shikarpur, observed "as regards the period, I presume that the usual period of 10-years will be approved of by Government. Personally I should like to see to 20 years, as I am of opinion that the shorter period belies the word settlement, is indeed adverse to any sense of security and tends to prevent capital from being expended on improvements." In 1909 Mr. Baker, the Collector of Larkana, remarked as follows:—

"I recommend that the rates be guaranteed for 20 years. It is generally admitted that the 10-year period is too short, but it is generally adopted because irrigational changes or further increases are expected. As a matter of fact, settlements nearly always last 20 years or so, though not guaranteed to do so. I think it advisable that the zamindars should have the benefit of a guarantee wherever possible."

The same officer remarks in another report:—

"I do not agree with the proposal that the settlement be guaranteed for 10 years only. I have ventured to submit on former occasions that the revision of rates at such short intervals, revision being usually the same thing as enhancement, causes a feeling of insecurity among landholders, which is regrettable both from the agricultural and political point of view."

Mr. Moysey, a settlement officer of experience, recommended that a period of 20 years should be guaranteed for Tando Allahyar, Shahdadpur, Hyderabad, Hala and portions of the Sinjhora and Mirpurkhas talukas. His proposals had the general support of the Collector of Hyderabad and the Commissioner in Sind ; but in the expectation that the Rohri-Hyderabad Canal would shortly be undertaken, Government ruled that the usual decennial period should be adhered to. Mr. Martin, supported by the Collector of Sukkur, proposed a 15-year period for Sukkur and Naushahro Abro, and this period has been adopted by Government for these and 5 other talukas. Coming finally to the opinions submitted to the present Committee, it is to be noted that the officials consulted have, with one exception, declared in favour of extension.

12. It has been shown that in the opinion of experienced officers the short settlement period is calculated to arouse discontent and a feeling of insecurity amongst zamindars. But the Committee is by no means convinced that it has actually had such an effect in all parts of the Province. As the general tendency in the Province is towards improvement of irrigation, increase in population and a rise in prices, enhancement is fortunately a more common result of revisions than a lowering of the rates of assessment. It is natural, therefore, that zamindars who have considered the matter should desire as long a settlement period as possible ; and those examined by the Committee have expressed themselves to that effect. But it is clear that some cannot have considered the question until very recently : for while avowing that they are haunted by the fear of revision and enhancement they have no idea when the settlement was last revised in their talukas or when it is next due for revision. If this is the case amongst the leading zamindars specially chosen to give evidence on account of their intelligence and high position, we must presume that there is considerable indifference on the subject amongst the rank and file. An intelligent minority has certainly considered the question for many years past since a representation on the subject was made to His Excellency the Viceroy as long ago as 1900. But the matter does not seem to have been taken seriously and was not pressed so that in all probability there was little weight of public opinion behind it. In most parts of Sind the zamindar's sense of security is so shaken by the uncertainty of his water-supply, dependent upon rise and fall of the river, that the possibility of a slight enhancement of his assessment troubles him but little. It must be remembered that he only pays on the area cultivated and as that varies enormously from year to year in accordance with the nature of the inundation, his assessment as well as his profits vary in like manner. In some of the rice-growing tracts, however, the case is different. There the water-supply is more assured and sufficient for the annual cultivation of a large proportion of each holding or even of the whole. Where that is the case, the whole assessment is a known lump sum which comes to be thought of as a fixed charge ; and an increase in assessment is as easily recognizable as an addition to that charge as it would be in the Presidency itself. Judging by the evidence recorded, we are of opinion that the zamindars of the prosperous rice-growing tracts are much more interested in the movement for the extension of the settlement period and under the present system are subject to apprehensions to which the majority of the zamindars of Sind remain strangers. We note that the expressions of opinion already quoted from Mr. Baker's remarks on the short settlement refer to the Larkana district where the feeling of insecurity appears to be most marked so far as we can judge from this enquiry. Another reason for the greater interest taken in the question by the zamindars of rice tracts appears to be the recent enhancement of the rates on rice cultivation, especially in Larkana and Hyderabad districts. The movement for the extension of the settlement period appears to be the work of an educated minority backed by a genuine feeling of discontent and insecurity in certain parts of the Province. The indifference of the majority in other parts is no reason for discouraging the movement in favour of extension so far as it is based on reasonable grounds. There is good cause to believe that the grievance which was formerly expressed by the few is coming to be felt more generally though it is by no means universal.

13. If one attempts to get beyond the mere feeling of discontent, it is difficult to prove that the shortness of the settlement period has had any injurious effects upon agriculture. Some witnesses have made very intemperate statements upon this subject. - Rao Bahadur Hiranand Khemsing, for instance, asserts that

Government rackrents the country and that crime and misery are the result. It is agreed upon all hands that the whole burden of assessment falls upon the shoulders of the zamindar and that the hari or cultivator, who receives a share of the crop generally fixed by custom, is unaffected by revisions and enhancements. The dearth of labour always enables him to make his own terms. Where the mass of the population is unaffected by enhancements of assessment, it is surely unreasonable to ascribe widespread crime and misery to such a cause. And as regards the zamindar class itself, the Committee cannot accept the view that it is either wretched or criminal. All admit that there is a great demand for land and that all classes are eager to invest capital in landed property. This fact is quite incompatible with Mr. Hiranand's view. It is true that some witnesses give ingenious explanations of the undoubted attractiveness of land to capital; and the Committee is aware that the Hindu money-lender frequently invests in it in order to obtain a more absolute monopoly of business with the haris to whom he lends. But we remain of opinion that the main cause is the obvious one; and that if land is attractive to the wealthy, if it is steadily passing out of the hands of the ignorant agricultural classes into those of the pleader and the money-lender, it is certainly not because zamindari is believed to be a ruinous concern. Those who lack land in Sind are eager to acquire it and those who hold it are greedy to acquire more. Under these circumstances it is idle to pretend that the zamindar is rackrented and crushed to the earth under a burden of wretchedness. Where the state of the zamindar is unsatisfactory it is usually on account of defects in the system of irrigation. It is probable that zamindari flourishes in spite of the short settlement and that it would benefit by an extension of the settlement period; but the fact that it does flourish must be admitted. As there has never been a long settlement in Sind, it is impossible to calculate the effects of the short one. We believe that they must be unfavourable to agriculture: there are no precise and sufficient data to prove it. The same difficulty confronts us when we endeavour to trace the effects of the short settlement upon the sale and leasing value of land. We cannot but assume that the possibility of early and frequent enhancement of the rates of assessment must diminish the value of land, but to what extent it does so we are unable to judge, because there is no land free from this liability with which we can make a comparison. The same remark applies to leasing values. Mr. Hiranand Tahilram, who as Assistant Manager, Sind Encumbered Estates, has had great experience in the matter of land values, has given it as his opinion that the imminence of a revision settlement affects the value of leases but not that of sales. So far as the former is concerned, conditions are usually inserted in the lease dealing with the possibility of enhancement and settling by whom the increased rates of assessment shall be paid. But this would presumably be the case were the settlement period extended. It does not help us to estimate the effects of the short settlement upon the leasing value of land.

14. It is equally difficult to judge how far the short settlement discourages the zamindar from spending money upon the improvement of his land, and though the witnesses have for the most part affirmed that it has such an effect, nobody has been able to give very definite or convincing examples. The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri has given two examples in paras. 74 to 80 of his pamphlet. But in his examination he failed to give a clear and intelligible account of the scheme for lowering his lift land, said to have been abandoned on account of a sense of insecurity induced by the short settlement. It can scarcely be maintained that a zamindar who turns his lift land into flow by lowering it, has good reason to fear that the improvement will be made a ground of enhancement of his assessment. It is true that under the irrigational settlement he will have at once to pay flow rates of assessment; but that is solely on account of the increase in his water-supply and has nothing to do with revision. At the time of revision the improvements made by him can hardly in practice cause an enhancement of the rates, unless they cover a very large proportion of the whole village or happen to be taken by the Settlement Officer as typical of the whole. Such instances must be exceedingly rare. Mr. Djalma has given one; but the Committee is by no means convinced that he is correct in ascribing the enhancement of his rates to the improvements which he effected. The zamindar is seldom deterred by such fear, so far as we can judge. It is obvious that a possible enhancement of assessment may turn a scheme which pays slightly into a scheme which does not pay at all; and that a short settlement period

involving frequent opportunities for enhancement must therefore tend to discourage schemes of which the profits are likely to be small. Further, a long settlement, as Mr. Hiranand Tahilram points out, leaves more money to the zamindar and therefore increases his power of improving the land, if he chooses. So much we may admit ; but the Committee does not consider that any ill effects in this respect due to the short settlement, can be proved from the evidence produced before it. It is doubtful whether its effects amount to much. All admit that there is no unwillingness to invest money in land on account of the short settlement period. There seems no greater reason why it should deter those who acquire land from spending money on its improvement. It must be conceded that in many cases the zamindars of Sind are easy-going and unprogressive, satisfied with a low standard of cultivation, at the mercy of their lazy and unskilful haris, and slow to realize the desirability of land improvement. Those who strive to improve their land are certainly the minority and it may be doubted whether an extension of the settlement period would have much effect in encouraging the remainder. The most therefore that can be said is that short settlements in general probably discourage expenditure on land improvement and in the case of Sind possibly discourage to some small degree the few zamindars who have the energy and intelligence to undertake it.

15. We have shown that an extension of the settlement period is desirable both in the interests of Government and of the zamindar ; of Government, because the frequent revisions involve inconvenience to the administration and because the period is generally exceeded in practice ; of the zamindar, because a longer settlement would remove the feeling of insecurity and discontent which is on the increase, and might possibly have a stimulating effect upon Sindhi agriculture, which certainly needs it. The next question is how far it should be extended. The 30-year period which is proposed in Government Order No. 12, dated 4th January 1915, for the consideration of the Committee is the period demanded by the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri and most of the unofficial witnesses. It is acknowledged that the claim for a 30 years' period rests upon the analogy of the Presidency and upon appeals to the general policy regarding settlements as set forth by the Government of India. This analogy and these appeals have already been shown to be fallacious and inadmissible, so that the case for a 30 years' period falls to the ground. The only points to be taken into consideration in settling this question are the welfare of the Sindhi zamindar and the interests of Government as the representative of the community generally. On these considerations we are of opinion that the normal settlement period in Sind should be 20 years. It is double the present period ; it is the period recommended by Mr. Giles, Mr. Baker and other experienced officers in the past and by nearly all the officers who have been consulted by the Committee in the present inquiry ; and finally it is the period adopted by the Punjab, a province which is believed most to resemble Sind in general conditions. If the need for extension is admitted, as we think it must be, the period proposed is unlikely to be criticized as excessive. It is a slight advance upon the period of 15 years which Government has already sanctioned for 7 talukas ; and a yet slighter advance upon the average of 16 years for which settlements have been shown to last in practice.

17. On the other hand, since the period of 30 years has been actually proposed for our consideration we do not think it sufficient to point out that the original demand for this particular period was based upon a misconception and therefore proceed to state our practical reasons for considering it excessive. Assessment in Sind, as has been stated repeatedly, consists of land revenue and water-rate in the proportion of one to nine. Even if we ignore the water rate, the conditions in Sind are not such as to justify a longer settlement period than 20 years. The conditions justifying short and long settlement periods respectively are enumerated in the Government of India's Resolution No. 1, dated 16th January 1902, para. 18. The former are as follows : much waste land, low rents, a fluctuating cultivation, a rapid development of resources owing to the construction of roads, railways or canals, to the increase in the population or the rise in prices. Each and every one of these conditions is found in Sind, and to a marked degree. The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri has attempted to explain away the facts, but we consider that he has entirely missed the spirit of the Resolution quoted by him. The Province which the Government of India contemplates is clearly

one which is in process of developing its resources. It is acknowledged that Sind is full of cultivable waste and that only a fraction of the occupied land is annually cultivated, and the significance of this fact is unaffected by the argument that land is cultivated so far as water is available. The point is that there is unlimited scope for the development of irrigation, for the construction of new canals and the improvement of old; that this development has gone on rapidly and steadily for the past 30 years and that it will continue in the future. As regards rents, we have shown that the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri is mistaken in believing that Sind has a high incidence of assessment. The true rent or land revenue is one-tenth of the assessment, and when it is borne in mind that this sum is levied only upon cultivated land exclusive of fallows, it must be admitted that the rates are very low. The cultivation fluctuates in Sind to an enormous extent, according to the level of the river. The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri argues that the rains are also uncertain in the Presidency, but he ignores the fact that while the monsoon is beyond human control, the fluctuations of the river can be largely neutralized by irrigational improvements. He passes over the subject of population with the remark that it increases here as elsewhere and that Sind is not peculiar in this respect. But the want of a sufficient population is at the root of the difficulties from which agriculture suffers in Sind. The rate at which the population increases is far more rapid in Sind than in the Presidency, though it still lags behind the requirements of the Province. The following figures show the density of population in Sind and the Presidency for the last 30 years:—

Year.	Presidency.	Sind.
1881	185 per square mile.	51 per square mile.
1891	210 " "	61 " "
1901	201 " "	68 " "
1911	212 " "	75 " "

It will be noted that while the population in the Presidency has increased by 14·7 per cent., that of Sind has increased by 45·3 per cent., more than thrice as fast. The steady development of irrigation, railway and communications has already been noted. The rise in prices, though not peculiar to Sind, has been continuous and rapid. The Province is in process of steady development, and even if there were no question of water rates yet Government would be fully justified in limiting the settlement period to 20 years, as is done in the Punjab Province, which, like Sind, is still in process of developing its resources, though it is far ahead of Sind in the progress already achieved.

18. If we consider the assessment as a water rate, which is its main character, there are yet stronger reasons for limiting the settlement period to 20 years. Owing to the unskillfulness of the Sindhi cultivator, which has its roots in the scarcity of population and indifferent irrigational system, the land at present cannot bear a fair rate of assessment and the lowness of the rates is a great obstacle to large irrigational projects, upon which the future of the Province depends. It is desirable, therefore, that Government should retain the power of enhancing the assessment as soon as the land becomes able to bear higher rates. Before this argument is developed, the Committee think it desirable to dispose of a view which has been put forward by several witnesses and has found fullest expression in a letter of R. B. Hiranand Khemsing. It will be found on the record next to his written statement of opinion. In this letter Mr. Hiranand argues, if we understand him rightly, that Government ought to have limited its profit upon each and every canal to a fixed maximum interest upon the capital thereon expended. We fail to see any reason for this view. Government in undertaking irrigational projects is liable to the same risk of loss as a private company and, subject to one condition, is entitled, as representing the general tax-payer, to whatever profits can be made. The condition is that those profits are not incompatible with the public welfare. (It has been seen that where irrigation is a luxury, as in the Presidency proper, the hands of Government are much freer in this respect than in Sind where the very existence of the zamindar depends on canals.) We do not agree with Mr. Hiranand in considering that the high returns on certain pre-British canals are discreditable to Government. As a matter of fact, the figures are misleading. The original cost of construction

is omitted from calculation because these irrigational works were taken over as state property at the conquest. But apart from this and as a matter of principle, the act that a canal pays tent. per cent. or more affords no reasonable cause for discontent, unless Mr. Hiranand can show that the assessment is oppressive. Mr. Hiranand appears to think that Government, while bearing the losses of these schemes which do not pay, should limit its profits to a low maximum upon those which do, abandoning the surplus to the zamindar. To discuss this view further would exceed the scope of this enquiry; we would only add that its acceptance would convert into loss the low profits which Government obtain from the Sind canals as a whole and is therefore impracticable.

19. Even as the case stands, the lowness of the assessment in Sind discourages Government expenditure on irrigation. The rate of interest upon canals other than pre-British is shown to be less than 6 per cent., but this figure is only reached by crediting the nine-tenths of the assessment to water rates and practically sacrificing the land revenue proper. The latter averages only 4 or 5 annas, and is not levied on fallows. The barani rate in canal tracts is never less than Re. 1 and were the land revenue on canal cultivation raised to this figure and the water rate proportionately decreased—a course which would be perfectly logical—the interest on irrigational expenditure would disappear altogether. Waiving this point, however, the fact remains that the lowness of the profits on irrigational expenditure in Sind is a real obstacle to irrigational development. Complaints are frequently heard that irrigation is fostered in the Punjab to the neglect and detriment of Sind; but who can doubt that if irrigation paid as well in Sind as in the Punjab, this Province would have received an equal share of attention? If we seek the reasons why land can only bear such low rates of assessment, they lie in the defective system of irrigation, the unsatisfactory system of credit and tenancy, the uncertain and insufficient supply of agricultural labour and the miserable methods of cultivation. Irrigation and population react upon each other; the poorness of the former checks the latter and the want of the latter hinders the expansion of the former. That the population is barely sufficient for the present area of cultivation is proved by the zamindar's difficulty in obtaining cultivators. When a new canal is opened the surrounding country suffers a depletion of its supply of labour, which is tempted away to the fresh lands. The laziness, dishonesty and general unmanageableness of Sindhi cultivators is the constant theme of the Sindhi zamindar, who is to a great extent at their mercy; and whatever the zamindar's own shortcomings, his complaint is largely true. It is little wonder that agriculture is at a low ebb under such conditions that the land does not bring the zamindar the profit which it should and that the zamindar can consequently not afford to pay a high assessment. But the advance in irrigation and the increase in population, though slower than one could wish, are nevertheless continuous and the enhancement of the water rates should not be unduly delayed. The higher the profits on irrigational expenditure the more rapid will be the development of irrigation. It is not therefore for the ultimate good of the Province that these profits should be cut down to the minimum. They should be enhanced so far as can be done without hardship to the zamindar, not only in fairness to Government, which is not getting a good return on its capital, but in the interest of Sind, which needs an almost unlimited expenditure upon irrigation. We consider that a period of 20 years is the maximum for which it is advisable that Government should waive its powers of enhancing the water rates.

20. For the above mentioned reasons, the Committee is of opinion that the decennial period should be extended and that the settlement in Sind should normally be guaranteed for 20 years.

G. E. CHATFIELD,
Chairman.

F. ST. J. GEBBIE.

S. C. SHAHANI.

J. R. MARTIN.

A. M. MACMILLAN.

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No. I-10421 of 1915.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,

Bombay Castle, 21st September 1915.

To

THE COLLECTOR OF THAR AND PARKAR, AND PRESIDENT,

SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE IN SIND.

SIR,

In reply to your letter No. 1625, dated 7th September 1915, addressed to the Under Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, I am directed to inform you that there is no single definite period for which water rates charged under section 44 of the Bombay Irrigation Act, are determined. Sometimes the rates are sanctioned without specifying any period, in other cases the period named may be any number of years from one to ten. The most usual term is 5 years.

2. Block permits are generally given for six years and the rate for irrigation is not liable to alteration during that period. This arrangement is somewhat in the nature of a contract.

I have, &c.,

W. U. CARTLAND,

Under Secretary to Government,
Irrigation and Railways.

**Opinion of the Honourable Mr. G. M. Bhurgri
on the settlement period in Sind.**

1. The history of the decennial system of settlement in Sind dates from the survey operations which took place in the days of Mr. Mansfield, who was Commissioner in Sind in 1862. In that year, the Government of Bombay had appointed Major Francis, Superintendent, Revenue survey and Assessment, Tanna and Ratnagri, to organize a system of survey and settlement for the province. Major Francis prepared a report embodying his proposals in the matter. One of these was that the period of settlement should be one of 10 years. In para. 50 of his report, he observes as follows :—“ It appears to me then that, whilst it is advisable to fix a light assessment as a means of improving the condition of the cultivator, and of bringing an increased area under cultivation, it is necessary also, in the interests of the State, that such an assessment should not be extended over a longer period than is required for the object in view, in order that there may be no necessary sacrifice of future revenue. Considering the general increase in the price of agricultural produce in all the markets of the province, and the value it must command in future, from the facilities of transport which are being daily extended over the country by railways and roads, it appears to me that a lease of 10 years will be sufficient to effect a considerable improvement in the condition of the agricultural class. I would therefore recommend that, *in the first instance*, the settlement should be fixed on a 10 years' lease *experimentally*. This will be sufficient to enable us to form a good opinion of the general results of the measure; and if it should be attended with the success contemplated, the rates can be increased at the expiration of the lease to the sum which the improved resources of the people and of the country generally may seem to warrant. If, on the other hand, it should not be successful, a short lease of the kind will afford a comparatively early opportunity for correcting any error in the system, or in the detail of the settlement. Upon these grounds I think that a plan of short leases is best adopted to the present *comparatively undeveloped state of the agricultural resources of the country*. ”

2. Mr. Mansfield, the then Commissioner in Sind, in submitting Major Francis' proposals for the approval of the Government of Bombay, observed, with regard to the period of settlement, that “ should the settlement proposed be approved of, it may be sanctioned for 10 years, *in the first instance, for the reasons stated by Major Francis*. ” (*Vide* para. 9 of letter No. 196 of 1863 addressed by Mr. Mansfield, Commissioner in Sind, to H. E. the Honourable Sir H. B. E. Frere, K. C. B., Governor and President in Council, Bombay.)

3. The Government of Bombay therefore in their letter No. 3888 of 1863, dated the 4th November 1863, to the address of S. Mansfield, Commissioner in Sind, decided to adopt 10 years as the period of settlement.

4. The Government of India approved of the Resolution of the Bombay Government in their letter No. 2290 of 1864, dated the 30th March 1864, from B. C. Bayley, Esquire, Secretary to the Government of India, to A. D. Robertson, Esquire, Officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay. At para. 40 of this letter, the Government of India observe as follows :—“ If the settlement be found to work quite satisfactorily for 10 years, it can, at the discretion of this local Government, *be extended for a further period without revision*. If there be found defects in it, a revision in whole or in part can be made. ”

5. Again, Major Francis, in his letter No. 532, dated the 8th August 1864, to the address of the Honourable Mr. A. D. Robertson, Secretary to the Government of Bombay, remarks as follows (para. 30) :—“ It was thought advisable to have a short lease of ten years in Sind on account of the *present undeveloped state of the agricultural resources of the province*, and the Government of India assents to this reasoning. No change, however, has been made in our system of operations on this account, for the survey assessment as carried out would be applicable equally to a 30 as to a 10 years' lease. The actual amount imposed may, perhaps, be somewhat lower than it would be over a longer lease to be granted. But this is a measure which is devised for the interests of Government as well as of the cultivating classes. ”

6. So much as to the first decennial settlement in Sind. This expired in 1872-74, and a revision of the settlement in some talukas was then undertaken. Lieutenant-Colonel the M. R. Haig, Settlement Officer, Right Bank Districts, was entrusted with the work of revision. Lieutenant-Colonel Haig drew up his report of proposals, and submitted it to the Collector of Karachi in his No. 7 of 1873, dated the 6th January 1873. At para. 67 of this report he observes as follows:—“With regard to the term of the new settlement, I think that 10 years will be long enough. Looking to the *present condition of the district*, especially the *very imperfect state of its irrigation*, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a low scale of assessment for some years; but though little may ever be done, or be possible, for the improvement of irrigation, there can be no doubt that the value of land in the district will be increased, and other important benefits derived from the *railway now being commenced*, and by the end of the next decade, the very moderate rates that will then have been in force for a period of 20 years may require some enhancement. If, however, these anticipations of progress should not be realized, the *settlement can then be renewed without increase* to the Government demand. *The people themselves will*, I may venture to say, be quite *satisfied with a short term of settlement*. So far as I can judge, there is no apprehension whatever on their part of their interests suffering when revision of rates comes under consideration, or of our object being otherwise than to deal fairly and liberally with them.” This report was endorsed and submitted to the Government of Bombay, in the ordinary course, by Colonel Merewether, the then Commissioner in Sind.

7. However, in submitting the Settlement Report of Captain C. E. Fisher, Acting Settlement Officer, Left Bank Districts, for the Guni taluka, Colonel Merewether, in his letter No. 1260 of 1874, to the address of H. E. the Honourable Sir Philip Edmund Wodehouse, K. C. B., Governor and President in Council, Bombay, observes as follows (para. 13):—“*The term of 10 years is, I consider, too short to allow of zamindars collecting capital and benefitting by judicious investment of it. Had I to submit the settlement, I should have been inclined to most strongly urge that the rates being pitched low, the settlement should have been introduced and sanctioned for 30 years. I am confident, from my knowledge of the country, that the cultivation at the end of the 30 years would be found very largely increased, and the position of the people vastly improved. But that this was not done cannot be laid to the doors of the Settlement Officers.*”

8. His Excellency the Governor and President in Council, Sir Philip Wodehouse, endorsed the view of Colonel Merewether in this matter. In his minute, recorded on the 23rd October 1874, he remarks as follows:—“*I agree with Sir William Merewether in preferring a longer term than 10 years for the settlement*”

9. However, the two other members on the Board, the Honourable Mr. Rogers and the Honourable Mr. Gibbs, dissented from the opinion of the President. In his minute recorded on the 25th October 1875, the Honourable Mr. Rogers observes as follows:—“*Matters are in such a transitional state in Sind in consequence of the opening of the province by a railroad and by the impetus that may probably be given to its agriculture by the export of wheat to England, which appears to be on the increase, that I am convinced we should not be safe in guaranteeing longer settlements than for 10 years. Existing markets will probably fall off and new ones will be opened, and prices will be so much affected in different localities as to render any assessment based on present circumstances inapplicable at the end of that time. The people themselves will be perfectly contented if they know that at the end of the short lease their improvements, will not be taxed.*”

10. The Honourable Mr. Gibbs, in his minute of dissent, remarked as follows:—“*I am aware I am writing on a subject which has not been my study and I am the more likely therefore, to be theoretical instead of practical; but of this I am sure that any arrangement which leads to a yearly survey is bad, and I also think that whatever may be adopted should not be allowed for more than 10 years.*”

11. His Excellency the President then waived the point in deference to the opinion of his colleagues. In a subsequent minute, he said: "I will willingly *yield the point* as to the present settlement being made for only 10 years, in *deference to my colleagues*, and then I think the method of dealing with the zamindar can be adopted that I have proposed without risk of much loss or trouble; and at the end of the 10 years, Government will be in a much better position for coming to a definitive settlement. I have a *very strong opinion* as to the *summary overthrow of the samindurs* by the want of caution with which the survey settlement was introduced."

12. Matters were, however, brought to a head by Government Resolution, No. 1438, dated the 10th March 1875, which authoritatively, and once for all, fixed the period of settlement in Sind at 10 years, and thus finally laid the question at rest. At para. 17 of the Resolution in question, Government observe as follows:—"The last question of general importance which has been brought forward is the length of the period for which the settlement should be sanctioned. *Sir William Merewether is of opinion that a period of 10 years is not sufficient to induce zamindars to collect and to lay out capital and benefit by the judicious investment of it.* His Excellency in Council is, however, of opinion that the settlements which are now being made or revised ought to be only for 10 years, which is the period proposed for the talukas of Sukkur and Kotri. Taking into consideration the *transitional state of matters* in the province, in which *considerable development of resources may be confidently expected* within the next ten years, coupled, perhaps, with the *closing of old and the opening of new markets*, in consequence of the *construction of the Indus Valley Railway*, and the *improvement of existing as well as the construction of new canals*; and bearing in mind what has been recorded about the insolvency of large holders and of the necessity for assisting them, His Excellency in Council is of opinion that the safest policy will be *to lay down the general rule that the revised settlement in Sind shall not be guaranteed for more than 10 years*, and to direct accordingly that all revision report be framed with that view."

13. And in disposing of the settlement report of the Sukkur taluka, the Government of Bombay again observe:—"Under all the circumstances of the *transitional state of the taluka* in consequence of the *construction of the new line of railway*, it is considered advisable to restrict the guarantee for the permanence of the rates to ten years, as in the present settlement."

14. Government then addressed the Secretary of State in the matter, in their despatch No. 10, dated the 10th March 1875, attaching the above papers.

15. *The Secretary of State was, however, of a different opinion.* He considered that the *period of settlement in Sind should, as a general rule, be one of 30 years as in the rest of India.* But owing to the reasons advanced by the Government of Bombay in support of the decennial system of settlement, which were chiefly the peculiar conditions of the province, the Secretary of State left the decision of the matter in the hands of the Bombay Government. And the latter have ever since clung to their first opinion and decision.

16. An examination of these, the earliest, opinions on the merits of the decennial system of settlement in Sind will show the reasons on which they are based. These are, principally, (1) the undeveloped condition of the province (2) the transitional and rapidly progressive state of things, (3) the experimental character of the proposed term of settlement.

17. Now these reasons, whatever may have been the extent of their application to the then condition of things, have been losing their applicability with the passage of time, and are most certainly inapplicable at the present moment. Since the inception of the decennial settlements in the province, Sind has made such great and steady strides in its agricultural development that there is not much room for any great or sudden progress in that direction. I think it can fairly be said that things agricultural and irrigational have

more or less settled down into comparative stability and permanence, and that no material or violent change is likely to take place. The greater part of Sind has been surveyed and been placed on a definite footing in this respect. The means of communication and the facilities of transport have been in the steady course of provision, and not much remains to be done in this direction. Roads and railways have been extended throughout the province, and no important improvement is to be expected in that line. Canals and other irrigational facilities have long been provided, and there is no scheme of any magnitude or consequence in the domain of immediate or near probability.

18. But the most important point to be borne in mind with regard to the first introduction of the decennial period of settlement in Sind is the *wholly experimental character of system inaugurated*. This is abundantly clear from the opinions of the officers responsible for its introduction and of Government at the time, opinions which have found very explicit and unequivocal expression. Major Francis, the officer who, as we have seen, first proposed the settlement in question, clearly states that he would "recommend that, *in the first instance*, the settlement should be fixed on a 10 years' lease *experimentally*." Mr. Mansfield, the then Commissioner in Sind, remarks that "the settlement may be sanctioned for 10 years, *in the first instance*." The Government of India observe that "if the settlement be found to *work quite satisfactorily for ten years*, it can, at the discretion of the local Government, *be extended for a further period without revision*." And Lieutenant-Colonel Haig remarks that "if the anticipations of progress should not be realized, the settlement can then be *renewed without increase*."

19. What is this but an admission of the tentative character of the settlement first proposed, and a recognition of the possible necessity or contingency of an increase of the period provisionally settled?

20. But it is manifest that the incipient and experimental stage of affairs has long departed. Those were times of a primitive and undeveloped state of things, of unknown and unexploited agricultural resources, of rapid and continual transition, of great and unhalting strides in irrigational improvement. But these are things of the past. Neither the present nor the future holds in its lap any important revolution in the state of things. The conditions of to-day are comparatively stable and stereotyped, and the days of sudden and great changes have passed, and there is no fear of their returning.

21. It will thus be seen that the reasons advanced for the first settlement to whatever extent they may have represented the state of things existing at the time, most certainly do not hold good at the present time.

22. In this connection, it may not be amiss to call attention to a most outstanding and noteworthy fact connected with the first decennial settlement, and that is, that far from there having been any harmony of opinion at the time, a distinct note of dissent was struck by the highest authority in the province, and this note was clearly echoed by the then Governor and President in Council, Bombay. Colonel Merwether, one of Sind's most eminent and experienced administrators, was, as shown above, emphatically opposed to the decennial settlement both in principle and in policy, and as emphatically in favour of a 30 years' guarantee. And this opinion had, as shown above, the support of His Excellency the Governor and President in Council, Sir Phillip Wodehouse. Hence even then the doctors disagreed, and the highest opinion and authority inclined to the establishment of a 30 years' settlement in Sind. And what is still more worthy of note is the remarkable fact that the then Commissioner in Sind based his opinion in this matter on the identical reasons that are urged at present for such a settlement, and that is the adverse effect of a 10 years' settlement on the minds of the zamindars in the matter of the improvement of their land.

23. Coming now to more recent times, we find that there has been very high opinion in favour of an extension of the period of settlement in Sind. Thus in 1880 Colonel Anderson, the then Survey Commissioner, recommended that the settlement should be guaranteed for 30 years, as in the rest of the Presidency. In his settlement report of the Sakrand taluka, he observes as follows:—“The next question is the period for which the settlement should be guaranteed. The land has been divided into small survey numbers, and the classification of soil may also be considered to be permanent, so far as the land water-supply is permanent, so far as can be seen, no change in this respect will be necessary, let the settlement be guaranteed for the period it may. *The Secretary of State has expressed his desire that settlements in Sind should be guaranteed for the period usual in India, 30 years. A short period of settlement may be considered to be deterrent of improvement. But so far as the only improvements the landholders are likely to make, the sinking of wells, these are guaranteed from extra assessment on revision, whatever period the settlement is guaranteed for; and as regards the extension of canals, this is a Government work in Sind, and any appropriation of water from them calls for an extra assessment at all times. It may be that a longer period of guarantee than 10 years is desirable in Sind. But considering the great changes to which the country is liable, I do not feel certain that a lower period than that of 30 years might be advisable in Sind. Whatever the period may be, improvements of any kind effected at their own cost by the landholders will be equally secure from extra assessment.*”

24. *Mr. Erskine, the then Commissioner in Sind, whose knowledge and experience of Sind was a long and intimate one, in forwarding the above recommendation of the Survey Commissioner, observed as follows:—“With regard to the period for which the present settlement should be guaranteed, I think the period common in other parts of the Presidency, 30 years, is too long for Sind: but at the same time I do not think any revised settlements should be for so short a period as 10 years. I think that half the time in other parts, or 15 years, should be a safe time to fix, or if even that is deemed too short, then 22 years. This, I think, should be the maximum.”*

25. But these recommendations of officers who possessed the advantage of a first-hand and intimate knowledge and experience of the province were overruled by Government, and the old period of 10 years was clung to with uncompromising tenacity.

26. The result of this deliberate and inflexible attitude of Government towards this question has been that, ever since, Settlement Officers and Commis- sioners in Sind have come to take it for granted that 10 years is the usual and regular period of settlement for the province. With this unquestioning belief, their special attention has rarely, if ever, been directed to the merits of the question, and their recommendations in this matter have always been made as a mere matter of course. And there is no reason for wonder, though there is much for regret, at this result, which is the natural and inevitable consequence of the rigid position that Government has long, and apparently unalterably, taken in this matter. Only a few officers, of recent years, have given special thought and attention to the subject, and have had the courage of their conviction in recommending an extension of the period of settlement. Mr. Moysey, one of the most capable and thorough Settlement Officers that Sind has had, recommended a guarantee of 20 years on several occasions, *e. g.*, in the settle- ment of Tando Allahyar, Shabdadpur, Hyderabad, Hala, non-Jamrao dehs of the Sinjhoru taluka and the non-Jamrao dehs of the Mirpurkhas taluka. Some of these recommendations were supported by Mr. Pratt, the then Collector of Hyder- abad, whose knowledge of Sind was unequalled, and who declared himself in favour of a 20 years' guarantee. Mr. Baker, a former Collector of Larkana, and an officer of the highest repute on these settlement matters, whose knowledge and experi- ence on this subject were commended by the Commissioner in Sind, Mr. Younghusband, in his letter No. 1975 of 1912, to the address of Govern- ment, also repeatedly recommended an extension of the period of settlement to

20 years, e.g., in the settlements of Larkana (1909), Kambar (1909), Dadu (1912), Sehwan (1912), Johi (1912). In the Larkana settlement, Mr. Baker observes as follows:—“*I recommend that the rates be guaranteed for 20 years. It is generally admitted that the 10-year period is too short, but it is generally adopted because irrigational changes or further increases are expected. As a matter of fact, settlements nearly always do last for 20 years or so, although not guaranteed to do so. I think it advisable that the zamindars should have the satisfaction of a guarantee wherever possible. In this taluka no irrigational change of any kind is expected except the Indus Right Bank canal, and I think I am right in saying that it will be quite 20 years before that canal is in working order and its results known. Even if it comes earlier, no alteration in the settlement is necessary.*” In the Dadu settlement report, Mr. Baker again remarks:—“*I do not agree with the proposal that the settlement should be guaranteed for 10 years only. I have ventured to submit on former occasions that the revision of rates at such short intervals, revision being usually the same thing as enhancement, causes a feeling of insecurity among landholders, which is most regrettable both from the agricultural and the political point of view. In the present case, the usual reasons for a short guarantee simply do not exist. There is not the least chance of any irrigational improvement until the Right Bank canal is made; and that canal will not affect Dadu taluka within the next 20 years.*”

27. Then Mr. Martin and Mr. Lawrence are two officers who have recommended periods of 15 years. *Vide* the settlement reports of Sukkur (1908), Naushahro Abro (1908). In the Sukkur settlement report, Mr. Martin observes as follows:—“*I recommend that the period of guarantee of the settlement be 15 years, unless it is probable that the Sukkur Barrage scheme will be carried out at a date considerably before the expiry of this period, and that it will materially affect the taluka. Otherwise there is little likelihood of change in the irrigation system of the south and centre of the taluka. In the north, too, the changes likely to take place are not very radical, and the inferiority in soil of that part of the taluka and the distance from market or part of it will probably always necessitate its being treated more leniently than the rest of the taluka. Improvement, if it takes place, in irrigation will bring a return in increased cultivation and in cultivation of the more highly assessed crops.*” Mr. Lawrence, in the same report, says:—“*I have the honour to recommend that these rates may be sanctioned for a period of 15 years. The Sukkur Barrage, even if constructed within this period, will only affect a small strip of these two talukas, and for the additional irrigation so provided it will be possible to impose special rates.*”

28. Again, in the Naushahro Abro settlement report, Mr. Martin says:—“*As regards the term of guarantee I would recommend a term of at least fifteen years, unless the Sukkur Barrage is likely to be constructed much within this period and is likely to affect materially the irrigation of the taluka. In the centre and north of the talukas any changes which take place will only remedy existing defects. They will enable land now useless to be brought under cultivation, and from it and from the extension of the more highly assessed crops, Government will get an immediate return even without an increase of rates.*”

29. And Mr. Lawrence, in this report, makes the same observations as in the Sukkur settlement report.

30. Even the Commissioner in Sind Mr. Younghusband, has occasionally recommended a 15 years' settlement (see Settlement Reports of Sukkur, Naushahro Abro, Dadu, Sehwan and Johi), and finally Government itself has seen the propriety of sometimes extending the period of settlement to 15 years. The reference is to the Sukkur, Naushahro Abro, Dadu, Sehwan, Johi, Larkana and Kambar settlements.

31. But the voices of these few officers raised in protest against the principle and policy of the present period of settlement in Sind have only been voices crying in the wilderness. Little or no heed has been paid to their

opinions and the inexorable attitude of Government in this matter has only tended to discourage even these rare attempts at dissent. The unfortunate result of this is that Settlement Officers either fail to give any special thought to the question, and take it as a matter of course or realize the unacceptableness and futility of any suggestion at variance with the declared policy of Government.

32. Meanwhile, the people of Sind have ever been discontented with that policy. They have failed to see any reason or justification, whether of necessity or expediency, for its continuance in conditions and circumstances that has long ceased to warrant it. The people have been unceasing in their agitation and their representation to Government on this subject. They have spoken with no uncertain voice through their representative associations, both Hindu and Mahomedan. The addresses presented by these bodies to the Governors of Bombay who have visited this province from time to time, have contained frequent and earnest prayers for an extension of the period of settlement in Sind. But these prayers have so far only fallen on deaf ears.

33. Now, before proceeding further, let us briefly consider the case for long settlements.

34. And first as to the general merits of long settlements.

35. Obviously the longest settlement would be a permanent settlement. This prevails in certain parts of India, such as Bengal and Madras. Now such a settlement is unquestionably the best that can be had. The late lamented Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, the eminent Indian statesman, administrator and economist, has conclusively shown that, among other striking benefits, the remarkable immunity that Bengal has enjoyed for over a century from the devastating effect of famines, which have had a blighting influence on the rest of India, is directly and solely due to the establishment of the permanent settlement in that province.

36. But the question of permanent settlement for the whole of India is not one with which we are directly concerned. But since my main contention is tantamount to *a plea for an increased length of settlement*, I should like to enforce the great truth that *the longer the settlement, the better the settlement*.

37. In this connection, and for this limited purpose, therefore, I may be permitted to say a few words in support of the proved advantages of the system of permanent settlement.

38. That a permanent settlement is the 'summum bonum' of all land revenue administration has been the reasoned and emphatic opinion of a long succession of England's greatest statesmen and administrators. These include such eminent and venerable names as Colebrooks, Bishop Heber, Lord William Bentinck, Sir Thomas Munro, the Marquis of Wellesley, Lord Minto, the Marquis of Hastings, Lord Canning, the first Viceroy under the Crown, Sir Charles Wood, the first Secretary of State for India, Lord Lawrence and Sir Stafford Northcote, a later Secretary of State.

39. However, the fatal decision of the India Office in 1883 in this matter put a final extinguisher on all hopes and desires in that direction. Though, therefore, a permanent settlement itself is at present unattainable, the people of this province would plead for the extension of the great and good principle underlying it, that is, length of settlement. But before taking the case of Sind in particular, a few words regarding the history and benefits of the introduction of a 30 years' settlement in certain parts of India will not be out of place.

40. To Lord William Bentinck, whose honoured name will long be remembered with thankfulness in this as in other connections, is due the credit of introducing long terms of settlement in Northern India. The great settlement of Northern India effected between 1833 and 1849 was for 30 years. Then the first great settlement of Bombay in 1837 was for 30 years. Settlements made in Madras have been for 30 years for over half a century. The Orissa settlement for 1837 was for 30 years, and

when the period expired in 1869, Lord Lawrence, the then Viceroy of India, continued the old assessment for another 30 years on account of the Orissa famine.

41. But this wise policy of long settlements was departed from for the first time in 1895, when Lord George Hamilton decided that, while 30 years should continue to be the ordinary term of settlement in Madras, Bombay and the North-Western Provinces, 20 years should be the general rule for the Punjab and the Central Provinces.

42. Against this new departure, the late Mr. Dutt raised his voice in protest in his memorable Open Letters to Lord Curzon on Famines and Land Assessment in India. The views expressed by Mr. Dutt in those letters were shared by a number of distinguished English administrators in this country, who had retired after long and meritorious work in India. A joint memorial was submitted by these eminent men, towards the close of 1900, to the Secretary of State, and one of the prayers contained in that memorial was the introduction of a 30 years' settlement throughout India. Among the signatories were such distinguished men as the Right Honourable Sir Richard Garth, late Chief Justice of Bengal, Sir John Jardine, late Judge of the Bombay High Court, Mr. R. K. Puckle, C. S. I., late Director of Revenue Settlement in Madras, Mr. H. J. Reynolds, C. S. I., late Revenue Secretary of Bengal, Mr. A. Rogers late Member of the Bombay Legislative Council (the same gentleman who, as we have seen above, advocated a 10 years' settlement for Sind), Mr. J. H. Gaistur, late Member of the Madras Legislative Council. The Secretary of State forwarded this memorial to the Government of India for consideration, and Lord Curzon's memorable Resolution expounding the Land Revenue Policy of the Government of India, these appeared as a reply to it.

43. The Government Resolution referred to defends this departure in the following words:—“When the land is fully cultivated, rents fair, and agricultural production not liable to violent oscillations, it is sufficient if the demands of Government are re-adjusted once in 30 years, i. e., once in the lifetime of a generation. When the opposite conditions prevail, where there are much waste lands, low rents and a fluctuating cultivation or, again, where there is a rapid development of resources owing to the construction of roads, railways or canals, to the increase of population or to a rise in prices, the postponement of re-settlement for so long a period is both injurious to the people, who are unequal to the strain of sharp assessment, and unjust to the general tax-payer, who is temporarily deprived of the additional revenue to which he has a legitimate claim.”

44. But a moment's examination will suffice to show that this defence of the short settlements introduced by Lord George Hamilton is unsound. The Punjab and the Central Provinces were not less fully cultivated, and not less developed, in 1895, after half a century of British rule, than the Bombay Presidency was in 1837, after only 20 years of the rule. It is possible that the Government of India saw this, for the closing sentence of this apologia sounds a more hopeful note. It runs thus:—“Whether these considerations justifying a shorter term of settlement than 30 years apply with sufficient force to the Punjab and the Central Provinces at the present time, whether the force of their application will diminish with the passage of time, are weighty questions to which careful attention will be given by Government upon suitable occasions.” “These words seemed to hold out the hope that the 30 years' rule would be extended to the Punjab and the Central Provinces. But that hope has not yet materialized, and 20 years is still the rule in those parts of India.

45. But, while the Punjab and the Central Provinces are unfortunate, as compared with the rest of India, it falls to the lot of this benighted province to strike bottom in the matter of the land revenue settlement. For the unfortunate people of this province, a beggarly period of 10 years is considered a sufficient dole of indulgence at the hands of Government. While the rest of the Presidency, of which Sind is persuaded to believe she forms a part, enjoys a

settlement of 30 years, Sind is singled out for the different treatment, and is only allowed the small period of 10 years. Sind, in this matter, as in almost everything else, is dealt with in another measure. No valid or adequate reason appears for this differential treatment. The only show of reason made is the very vague and general plea put forward to the effect that the conditions of Sind differ from those of the Presidency proper.

46. Let us now consider the merits of this plea. It will suffice for our purposes if we apply Lord Curzon's tests to this province, and see whether and how far they are applicable or inapplicable to Sind.

47. It will be observed that the Government of India admits that the following conditions would make a good case for a 30 years' settlement:—(1) *Land fully cultivated*, (2) *Rents fair*, (3) *Agricultural production not liable to violent oscillation*. On the other hand, it is laid down that the case would be spoilt by the following conditions—(1) *Much waste land*, (2) *Low rents*, (3) *Fluctuating cultivation*, (4) *A rapid development of resources due to* (a) *the construction of roads, railways or canals*, (b) *increase of population*, (c) *rise in prices*.

48. Now let us see how far these several conditions are present or absent in Sind.

49. (1) This condition is fulfilled in Sind to the extent that is possible. Cultivation in Sind is solely dependent on the water-supply provided. It is obvious that the extent of cultivation can only be co-equal with the extent of the water-supply and only so much land, and no more, can be cultivated as there is a supply of water for. Now, to the extent that water is available, the land is fully cultivated. In fact, on many canals the limit has been reached: so much so that Government have, on the recommendations of the Public Works Department, stopped further grants of land on these canals. Even on a canal like Jamrao, water-supply is only provided for one-third of the land situated on it, every year, with the result that, *under the present system of settlement, a holding cannot be cultivated more than three times during the currency of the settlement. Even this is only so in theory, for in practice a holding is rarely cultivated more than twice*, as the fallow assessment figures clearly show.

50. Waste land there doubtless is in Sind as elsewhere, but this is because no water is available in those parts. If water, however, is made available at the cost of Government, it is competent to Government to levy special water rates, under the provisions of section 55 of the Land Revenue Code, and thus Government is reimbursed over and above the added revenue which an increased cultivation will bring. Hence, in any case, this argument falls to the ground.

51. (2) The rents in Sind are unquestionably fair, and the rental value of land to the State in this province does not suffer by comparison with that obtaining in the rest of the Presidency. In fact, Sind has a place of pride in the whole of India as regards the incidence of assessment per acre, and it is obvious that one of the main reasons for this unenviable pre-eminence is the short duration and consequent frequency of settlements, each revision of which only brings enhancement in its train. The figures showing the incidence of assessment in the various provinces of India which are appended, tell their own sad tale regarding this province. (See Appendix A.)

52. (3) I think it may safely be taken that rains in the Presidency are as uncertain, if not more uncertain, a factor in cultivation as the river water-supply is in Sind. Agricultural production is therefore as much subject to oscillation, and sometimes, perchance, violent oscillation, in the rest of the Presidency as in Sind. Hence, the case of Sind presents nothing singular or distinctive, and the fluctuations in this province have their parallel in other parts of the Presidency, where 30 years' settlements are the rule.

53. (4) It has already been shown above, that there is not much scope for further improvement in many parts of the province in the direction of the construction of roads, railways and canals, which have been long provided in the greater part of Sind, and to which there is no reason to fear any rapid or sudden addition. Besides, this condition is equally present in the rest of the Presidency, and has no special application to Sind.

54. (5) Population increases in Sind as it does in the Presidency, and everywhere else, for that matter, and there is no indication that Sind is abnormal or exceptional in this direction.

55. (6) Prices too rise in Sind as they do in the Presidency and elsewhere. In fact, there has been a general rise of prices in the whole of India. But in this connection it is important to remember that there has been a concurrent and co-equal rise in the cost of production and the cost of living. And this will always be. The income derivable from the former will always have an equal set-off in the outgoings entailed by the latter, and profit in one direction will always be balanced by loss in the other. Besides, there is nothing to show or suggest that prices in Sind have any tendency towards a more rapid or more sudden rise than in the rest of the Presidency.

56. It is therefore clear that Sind fulfils all the conditions that have been laid down by the Government of India as justifying the establishment of a 30 years' settlement. None of the opposite conditions indicated as necessitating a shorter settlement prevail in Sind to any greater extent than they do in the rest of the Presidency, and where they do prevail the interests of Government are, as shown above, sufficiently safeguarded. Hence, the case of Sind stands on all fours with that of the Presidency proper, and therefore what is considered or found suitable for the rest of the Presidency must also be suitable for Sind. In this connection, it is instructive to observe that a case for a 10 years' settlement was attempted to be made for the Presidency as well, and—what is more remarkable—the very grounds, or most of them, that are being urged now in support of short settlements, in the case of Sind, were also urged then with regard to the Presidency. And a 10 years' period was sanctioned, and was actually in force, for some time there. But the above pleas were finally overruled by Government as inapplicable to the Presidency, the 10 years' period of settlement was once for all abolished, and instead a 30 years' system of settlement was permanently established, for the reasons given by Government in favour of long settlements in paras. 24 and 39 of Mr. Secretary Reed's letter No. 3779 of 1839. Sind has long stood, and stands at present, in like case with the Presidency as regards length of settlement, and has, therefore, as strong and clear a claim for a 30 years' settlement as the Presidency.

57. So far as to the general conditions laid down by Government as necessary for the establishment of a 30 years' settlement. Let us now consider the special reasons advanced by Government in support of the short settlement maintained in Sind. These were given expression to by Lord Curzon in 1902, in his reply to the address, presented to him on the occasion of his visit to Sind, by the Sind Mahomedan Association. Lord Curzon in this connection spoke as follows:—

“When you make this request, do you not, to some extent, lose sight of the peculiar conditions of land tenure and cultivation in this province? There is no part of India where these *conditions are in a more transitional state*. You have to deal here both with the benefits and with the caprices of that most unstable of factors, water. On the one hand, irrigation, where successful, may convert a wilderness into a garden; on the other hand, the *vagaries of the river* may reduce a garden to a wilderness. In the one case, continuance of a low assessment becomes obsolete; in the other case, continuance of a high assessment is unfair. Later on, as *conditions become further crystallized, a longer period will probably come*.”

58. It will thus be seen that two reasons are assigned for the short settlements established in Sind: one is the extension of irrigation and the other the vagaries of the river.

59. To take first the extension of irrigation. Extended irrigation means increased water-supply, hence increased cultivation, and hence increased revenue to Government. The case of large irrigational improvements which provide an increased or assured water-supply to the land, has been clearly provided for in the Land Revenue Code. Section 55 of that Code enables Government to safeguard its interests in prospective revenue by charging special rates when new irrigational works are opened. Hence, the contingency of the construction of new canals or other irrigational works is no reason whatever for the maintenance of short settlements, since adequate provision is made for the interests of Government in that event.

60. The case of small local improvements stands on a different footing. They are not designed to increase the water-supply for existing cultivation. They are primarily intended for the removal of complaints regarding the deficiency of water-supply, which means loss of revenue to the State in the shape of remissions. These they reduce and thus add to the revenue of Government. They only result in or attempt the bringing of the water-supply to its proper and normal condition as regards existing cultivation, though sometimes they provide water for a new area of cultivation. They do not result in any increase of water-supply to existing cultivation, and are hence a proper and valid charge on the maintenance of the canal. However, should any increase actually occur in the water-supply, it is provided for by section 55 of Land Revenue Code, which embraces all manner of improvements made by Government, the effect of which is to secure an improved water-supply.

61. Hence, in any case these improvements in irrigation are directly to the benefit of the State, which secures added revenue, by reason of increased cultivation, which is in its turn due to an improved water-supply.

62. The above arguments only seek to meet the contingencies contemplated by Government. But here it may be protested, once for all, that those contingencies are extremely attenuated and remote. No great irrigational scheme looms in the near future, and the Sukkur Barrage and Rohri Canal are not yet within the domain of practical politics. Besides, even when they do come, Government have a clear way open to them of securing their interests. But, dismissing these schemes from immediate consideration, it is a matter of notoriety that there are very many talukas in Sind where there is no room for further extension of irrigation, and where, in the words of Lord Curzon, the conditions have been crystallized. In such talukas, therefore, settlements for 30 years are clearly indicated, and can safely be introduced, even in the possible event of the barrage or other great irrigational scheme being brought into force. For, as shown above, Government can in that case impose special rates. As there is a clear preponderance of such talukas, the greater part of the province can be brought under a 30 years' settlement. Hence it is clear that the excuse of extension of irrigation is a plea without substance or reality.

63. Coming to the other reason advanced for short settlements, the vagaries of the river, we find, on a little examination, that it is equally unsound and untrue. The vagaries of the river, which, by the way, have been very greatly exaggerated, do not affect the whole of the province. Only about a dozen talukas out of 58 border on the river, and even in their case the changes in the course of the river, if any, affect only a few villages, known as 'kacha' land, and not the whole talukas. Hence to deny the benefit of long settlements to the whole province on account of the vagaries of the river, which only affect a very small and almost negligible portion of it, is very unfair.

64. But even taking these into account, what do we find that the river does? It generally encroaches upon one side and turns 'paka' land into 'kacha,' and leaves alluvial soil on the other. There is already a different tenure for 'kacha' or alluvial lands. Thus there is an automatic machinery for adjusting the differences caused by the changes of the river. If any surveyed land is swallowed up by the river, it becomes alluvial when it comes out, and is treated as such; while, on the other hand, accretion made to the

survey land on the other side is dealt with in the same way. Besides, the vagaries of the river ever since the British conquest have not produced any such result as the conversion of a garden into a desert or of the desert into a garden. Had that been so, we should have seen great fluctuations in the realizations of the land revenue of the different talukas and at each revisional settlement there would have been a great and violent readjustment of rates of assessment. What we find, however, in actual practice is a steady and growing revenue from each taluka and at each new decennial settlement no reduction of rates any where; on the contrary enhancement is the result. The vagaries of the river and its results are therefore more imaginary than real and cannot stand the test of even a superficial scrutiny.

65. I shall illustrate my meaning by giving a few concrete cases in the next paragraph.

66. The revision of settlement of the talukas of Kambar and Ratodero, Khipro, Sanghar, Nasrat, Tando Allahyar, Shahdadpur, Tando Mahomed Khan took place a few years ago, resulting in a general, and in some talukas a very considerable, increase of assessment. Now, all these talukas are settled talukas, and not in one of them has the river "converted a desert into a garden or a garden into a desert," nor has any extensive scheme of irrigation been undertaken in any of them. Yet the period of settlement in all these is 10 years, with the exception of 3 talukas, for which the Collector recommended 20 years, and the Commissioner 10 years, but for which Government sanctioned 15 years as the mean of the two periods.

67. I trust I have sufficiently shown that the grounds urged by Government in support of short settlements in Sind either do not exist or are rarely present in point of fact, in the greater part of the provinces; and that where they do exist or arise, Government can and does take full advantage of them. Hence, it is clear, that there is no valid reason for the policy of Government in maintaining a special short settlement for Sind different from that of the Presidency. This differentiation is clearly unwarranted. And when Sind is governed by the same Land Revenue laws as the rest of the Presidency, it is only fair and proper that the settlement in Sind should be guaranteed for 30 years, as in the Presidency proper, and not for any lesser period.

68. To deal now with the questions proposed by the Committee.

69. The first question proposed is whether the shortness of the present period of settlement affects zamindars unfavourably by discouraging them from improving their land.

70. My answer to this is most emphatically in the affirmative. The most salient drawback of short settlements in Sind is the damper they throw on the otherwise natural inclination of zamindars to improve their land. This is so obvious and so natural that it scarcely needs any argument to prove it. A zamindar, constantly having before his mind's eye the knowledge that within a very few years the assessment on his land will be revised, or enhanced—for that is about the same thing—without his improvements will naturally be slow to make such improvements in the future, realizing as he does that they are more to the advantage of Government than to his own. He has not enjoyed the benefit of his improvements which have cost him so dearly in capital, in industry, in patience, long enough before the State steps in and claims the fruit of his expenditure, his labour and enterprise. Hence, he neither obtains an adequate reimbursement for the capital he has invested, nor a sufficient recoupment for his industry and interest in the land. And a zamindar, like every other business man, will be slow to invest capital in the improvement of his land when the return from it is most inadequate and fleeting.

71. This fact is so patent that it scarcely needs any authority to support it. But if authority were at all needed in the matter confirmation could easily be found, and from very high and responsible quarters. I might only mention the names of such distinguished and experienced officers in Sind

as Colonel Anderson, Colonel Merewether and Mr. Baker, whose opinions in this matter have already been quoted above.

72. I have just said that the benefit of improvements made by the zamindars is taken by the State. Here I know it will be contended, on behalf of Government, that section 107 of the Land Revenue Code expressly exempts improvements made at the cost of the landowners from liability to assessment. But this is mere theory, a theory which is quite divorced from actual practice. I will presently justify this observation. The Land Improvement Loans Act defines the term 'improvement' as including almost any form of improvement to land made by the zamindar at his own cost. The term 'improvement' is therefore very wide and comprehensive in its scope, and embraces almost every thing that every zamindar does every day in the ordinary course of things for the betterment of his cultivation, such as the clearance of watercourses, clearance of jungle, construction of bunds, manuring land, etc. Hence the value of the improvements a zamindar makes is scarcely distinguishable from and is managed in the other factors involved in the value of the land. The result is that it is hardly possible to avoid taxing improvements to the land, which are thrown into hotchpot along with other factors relating to the land. In fact, there is no indication whatever in any settlement report that there has been any detailed enquiry into, or consideration of, individual cases of improvement made by the various zamindars, which must needs be the case if improvements are to be properly exempted. Nor is this possible, for the rates can only be fixed with reference to area, or class of land, and not with reference to the several conditions obtained in the land of individual zamindars.

73. It being the case then, that improvements are taxed in actual practice, what possible encouragement can a zamindar find for the improvements of his land when he knows for certain that at the end of the very short period of 10 years, he will be taxed for the little advantage his industry and enterprise have produced him. I would respectfully submit that it is neither justice nor sound policy for the State to step in every now and then and to appropriate the profits that fairly belong to the land owner. No industry or enterprise can long survive; in the absence of a certain and guaranteed prospect of profit and return for a reasonable length of time, and where this is absent the inevitable result will be that all agricultural improvements must languish and die.

74. If a specific instance were needed, I might cite my own case. In certain debts, I had a mind to convert some of my lift land into flow by excavation and the reduction of level. The estimate made, showed that the work would entail a considerable outlay. However, it would have been worth my while in the event of an assurance that the rates would not be enhanced for a reasonable length of time. But on reflecting that the rates would be revised and enhanced in a very short time and this has actually been the case, I was compelled to abandon the scheme which could only make a poor and wholly inadequate return under the present short period of settlement. The gain to me would have been slow and gradual, and only a long settlement could bring me adequate reimbursement for the capital sunk in the improvements. But the gain to Government would have been immediate, being nothing less than the difference between the rates for flow and lift cultivation. Hence the shortness of the present settlements, while staying the improvement of my land, was also directly responsible for a loss to Government.

75. I might quote yet another case of mine to illustrate the effect that a short settlement has on the mind of a zamindar with regard to the improvement of his land.

76. My estate was, as the Commission is probably aware, under the management of the Court of Wards, and was leased out in portions at various amounts for terms of 8 years. The lessees, as is their wont, went on cultivating only good land year after year, without touching the inferior lands, or those that required

capital and concessions to haris. The result was that the lands were exhausted and would not pay any more. The lessees asked for remissions, which were liberally granted by my guardian, the Deputy Commissioner. By the expiry of these leases, I came of age, and my estate came back to me. I issued public notices in respect of the leases and held a public auction at Jamesabad. But the bids scarcely reached half the amount of the original lease money, and, in some cases, hardly more than one-third. This decided me to manage my lands myself. I ascertained the existing batai rates in the locality, and these were :

Flow—Half and half of the gross produce for the zamindar and the hari, plus 3 to 5 sers of cotton per maund for the zamindar towards expenses.

Lift—One-third and two-third of the gross produce for the zamindar and hari respectively, plus 3 to 5 sers of cotton per maund for the zamindar for expenses.

77. But then the hari could cultivate any survey number he liked, and prepare the land for cultivation in any way he chose, and he naturally chose the best lands.

78. After the deliberation, I called a conference of my haris in each deh, and offered them the followings terms:— I undertook to forego the 3 to 5 sers per maund allowed to the zamindar for expense, and to take only half or one-third according as the land was flow or lift. I also undertook to advance them takavi, and provide seed, without any interest. *The haris*, on their part, should agree to (1) *plough the land at least four times, with at least 15 days' intervals between the ploughings, before putting in the seed*; (2) *in each deh make plots, and cultivate them all, irrespective of the sort of land*; (3) *manure the inferior lands*; (4) *construct 'bannas' to facilitate irrigation.*

79. The haris agreed to these proposals and took to the field on these conditions. Each deh was divided into 3 to 5 plots, and all the land was regularly cultivated. The result was alike favourable to me, in as much as my land, whether good, bad or indifferent, was fully cultivated and improved, and to Government, in as much as a larger revenue was thereby secured by reason of the increase in the area under cultivation.

80. In the meantime the assessment on these lands has been revised twice, and the rates have been enhanced each time, hence, even in my case,—and herein lies the morale of the whole incident—I am seriously considering whether, owing to the present short period of settlement and the manner it affects me, I should not go back to the old rates of batai which were more favourable to me.

81. The second question proposed is whether short settlements have decreased the value of land for the purpose of sale, lease or mortgage.

My answer to this question too is in the affirmative, and for similar reasons. A man purchasing or taking the lease or mortgage of land having in his mind the knowledge that, in a very short time, the assessment will be revised or enhanced—for that is about the same thing—may naturally be expected to take this circumstance into calculation in the price he offers for the purchase, lease or mortgage of the land. Like every other businessman, he must naturally regulate the price he offers on this basis of loss and uncertainty.

83. Now it may be contended that this is not a fact, as the value of land has risen. But while I agree with Government as to the fact, I emphatically differ as to its cause.

84. It is a matter of notoriety that this state of things has its origin less in natural causes than in artificial conditions. Of recent years there has been a rush for land, and the increased demand has naturally entailed a rise in the

price of land. But we cannot stop here. We have to go a step further, and consider what is the reason for it. The reason is that land is considered a safe, if not a paying, investment, when the uncertain fortunes of commercial concerns are considered. Land also carries with it status and importance of its own, which is very dear to the hearts of most people. In Sind as elsewhere there is a strong tendency on the part of the capitalists to acquire real property. But, above all, land, if prized at all, is prized not so much for its direct benefits, which are anything but attractive, as for the secondary and indirect advantages attaching to it.

85. It is well known that the majority of capitalist zamindars, who are generally Hindus, are in the habit of advancing money, at very high rates, to their hariis, who are almost exclusively Mahomedans. This system is to the advantage of both parties. The zamindar lender obtains a most excellent return for the capital he lends, an income which is incomparably in excess of that obtainable any where else. The loan is also unattended by any risk or uncertainty, as the hari, once indebted, is in his hands, and the zamindar can easily and effectually recover his interest, either in money or in kind, at the time of the batai, without any necessity of resort to the Court. On the other hand, the hari, whose credit is generally at low water mark, can easily obtain money, albeit at high interest, which he could not raise anywhere else. Now the zamindar, once he has the hari in his debt, can and does take advantage of the latter's indebtedness. As the capital of the loan is never discharged, he can ever go on adding to his rate of interest for every fresh advance he makes, an arrangement in which the hari's necessity compels him to acquiesce; and the zamindar also trades on hari's necessity at the time of the batai, allowing the latter smaller value for the produce than the prevailing market rates.

86. A contrast of the case of Sind with that of the Presidency has already been made, and it has been shown abundantly that there is no peculiarity in the conditions of Sind justifying any differentiation in treatment. A comparison of Sind with the Punjab too would be equally in favour of Sind. The Punjab has had larger irrigational works than Sind will probably ever have. The same river, with same caprices, is as wilful and wayward in the Punjab as in Sind. And yet a 10 years' settlement has never been thought of there. Twenty years is the rule, and in some parts even a period of 30 years prevails, and even this is considered insufficient by the people of that province.

87. It may be said on behalf of Government that though the period of guarantee is theoretically one of 10 years, yet in actual practice it is sometimes longer, being occasionally extended by Government. Thus the Tando settlements ran out a course of 15 years. The settlement proposals for the Hyderabad taluka were prepared in 1908, but were not sanctioned by Government till 1913. The settlement proposals for Dadu, Sehwan and Johi were submitted to Government in 1909, but were not sanctioned till 1912. But this haphazard method of extending the period does no good to the people. The people cannot possibly foresee and reckon on the enlargement of the period. They deal with their lands on the understanding that the period is to be one of 10 years. They cannot forecast the future, nor base their operations with regard to the land on mere speculation. For the reality may belie their hopes and calculations, specially when extensions of the period are like angel visits, few and far between.

88. But the very fact that the period is extended, however rarely, by Government is proof enough that Government have found the present period too short, and a longer period necessary, in some cases. Well, what could be better than the grant of a longer guarantee in the first instance? The people would then have the advantage and satisfaction of *previous assurance and certainty*, and could then safely work their cultivation on the basis of a longer term. *At present it is all doubt and uncertainty, indecision and hesitation.*

89. It is sometimes urged, as a reason against long settlements, that agricultural concessions only tend to the benefit of the zamindars, and do not reach the more deserving class, the hariis. The answer to this is that, even if

long term settlements could at all be styled concessions—which they are not—the benefits accruing to them would fall more to the haris than the zamindars. Haris in Sind, it is well known, can generally dictate their own terms. In fact, the share of the hari at batai *has been maintained since 1882, though the assessment—which is paid by the zamindar—has steadily increased.* If anything, the share of the zamindar is unmistakably on the wane, owing to the opening of new canals and other irrigational works. But if the settlement were a longer one, and the zamindar had no fear of frequent and rapid revisions and enhancements, as is the case at present, the zamindar would be in a position to still further increase the share of the hari, and would do so of his own motion.

90. It is also contended on behalf of Government that short settlements are maintained in Sind partly for the behoof of the people, whose interests the State professes to study and protect. But this profession is belied by actual practice. For, it is common experience, all official disclaimers to the contrary notwithstanding, that revisions of settlements almost invariably entail an enhancement of the assessment. Revision has almost come to be recognized as synonymous with an increase of rates.

91. Bearing this fact in mind, is there any reason for wonder that the people fail to see eye to eye with Government with regard to the merits of short settlements, and that they cannot allow themselves to be persuaded into the belief that their good is the State's chief concern in this matter. The people's unhesitating belief and conviction—a belief and conviction which are based on convincing and conclusive reasons, and are endorsed by actual experience of the effects of the present settlement—are that their good lies in long settlements, and that the shortest settlement that can promote that good is one of 30 years.

92. Finally, I would humbly venture to protest against the way the Commission have approached the subject. The questions proposed by them for solution are so framed as to throw the burden of proof on the wrong shoulders. It has been long understood by the people, and repeatedly admitted by Government, that a period of 30 years is or should be the rule in all tracts where a temporary settlement prevails, and that a departure from this rule is only warranted by especial and exceptional conditions and circumstances. Hence the present period of 10 years in Sind is clearly and admittedly an exception, and the burden of proof lies heavily on Government to make good that exception. It is a general and accepted principle of law that the party pleading an exception must prove that exception strictly. Hence it is for Government to show why a period of 10 years is warranted and a period of 30 years unwarranted in Sind, and not for the people to show the reverse. It is for Government to make out their case—and it must be a clear and conclusive case—for a 10 years' settlement in Sind, and not for the people to make out a case for a 30 years' period. It is for Government to show cause for the present system, and not for the people to show cause against it.

93. But the course followed by the Commission is putting the saddle on the wrong horse. Its unfairness to the people is all the greater, as the evidence called for is in support of negative facts, and must necessarily be of a negative character. The people have been asked to prove the negative, namely, that short settlement *do not* tend to any improvement of the land or *do not* tend to raise the value of land, while it was more properly for Government to prove the positive, namely, that short settlements have helped the improvement, or the rise in the value of land. And negative evidence it is always hard, and sometimes not even possible, to adduce to any conclusive effect.

94. For all the above reasons it behoves Government to fix a settlement of 30 years as the general rule in Sind. Government may, if it thinks fit, reserve to itself, as it has in the Presidency, the right to have a shorter settlement in any special case, and thus safeguard its interests against any exceptional or unforeseen contingency. The supreme advantage of this arrangement would be that it would be understood once for all both by the people and by

the officers of Government that 30 years is the normal and proper period of settlement for the Province, a period which must be fixed in the ordinary course of things, and that any period short of that would be clearly abnormal and exceptional, for which a special case must be made out. Hitherto nothing has done more harm to the cause of long settlements in Sind than the impression of the officers of Government that 10 years in the "usual" rule for this Province, the word "usual" pointing to the underlying idea of propriety or conformity to type. And the sooner this false and mischievous impression is removed, the better for all concerned—certainly better for the people and, I would venture to submit, also better for Government, whose interests will, I feel, must unquestionably be advanced by the establishment of a 30 years' settlement in Sind, which cannot fail to promote the prosperity and contentment of the people of this Province.

(Sd.) G. M. BHURGRI.

APPENDIX A.

Statement showing the incidence of land assessment per acre in British India.

Names of Province.	1907-1908.		1908-1909.		1909-1910.		1910-1911.		1911-1912.		Remarks.
	On total area.	On cultivated area.	On total area.	On cultivated area.	On total area.	On cultivated area.	On total area.	On cultivated area.	On total area.	On cultivated area.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	Ra. a. p.	
Upper Burma ...	0 11 10	1 5 7	0 6 6	1 5 7	0 7 0	1 7 5	0 7 8	1 10 9	0 7 2	1 9 4	
Lower Burma ...	2 6 11	2 9 3	2 8 0	2 10 9	2 8 0	2 11 7	2 9 8	2 12 8	2 9 0	2 12 7	
Assam ...	1 15 7	Not available	1 15 9	Not available	1 15 3	Not available	1 14 9	Not available	1 15 2	Not available	
Bengal ...	1 1 2	1 12 4	N	o	t	a	1 1	a	b	1	o
Bihar and Orissa ...	0 11 6	0 15 6	n	t	a	v	a	1 1	a	b	1 1 3
Agra ...	1 2 9	1 12 4	1 2 9	1 12 4	1 2 9	1 12 4	1 2 9	1 12 4	1 2 8	1 12 8	
Oudh ...	1 3 6	1 14 0	1 3 5	1 14 0	1 3 5	1 14 0	1 3 5	1 14 0	1 6 4	1 15 11	
Ajmere and Marwar ...	1 3 4	2 9 0	1 6 4	2 9 0	1 3 4	2 9 0	0 8 1	1 4 8	0 5 1	1 4 6	
Punjab ...	0 9 3	1 1 5	0 10 1	1 1 2	0 10 4	1 1 8	0 10 9	1 2 5	0 11 7	1 4 6	
N.-W. Frontier ...	0 5 4	0 15 7	0 5 9	1 0 2	0 5 5	0 15 8	0 5 4	0 15 3	0 5 2	0 15 0	
Bombay ...	1 1 10	1 7 9	1 1 11	1 7 5	2 1 11	1 7 1	1 1 11	1 7 0	1 1 10	1 10 3	
Central Provinces ...	0 1 10	0 5 11	0 2 7	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 3 2	0 2 11	0 6 0	0 2 11	0 6 0	
Berar ...	0 15 10	1 2 9	1 7 0	1 2 4	1 0 6	1 2 5	1 9 7	1 2 10	1 1 11	1 6 4	
Madras ...	1 15 11	2 5 5	1 15 8	2 7 0	1 15 8	2 7 0	1 15 8	2 7 0	1 15 8	2 7 0	
Sind ...	2 4 7	2 7 4	2 4 11	2 7 2	2 5 9	2 8 8	2 8 2	2 8 7	2 10 7	2 15 7	

These figures do not include permanently settled areas.

Examination of the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri, Bar-at-Law.

Questioned by the President—

- Q. I think you object to the procedure adopted by the Committee ?
- A. Yes, I do.
- Q. Would you tell me why ?
- A. Because I think the burden of showing that the short term settlement is good is on Government, who consider that there are exceptional circumstances in Sind which justify on short term settlement unlike the Presidency.
- Q. I suppose you have no objection to giving evidence ?
- A. No, because Government and the people are interested in this matter.
- Q. But you do it under protest ?
- A. No.
- Q. I understand the party which has moved in the matter are the zamindars represented by you ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is it not your duty then to show why the period of settlement should be extended to 30 years ?
- A. So far as the duty of the public is concerned, it is all right. But we would first like to know from Government what are those exceptional circumstances which necessitate on short term settlement in Sind. I believe that 30 years' settlement ought to be the rule in the whole of India, and Sind should not be an exception to it.

Questioned by Mr. Martin—

- Q. Should you not be called on by Government to show your position ?
- A. Instead of being examined by Government, you ought to have examined Government officials and elicited from them the reasons which necessitate a short term settlement ?
- Q. How can Government be examined ?
- A. There are representatives of Government appointed by them and they could be examined on behalf of Government.
- Q. But can't you explain your position ?
- A. It is not fair to us, as we do not know their views and we shall have no voice.

Questioned by the President—

- Q. I understand your point to be that not knowing the Government case, you cannot know your own ?
- A. Quite right.

Q. Can't you state your views ?

A. All this while I have been hunting in the dark.

Questioned by Professor Shahani—

Q. You have quoted a passage from the Decentralization Committee's report. Can't you give the whole of it ?

A. You see the whole of the despatch is not quoted in that. It is only the portion which is referred to by me. I may inform you that I asked Government to show me a despatch of 1875, but they refused to do so.

Questioned by the President—

Q. I understand you to state that Sind has the highest incidence of assessment in the whole of India and that this is due to the frequency of the revisions, each of which brings enhancement in its train. Is that so ?

A. Yes.

Q. Let us turn to your table of figures showing the incidence of assessment. Where did you obtain these figures from ?

A. From the blue-book.

Q. In the statement accompanying your printed report in columns 2 and 3 (*i. e.*, on total area and on cultivated area) Rs. 2-4-7 and 2-7-4 are shown for Sind for the first year. It is obvious, is it not, that the incidence on the total Kabuli or on the culturable area could not so nearly equal that on the cultivated area. This is therefore a mistake ?

A. That is what the Government publication says.

Q. I want to ask you whether it could possibly be so ?

A. I think it ought to be less. It looks like that.

Q. You will admit that Rs. 2-4-7 as a rate on the whole culturable land in Sind is absurd ?

A. Yes, it looks like that.

Q. We will next turn to this Rs. 2-7-4. It is the rate on the cultivated area. You are aware that what is called assessment in Sind includes also the water rate on irrigated cultivation. Are you aware that in other parts of India water rate is separated from the assessment ? Thus, can you fairly compare the assessment on unirrigated land in other parts of India with the assessment plus water rate on irrigated land in Sind ?

A. No. That will be unfair. I understood that these figures in this statement include water rate for other parts of India. Otherwise it is absurd to give it in the comparison table.

Q. Then you admit that if the rates shown in this table for other parts of India do not include the water rate, then your figures are misleading and valueless. And in that case the whole of your assertion that Sind has the highest incidence of assessment per acre falls to the ground.

A. Silence.

- Q. You are aware that assessment is only levied in Sind on cultivated land. Is there no other no other part of India to your knowledge where the assessment is levied on cultivated land ?
- A. Punjab.
- Q. Where the assessment is only levied on cultivated land ?
- A. I cannot say that.
- Q. If you are comparing a combined land revenue and water rate levied on irrigated land when cultivated with land revenue levied on unirrigated land whether cultivated or not, then the comparison would be unfair ?
- A. Silence.
- Q. You are not aware whether you are doing so or not ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. Leaving the comparison of Sind with other parts of India, let us proceed to the second point. Your assertion is that this is due to the frequency of revisions, each bringing enhancement in its train. Have you compared the present rates of assessment with those fixed in the first irrigational settlements ?
- A. I have not done so.
- Q. Then on what do you ground your assertion ?
- A. My ground is that the settlement reports, with the exception of one or two cases, show that every revision settlement has brought an increase. I think there are only two or three cases in which there has been some decrease.
- Q. Let us see. Are you aware that, taking 50 talukas in Sind, in 20 cases there has been no enhancement in Sind since the first irrigational settlement ?
- A. I am not aware of that. There has been decrease in some.
- Q. You state that revision always means enhancement.
- A. Not only I, but Mr. Baker also.
- Q. Well, you repeat Mr. Baker's assertion ?
- A. Yes. I find that, except in one or two cases, assessment has been enhanced in every case. If it is not done directly, it is done by grouping.
- Q. You state that Government never reduce assessment on account of a falling off in prosperity ?
- A. I have said, it has in a few cases.
- Q. I do not think so. This is what you have stated. "In fact Sind has a place of pride in the whole of India as regards the incidence of assessment per acre, and it is obvious that one of the main reasons for this unenviable pre-eminence is the short duration and consequent frequency of settlements, each revision of which brings enhancement in its train" ?
- A. Then that wants modification.

- Q. Yes. That is all I want. Are you aware that in the case of some talukas the assessment has been very much reduced?
- A. Yes. I know, in some talukas.
- Q. Even to the extent of 30 per cent.?
- A. That I cannot say.
- Q. Well, here is 44.9 in the case of Johi settlement. Take another case viz., Mirpur Sakro, which shows a decrease of 29.54 per cent. Ghorabari 28.21, Tatta 18.63. In the face of these three instances are you justified in saying that Government never reduce the assessment?
- A. I said that that requires qualification.
- Q. Considerable qualification!
- A. Silence.
- Q. You state that there are few talukas in which there is room for extension of irrigation?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What exactly do you mean by that?
- A. I mean that there is little room for more canals.
- Q. Supposing the supply of the Jamrao were doubled, would that not be an extension of irrigation?
- A. That would be an improvement but not an extension.
- Q. I put it to you that every taluka contains possibility of improvement of irrigation?
- A. If you take it in that sense, then there may be some possibility of improvements.
- Q. Then of course that contention is thrown overboard?
- A. I cannot go beyond a certain point.
- Q. At present the water-supply that we are getting is limited. It could be increased until there is water for the whole area commanded by a canal?
- A. Whole area. That is what I say, if you call that extension.
- Q. You will admit, in the literal meaning of the sense, in every taluka there is room for an extension of irrigation?
- A. Well, if you use it in that sense, that qualified sense.
- Q. In what sense do you use it?
- A. The sense of construction of new canals. Of course, if you give more water to an old canal, I do not think that is an extension of irrigation.
- Q. Then it is a quarrel about terms?
- A. Silence.
- Q. You state that kachas only are affected by the vagaries of the river. I put it to you that every taluka is dependent on canals whose mouths are continually being affected by the vagaries of the river?
- A. That is so in one sense.

- Q. In the obvious sense?
- A. I mean to say that if the mouth of a canal is silted—and this is due to the vagaries of the river—in that way every taluka in Sind is affected by the vagaries of the river.
- Q. Exactly; that is what I want. The next question is incidental. You have quoted the Nasrat taluka as an example of a settled taluka in which assessment has been raised and heavily enhanced though the river has not converted a desert into a garden. Are you aware that this taluka is a new creation, so far from being a settled taluka?
- A. Yes, I am aware of that, certainly.
- Q. To what revision are you referring, then? You say that the assessment has been revised in the Nasrat taluka and has been heavily enhanced. To what revision do you refer?
- A. The Nasrat taluka has got a 41.43 increase of assessment. I have not got the year, but I have the figures.
- Q. Are you aware that formerly it was a part of the Sakrand desert. And can you say that it is an old settled taluka?
- A. But Nasrat taluka has been irrigated for some time.
- Q. But the settlement was done some time ago?
- A. Yes, that is so.
- Q. Then the Nasrat taluka should be struck off?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You state that zamindars are never free from the thought that their rates will be enhanced and that this prevents them from making any improvements. That is your opinion?
- A. Yes, that is the opinion even of authorities on economy.
- Q. Have you noticed that there is any difference between cultivation in jagir lands and the cultivation in ryati land, difference in the amount of improvement and the goodness of the cultivation?
- A. Jagirdars are worse than Government. I mean that in Government land assessment is increased on certain principles. You cannot compare the two.
- Q. You mean to say that Jagirdars enhance their assessment?
- A. Yes in many cases; except where there are Maurusi haris.
- Q. If the Sindhi zamindar is so much haunted by the fear of revision, why does he not represent his case at a settlement time?
- A. Because he thinks that making applications is not liked by his officers. Further, he does not know for the reason why rates are enhanced. That is his difficulty.
- Q. Surely that is a reason asking why?
- A. So many times have I asked for copies.
- Q. I think we are misunderstanding each other. My question is, while the enquiry is being made, why does not the zamindar represent his case?
- A. They do. They make applications, they come to the Settlement Officer. In the state of society in which zamindars are now, can you expect more from them.
- Q. Is it the shortness of the settlement that makes the Sindhi leave ak and kirir bushes growing in his cotton?
- A. We cannot say that.

- Q. Supposing that there was a longer settlement, do you think the Sindhvi will cultivate his land better?
- A. I think so.
- Q. The shortness of the settlement period does not deter the Punjabi Abadgar from improving his land?
- A. Even the Punjabi zamindars would be deterred. A zamindar has been complaining to me about it.
- Q. Was he an Abadgar or a Sufed Posh?
- A. He was a Sufed Posh.
- Q. You assert that Government steps in and claims the fruit of his enterprise if he lays out money on his land?
- A. That is so under the present system. Whatever the Settlement Officer does is irrespective of any zamindar having improved his land.
- Q. Government should not tax improvements?
- A. No, Government themselves have said so.
- Q. But surely the meaning of that is that Government should not make improvements the ground of enhancement?
- A. That is surely so.
- Q. You do not mean that because the zamindar has improved his land the assessment should not be enhanced on any other grounds?
- A. Improvements and other factors which contribute to the enhancement of assessment are so intermixed that it is impossible for the Settlement Officer to separate them.
- Q. My point is this. The only objection you raise is that the improvements of the zamindars should not be made the ground of enhancement?
- A. No. That does not—
- Q. I do not think you catch my point. Suppose there are 2 zamindars in one village. A improves his land and B does not improve his land. The assessment is enhanced on the whole village. There is no injustice to A though after improving his land he has to pay the same as B who has not improved his land?
- A. Yes, I understand your point. (Rest of answer was not recorded.)
- Q. Your point is that he can't say whether the goodness of land is due to improvement or accident. Can you give any instances in which because a zamindar has improved his land, the assessment has been enhanced?
- A. Well, I cannot, because no mention of improvement has been made in any settlement report.
- Q. You state that the shortness of the settlement has debarred you from lowering your lift lands; since the scheme could only bring in a poor and wholly inadequate return under the present system of settlements. Lowering of your lift lands increases your profits?
- A. Yes; because it would save me so many expenses.
- Q. Why do you not do so, then, whether rates are enhanced or not?
- A. It is for these reasons. If lift land is cultivated, I am paid by my haris, but when I spend Rs. 25 thousands on my land, I realize my profits gradually, while Government will be gaining immediately. My work will be done by haris to whom I will advance my money.

- Q. I put it to you that you gain immediately too?
- A. No; because I have to make certain concessions to the haris. They will have to do the work. I will have to make concessions to them.
- Q. You will at once gain the difference between the lift and flow shares of produce?
- A. No, I will have to make concessions to my haris.
- Q. Apart from paying for the work, your gains will begin directly it is cultivated?
- A. No. In the beginning I will have to make concessions to the haris who are to work. So, I won't gain.
- Q. But supposing you pay for the thing straight off?
- A. Yes, but the haris do it.
- Q. Why should it not be done by labour?
- A. The labour will not be available.
- Q. But if the haris do it, that is a gain for you?
- A. On the contrary, haris dictate their own terms?
- Q. Why should you not do it number by number?
- A. That is exactly what I do. But the hari will have to do it.
- Q. Are you aware that Punjabi Abadgars invariably lower lift lands in this way, undeterred by short settlements?
- A. Yes, some of them.
- Q. I think they do it invariably, unless the land is very bad indeed?
- A. Silence.
- Q. You are also aware that the Punjabis are most prosperous people?
- A. Of course. I think there are many Sindhi zamindars prosperous also.
- Q. I understand that your point is that it is too much trouble on your part to do this?
- A. No; as I told you, the difficulty is labour.
- Q. But would you have labour if there is a long settlement?
- A. The short settlement will affect us in this way. I cannot press my haris. I do not want them to run away. Government will be gaining at once and I will not be gaining my interest on capital. Meanwhile the revision comes in.
- Q. Let us take a concrete example: how long will it take a man to improve an acre of land?
- A. Something like a week or more.
- Q. What concessions will you have to make?
- A. For certain years, I give him 5 kisas or 6 kisas. In return he does work well; I have also the consolation of knowing that he will not run away.
- Q. That is a cheaper way of doing it than if you did it by labour?
- A. Sometimes you may not get labour. If the man is there, my work will be done.
- Q. How does the settlement period affect the question?
- A. If the settlement is to run for only 10 years we do not get the recoupment which we ought to.

- Q. Supposing that there was a longer settlement, do you think the Sindhi will cultivate his land better?
- A. I think so.
- Q. The shortness of the settlement period does not deter the Punjabi Abadgar from improving his land?
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- Q. That is a cheaper way of doing it than if you did it by labour ?
- A. Sometimes you may not get labour. If the man is there, my work will be done.
- Q. How does the settlement period affect the question ?
- A. If the settlement is to run for only 10 years we do not get the recoupment which we ought to.

- Q. You state that you have given your haris easier terms than customary on condition that they cultivate your land in a particular way and specially that they cultivate the inferior as well as the best land. Does this pay you at present?
- A. Well to a certain extent, because they save me at least fallow assessment.
- Q. Does it pay you?
- A. It does pay me because there is increased cultivation. Every inch of my land is being cultivated. Increased cultivation brings increased profit.
- Q. I do not understand; if this system pays you at present on the whole why do you want to go back to the former system?
- A. Taking a long view, I expect it to pay me. Supposing there is an enhancement of rates, I will have to reconsider the question.
- Q. I understand your point to be that you have undertaken this system on the assumption that you could estimate exactly what your profits would be in 15 years' time?
- A. I consider it in this way. My land, very inferior land, is cultivated by these people and after years it is improved and in the end will pay me.
- Q. Taking a long view, you hope it will pay you?
- A. Certainly.
- Q. A possible enhancement of assessment may turn a paying scheme into a scheme which does not pay?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Then you state again that if settlements were longer the zamindar could give better terms to his haris?
- A. That is so, if he is a sensible man.
- Q. Do you mean to say that any zamindar would give better terms to his haris than he is absolutely obliged to?
- A. A zamindar will give better terms to his haris if he wants his land improved. If a man knows with certainty that for so many years he can have his land cultivated without its assessment being enhanced, he will undertake the improvement.
- Q. The only other question is this: Your land, I believe, is all on the Jamrao?
- A. Nearly half of it. I have got land on Mithrao also.
- Q. You have not suffered so far on account of the shortness of the settlement period?
- A. Only on account of one.
- Q. My point is that the only settlement that has taken place hitherto has practically been the first settlement since the Jamrao was constructed.
- A. Yes.
- Q. That enhancement would have taken place even with the 30 years settlement as a water rate would have been imposed. That is, as far as you personally are concerned you have hitherto suffered nothing?
- A. After 5 years another settlement will come. After 10 years another will come.

Q. My question is whether you have suffered by the short period of settlement so far ?

A. No.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Prices rise in Sind as they do in the Presidency and elsewhere. Do you not think that rise in prices justifies rise in rates ?

A. I do think so. Yes. It does justify it.

Q. The period of settlement in Punjab is 20 years. Can you see any reason for differentiation in Sind.

A. I see none.

Q. You have said in paragraph 55 "the income derivable from the former (i. e., high prices) will always have an equal set off in the outgoings (cost of production and living) cultivated by the latter and profit in one direction will always be balanced by loss with other." The rise is proportionate all round.

A. The rise in prices means a rise all round.

Q. Then if the land revenue is simply proportionately increased then there is no loss to the zamindar ?

A. I have no objection to that at all. As a matter of fact it is not only my opinion ; it is the opinion of many authorities that the only grounds on which assessment should be enhanced are the rises in the prices.

Q. Supposing an improvement is made by a zamindar. If the increase in profit is taxed by Government and Government tax the same proportion out of these profits; which it took on the original profits, then the zamindar obtains his proportion out of the profits of this improvement ?

A. He does.

Q. That is quite true. If the Government take 1/3rd of the net produce and if an improvement is affected by a zamindar which increases the produce and the assessment is enhanced proportionately, will the zamindar not obtain still his share of the increased profits ?

A. I think it is not fair for the Government to step in at once. Government may do it afterwards.

Q. You simply say in that case Government does not take the whole advantage of the improvement ?

A. It is juster for the Government officers to let the man who spent the money recoup himself first, that is the idea.

Q. With regard to paragraph 81. In what way does the short settlement decrease the value of land ?

A. I have not got figures for that.

Q. But you do not definitely say in what way ?

A. No. I have not worked it up.

Q. In paragraph 89 you say "In fact the share of the hari at batai has been maintained since 1882, though the assessment which is paid by the zamindar has steadily increased." If the assessment is proportionate to the increase in prices and the general fertility of land, the zamindar gets his proportion as before ?

A. If the assessment is only based on prices.

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- Q. The zamindar's share remains unchanged ?
- A. Yes. He gets the same share which has been fixed since 1882.
- Q. But that share is also increasing in value ?
- A. Silence.

Questioned by Professor Shahani—

- Q. In paragraph 35 of your report you say "Such a settlement is unquestionably the best that can be had (permanent settlement)." Will it be the best for all the parties ?
- A. Well, I do not know. In one sense it would, because it would really bring contentment among the people.
- Q. Then you say, "The late lamented Romash Chandra Dutt, the eminent Indian statesman, administrator and economist, has conclusively shown that among other striking benefits the remarkable immunity that Bengal has enjoyed for over a century from the devastating effects of famines which have had a belighting influence on the rest of India is directly and solely due to the establishment of the permanent settlement in that Province."
- A. Yes.
- Q. What is your opinion ; is it solely due to it ?
- A. Yes, I think so.
- Q. In paragraph 36 of your report you say, "Since my main contention is tantamount to a plea for an increased length of settlement, I should like to enforce the great truth, that the longer the settlement the better settlement. Is this so ?
- A. Yes. That is even admitted by the Government of India.
- Q. But you recommend 30 years' settlement. Why not 100 years ?
- A. Thirty years in this way. The State Exchequer has to get some money from the people once in a generation. That is quite enough.
- Q. Then you are against the settlement in perpetuity ?
- A. That is quite impossible. We won't have it.
- Q. Please see paragraph 49 of your report. Can you give facts to prove it ?
- A. Although I am doubtful about the figures I have, yet I give them. Water-supply in Sind is estimated to be available for 38,37,220 acres and the cultivation is estimated at 34,54,650 acres.

By Mr. Gebbie—

- Q. That is the estimated supply. The actual supply must fall short. You say that the difference is less than 4 lakhs ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. In paragraph 76 you say. "The lessees, as is their wont, went on cultivating good land, year after year, without touching the inferior lands or those that required capital or concession to the haris"
- A. I mean in most of my lands.

- Q. During these 8 years, you must have had to pay a lot of fallow assessment?
- A. Oh yes. The very first year I paid something like 15 thousand rupees as fallow assessment.
- Q. In the same paragraph you state, "But the bids scarcely reached half the amount of the original lease money and in some cases hardly more than one-third" Was the reduction due to the exhaustion of the lands?
- A. Yes, that was one of the reasons.
- Q. Further, you say, "This decided me to manage my lands myself." I want to know if you have had to get any of the outlets on the Jamrao shifted after that?
- A. Some minor changes might have taken place in one or two places.
- Q. Paragraph 77. "But then the hari could cultivate any survey number he liked and prepare the land for cultivation in any way he chose and he naturally chose the best lands." Have you ascertained this to be true?
- A. Yes, that is true. You can easily find out from the cultivation of those years. They simply chose the best tracts.
- Q. Can you give an instance of a deh in which the selection was made by the haris?
- A. Yes, for instance in deh 211 and 212.
- Q. Paragraph 78, you say, "I also undertook to advance them takavi and provide seed without any interest. At what rate do you supply grain to the haris?"
- A. Market rate, plus actual expenditure which I incur in bringing the seed to Jamesabad.
- Q. Further, you say, "The haris on their part agreed to plough the land at least four times with at least 15 days' intervals between the ploughings before putting in the seed" Is it two times or four times?
- A. Four times.
- Q. Secondly, "in each deh to make plots and cultivate them all irrespective of the sort of land." Do you mean larger plots of land than acre plots?
- A. I mean that supposing that in one deh I have got 400 acres of land. It is made into 4 plots, each plot of 100 acres. Each plot has to be cultivated every year; to make the plots thus cultivated by one hari in turn so that whatever good or bad land there is it is cultivated.
- Q. Next you say, "Construct banas to facilitate irrigation" Are banas constructed by all haris or your haris alone. You will find banas are very high, which are called karum, so that there is no waste of water?
- A. They are not constructed by all the haris, as I find that there was a good deal of waste water and heavy fines.
- Q. Paragraph 80, "Haris in Sind, it is well known, can generally dictate their own terms." How far is this true?
- A. Haris, so far as batai is concerned, dictate their own terms. Really speaking, certain zamindars are getting more than they ought to get. But if the hari runs away the whole thing is gone.

- Q. Are you aware that the position of a hari is very much better than that of the zamindar ?
- A. Yes, better, but not very much better than that of the zamindar.
- Q. Are you also aware that haris run away ?
- A. Yes ; some haris do.
- Q. It is also true that indebted haris neglect cultivation ?
- A. That is perfectly true. Because he knows the whole thing is taken away.
- Q. Is it also true that his share is usually small ?
- A. At times very small.
- Q. Is it true that the zamindar takes advantage of the indebtedness of the hari ?
- A. Yes, I am afraid that is true in some cases, not in all.
- Q. Is it true that the hari takes advantage of the zamindar's indebtedness ?
- A. If the zamindar is indebted, the hari gets the advantage. If the hari is indebted the zamindar gets the advantage.

Opinion of the Hon'ble Mr. Harchandral Vishandas.

Karachi, 9th July 1915.

To

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION FOR ENQUIRING INTO
THE EXTENSION OF SETTLEMENT PERIODS IN SIND.**

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following answers to the queries propounded by you.

1. I do recommend that the present period of settlement be extended from ten to thirty years.

My reasons are those which have been frequently urged from press and platform and in addresses and memorials.

Except in Sind, 30 years' settlement obtains in the whole of the Bombay Presidency and the other provinces of Bengal and some parts of Upper Provinces and Madras where there is permanent settlement and Punjab where there is 20 years' settlement.

The grounds assigned for giving Sind a different treatment are and have been shown to be fallacious.

The theory of the caprices of water, including the vagaries of the Indus turning gardens into wildernesses and *vice versa* has been sufficiently answered above. The vagaries only affect a small portion of the provinces, for which a separate treatment could be provided, if the fact does hold good in those parts. If this theory were correct, enhancements of assessments would not be the rule as is the case with every revision of settlements, but enhancement would alternate with reduction.

As to the variations in water-supply for instance, extended irrigation, in the first place Government is compensated by the increased crops due to extensive irrigation, in the next place wherever new projects like the Jamrao Canal are executed Government create special tenures—and the ryot would not be justified in complaining in such cases. The State is entitled to increased rates in such cases. Besides, Government, while guaranteeing the period of settlement can reserve to itself the right of increasing rates for increased supply of water owing to construction of works at the cost of the State.

Secretaries of State, Viceroys, leading statesmen and other officers have advocated long term settlements whose names have been so often mentioned before, that the Commission must be knowing them and it would be unnecessary to repeat them.

In any case, having regard to the fact that there are many parts of the province which are entirely untouched by the conditions which are appealed to for the shorter term of 10 years' settlement, there is no reason why the longer term of 30 years should not be made to govern those parts, so as to bring them into line with the Presidency proper, leaving the parts affected by those conditions for special treatment.

Lord Curzon had said 15 years ago, that a longer period would probably be introduced later on when conditions became further crystallized. I think this crystallization may rightly be said to exist in the case of those parts of the province which are unaffected by these conditions.

2. The short period of settlement does discourage zamindars from improving their holdings, as they think that by improvements they will be exposing their lands to higher assessment in the near future.

It is human nature that the zamindar would not be disposed to exercise his ingenuity, skill or labour when he apprehends that the fruits of such ingenuity, skill or labour would be soon collared by some one else. It would rather create a sense of irritation in him. But if a larger term of settlement is guaranteed, he will think that he has been allowed a legitimate return for his trouble.

The shortness of the period also doubtless affects injuriously the value of land for sale, mortgage or lease. For whilst it may be said that the possession and purchase of land is very popular and values instead of depreciating have arisen, the causes are entirely different, and if a larger term of settlement were guaranteed there would be still higher appreciation. Those causes are that investment in land is considered solid and secure, specially fitted for people retired from active life and as bringing in a status in society and before Government.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS.

Opinion of the Hon'ble Mr. Ghulam Husein Hidayatullah.

Hyderabad Sind, 29th June 1915.

To

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SIND SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE.

Opinion on the Sind Settlement extension question.

The Commission is aware that revenue settlement in India is of two kinds, namely, permanent, by which the demand of the State is made fixed and unalterable for ever, and temporary, under which the State demand is revised at recurring periods of greater or less duration. The permanently settled districts are, the greater part of Bengal and some parts of the North-Western Provinces and Madras. The temporary settlement prevails in the west of India, including the Bombay Presidency. Wherever the temporary settlement is in force, the term of settlement is 30 years, except in the Punjab, where a short term of 20 years has been the established rule. But, though in the whole of the Bombay Presidency the ordinary term of 30 years is adopted, yet in the valley of Sind, which is an integral part of the Presidency, the short term of 10 years is allowed.

Now, Sind is the only unfortunate province where the period of settlement is 10 years. The reasons so far alleged for this short period of guarantee are those which were given expression to by Lord Curzon in 1900 in his reply to the address of the Muhammadan Association of Sind. In reference to a request for 30 years' settlement, he said "When you make this request do you not to some extent lose sight of the peculiar conditions of land tenures and cultivation in this province? There is no part of India where these conditions are in a more transition state. You have to deal here both with the benefits and with the caprices of that most unstable of factors, water. On the one hand, irrigation, where successful, may convert a wilderness into a garden. On the other hand, the vagaries of the river may turn a garden into a wilderness. In the one case continuance of a low assessment becomes absolute; in the other case, continuance of a high assessment is unfair. Later on, as conditions became further crystallized, a larger period will probably come."

In short, two reasons are assigned for a ten years' guarantee in Sind, namely :—

- (1) the extension of irrigation, and
- (2) the vagaries of the river Indus.

First, as to the extension of irrigation.

Extended irrigation means increased cultivation, which brings the State revenue. Hence there is no reason for the raising of the rates, for which short settlements are necessary. When by reason of large irrigational improvements, an improved water-supply is assured to the people, the State will be justified in increasing the rates. For instance when the Jamrao Canal was opened, the ordinary supply of water which zamindars were then getting was converted into a perennial supply. I repeat that, on such occasions, Government will be justified in raising the rates. But there are no such schemes in view at present. The Sukkur Barrage scheme has been shelved, and there is no prospect of any such scheme being taken up in the near future. But even supposing that such schemes were brought forward and carried into execution, in the future, Government could, in spite of the longer guarantee, raise the rates under section 55 of the Land Revenue Code. The form of guarantee given by Government is contained in Appendix (i) of Sathé's Land Revenue Code, 1909 edition, page 4. In para. 2, it is distinctly stated that, in spite of the guarantee, Government reserves to itself the right of increasing the guaranteed rates for the increased supply of water on account of the

construction, repairs, or improvement of works constructed and maintained for the supply of water at the cost of the State. This not only covers the construction of a new canal, like the Jamrao or proposed Rohri Canal, but also the improvements effected in the existing ones by which more water is supplied than that obtained at the time of guarantee.

Small local improvements are not designed to supply more water for existing cultivation. Such works are undertaken principally for the removal of complaints regarding deficiency of water-supply, which adversely affects the State in the shape of remissions, or for the purpose of bringing a larger area under cultivation than that fixed on the canals. In both these cases there is no occasion for the increase of rates, as the cultivators thereby get more water than they got before, and the expenditure incurred is made up for by the saving in the remissions and by the additional assessment secured by reason of the increase in the area under cultivation. I believe all such schemes of small local importance are based on these considerations. Additional revenue by means of an increase in the rates never enters into the question. But as I have stated above, if Government can show that in any case, these local schemes have, as a matter of fact, resulted in the increased supply of water to existing cultivation, they can raise the rate in accordance with the reservation contained in the notification of guarantee. I hope, I have satisfactorily shown that, in these circumstances, the case for a short term guarantee becomes altogether insupportable.

Incidentally, I might mention that the rates are already high enough in Sind. At page 60 of the Administration Report of 1911-12 for the Bombay Presidency including Sind, the levy of high rates of assessment has been justified by the grant of liberal remissions. However, even in that year, which was admittedly a bad year for Sind, the amount of remissions granted did not exceed more than an anna in the rupee of assessment. Thus, the remissions granted are altogether out of proportion to the heavy rates and do not warrant their continuance much less their increase, at every short term of revision.

Coming to the vagaries of the River Indus, I contend that these vagaries affect the zamindars rather than Government, for almost every change in the river adversely affects the canals which take off at that point inasmuch as a lot of silt is thrown up at their mouths by the receding river. It is very rarely that a change in the course of the river gives a better supply of water to a canal. It can safely be said that in 29 cases out of 100, the changes in the set of the river, wherever they take place, spoil the canals near their heads. Hence Government hardly suffers by the vagaries of the river. The loss mainly falls on the cultivators. Even if these changes occasionally cost Government something towards improving the water-supply, there is no cause for increasing the rates when the water-supply is actually not increased. Such expenditure is a valid charge on the maintenance of the canal. The vagaries of the river cannot therefore be taken as an argument for the short period of guarantee as I have shown that it is the ryot and not the State that suffers from these vagaries. Consequently, Government should grant the peoples' request for a long period of guarantee.

If it be contended that Government looks to the good of the ryot in fixing a short period of guarantee, as Government is anxious to save them from the caprices of the river, I would simply say that the argument has no substance or reality. In spite of the vagaries of the river, which have been in progress long years before the advent of the British in Sind, almost every settlement has resulted in an increase of rates. And since the vagaries have not yet contributed to the reduction of the rates in any settlement, people cannot allow themselves to be persuaded into the belief that the ten years' guarantee is meant for their benefit. Both the Muhammadan and Hindu Associations in Sind have repeatedly asked with open eyes for a long period of guarantee, and there is no reason why Government should withstand their prayer, if the only reason for their course, according to Government, is the

good of the people. The people believe their good lies in a long period guarantee. There is a universal cry for permanent settlement, or at least for settlement for a term of 60 years, but here poor Sind has so far been denied even the ordinary term of 30 years, which is in force in the rest of the Presidency.

Now let us see how these short terms revisions are carried out at present. As there is no special establishment in Sind for this kind of work, the revisions are postponed from time to time, and when they are taken up, the work is often entrusted to a new Assistant Collector, in addition to his other duties, whatever his capacity or aptitude for this kind of work may be. No wonder then that the belief of the people that revision of the rates means an enhancement is confirmed and becomes a subject of public talk. How could a new Assistant Collector be expected to be conversant with a most difficult subject, which takes long years of knowledge and experience to be thoroughly acquainted with. The faith of the public in these revisions has been entirely shaken, and no argument can convince them of the justification, even if one exists for an increase on the rates at any particular revision.

I might bring it to the notice of the Commission that inspite of the theoretical period of guarantee, the actual period for which the guarantee runs in practice, is much larger. Periods of guarantee are often extended on account of the want of Assistant or Deputy Collectors to take up the work of revision, favourable seasons, impending local improvements and the like. For instance, Tando settlements ran out a course of 15 years, although they were guaranteed for only 10 years. The revision settlement reports of this division also show that they were written by Mr. Moysey in 1908, but the proposals were sanctioned by Government only in 1913. Similarly, the revision settlements reports of Sewhan, Dadu and Johi were written in 1909, but they were not sanctioned till the end of 1912. Similarly, a long delay took place in the report of the revision settlement of the Nasirabad taluka. It is a matter of common knowledge and experience that the original guarantee of ten years is extended in many cases. But this policy is no satisfaction to the people. They hardly benefit by this haphazard method of extending the guarantee. It might be contended on behalf of Government that although people are not told so, they get the longer period of guarantee and hence what is being asked for by them, they actually get to some extent in practice. To this, I would at once reply that this very fact is the greater reason for giving a longer period of guarantee from the commencement. The fact that the guarantees are extended from time to time only proves that the present period of 10 years has been found in practice to be insufficient. But the way in which the guarantees are extended, give people no benefit in as much as they have no peace of mind on account of the short guarantee. With the sword of Democles hanging over their heads, which can be lowered at any time when the 10 years, period expires, they can have no inducement to make improvements. Thus, both the people and the State are losers by the short term guarantee. Unless a long term guarantee is given from the very commencement, there will be no improvement and all concerned stand to lose by the arrangement in force at present. I hope I have sufficiently shown that there is nothing in Sind conditions which necessitates in its case the departure from the rule of 30 years which is in force in the rest of Bombay Presidency. I have shown that the arguments urged by the officer of Government in favour of 10 years do not stand the test of searching analysis. In the Presidency proper, I believe the rains are as uncertain a factor, if not more so, in the cultivation of lands in inundation in Sind. But if comparision of countries similar in all conditions is needed, I can refer to the Punjab which had more irrigational projects than Sind is ever likely to see, and where the vagaries of the River Indus have as much affected cultivation as they have done in Sind. And yet 10 years' guarantee is never thought of in Punjab. Twenty years has been the rule and people are not content with that period. Sixty years is the universal demand for India, and therefore if I propose that Sind should be placed on a level with the rest of the Presidency, I hope the period will not be considered too much.

In this connection, I would draw the attention of the Commission to the memorable representation made to the Secretary of State for India by some eminent retired officer in India, one of the prayers in which was that a period of settlement for 30 years be extended throughout British India.

Looking at the various settlement reports of Sind, we find that officers in Sind have often recommended a long term guarantee.

Colonel Anderson, who was Survey Commissioner in 1880, stated in his report for Sakrand taluka, at page 38, as follows :—

“The next question is the period for which settlement should be guaranteed. The land has been divided into small survey numbers and the classification of soil may also be considered to be permanent so far as the land and water-supply is permanent ; so far as can be seen no change in this report will be necessary, let the settlement be guaranteed for period it may. The Secretary of State has expressed his desire that settlement in Sind should be guaranteed for the period usual in India, 30 years. A short period of settlement may be considered to be deterrent of improvement.”

Colonel Anderson proposing a guarantee of 30 years had the authority of the highest official, the Secretary of State for India, for his proposal. Mr. Erskine, the then Commissioner, who was the father of the Irrigational Settlement in Sind, recommended to Government that the period should be 21 years, or at least 15. In spite of these recommendations on the authority of the Secretary of State, the Bombay Government only sanctioned ten years guarantee. This was 30 years ago. But since then conditions have become sufficiently crystallized, and there is at present no case whatever for a short settlement. Even an experienced officer like Mr. Baker, the greater portion of whose service has been spent in Sind, who is publicly credited with a good knowledge of settlement work, recommended a guarantee of 20 years in several talukas of the Larkana district, namely, Sewhan, Johi and Dadu, and Government sanctioned 15 years in these cases. This shows that Government has now become alive to the necessity of giving a longer term of guarantee, and in view of what I have urged, I expect the Commission will see the desirability of extending the period of settlement in Sind to 30 years and record their opinion and make a recommendation to that effect to Government.

To the observations already made by me regarding the question extending the period of settlement in Sind, I have to add the following :—

It is a matter of notoriety that a permanent settlement for India was recommended by a large succession of England's best statemen and administrators. It is only necessary to mention the names of Lord Canning, Lord Lawrence, Sir Charles Wood and Sir Stafford Northcote. Further, a permanent settlement has actually been adopted and still prevails in Bengal and some parts of the Madras Presidency.

Unfortunately, however, the successors of these administrators were of opinion that this system entailed a sacrifice of prospective revenue on the part of the State, a sacrifice which they deemed unfair to Government.

This led to a compromise being proposed by Lord Ripon to the effect that 30 years' settlements should be the rule throughout British India.

From this it is clear that 30 years' was taken to be the rule for the whole of India. Hence any period short of this would clearly be an exception, for which it was incumbent on Government to show special reason. Now, the reasons so far advanced as justifying a departure from the rule in the case of

Sind have been already replied to by me in my previous remarks on the subject. I am not in a position to say if Government has any other reasons, and what they may be, for their policy of short settlements. Unless these reasons, if any, are fully and clearly laid before the public, it is not possible for the people to meet them. For the present, it is only left to me to reply to the questions which have been proposed by the President of the Commission.

Before dealing with these, I should like to emphasise a principle which has been recognized in theory and followed elsewhere in practice, and that is, that the assessment should in no case exceed half the net produce of the land. Now in Sind, there is no connection whatever between the assessment and the net produce, a connection which exists in other parts of India, such as Madras. Assessment in Sind is based on the mode of irrigation. On this account, many poor lands are assessed the same as superior lands. Hence, if we take the average outturn of good and bad lands together, we find that Government already gets more than its due and therefore short periods of settlement for the purpose of saving prospective Revenue to the State are quite uncalled for.

To come now to the questions proposed.

The first question proposed is whether the present short settlement in Sind decreases the value of the land for the purposes of sale, lease, or mortgage.

My reply is that it has been found by experience that almost every revision of settlement results in enhancement of assessment. The natural effect of this successive rise in the rates must be a depreciation of the value of the land. A person purchasing land in Sind has always before his mind the knowledge that the assessment will, a very few years after the purchase, be revised, or enhanced (for that is almost the same thing) and may naturally be expected to take this circumstance into calculation in the price that he offers for the land. Similar is the case of the lessee, and mortgagee who are guided in their negotiations with the lessor and mortgager by the same consideration, and who will reasonably be led to regulate their lease and mortgage on the same basis.

Now here it may be pertinently asked why then should there be such an anxiety to obtain land on the part of ever increasing numbers? The answer to this is plain. The reason of this state of things is to be sought, not so much in natural causes as in artificial conditions.

There is at present a great and ever growing tendency on the part of large numbers of people, who were not originally agriculturists, to take to agriculture as a pursuit rather of pleasure than of profit. Now this increase demand for land, whatever may be its reasons, must entail as its necessary consequence the appreciation of that commodity in the market. But can it be said that the reason for this rising demand is the conviction on the part of the people that the rate of assessment or period of settlement is satisfactory or that the land is paying? Not in the least. The real and only reason for this great demand is the notorious fact that agriculture is considered a safe investment, when compared with insecure industrial enterprises, such as banks, joint stock companies and the like, which can never command public confidence in any thing like the same degree. Land, again, carries with it a certain status and importance, which is dearly prized. Agriculture also provides congenial and useful occupation for all those who have retired from the heat and toil of official or professional life. These and similar considerations are responsible for the increasing demand for land. Besides, the rise in prices must naturally and necessarily affect the price of land, which must rise in consequence. Hence, it is not at all true that the high market value of land is an indication of public satisfaction with the rate of assessment or the period of settlement or the character of the land. The rise in the price of land is only a proof of the competition prevailing in the market for the purchase of land, which is,

in its term, due to the conditions and circumstances stated above. It is absolutely certain that the present market value of land is purely artificial, being determined by the considerations indicated above, and not by natural causes of influences. In fact, land, if valued at all, is valued not so much for its primary or direct advantages, which have been shown to be anything but substantial or attractive, but for the secondary, indirect and consequential advantages attaching to it.

That land is not found or deemed to be paying is clear from the fact that most of the land is passing out of the hands of the original holders what could induce or compel the latter to sell but the knowledge or experience that the land does not pay them? On the other hand, why people are anxious to buy, has already been sufficiently explained.

The second question proposed is whether the present short settlements discourages zamindars from improving their land.

It has been shown above that land is not a very paying concern. The land holder, who is scarcely sufficiently compensated for the capital he has invested, will be chary of any increase of expenditure on improvements to the land, with the knowledge always before him that at every short period of revision the assessment on his land will ever increase. The land owner does not enjoy the benefit of his improvements long enough to make it worth his while to have ever made them before the State steps in for an increase of assessment. What could be more directly and effectually discouraging to any desire on the part of the zamindar to improve his land than the disability to reap the fruits of those improvements for any reasonable length of time.

It might possibly be contended that the prices of the produce of land have arisen, and that it is only fair that the State should share in this profit reaped by the zamindar. But a complete answer to this contention is furnished by the fact that the cost of production and the cost of living have kept pace with the price of produce, and concurrently with a rise in the latter has there been a rise in the former. In this connection, the opinion of such an enlightened statesman and administrator as Lord Ripon will be most instructive. Lord Ripon held that the settlement ought to be dependent on the course of prices taken every 30 years. Hence, the reason of the rise in prices is no ground whatever for the maintenance of a short settlement in Sind. It is not the people's contention that the rise in prices should never be taken into account for the purposes of settlement. They only say that that need not be done before 30 years have elapsed. This is, in other words, their prayer for a 30 years' settlement.

The officers of Government only come into contact with the bigger zamindars, who hold thousands of acres. But the vast majority of holdings are small, and the comparative prosperity of the larger land-owners is not a correct measure of the general condition of the agricultural classes, nor a proper criterion of the remunerative or other character of the land. A big zamindar owning thousands of acres, will not be in want even though his income from the land be comparatively small. But even his smallest income will be a fortune to his smaller and less favoured brethren. Hence, the proper consideration to be borne in mind in the matter of regulating the amount of assessment or the period of settlement is the manner and extent of its operation and effects on the vast bulk of the agricultural community, who are small holders, who can just contrive to hold their head above water and who can ill-afford any, the smallest encroachment on their small profits.

(Sd.) GHULAM HUSSAIN HIDAYATULLAH.

Examination of Mr. Ghulam Husein Hidayatullah.

30th August 1915.

To the President.

Q. Are you a zamindar yourself ?

A. Yes.

Q. Where are your lands situated ?

A. Nasrat.

Q. You state that the vagaries of the river have not yet contributed to the reduction of assessment in any taluka. You are probably unaware that in Tatta, Ghorabari and Mirpur Sakro the rates of the past settlement have been decreased very much indeed ?

A. Yes.

Q. They have been decreased by 30 per cent. in the case of one taluka ?

A. Silence.

Q. Your statement requires modification. I think the decrease in the case of Tatta is 13 per cent., in the case of Ghorabari it is 28 per cent. and in the case of Mirpur Sakro it is 29.54 ?

A. I am talking of since 1843. That is an exceptional case in which the Government revenue has decreased.

Q. I only start with the irrigational settlement. I do not think that it will be profitable to go into times before that.

A. Yes, there is this one case, I believe.

Q. In Tatta there has been one revision settlement and there has been great decrease in the rates. My only point is that your statement requires modification ?

A. It is very difficult for me to know all the facts.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. But the settlement reports can be purchased. They are for sale ?

A. It is so difficult to go through all of them.

By the President.

Q. One of your objections to the frequent revision is that it has to be entrusted to a young officer ?

A. Yes ; generally, senior officers are not employed.

Q. Have you any instance in mind of an unfair revision settlement being attributable to the youth of an officer ?

A. I do not give particular instances. Most of the Assistant Collectors who are put in charge of the settlement work have not been in Sind for more than three years.

Q. You can't give instances ?

A. I do not like to name particular officers.

Q. You say that frequent revision prevents people from improving their lands. Do you mean that, improvements of their lands bring enhancement ?

A. No. They know that the amount they have spent on land will not be sufficiently recouped before the settlement is revised.

- Q. You do not accuse the Settlement Officer of enhancing the rate because the land has been improved by the zamindar ?
- A. I do. That profit ought to go to zamindar rather than to the Government.
- Q. You accuse the Settlement Officer of enhancing the assessment on the ground that the zamindar has improved his land. Do you ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You must give an instance. It must be supported by instances.
- A. Mr. Dialmal is an instance in point.
- Q. Are you basing yourself on that alone? Can you give any other instances ?
- A. Yes. No other instances.
- Q. If you base your assertion on one instance alone, how can you justify it ?
- A. There must be many others, but I don't know them. But I know that as soon as the land is improved, there comes enhancement.

By Mr. Gebbie.

- Q. Haven't you improved your land then ?
- A. Not yet.

By the President.

- Q. The assessment in Sind is partly water-rate and partly land-revenue ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Does not this fact make it hard to compare the rates of assessment in Sind with the rates of assessment in other parts of India ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You talk of the principle that the assessment should never exceed half the net produce of the land. But the assessment talked of in that case should surely not include the water-rate ?
- A. I do not think so. It ought not to.
- Q. Surely if Government is not to be allowed to charge more on irrigated land than on unirrigated land, then Government have no reason to carry out irrigational works ?
- A. The Government is compensated by the revenue it gets.
- Q. Government must charge more upon land which is irrigated in order to compensate themselves for the irrigational works which they carry out ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. My point is that really one cannot compare the figures of assessment in Sind with figures of assessment in other parts of India ?
- A. I agree.
- Q. You mean to say that good and poor lands are assessed alike under the irrigational settlement ?
- A. Yes.

Q. Are you in favour of classification of land such as they have in the Presidency? Would not this mean an enhancement as compared with the present rough system?

A. I have not considered that question.

Q. You say that land is a safe investment inspite of being overassessed. How is this compatible with saying that land does not pay?

A. Though it does not pay, yet the whole capital does not go as in the failure of banks.

By Mr. Gebbie.

Q. But you must be losing your money every year?

A. I do not mean that it absolutely does not pay. It does pay, but it does not pay enough.

Q. It never runs away?

A. No.

By the President.

Q. Is it not a fact that land is passing out of the hands of the cultivating class into those of the lawyers and money-lenders?

A. Yes, it does.

Q. Is it not chiefly due to want of thrift and ignorance of law?

A. I cannot say. At the time of paying assessment, zamindars have to go to money-lenders.

Q. But that does not prove that the assessment is too heavy?

A. I think it does.

Q. Whatever the assessment is and however late it is demanded, the greatest pinch will be felt by the man when he has to pay the assessment?

A. I do not think so; they will make a saving.

By Mr. Martin.

Q. Except assessment, there is no one expense which falls upon every body at the same time?

A. Expenditure on funerals and marriages.

Q. They do not fall on everybody at the same time. Don't you see that this burden alone does so?

A. Silence.

Q. What reason have you to say that assessment in Sind is high?

A. I have quoted page 60 of the Administration Report of 1911-12, in which the levying of the high rates of assessment is justified by the grant of liberal remissions.

Q. What is your reason for saying that the assessment is high?

A. Government itself admits it.

Q. But you are not comparing it with any other part of India?

A. No.

Q. You say that it does not pay on the whole. You say that land is not a paying investment ?

A. I say that it is not more paying than other investments.

Q. Land does pay.

A. Yes.

Q. Even in the present short settlement ?

A. It does not pay on small holdings.

Q. Does it pay the Punjabi who holds 32 acres ?

A. I know of a Sindhi holding 30 acres and starving on it.

Q. Supposing that he held the land revenue free, would he be prosperous ?

A. I think so.

Q. What sort of holdings are you speaking of ?

A. Even ordinary holdings of 50 acres.

Q. On an average not more than 15 acres of such a holding would be annually cultivated ?

A. If there is more water they will cultivate more.

Q. Your land in on the Nasrat. What is the average proportion of the land cultivated.

A. Generally one-third.

Q. In that case 16 or 17 acres could be cultivated in a year. The assessment would be about Rs. 50 ?

A. Yes.

Q. That comes to Rs. 50 a year. If he is starving now, he will be poor then too, even if he does not pay assessment ?

A. Rs. 50 is a good outlay for a poor hari.

Q. If the zamindar knows that his assessment will be enhanced, whatever happens, will he not try to get the utmost from his land ?

A. How can he get it ?

Q. Do you think that the ordinary Sindhi zamindars are doing their best ?

A. Yes, most of them.

Q. Undoubtedly the short settlement must affect the value of the land ?

A. Naturally it must.

Q. And I understand that is your point. Is that so ? It affects the value of the land, it discourages the zamindar, the land is not paying ?

A. It is not paying more than other investments.

Q. Is it paying as much ?

A. Yes.

By Mr. Gebbie.

Q. Is it better to put your money in $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan ?

A. On smaller sums it will be much better. We will get a better return by putting it in $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. paper.

By the President.

Q. Is it your opinion that big holdings are better cultivated than small ?

A. Silence.

Q. What is the size of your holding ?

A. Very small—200 acres.

By Mr. Macmillan.

Q. Could you give any idea of the manner how a short settlement affects the price of land ?

A. At present the rate of assessment is Rs. 3 per acre. After revision it will have much more assessment, so the price will be low.

Q. What I mean is, will it reduce the price unduly ?

A. It will decrease its price because there is the fear of enhancement of assessment.

Q. Will it unduly decrease its price ?

A. Silence.

Opinion of Mr. Hiranand Khemsing.

Hyderabad Sind, 29th July 1915.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I. O. S.,
PRESIDENT OF THE SIND SETTLEMENT COMMISSION.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following views on the decennial settlement of revenue in Sind.

1. I have always held to the opinion that the connection of Sind with Bombay in the matter of its Land Revenue policy has been a most unfortunate one. If the province had a Government of its own directly responsible to the Imperial Government, it would have worked out its destinies much better than as a subordinate factor of a Government that know little of Sind and its people. The Bombay Government to which Sind was transferred as soon as Sir Charles Napier, the first and last Governor of Sind left the province, was familiar only with the ryotwari system of land tenure where the ryot or the cultivator is the holder of the land as well, and therefore it at once proceeded to reduce the zamindars of Sind to the same tenure. The Sind zamindar like his brother in Bengal and the United Province was entitled to a permanent settlement, and although, the Imperial Government was in the beginning mindful of the status of the Sind zamindar, yet, because, the Bombay Government wished to have one system and one Land Revenue Code throughout the Presidency, the zamindar of Sind was without any compunction, lowered to the level of a ryot or a mere occupant although his holding consisted of thousands of acres. Unlike his brother in Bengal or Oudh and Agra, the Sind zamindar did not know how to protest and trusted the Government fully, and accepted his new position quietly. Little did he dream that his acceptance of the lowered status assigned to him would subject him to short period settlements and enhanced assessments.

2. The British Government in the early days of the conquest took a share of the produce just as the Amirs did, but in the sixties, the zamindars were given pattas of the lands they held and were charged a lump assessment in cash called *Mutta* for their holdings whether they were cultivated or not. This lump assessment was comparatively a light one and therefore led it to no objection. In the seventies, the *Mutta* assessment was altered into a light charge at about 8 annas per acre under the "diffused" settlement when the zamindars holdings were broken up into survey numbers of about 50 acres each. This evoked some protest, but as of all the people in India, the zamindar of Sind has the weakest voice, he accepted this curtailment of his rights without much noise. In the eighties, came the present survey and settlement, the irrigational settlement as it is termed, and the Government told the zamindar "Look here we shall not charge you for the land which you possess, but which you do not cultivate, as we have done before, we shall charge you only for the land which you do cultivate and which we have now broken into small parcels, and for each parcel of cultivated land we shall charge you four times or six times the rate which you paid before". To this increase though it was an increase of cent. per cent. or 200 per cent. or even more, as the case might be, the zamindar bowed in silence. This settlement was guaranteed for 10 years and the zamindars have now realized that this guarantee is in other wards a guarantee for increasing the rate every 10 years.

3. The Sind system though nominally a ryotwari system of Bombay has become a peculiar system of its own differing from that of the Presidency proper in every detail, in fallows, in remissions, in rate of assessment, in the period of guarantee and in every thing which a settlement may signify. Although, the soil of Sind is poor as compared to other parts of India, as the extract noted in the margin from the settlement of moral and material progress of India

"The special feature of the Sind Settlement is the allowance for fallows, which are common owing to the poor-ness of soil, the abundance of waste land, and the absence of a sufficient supply of manure."

(Parliamentary Blue Book for 1911-12, page 179) shows yet its incidence of taxation is the heaviest in India *viz.*, Rs. 2-16-0 per acre. *Vide* page 174 of the same Blue book. The rate in the Presidency, is Rs. 1-10-0 per acre only and is guaranteed for 30 years. The Sind rate being nearly double of that in the Presidency, the guarantee should also be double, *viz.* : 60 years. And for this, there is very good reason. A high rate of assessment (the highest in India) if enhanced every 10 years is likely to operate in the same way as rack-renting of merciless landlord does. Rack-renting is always abominable, for it deprives the tenant of the small margin of profit which he may eke out by thrift and by improvement and leaves him hopelessly poor and in debt. If the tenant makes the profit and is happy, the land lord is sure of his rent and earns the tenant's blessing in the bargain. To any Government, the blessing of the cultivator is a great political asset, while the poverty and indebtedness of the ryot a grave political danger. If the ryot is able to make the two ends meet, lives in comfort, is free from debt, has a house of his own and some ornaments for his wife and children, he has every thing at stake in the Government of the country. On the contrary, a man who is in chronic indebtedness, has not enough to feed and cloth himself and his family, has no moorings to which he could be attached, becomes a source of danger to the State. Much of the crime, mostly of cattle lifting, is due to the ryot's poverty. Tinkering with rates of assessments every ten years is synonymous with rack-renting and since the rates in Sind are very high, it is essential that they should be left untouched as long as possible, so that people may have intervals to breathe freely, to grow in wealth and comfort, and to learn that their welfare is the welfare of the State. A limitation upon the demands of the State is a most necessary one and this limitation is only possible when we have long term settlements. Failing a permanent settlement, Sind should be blessed with a sixty years' settlement.

4. If the old status of the Sind zamindars were to be restored, they would be entitled to a permanent settlement, but if that is not expected, they should have a settlement of 60 years at least. I ask it for two reasons. One is that the incidence of taxation is the highest in Sind, and the higher the incidence, the longer the term for which it ought to be guaranteed. The other is that, in Sind the bulk of the land is lift land. I think out of 60 talukas in the province 50 are lift and lift land is usually cultivated once in three years. A sixty years' settlement therefore means 20 cultivation seasons' settlement. This is the least to which the people can lay claim to, for a respite of 20 years for the growth of the people in Sind is nothing in comparison to what the other provinces enjoy. To be put on a par with the Presidency, the Sind landholder might with justice ask upon the above basis for a 90 years' guarantee, but 60 years would put him on a level with the Punjab where 20 years' guarantee is given. The present 10 years guarantee is too absurd to need an argument to demolish it, for it means revision after only 3 years of cultivation and no man could be found to defend such a system. I know that the members for Sind in the Legislative Council asked for a 30 years' guarantee for Sind as in the Presidency proper, but they forget that 30 years in Sind are equal to 10 years of the Presidency; for while the same land in the Presidency is cultivated every year, in Sind it is cultivated once in 3 years only. That is because the soil in Sind is utterly poor and can bear no annual crop.

5. I will not travel over the ground which many others have done in their addresses to the Commission. That ground is a well trodden one and the stock arguments require no repetition. I have emphasized in my letter the principal argument, namely, that the good of the State lies in the happiness and contentment of the people and these can only be secured if a highly taxed country like Sind is rendered immune from repeated and early enhancements of the already bloated tax.

6. If there should be any doubt in the mind of the Commission as to the condition of the agricultural population, I will ask the Commission to go into typical villages and find out the facts for itself. There is the cultivator, the actual tiller, and there is the zamindar, the middleman, the man who supplies the capital, who clears the canals and advances the taccavi, coordinates

the cultivators and acts as their protector and friend. If it should lie with the province of the Commission to undertake an enquiry of this kind, the Commission cannot but come to the conclusion that the cultivator is in heavy debt from year's end to year's end, is ill-fed and ill-clad, ill-housed and uneducated, and there is no redeeming feature in his life as he leads it. The zamindar's position is slightly better, it differs in degree as he owns large or small bits of land. The fact, however, remains that the average zamindar is invariably indebted to the village bania, has very few comforts which a cultivated man craves for, has no education worth the name, and beyond a few buffaloes and cows his wealth is negligible. It is possible that want of thrift partly to account for his condition but there is no blinking the fact that heavy assessment and bad years weigh him down, and if to these is added the enhancement of tax which every settlement brings his lot is not an enviable one.

7. Writing of heavy rates of assessments, I beg permission to touch upon the question of remissions which are said to take the sting off these heavy rates. However excellent the remission rules may be on paper, they are in practice more illusory than real. That is best legislated which is best executed. The remission rules are always extremely ill executed and that I know from personal experience as a zamindar. The Mukhtiarkars are terribly afraid of giving remissions lest they may be suspected of being in collusion with applicants for remissions. In a variety of ways they reject applications, and the last resort is to over estimate the produce, for the Mukhtiarkars are not bound by the estimates of the amins. I had a bitter experience of this over estimating only this year. The remissions are generally no palliative and the rates in Sind continue to be heavy and inelastic in spite of the remissions. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Take the case of any taluka and take its gross revenue for any year or a period of five years and compare it with its net revenue after allowing remissions and the measure of the relief will be found to be so small as to require very little notice. The net rate of assessment so worked out is almost the same as the gross rate notified by Government.

8. I will not labour this point further, but will address myself to the question whether 10 years' assessment deters the zamindars from carrying out improvements upon their lands. According to law, the improvements ought not to be taxed at a revision (*vide* section 107 of the Land Revenue Code). According to fact, improvements are taxed. Every zamindar owns among his holding some land which is either affected with kalar or is full of mounds and sand-hills, or is water-logged being very low or for other reasons not fit for immediate cultivation. To bring it under the plough, a good deal of expenditure is required. The kalar has to be patiently washed out, the sand-hills have to be dug out and levelled up, the depressions filled or bunded up. The zamindar keeps this kind of land and pays the fallow assessment on it every five years without getting anything out of it. If he effects improvements which are needed, it will be brought under the assessment and the assessment will be revised every 10 years.

9. Well if improvements are taxed in the way I have shown then it follows *ipso facto* that revisions at short intervals of 10 years do discourage improvements being made upon the land by their holders who will make improvements when he knows that after 10 years the fruit of his labour will have transferred itself into the coffers of the State?

10. Improvements would be made on a very large scale, if revisions did not come off so quickly. People would sink more wells, would erect more pumps and engines would manure the lands more freely and remove sand-hills and jungle and fill depressions if the fixity of tenure was a longer one so as to afford to them a full opportunity of enjoying the fruit of their labour and capital. That goes without saying.

11. I therefore respectfully submit that for the reasons which I have advanced, the period of settlement in Sind, should be extended to 60 years.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) HIRANAND KHEMSING.

Hyderabad Sind, 2nd September 1915.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I. C. S.,
PRESIDENT SIND SETTLEMENT COMMISSION.

Sir,

In reference to the evidence, I gave on the 30th ultimo, before the Commission, I beg to invite attention to pages 202 and 203 of the Administration Report of the Public Works Department (Irrigation Works) Part II for the year 1913-14. At these pages is given a tabular statement showing the financial results of the Irrigation Works for and upto the end of 1913-14.

I was asked by Mr. Gibbie as to what my idea was about the income derived by Government from its Irrigation Works. I replied that in my opinion it was about 25 per cent. Mr. Gibbie corrected me and stated, that it was only 6 per cent, and pressed the question as to whether in view of this limited profit, I still maintained that the assessment was excessive. I replied, that if it was only 6 per cent. the assessment was not unreasonable.

3. On looking over the statement referred to in the first paragraph, I find that the canals are divided into two classes. In the first class headed "Major Works" are included new canals excavated by British Government. In the second class headed "Minor Works" are included old canals of pre-British days. While the income from the new canals is shown to be 5.39 per cent. the income from the old canals averages 25.83 per cent. Out of the new canals the Dad and the Nasrat yield only an income of 1.96 and 1.50 per cent. respectively, thus reducing total average income which from the other new canals goes as high as 10 per cent. in some cases. As regards the old canals, the Ghar produces as much as 113.89 per cent. Abbohar Kacheri as much as 67.91 per cent. Marak Great 42.14 per cent. Sarfraz 25.61 per cent. Fuleli 15.99 per cent. Sukkur Canal 8.05 per cent. Hassanali 5.35 per cent. and Suttah 2.43 per cent. The average of this is worked out as 25.83 per cent.

4. I had the old canals in mind, when I stated in my evidence that in my opinion, the Irrigation Works produce 25 per cent. and I find that I am borne out by statistical tables compiled by Government.

5. The water assessment which is 9/10th of the total assessment represents a profit to Government over and above 4 per cent. out of all proportion to its expenditure and the Ghar Canal beats the record of all by yielding an annual income of 113 per cent. This canal has to its credit an accumulated surplus revenue of Rs. 1,89,63,181, against the capital outlay of Rs. 5,77,481. The capital outlay has thus been covered 32 times over. The Fuleli has to its credit an accumulated surplus revenue of Rs. 70,16,026 against a capital outlay of Rs. 19,84,661, which has been covered nearly four times over. Surely, on these old canals the assessment is capable of substantial reduction, if Government will agree to limit its profit to a reasonable figure.

6. The average income from the new canals is 5.39 per cent. and that from the old canals 25.59 per cent. and the average of the two is shown in the table to be 8.51 per cent. but even the average income of 8.51 per cent. upon the capital outlay is a very good one and no one will accuse Government of being over generous, if it agrees to give up a part of it in favour of the ryot. The recent increase on the Fuleli Canal in the Tando Sub-division will swell the profit of this canal to 20 per cent. and the point therefore, which I made of assessment being heavy has been made good by the figures quoted above.

I have, etc.

(Sd.) HIRANAND KHEMSING.

Examination of R. B. Diwan Hiranand Khemsingh.

30th August 1915.

To the President.

- Q. You state that the Sind zamindar, unlike the Bombay zamindar, is entitled to a permanent settlement ?
- A. What I mean is this that the Sind zamindar is very much like a zamindar in Bengal.
- Q. How is that ?
- A. In the nature of the holding and in the tenure. If you compare the tenure of the zamindars in the pre-British days with the zamindars of Bengal, you will find it.
- Q. Do you consider that the British Government was bound to recognize all rights which it found when it conquered the country ?
- A. Yes.

By Mr. Gebbie.

- Q. What was the position of Hindu zamindars in the days of Mirs ?
- A. They used to live on 'batai' only.

By the President.

- Q. You state that the irrigational settlement brought an enhancement of 100 or 200 per cent. ?
- A. Before the irrigational settlement, they used to levy about 8 annas per acre, and now it is Rs. 2-8 to Rs. 4.
- Q. But then they levied 8 annas on all lands whether cultivated or not, so then it is not an enhancement of 100 per cent. ?
- A. In practice it is cent. per cent. If you exclude the uncultivated area under the diffused settlement, still the rate was not so high as it is now.
- Q. Do you mean to say that the irrigational system was unpopular when it was introduced ?
- A. Yes, it was.
- Q. Would you favour a return to the old system ?
- A. Very much.
- Q. Would you favour a division of the present assessment into land-revenue and water-rate ?
- A. No, I would not.
- Q. Then you wish Sind to be treated differently from the Presidency ?
- A. In the matter of assessment.
- Q. In the matter of the division of the water-rate from the assessment ? In the Presidency you know that the water-rate is not included in the assessment. Would you wish the same system as they have in the Presidency to be introduced in Sind ?
- A. No, I would not.
- Q. Why not ?
- A. Because in Sind land without water is perfectly useless. If there is water the land is worth having, otherwise, it is no good. And therefore whatever assessment is levied, whether in the shape of water-rate or in the shape of land-revenue, it is practically the same thing to the Sind zamindar.

Q. On what ground do you think that fallow diffused system is preferable to the irrigational system ?

A. Because, it leaves a good deal to the free will to the zamindar and means a lighter assessment.

Q. In fact, you think the zamindar would profit by it ?

A. Yes.

Q. You quote a Parliamentary blue-book for 1911-12, in which you state that the number of fallows in Sind is due to the poorness of the soil. I put it to you that it is due to the want of water ?

A. No. As a matter of fact, lift land is not capable of annual cultivation at all due to poverty of soil.

Q. But it is not true. I can give you instances. All along the upper part of the Sukkur Canal in the Sukkur taluka, you find lift land which gives annually a good crop.

A. I think such land must be very rare.

Q. It is an instance of annual cultivation in lift land.

A. Silence.

Q. But still apart from that the water in Sind is insufficient for the cultivation of the whole area ?

A. That is true.

Q. So that, apart from the vexed question whether the soil is good or bad, it is absolutely necessary, while the irrigation remains as it is, that there should be fallows ?

A. I think so.

Q. You state that Sind has the highest rate of assessment in India ?

A. Because I find it in almost all the blue-books that incidence of taxation in Sind is the highest.

Q. I want you to go to the consideration of the fact that assessment in Sind includes water-rate. If Government is not to charge more as assessment in Sind, how is Government to carry out large irrigational works ?

A. It has surplus revenues. I think Government is realizing much more than a fair return.

By Mr. Gebbie.

Q. What do you think was the return on the irrigational works in Sind the year before last ?

A. I think it exceeds 25 per cent.

Q. It is just under 6 per cent.

A. Some canals of course, pay better.

By the President.

Q. That being the case, Government only gets a fair interest on its expenditure. You still maintain that Government is charging more ?

A. Silence.

- Q. And is it not better that Government should give you irrigation water and charge you for it than give you nothing and not charge for it ?
- A. Of course, it is better.
- Q. You state that Government rackrents the country and that crime and misery are the result. What are your grounds for this grave assertion ?
- A. I consider that the assessment is very high and leaves very little margin of profit to the cultivator and the zamindar as the revision comes in every ten years because revision in most cases means enhancement of assessment.
- Q. Was there less cattle theft before the irrigational settlement ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. Less cattle theft in the times of Mirs ?
- A. Far less.
- Q. People lost less cattle probably because there was less cattle to lose ?
- A. Silence.
- Q. You state that the ordinary cultivation is ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed and ill-educated and permanently in debt to the village banya ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What about the village banya ? Is not he ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed and ill-educated ? Does he live differently ?
- A. I think he is better fed, better clad. He has got much more wealth.
- Q. I do not think he is better fed, better clad ?
- A. But he has got much more wealth.
- Q. And has this state of affairs come into existence only after the irrigational settlement, and has there been a great decline in prosperity ?
- A. Indebtedness has increased.
- Q. Where is your land ?
- A. My land is in the Tando sub-division, mostly in the Badin and part in Guni.
- Q. Do you know what the enhancement amounts to since the first settlement ?
- A. It was Rs. 3 first and is Rs. 4 now. In Guni it was Rs. 3-0 per acre formerly, now it is Rs. 4.
- Q. In Guni the average rate is Rs. 2-14, in Badin the assessment has been greatly raised ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Well, supposing that we had a thirty years' settlement, would it not follow that the enhancement was very sudden and very startling when it came ?
- A. It ought not to be.
- Q. It would be more sudden and more startling ?
- A. I do not think, if it is fairly enhanced. In any case this is my opinion as regards Tando sub-division.

- Q. In the case of Guni, I think I am right in saying that there has been no enhancement from the year 1883 to the year 1913 ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. That is 30 years ?
- A. 27 years.
- Q. But there is no enhancement for nearly 30 years in the case of Guni, so they have not to complain very much.
- A. They have, I think because the first group is charged Rs. 3 to Rs. 4.
- Q. You complain of the first group only ?
- A. I complain of all groups.
- Q. In Guni the total enhancement is only 4.55 per cent. The rate is raised from Rs. 2-12 to Rs. 2-14. I am talking of the entire amount of assessment divided by entire area of cultivation.
- A. It presses very hard in certain cases. Mostly, the country is rice land and in that case the assessment is very high.
- Q. You state that improvement of land by zamindar is taxed at revision and that this is against the law ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you mean by that that the enhancement is grounded on improvement ?
- A. No.
- Q. Then why is it against the law ?
- A. Because you find in many cases in lands which are unprofitable there have been considerable improvements at great expense, and the Settlement Officers do not treat such lands differently. They do not exclude them.
- Q. Can you give an example ?
- A. In the Tando sub-division there have been three revisions and in none of those have any lands been excepted on the ground of improvement. Surely some improvement must have taken place.
- Q. Surely that is inevitable when you have the present group system ?
- A. Yes, it is inevitable.
- Q. Are you in favour of the classification of land, good land to pay more and bad to pay less ?
- A. Yes, I am.
- Q. Surely that carries with it a division of assessment and the water-rate. Water-rate is a charge on all land. Assessment should be modified according to cultivation ?
- A. No, because the very first principle is irrigation. It should be uniform.
- Q. You state that in the country you know improvements would be made on a large scale if revisions and enhancements were not so frequent ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Would you tell me what sort of improvements ?
- A. I think I have specified in my letter.

Q. You do admit that assessment in Sind, being chiefly a water-ri must be kept up to a sufficient level to pay Government irrigational work ?

A. Yes.

By Mr. Martin.

Q. Have you come across any rain cultivation in Sind ?

A. There is barani cultivation in Sind.

Q. Do you know the rates on it ?

A. They are lighter than irrigational rates.

Q. Don't you think that the comparison between areas cultivated Sind on rainfall and those in the Presidency on rainfall would a fair one ?

A. No. Rainfall in Sind is very scanty and fitful and no serious cultivation can be undertaken on rainfall.

Q. You are acquainted with barani tracts ?

A. I am not. But I have heard of barani tracts.

Q. You mention wells as one form of improvements. The zamindars are discouraged from making the wells on account of revision. Do you know what the charge on well cultivation is ?

A. No.

Q. The charge on well cultivation is that on the cheapest form of cultivation in the deh.

A. May be. I am not aware of it.

Q. If that is so, no zamindar would be discouraged from making his well

A. Yes. When I was talking of wells, I was talking of them in connection with the wells in the Tando division where wells are necessary for the purpose of rearing early rice seedlings ; the crop when sown early yields a good outturn and a well is necessary for sowing the seed early.

Q. You were not referring to well cultivation generally ?

A. No.

Q. You said that zamindars would profit if we went back to the old system of assessment. You mean if we also went back to the old rates ?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you think that zamindars will prefer to pay assessment on every number, whether they cultivate or not ?

A. Yes, provided the rates were not high.

Q. I am not trying to compare the two systems on the same footing. Do you think zamindars will prefer the former system to the one at present ?

A. Possibly not.

Q. Don't you think that the present system adjusts itself better than the old system ?

A. I cannot answer that.

By Mr. Macmillan.

Q. Could you tell how the fact that a settlement is to be made affects the selling, mortgaging and leasing price of land ?

A. I cannot answer theoretically, unless I know the conditions of the lease. If the man who takes up lease has to pay the assessment, he would necessarily consider that the revision might bring a high assessment, so he will pay less.

Q. Is it your experience ? Is it your first question ?

A. No.

Q. Do you think that the lessees or mortgagees are even able to estimate the probable increase ?

A. I cannot say.

By Professor Shahani,

Q. Is all the cultivable land in the Presidency cultivated every year ?

A. Mostly.

Q. On account of the rains ?

A. As well as on account of the nature of the soil. The Sind soil is distinctly inferior.

Q. What is the authority for that ?

A. It is quoted in the blue-books.

Q. Has your own experience been to that effect ?

A. Yes.

Opinion of R. B. Diwan Kauromal.

Hyderabad, 9th July 1915.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I. C. S.,

President, Settlement Committee.

Sir,

In compliance with your notice inviting opinions on the desirability of extending the period of settlement, I beg respectfully to submit the following opinion :—

The present period of settlement should be extended to 30 years, for the reasons stated below.

The shortness of the present period deters zamindars from effecting improvements in their lands. As almost every revised settlement has resulted in the enhancement of assessment, decennial settlements have come to mean enhancement of assessment. During the present period of settlement land can be brought under cultivation not more than three times and in some cases only twice, and as living and labour are getting dearer day by day the cost of cultivation has enormously increased, and when to these is added the fear of enhancement of assessment, after every ten years, which is constantly haunting them, zamindars cannot have the heart to think seriously of undertaking any improvements.

2. While the other divisions of the Bombay Presidency, of which Sind forms a part, have been enjoying 30 years' settlement, it is difficult to understand why this province should have been singled out for the meagre period of 10 years. The reason assigned for the different treatment is that the conditions of Sind are peculiar. No doubt Sind does differ from the rest of the Presidency divisions in some respects, but this fact was not unknown to those experienced and far-seeing administrators who more than 30 years ago recommended 30 years' settlement for Sind. As far as is known, only two reasons have been advanced for not extending the period to 30 years, and these are—

- (1) extension of irrigation, and
- (2) the vagaries of the river.

The first does not now exist and if any new irrigational works are hereafter opened, Government have the power to charge special water rates under section 55 of the Land Revenue Code while the second affects only a very small part of not more than one-fifth of the districts of Sind. It is the zamindars who are affected by the changes brought about by the river and when they themselves are asking for an extension of the present short period of settlement there is no valid reason for withholding the benefit of 30 years' settlement from Sind.

3. It is asserted that the shortness of the settlement period has not affected the value of land which instead of decreasing has considerably increased; but the real reasons for the increase are (1) the increased prices of food-grains and (2) the great desire on the part of non-agricultural people to become landholders, because they think that holding land carries greater honour and that it gives them a certain status in society. Moreover, investment in land is considered to be more secure. It is not a fact that people pay such high prices for land because they are so profitable. In the case of virgin lands, if they bring in some profit to zamindars in the first few years, they have also to meet heavy expenses, but after a few years' use when lands get deteriorated or are impregnated with kalar their productive power is so much reduced that zamindars do not derive much profit out of them; and if owing to low inundation in any year they do not get a sufficient supply of water or if crops are destroyed by locusts, as is the case in the Nasrat taluka

almost every year, zamindars, especially those of limited means, are reduced to such straits that they are obliged either to relinquish their holdings or to seek the protection of the Encumbered Estates Act. If I am not misinformed, as many as 50 zamindars have during the last 12 months sought the help of that Act in the Nasrat taluka alone. Is it not worthwhile to enquire into the cause of this ?

4. That the mortgage and lease value of land is affected by the shortness of the settlement period, cannot be doubted. How many lessees have applied to the Encumbered Estates to allow them to withdraw from their agreements owing, to some extent at least, to the fear of enhancement of assessment after the expiration of the present period of settlement. If a few persons have gained by mortgages or leases of land there are many who have incurred debts to discharge their obligations.

5. It is a fact that zamindars sometimes sell land to their creditors in liquidation of their debts at abnormally high prices ; but these creditors are obliged to agree to such high prices because they find that they cannot otherwise recover their debts from their impoverished debtors. This increased value of land is not, however, its real value ; for under ordinary and normal circumstances the land thus sold will never fetch such high prices.

6. It cannot be denied that assessment rates are already heavy in Sind, and the remission rules are so very stringent that in bad years even when remission is granted the lot of zamindars is anything but enviable, as the relief they thus get is only nominal ; and if after one or two lean years a revised settlement, followed by increased assessment, takes place the misery of the zamindars can be better imagined than described.

7. For these reasons the extension of the settlement period to 30 years, thereby bringing Sind on a par with the sister-divisions of the Presidency and other provinces of India, is not only desirable but necessary both in the interests of landholders and Government.

I beg, etc.,

(Sd.) KAUROMAL C. K.,
Zamindar Dad Wah.

30th August 1915.

Examination of Rao Bahadur Diwan Kouromal Chandanmal.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land, in which talukas?
- A. Nasrat and Naushahro.
- Q. Is it mostly in the Nasrat?
- A. Yes.
- Q. The zamindars are deterred from improving their lands by short settlements. Is it so? How is that so? If improvements pay, they pay, whether the assessment is high or low?
- A. This way, that the fear of enhancement at every revision settlement always hangs upon the zamindar, so he cannot make up his mind to invest his capital.
- Q. Are you speaking from experience? On the Nasrat, I believe there has been no revision?
- A. Yes. But still there is the fear.
- Q. What sorts of improvements?
- A. If my land is lift, I will convert it into flow. Unless I know for certain that the period of settlement is much longer, I will not do so.
- Q. You have not personal knowledge that zamindars are so deterred?
- A. I have heard so.
- Q. You have said in your written statement, "Administrators have advocated 30 years' settlement." Has any administrator done so after the irrigational settlement was introduced?
- A. I am not quite sure.
- Q. You say the vagaries of the river do not affect the whole of Sind, but they surely are affecting the Nasrat taluka?
- A. No.

By Mr. Gebbie—

- Q. We have had complaints on the Nasrat.
- A. That is not due to vagaries of the river. The inundation was absolutely low.

By the President—

- Q. Is not the river affecting the mouth of the Nasrat and Dad by erosion or by receding?
- A. Very little. It will affect the whole taluka.
- Q. You talk of the distress of the Nasrat zamindars. Is this due to the shortness of the settlement period or want of water?
- A. Partly to one and partly to the other.
- Q. What is it mostly due to?
- A. It is due to locusts, then to deficiency of water and then to shortness of the settlement period. The third cause is equally important as the first two.

Q. You say that the lessees commonly apply to the Manager, Incumbered Estates, to be let off their contracts through fear of their enhancement on revision. Is this so?

A. I have heard so.

Q. Are not these lessees aware, when they enter into the contract, of the settlement period?

A. If there is any bad year of deficiency of water, this thing accentuates.

Q. Land sells at higher prices now than it did formerly?

A. Yes. There are various causes for it.

Q. On the whole, a zamindar makes more profit than a banya who lends money?

A. Sometimes he is and sometimes the banya is better off. In bad years the zamindar loses.

Q. Which is better of on the whole?

A. I am talking of money-lenders only and not of merchants. Zamindars are on the whole better off than money-lenders.

Q. Do you consider that zamindari under the present conditions is a paying concern?

A. If there are no untoward circumstances.

Q. Everything will pay if there are no untoward circumstances?

A. Yes.

Q. As a matter of fact the zamindars as a rule make a profit?

A. Yes.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Can you give me any instances of a lessee who has applied to be let off his contract, as you have stated?

A. I cannot name any.

Hyderabad, Sind, 14th July 1915.

Opinion of Mr. Mathradas Ramchand, B.A. LL.B., Pleader.

I have the honour to submit my views on the question entrusted to you for decision whether the period of settlement prevailing in Sind should or should not be enhanced.

This question is not a new one. It has been puzzling the brains of authorities for the last half a century and over. In the sixties of the last century it was decided against the personal opinion of the head of the Bombay Government, *i.e.*, Sir Bartle Frere, that the period should be 10 years only and not 30 as prevailing in the rest of the Presidency. The Governor of Bombay was himself strongly in favour of allowing 30 years' settlement. But his colleagues thought that Sind was then in a transitional state and, as an experiment, only 10 years' period should be guaranteed.

Again, in the seventies, the then Commissioner in Sind, Sir William Mervweather was strongly in favour of guaranteeing 30 years' settlement, but the authorities were dazzled by the brilliant prospects of the new line (the Indus Valley Railway) which was then under construction. They believed if the period of settlement was fixed at 30 years, the Government will be losing a large share of the benefits that would accrue from the opening of the above mentioned railway. So the battle of 30 years' period against 10 years was lost.

Again in 1880, when the present irrigational settlement was being introduced in Sind, the then Settlement Commissioner, Colonel Anderson, put forward the claim of Sind for 30 years' settlement and, even the Commissioner in Sind, Mr. Erskine, went so far as to allow 21 years' settlement. But again the Bombay Government decided against 30 years. Again the Sindhis had to put up with this defeat.

The question was again raised by the Sind Muhammadan League in their address to His Excellency the Viceroy of India, *i.e.*, Lord Curzon, in 1900. The noble Lord again replied that Sind was not yet fully developed from the irrigational point of view, and the vagaries of the River Indus could not allow a longer period.

In the meantime, on the discussion raised by R. C. Dutt, Esquire, a high retired Government official, the Government of Lord Curzon laid down certain principles, chief of which were that, as an ordinary rule, the settlement should be for 30 years in backward provinces as an exceptional measure, a shorter settlement may be guaranteed; and the exceptional circumstances, applicable to Sind were those mentioned by His Excellency in his reply to the Muhammadan League in Sind. I need not go into a detailed criticism of Lord Curzon's exceptional circumstances prevailing in Sind, but I take permission to invite your attention to the speech delivered by me at Bombay on the 14th September 1901, before the Bombay Provincial Conference, a copy of which is herewith attached. If the vagaries of the River Indus were always to be taken into consideration, there will be no change in the period of settlement, because the vagaries will last as long as the river exists. I will therefore only place before you a description of changes that have taken place during the last 14 years. These changes have been very great. The province has been fully opened up by the construction of railways in all directions, north, east, south and west, with subsidiary feeders, and therefore from the point of railway development this province is inferior to none in India. From the point of irrigational development, it is sufficient to say that all the important extensions and improvements of the irrigational system have been carried out, the Dad, the Naulakhi, the Nasrat and the Mahwah are in working order. The cultivation depends upon irrigation and I submit that cultivation has reached

the ends of its tether and the zamindars are generally refused permission to cultivate new lands on account of the paucity of water. It is therefore clear that the present conditions are well crystallized here as in any other province of India and there is not much room for development. I therefore submit that no more exceptional circumstances exist in this province justifying exceptional treatment. The much talked of great Rohri Canal has been looming before the public for the last 60 years and will remain so for the next half a century, and even if it be taken up to-day it will not be completed in the next 30 years. It therefore cannot come in the way of Sind getting a settlement of a longer period than that for 10 years. To me it appears strange that your Commission should have thought fit to call upon the public to prove before you the propriety or necessity of extending the term of settlement prevailing at present. It is axiomatic truth that more the Government demand is fixed and longer the period of settlement the better it is for the country. That view is supported by eminent economists and statesmen. Unfortunately, the public interests in India are considered distinct from those of the Government and the Government is always earning for a larger share of income. The public therefore need not be called upon to prove that a long settlement is more beneficial to the country than a short one. The burden, therefore, should be laid on the shoulders of those who allege the existence of exceptional circumstances justifying the exceptional treatment. But the exceptional circumstances alleged to exist in Sind are, so far as I am aware, those which were put in the mouth of Lord Curzon.

It is also a matter of knowledge that the prospect of a revised settlement discourages people from purchasing lands until they know what is in store for them at the coming settlement. It is general belief in the minds of people, and I think it is fully justified, that a revisional settlement means only a settlement for the enhancement of the Government demand and never for reducing it. It is therefore a reasonable inference that where people are afraid or unwilling to buy, prices of land will surely fall.

Your next question requires instances where the fear of revisional settlement has retarded improvements. If it retards sales, i.e., investment of capital in land, it clearly follows that it will equally discourage people from investing capital required for improvements. The evidence on this point will be only negative and therefore not worth much. I myself possess many survey numbers which I would like to convert from lift to flow, but the fear of enhancement of assessment is always a factor which prevents me from carrying out the improvements.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) MATHRADAS RAMCHAND, B.A., LL.B.,
Pleader.

Examination of Mr. Mathradas Ramchand.

By the President—

Q. You are a zamindar?

A. Yes.

Q. Where is your land?

A. In Hyderabad and Badin talukas.

Q. You say that you have lift lands which you would convert into flow if you did not fear enhancement. In how many years' time do you think it will pay you?

A. That depends on the amount I spend and the labour I get. If I can get labour, I can do it in three months. Had I sufficient amount of money, I would be prepared to spend it at one time.

Q. Can't you give us something more definite?

A. In a season I generally get one number converted.

Q. How soon will it pay?

A. That depends on water.

Q. I am asking for facts from your experience.

A. I cannot say. Perhaps it may not be in five years.

Q. So that, even if there were no questions of enhancement, you would not be able to say whether the thing would pay or not?

A. I would expect some profit. It depends on the quantity of water I get.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. To what extent would you increase the value by converting?

A. I think it will double the value. If it is Rs. 50, it will become Rs. 100.

Q. Could you give an idea of the average cost of doing it?

A. Rs. 50 a gireb.

By the President—

Q. If you have land worth Rs. 50 per acre, and if you pay Rs. 100 to convert it, is it not a paying concern?

A. My land in Hyderabad worth Rs. 50 has been fetching Rs. 125 per acre after conversion. I find many other profits. It will cost less to cultivate.

Q. You could not have two values, selling and cultivation value?

A. The selling value is very much increased.

Q. How will a question of rates being enhanced prevent you from improving your lands?

A. Because the rates are enhanced if the land is improved. If the Settlement Officer finds the land improved, he will tax it accordingly.

Q. Do you think that the Assistant Collector enhances rates because of one number?

A. He takes all the numbers into consideration, but still he might take mine as a standard.

Q. The question of lift and flow does not affect the grouping, so in converting lift into flow you need not be afraid of high assessment?

A. No, but flow land bears a better crop.

Q. The way in which it discourages you is that when you sink money in the land you cannot be certain that it will bring you a sufficient return?

A. Yes. Hyderabad taluka was very unfortunate in that respect, because in 1896 the assessment in lift lands was increased by 12½ per cent. and in 1906 one rupee more was the increase in garden cultivation in the Hyderabad taluka. The next revision, which is expected in 1916, will, it is expected, add to this assessment and thus the benefit of the improvement will be carried away by the enhancement.

Q. "The prospect of a revision deters people from purchasing land until they know what is in store for them." Do you speak from your experience?

A. I think it does. I cannot speak from experience.

Q. Can you tell me, as regards leasing, whether people who are taking lands on lease usually enquire when the revision is due?

A. Yes, they do. Such a term is put in the kabulyat, that if Government demand an increase the lessee will be bound to pay it.

Q. You criticise the methods of the Committee. Will you state what sort of information witnesses should be asked to give?

A. They should first examine those gentlemen who say that in Sind exceptional circumstances prevail which justify shorter settlements. The burden has been thrown on us to show that shorter settlements are not beneficial.

Q. All the reasons for the ten years' period are on record.

A. Lord Curzon has illustrated them.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. They are all on record at present. The reasons are on record.

A. If you could have given a particular reason, I should have come to rebut it.

Q. Your real argument for the extension of the settlement is that there is no reason to make a distinction between Sind and other parts of the Presidency. The present settlement period is not causing any real hardship, is it?

A. Yes, it is.

By Professor Shafrani—

Q. You quote "The longer the settlement, the better for the country." I should like to see that?

A. Here it is (Lord Curzon's Land Revenue Policy).

Q. Government Resolution means that settlement in perpetuity, i.e., the permanent settlement would be the best?

A. Silence.

Q. The conditions here are very much similar to those in the Punjab?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you not be content with the same period as in the Punjab?

A. We should be content with anything that Government will give us.

30th August 1915.

Examination of Khan Bahadur Sayad Allahando Shah.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land?
- A. In Naushahro, Nasrat, Tando Muhammad Khan and Kandiaro talukas.
- Q. What is your opinion regarding the settlement period?
- A. It should be thirty years.
- Q. Why?
- A. Because the zamindars are not induced to spend money on their lands and improve them.
- Q. If the period is extended, will they improve their lands?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Most of the zamindars care nothing about the settlement, do they? They do not know when the revision is to take place?
- A. Every one knows that it is to take place every ten years.
- Q. If the period were extended to thirty years, would there be any increase in the value of the land?
- A. If the land is improved, it will fetch more.
- Q. What improvement do you mean?
- A. Converting lift land into flow, etc.
- Q. Why do they not make such improvements, when the period is ten years?
- A. They would make such improvements, but the fact is that in ten years they will cultivate the lands three times and by that they cannot get all their expenses.
- Q. Have any zamindars complained about it to you?
- A. Yes, many.
- Q. In which taluka?
- A. In all the talukas—Kandiaro, Naushahro, Nasrat and Tando Muhammad Khan.
- Q. But not in Guni?
- A. I have not been to Guni.
- Q. Nasrat?
- A. Yes, there the zamindars have complained to me.
- Q. Does revision mean enhancement?
- A. When the settlement was introduced the rates were enhanced. Government record will show. So many men have left their lands.

Q. Is it not owing to deficiency of water ?

A. Partly owing to that.

Q. If the settlement period is extended, would the people improve their lands ?

A. The land will be made better. People think that after ten years the assessment will be enhanced, so they leave off their lands and make no improvements.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. The rates at present are unreasonable. If the period of settlement is extended to 30 years, will they not be considered too high then too ?

A. The zamindars will improve their lands more, knowing that during the next 30 years there will be no enhancement and so will think less of the high rates.

30th August 1915.

Examination of Sayad Abdul Hakim Shah.

By, the President—

Q. Is your land in Guni?

A. Yes.

Q. What is your opinion regarding the period of settlement?

A. I am of opinion that it should be thirty years.

Q. What is the real difficulty at present, when the settlement period extends to ten years?

A. The produce of the land is scanty, therefore the rates should not be high.

Q. You seem to fear that if the settlement is revised, you will have to pay high rates?

A. Yes.

Q. The first settlement of Guni was made in 1883, next in 1893 and the third in 1913. The rates were enhanced only in the last settlement, *i.e.*, after thirty years. Do you still think that the rates are too high?

A. Yes. Our land is still as bad as it was before.

Q. But the rates have only been increased after thirty years?

A. Because the land was bad.

Q. But you have not to complain against the period of settlement?

A. Yes.

Q. How so, when the rates were not enhanced for thirty years?

A. The land is poor and the rates are high.

Q. Then you have no complaint against the period of settlement?

A. I have.

Q. Have you anything else to say?

A. No.

Examination of Diwan Mnshtaksing.

By the President—

Q. Your land is in Guni?

A. Yes, in Guni and Badin.

Q. What is your opinion about the settlement period?

A. It is too short a period. Our lands are adjacent to the river and in this short period of 10 years we are not able to eradicate weed and other pests.

Q. If the period is extended, will the pests disappear?

A. During the long term settlement it will be possible to eradicate them.

Q. Does your land in Guni pay you?

A. No.

Q. In Guni rates have not been enhanced from 1883 to 1913?

A. The settlement was revised every 10 years, but there was so enhancement of rates.

Q. You should not have any reason to complain then. But even if the rates are enhanced you could represent your case to the Settlement Officer?

A. If we did so, the Settlement Officer would be displeased.

Q. You are of opinion that the period of settlement should be extended to 30 years, i.e., the rates should not be enhanced before 30 years, and in Guni the rates have not been enhanced for the past 30 years?

A. Yes.

Q. Therefore you have no complaint against the period in Guni?

A. But I have fear for the future.

Q. Has the land decreased in value because of the short term settlement?

A. Yes. If the period is extended, the value of land will increase proportionately.

Examination of Rao Bahadur Parulekar.

By the President—

Q. What is your opinion as regards the length of settlement? Do you consider 10 years insufficient?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you say why?

A. The chief thing I have found is the sense of insecurity. There is no attempt at improving the land. The zamindar does not use his water to the best advantage. If the period were 20 years he would use it to the best advantage. The special water-rate can be fixed if there are irrigational improvements. The Government will not lose thereby.

Q. You say that the shortness of the period at present discourages improvements made by zamindars?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you any instances in mind?

A. I do not see them making improvements.

By Mr. Gebbie—

Q. Has any zamindar in your district ever mentioned to you that the period was too short?

A. They always feel that the rates will increase and view the revision with apprehension. It prevents them from making improvements.

By the President—

Q. You see them making no attempt at improvements?

A. Yes.

Q. It is assumption on your part that their failure is due to shortness of settlement period?

A. Partly, that is my opinion. There may be other causes also.

Q. Can you say which?

A. Their indebtedness. This, I think, is one of the reasons.

Q. Do you consider that if the period were doubled, the people would start improving their land?

A. Yes, I think they would, because as time is advancing, education is also advancing and the people realize the value of improvements. Doubling the period will make them improve their lands.

Q. Are there any educated zamindars in your district at present? Unfortunately they are few?

A. Very few. But we are expecting improvements in their education.

Q. Is not the shortness of water-supply in your charge much more of a factor deterring the zamindars from putting money in land than the fear of enhancement of assessment?

A. I cannot say definitely. It is also a factor.

Q. A very great factor?

A. Probably. Yes, it is a very great factor.

- Q. Until that sense of insecurity as regards, water-supply is done away with, nothing else is of much importance?
- A. That is the most important thing, as is acknowledged by Revenue and Public Works Department authorities.
- Q. Do you think that the rates of assessment are too high in your charge?
- A. They are fair, excepting those for rice which are low.
- Q. Do you consider that the zamindars have any just cause for considering that they have been hardly treated in the matter of enhancement?
- A. They have no just cause.
- Q. I believe there has been only one revision settlement in your district?
- A. Yes, only one in 1906, by Mr. Bharucha.
- Q. Do you consider that rice is the main crop in your district?
- A. Yes, two-thirds.
- Q. Do you consider that the rate on rice is low?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Very low?
- A. Yes, at least from the irrigational point of view.
- Q. In fact it could fairly be enhanced?
- A. Yes. In a just way.
- Q. Then the zamindars have no cause to complain at present as regards the rates of assessment?
- A. No.
- Q. You do not consider it true that the shortness of settlement period leads to unfair enhancement of the rates?
- A. The feeling in my mind was that every revision means enhancement until I saw Mr. Moysey's report.
- Q. So the objectionable feature is the feeling of insecurity. It is not the actual enhancement?
- A. That is what I could say by seeing the facts and figures. There might have been unfair enhancement in few cases.
- Q. But my point is that in your opinion that the rates have not actually been unjustly enhanced owing to the short period of settlement?
- A. They might have been unfairly enhanced in a few cases.
- Q. You can't point to any particular enhancement which you think unfair or unjust?
- A. No, I cannot.
- Q. Nor could you say that the shortness of the settlement has in practice led to undue enhancement of assessment?
- A. No.

Q. It is the feeling of insecurity which you think is the only bad result?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there any other grounds for recommending a longer period except this?

A. None.

Q. Do you consider it true that there are not likely to be great irrigational improvements in your charge which would justify an enhancement. The argument is raised that there has been much irrigational improvement and no further improvement is now necessary?

A. But that need not be taken into consideration because Government can put special water-rate for the purpose.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. What period of settlement would you recommend for the Province of Sind?

A. Not less than 20 years.

Q. May be more?

A. May be more.

Q. Forty years?

A. Thirty years should be the maximum.

By the President—

Q. What would you consider to be the more proper period?

A. Twenty years.

No. 737 of 1915.

**Opinion of R. B. Gobindram Salamatrai, I.S.O., Superintendent,
of Land Records and Registration in Sind.**

Superintendent's Office,
Hyderabad, 25th June 1915.

With reference to your letter No. T/66, dated the 28th May 1915, I have the honour to state below my views on the question as to the desirability of extending the period of settlements in Sind from 10 to 30 years.

2. To begin with, it must be recalled under what conditions the present period of 10 years was fixed. The irrigational settlements were then, so to say, yet in their experimental stage, the suitability of this form of settlement for the entire province had yet to be established, the attitude of the people had yet to be studied, and lastly the irrigational conditions were in a state of uncertainty. It was thus in the interests of Government and the ryats alike that the period of the settlements should be reasonably short so as to allow of a quick readjustment of the rates in case they were found to be unfair in the working. The conditions of to-day are far different. It is now over 30 years that the irrigational settlements were first introduced, and the experimental stage may be said to have passed, the people are now quite conversant with the principles of this form of settlement and the railway and canal systems are no longer in their initial stages of development. It is true that the situation may be revolutionized by the execution of large irrigational projects such as the proposed Rohri Dad Canal or the Bukkur Weir, but schemes of such vast magnitude take time to materialize, and even then the interests of Government always remain safeguarded by the clause in the settlements reserving to Government the right to revise the rates during the period of guarantee in case of increased water-supply from Government works. In view of all this it would appear that the time has arrived when the whole question of the period of guarantee should be reviewed and decided on consideration of the conditions now subsisting. I have given the subject my best consideration and am respectfully of opinion that the period could very appropriately be doubled, I shall explain in the next paragraph my reasons for favouring this view.

3. Revision of settlements has come to be looked upon by the ryats as synonymous with enhancement of assessment rates and however fair and reasonable the increments, if any, at a revision settlement may be, the feeling of dread and uncertainty inspired by the fact that the next settlement will follow in ten years' time, has a demoralizing effect and must tend to retard agricultural improvements. In Sind the irrigational conditions necessitate a system of fallows, with the result that a very large number of fields is cultivated (and pays assessment every third or fourth year). The effect of frequent revisions of assessment on the holders of such fields can be easily imagined. In their case, the revision comes after every second or third cultivation season and the cultivator hardly gets time to settle down under conditions created by one revision settlement before he is called upon to face another settlement. In considering this point it is of importance to remember that the incidence of assessment is not light in Sind as compared with other provinces. On the other hand, the State will not be committing itself to any undue sacrifice of revenue by extending the period of settlement to 20 years. Experience has shown that in a very large number of cases, on administrative or other grounds, Government themselves have had to extend for varying terms the existing periods of guarantee. The number of cases in which this

has had to be done goes to show that the present period of 10 years has proved far too short. This view is upheld by the opinion of several officers of long and varied experience in Sind and in a way has been recognized by Government also, as is evidenced by the fact that of late they have sanctioned guarantees for longer terms than the customary period of 10 years. Slight irrigational improvements will not, of course, justify any revision of rates, as the rayats have a claim to a fair water-supply, while in the case of any large irrigational improvement the Government can at any moment exercise their right to revise the assessments according to the terms of the settlement. For these reasons Government do not stand to lose anything, to speak of, by acceding to the demand of the rayat for a more extended term of settlement. In the rare cases in which the rates should prove to have been pitched too high, the matter could always be remedied during the currency of the settlement by a reduction of rates which is permissible at any time.

Thus, while an extension of the period of settlement is not likely to affect the revenue of Government, it is calculated to afford immense satisfaction to the rayat and to enable him to embark on agricultural enterprises more freely and fearlessly than he has been wont to do.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) GOBINDRAM,

Superintendent of Land Records and Registration in Sind.

Examination of R. B. Gobindram Salamatrai, I. S. O.

By the President.

Q. What is your opinion as regards the extension of settlement ?

A. I have given it in writing that the present period should be doubled, *i. e.*, 20 years.

Q. You give reasons for which the term is fixed at 10 years at present ?

A. No. I have simply said in my second paragraph.

Q. This is the second paragraph. Is it simply because the things were in an unsettled state ?

A. Yes. The irrigational conditions were also unsettled. They are more settled now, unless larger schemes come in.

Q. And in that case we can put on a water-rate ?

A. Government is of course protected by that provision. But large schemes are not coming now. They will take time to materialize.

Q. What in your opinion are the bad effects of short period of settlement ?

A. I think I have said in my report.

Q. Do you think that the actual facts justify the idea that revision means enhancement ?

A. In these matters the general feeling has to be taken into account. I think that when Government officers also begin to think that there is a feeling of insecurity, we may take it for granted that it is so.

By Mr. Martin.

Q. The feeling exists rightly or wrongly ?

A. Mr. Giles, who was considered to be a wellknown expert in settlement matters, has said in the Shikarpur taluka settlement report of 1898-99, while submitting the proposals as Commissioner in Sind :—

“As regards the period for which the rates should be guaranteed, I presume that the usual period of 10 years would be approved by Government. Personally, I should like to see it extended to 20 years, as I am of opinion that the shorter period belies the word settlement, is in fact adverse to any sense of security as regards assessment and tends to prevent capital being extended on improvements—a view which was strongly represented to me by Mr. Dayaram Gidumal, the Sessions Judge of Shikarpur, on my recent visit there.”

The longer guarantee should of course be attended by the condition that assessment would be increased during the period if any new irrigational projects favourably affecting the water-supply come out. Of course the opinions of other officers are to the like effect. So some time or the other it has come out that this period is short.

Q. You give the opinions of officers and you think that this is an opinion which is shared by everybody ?

A. I can't say by everybody, but by the majority.

Q. By the thinking zamindars ?

A. Yes. There are many who do not know what a settlement is.

- Q. The ordinary uneducated zamindar never spend thought on the matter ?
- A. I think they do not know what a settlement is. Now perhaps when there has been some agitation, they may. Before it, many were quite ignorant what a settlement was.
- Q. The present period is said hardly to allow a man to cultivate two or three times ?
- A. In some cases it does not.
- Q. You say also that incidence of assessment in Sind is not light ?
- A. Yes. I saw that in a printed agricultural statement, in which the rates of the various provinces were compared.
- Q. You are basing your remarks on that ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is that the list given by Mr. Bhurgri ?
- A. No. That is a printed list in a publication.
- Q. A Government publication ?
- A. Yes, a Government publication of the Agricultural Department.
- Q. I do not know what that list was. But I presume that the rates with which it has been compared do not include the water-rate for other provinces ?
- A. I do not know ; it may be so.
- Q. Do you know of any other part of India in which water-rate has been included in land revenue ?
- A. I do not know of any other part in India. My experience is confined to Sind.
- Q. You do not know even by reading ?
- A. No.
- Q. So that really you are not able to maintain that the incidence is high ?
- A. No.
- Q. You are in favour of doubling the period ?
- A. Yes. That is the opinion of the majority of Government officials.
- Q. Have you got any particular reasons for fixing it at 20 years ?
- A. Because whenever I see settlement reports, I find that several officers have recommended the period of 20 years, and I personally also think that it should be 20 years. I can quote a high authority for that.
- Q. Apart from the recommendations of other officers, what are your reasons for fixing it at 20 years ?
- A. Because 10 years is too short, and Government themselves have recognized it.
- Q. Why not 15 or why not 30 years ?
- A. Fifteen years is a short period and 20 years would be sufficient.

By Mr. Martin.

Q. Why do you object to 30 years ?

A. If we are urged on account of ryots, I should reply to them that for their sake it should be 20 years. Because very long term of guarantee will wretchedly weigh on them. Even the Settlement Officer, when fixing the rates, might fix them higher when the term is 30 years.

Q. You mean that after 30 years the Settlement Officer will be bound to enhance the rates ?

A. I mean to say that when a Settlement Officer revises the rates he will think that the rates have to be fixed for 30 years and so he will fix higher rates.

Q. You think that an officer who fixing the rates for 30 years would be more careful not to pitch them too low than one who fixes for 20 years ?

A. My meaning is that if the period is 30 years, the officer fixing the rates for 30 years might think very much over them and fix them too high.

Q. Therefore the rates would be pitched higher for a period of 30 years than they would be for a period of 20 years ?

A. My opinion is that the rates might be a little higher if fixed for 30 years. If we hire a house for 5 years, we will be charged a certain rent, but if we hire it for 20 years it will be fixed higher.

Q. Surely that argument should be in favour of a 10-year period ?

A. Twenty years have been looked upon as a proper period. Officers themselves fix it at 20 years.

By Mr. Macmillann.

Q. Is it because the rates of assessment on the whole are rising and are likely to rise and therefore the Settlement Officer is likely to provide for a probable enhancement for 30 years. Do you think he will fix a rate which would be suitable for the whole period of 30 years ?

A. I do not quite understand, but I shall repeat that I consider that, even according to the majority of Settlement Officers, 20 years is the normal period.

By Mr. Martin.

Q. But is it your conclusion that a longer period means a high rate ?

A. Yes.

Q. If a 30 years' period is fixed it will mean a high rate ?

A. I do consider that perhaps it may come to it. But this is what I said in the beginning.

By the President.

Q. Are there any other reasons in favour of 20 years' settlement ?

A. I think, for Government sake, the 10 years period is rather short. I think Government does not gain anything in that short time which has been so many times urged by officers themselves. Small

improvements in canals do not affect that at all, because the people are entitled to a fair supply of water. It is only when Government spend large capital and very large improvements come in that they should claim.

Q. You say that Government do not gain by the present term of 10 years ?

A. Yes. I think the term is unnecessarily short.

Q. You mean to say that 10 years' settlement does not lead to enhancement ?

A. I am not arguing.

Q. Do you consider that Government does get more or not ?

A. I think that the Government does not get more.

Q. In fact you do not think that the short settlement favours enhancement of rates ?

A. No, I do not think that.

Q. But you do think people fear it and think it favours enhancement ?

A. Yes.

By Professor Shahani.

Q. Could you quote the opinion of the highest authority you referred to just now with regard to the period of settlement ?

A. Yes.

Q. I would like to have that.

A. It is quoted in a Government Resolution embodied in the Garhi Yasin settlement report of 1899 :—

“Mr. Giles, with his usual care and thoroughness, explains in detail the grounds on which he differs from the Collector and the Deputy Collector, and while—were the assessment to be fixed, as in the Presidency, for a term of 30 years—His Excellency the Governor in Council would consider that the State had a claim to a large increase, yet, in view of the next revision taking place after 10 years, he is prepared to accept the Commissioner's proposals as they stated.”

This shows clearly that if the period had been proposed for 30 years, Government would have accepted it.

Q. Is the economic development of the Presidency different from that of Sind ?

A. I cannot say. I have not read the settlement reports of the Presidency.

Q. Is the assessment in the Presidency higher than that in Sind ?

A. No. I am not able to compare unless the figures are put before me. Of course the water-rate and other things vary.

Q. Has the time arrived for extending the period generally throughout Sind.

A. I have said so in my report.

Examination of Nawab Hyder Khan Laghari.

By the President—

Q. Where is your land ?

A. In the Sinjhoru and Sanghar talukas.

Q. What is the extent of your holding ?

A. Two thousand acres.

Q. Is it rice land ?

A. No, it is not rice land.

Q. What is your opinion as regards the period of settlement ?

A. It should be extended. Others also think so.

Q. Have you asked other zamindars ?

A. Yes, I have asked other zamindars, and I myself think it will be better.

Q. How will the zamindars gain thereby ?

A. The land being kalar requires water for its improvements and during the long term settlement it will be possible to manure it and improve it in other ways. In the case of sandy land also, manure and water are necessary to improve it, and it will take long to do so.

Q. Then 10 years' settlement affect the zamindar unfavourably ?

A. Yes, because during this period land is cultivated once or twice and cannot be improved.

Q. What is the real difficulty ?

A. The real difficulty is that on account of deficiency of water we cannot improve our land. If the supply of water is increased, we will be able to improve our land. During the short term we cannot improve our land. During the long term settlement, we hope to get a good supply of water in some years and in these years we hope to improve our land.

Q. Do you get sufficient water ?

A. No.

Q. Will it be possible for you to effect improvements if you get sufficient supply of water ?

A. Yes.

Q. That is, you have to complain of water and not of short period of settlement ?

A. Yes. The important thing is the deficiency of water. The extension of settlement period is the next question. To begin with, we had to pay an assessment of annas 8 per acre and when the settlement was revised the assessment was raised to Re. 1 or Re. 1-4 per acre, and so it has been increasing at every revision although the water-supply has been the same.

Q. Does the revision of settlement mean enhancement ?

A. When there is no water, the assessment is not enhanced, but when there is water, there is no hope of assessment being reduced.

- Q. What should be the period of settlement ?
- A. It should be 50. If not 50, it should be 40, but at least 30 years, as in all parts of India.
- Q. If the period is extended to 30 years, will the zamindars improve their lands ?
- A. Yes. Because they will think that the rates will not be enhanced shortly and will try their utmost for a greater outturn.
- Q. Are the present rates too high ?
- A. The land of Sind being inferior, does not pay. The ordinary expenses of Sind zamindar are also greater than his income. He has to keep an otak where his guests bring horses, camels, etc., and it costs a great deal to do so.
- Q. Formerly you paid an assessment of annas 8 per acre ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. This was paid on cultivated as well as on uncultivated land ?
- A. Yes. Out of a holding of 30 acres, if 10 or 15 acres were cultivated, the assessment had to be paid on the entire land.
- Q. If the period of settlement were extended to 30 years, would the value of land then increase ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did the people think of this before ?
- A. Yes.

By Mr. Gebbie—

- Q. Sinjhora is a new taluka, in what taluka was your land situated formerly ?
- A. First in Shahdadpur, then in Sanghar.
- Q. Was the assessment enhanced on your land in Shadadpur ?
- A. Our land was irrigated by Shahu Wah. Then Dinu Wah was constructed. When the Jamrao Wah was first constructed, there was good water-supply and it went on decreasing shortly. Now there is rotation.
- Q. You mean to say that there is no water now ?
- A. Not sufficient.
- Q. When you paid 8 annas per acre, you got water from Shahu Wah ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you get sufficient water then ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. How did you fare when you got Dinu water ?
- A. It was alright in the beginning but went on decreasing gradually
- Q. Dinu Wah existed before the Jamrao ?
- A. Yes.

Q. Would you be satisfied if you get as much water from the Jamrao as you get from Shahu Wah ?

A. Yes.

Q. Then you have suffered on account of Jamrao ?

A. No. It is only now that we have suffered.

Q. But you get less water and it is a loss to you ?

A. Yes.

Q. If you get sufficient water now, the present rate will not be considered high ?

Q. If we get the water we first got from Jamrao, we would not be losers.

Q. Is your land situated in Shahdadpur ?

A. No.

Q. Was it before ?

A. Yes.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. Do you know why the settlement period has been fixed at 10 years for Sind when it is fixed at 30 years for the Presidency ?

A. No.

Examination of Mr. Gurmukhsing Paramal.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land situated ?
- A. In Sakrand taluka.
- Q. Is it rice land ?
- A. It is lift land dry crop.
- Q. Are you of opinion that the settlement period should be extended ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Have the rates been ever enhanced so far as your land goes ?
- A. No. Since 1880 there has been no enhancement.
- Q. So that, as far as your land is concerned, you have already enjoyed the advantage of a 30 years' settlement ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And all the zamindars in the Sakrand taluka have enjoyed the same advantage ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Are the zamindars there of a progressive class ?
- A. No.
- Q. Do they sink money in lands for improvements ?
- A. No, owing to scarcity of haris.
- Q. What about the water-supply. Is that good ?
- A. So far as Dad Wah is concerned, it was working very well. But for the last 3 years it is not working well. It has not worked well owing to change in the course of the river. This year it is working well.
- Q. But on the whole during the last 30 years you have not suffered ?
- A. In some canals water supply was generally good. Dad Wah working very well. Only in the years of erosion it has suffered.
- Q. Is there any particular reason that there should be a scarcity of haris ?
- A. Because the Sakrand taluka is thinly populated.
- Q. Why should it be thinly populated ?
- A. The whole of the Nasrat taluka was included in the Sakrand taluka, and when the new canals were constructed the haris ran to Nasrat and Dad.
- Q. My point is that the Sakrand taluka is not at a disadvantage when compared with Hala or Moro in point of water-supply ?
- A. It is worse than Hala.
- Q. Is it not so well off as Hala ?
- A. No. Dambhro Wah worked well, and water was sufficient when the Dad portion had good supply. It is the same as in Sakrand.
- Q. Supposing that the settlement period were extended to 30 years, do you think that the condition of Sakrand will be altered in any way.
- A. It will be altered only in one way, *i. e.*, where the zamindars are intelligent, they will carry out improvements.

Q. You say, when the zamindars are intelligent. But do you think that people do much improvements in practice ?

A. I am giving you my own example. I spent Rs. 3,000 for improving 18 acres of land by digging mounds. It was an old village site. I am growing tobacco crop on it.

Q. You could not have done more with the longer settlement. I think you are guaranteed for a long period ?

A. Yes. Now I have a guarantee till Ren Wah project is carried out.

Q. You feel quite safe ?

A. Yes. Settlement rates will not be enhanced.

Q. If there had not been such a guarantee, you would have been cautious about investing money ?

A. Yes.

Q. These considerations only affect a few zamindars ?

A. Yes.

Q. You do not own land in any other taluka ?

A. No.

Q. Do the majority of zamindars consider the question of settlement ?

A. Those who are intelligent and can understand.

Q. I suppose that the unintelligent ones would never think of the question at all ?

A. No, mostly the zamindars of Sakrand taluka are uneducated.

Q. Money-lenders, I suppose, think of the question ?

A. Yes. Money-lenders as well as purchasers.

Q. If you were purchasing land, for instance, would you enquire when the revision was due ?

A. Naturally, I would.

Q. Since how long have you been a zamindar ?

A. Since 19 years.

Q. Would you tell me how much land you hold ?

A. 500 acres.

By Mr. Macmillan —

Q. When you made the improvement, if you had known that the assessment would increase by 4 or 5 annas per acre, would you have carried it out ?

A. If the period had been only 2 or 3 years, I would not have gone for it.

Q. Does the question of length of the settlement period affect the leasing value of land ?

A. Yes.

Q. Supposing that the period of a lease includes the year in which the new settlement is to come into force, how far do you think it will affect the leasing value ?

A. I would think over it and, naturally, offer less amount. Yes, of course I would have to do, because if the rate increased, naturally, we will have to pay more assessment to Government.

Q. In such a case do you make an estimate of the increase ?

A. We cannot say how much it will increase. If the rate is enhanced, we would naturally take about 4 or 6 annas per acre.

Q. Can you tell whether the zamindars have an idea how much an enhancement will be under a settlement ?

A. No. Most of them have no idea. It depends upon the officers.

Q. Is that the general feeling ?

A. Yes.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. Do you know why there was a 10 years' settlement in Sind and a 30 years' settlement in the Presidency ?

A. I think it is because in it was considered that there was erosion of the river, and that there would be new canals.

By the President—

Q. You mean, things were not settled down ?

A. Yes.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. Do you expect any rapid changes in the irrigational features ?

A. The proposed canals have been dug. In the district I am concerned with, there is no other proposal.

Q. Do you expect that waste lands would soon be occupied ?

A. If we imported labour from outside.

Q. Then you think this is the right time for the period being increased ?

A. Yes.

By the President—

Q. The question of the water-supply and the question of labour are very much more important than the question of the period of settlement. Otherwise haris will not run away from Sakrand where the settlement is more or less guaranteed ?

A. The haris will not run away because they get the same share. If we are charged Rs. 5, we pay the same share to the hari, it is the zamindar who suffers.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Does the alteration in assessment affect the share in batai ?

A. No.

Q. Is there any custom in Sakrand that haris, after batai is over, give some additional amount to the zamindars ?

A. It is a fixed amount which they pay for a karao, etc.

Q. Is there no custom that the hari gives money to the zamindar in addition to the fixed charges?

A. No.

Q. Do you know that prices of grains have changed in one way or other?

A. Yes, they have.

Q. To what extent can you say that they have?

A. I can say that it depends on every year's crop. When there is good crop in Rajputana, even if the crop in Sind is not good, the prices do not rise.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Is the water-supply in your taluka good?

A. No.

Q. Is it capable of improvement?

A. The canals have already been improved.

Q. No possibility of extension?

A. No. The Dad is improved, the greater portion where there was waste land has come under this canal. Already the land has come under improvement on Ren Wah also.

Examination of Mr. Gurmukhdas.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land situated ?
- A. In Naushahro taluka.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding ?
- A. Five hundred acres.
- Q. What is its peech ?
- A. Navlakhi.
- Q. Lift or flow ?
- A. Both.
- Q. Is it rice land ?
- A. No.
- Q. What is your opinion about extending the period of settlement ?
- A. I am of opinion that it should be extended.
- Q. What should be the period ?
- A. It should be at least 30 years.
- Q. How does the 10 years' settlement affect you unfavourably ?
- A. We cannot improve our land.
- Q. Can't you improve your land in 10 years ?
- A. No.
- Q. Why ?
- A. When we spend anything on our land it is with the object of getting a return. If we are certain that the rates will not increase in a short period, there would be an impetus to spend money over it. Our land is cultivated twice or thrice during 10 years and it does not pay us the interest money.
- Q. If the period is extended to 30 years, how will the zamindars improve their land ?
- A. The waste lands will be cultivated.
- Q. But how can the land be improved which is cultivated now ?
- A. We will manure it. But even in cultivated land there are unculturable portions (kharabo) which will be improved and brought under cultivation. The lift land can be converted into flow.
- Q. Is there any other difficulty ?
- A. If one likes to sell his land he does not get what he might if the period were extended, so in the case when it is let on lease.
- Q. Are you a Bunyadi zamindar ? Is the land yours or your father's ?
- A. Yes. It is my father's and my uncle's.
- Q. Since how long was your father a zamindar ?
- A. Since about 40 years.
- Q. When were the rates enhanced ?

A. They will be enhanced this year. Last year we were assessed at higher rates, but these were remitted.

Q. This is the second enhancement, I think ?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the enhancement in this settlement ?

A. Four annas per acre on an average.

Q. The zamindars think that if the settlement is revised the assessment will be enhanced ?

A. Yes, all the zamindars think so because it has always been enhanced.

Q. Therefore they fear and do not spend money on their land ?

A. Yes.

Q. If the period were extended to 30 years, will all the zamindars spend money on their lands ?

A. Many would, but not all. They will certainly try in their own interest.

Q. Do the small zamindars think of these matters ?

A. They do.

Q. Are there many Hindu zamindars in Naushahro ?

A. No, the majority are Mahomedans.

Q. Are they big zamindars or small ?

A. The majority are small.

Q. How is the supply of water ?

A. It is good on Navlakhi and Nasrat has rotation.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Is the water-supply capable of improvement ?

A. No.

Q. Is no more water needed ?

A. It is needed in some cases.

Q. Is it needed for lands already cultivated ?

A. No.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. If the land were disposed of 2 years before the revision of a settlement came in, will this fact affect the price of land ?

A. Yes, I will give instance. In the Naushahro taluka the estate of Muhammad Chamar, who is under the protection of the Manager, Encumbered Estates, was to be given on lease, and the Deputy Manager held the auction at Naushahro. There was a bid for a certain amount by a banya by name Surtram, but the auction was not included. On the second or third day he came to know that the

rates were to be enhanced. He did not take up the land because he thought that he would have to pay Rs. 200 or 400 more on account of enhanced assessment.

Q. Is this the example cited by you? You say that he bid for the land, but when he came to know that the rates actually were enhanced, he thought, that he would have to pay Rs. 300 or Rs. 400 more towards assessment. But if he had not known what the actual increase would be, would he have bidden less from the mere enhancement?

A. He would not have bidden more.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. You have said that the period should be extended. If the period is not extended, the zamindars will be (*kangal*) very poor. Is it due to deficiency of water or to shortness of the period of settlement?

A. Owing to the shortness of the period of settlement.

Q. You say it is the second time that the rates have been enhanced and the result is that the return has considerably decreased?

A. Yes, it has.

Q. Formerly, the rate was Rs. 2-7-0 per acre, now it is Rs. 2-13-0 per acre, *i. e.*, an increase of annas 6 per acre. Now has this reduced the zamindar to poverty? Let us take an instance.

A. A zamindar who has a holding of 50 acres will, if the assessment is enhanced by 6 annas per acre, pay about Rs. 19 more.

Q. What is the average yield per acre?

A. It is about twice the assessment. If it is rice land, the produce is worth Rs. 8 after the expenses have been paid.

Q. So that 50 acres will bring a sum of Rs. 400, out of which Rs. 19 will go towards the enhanced assessment. Then the increase of this zamindari is not considerably reduced? Therefore the word *kangal* (very poor) is exaggeration?

A. Yes.

Q. You next say that every settlement brings enhancement. Do you speak of your own taluka or for the whole of Sind?

A. I think it applies to the whole of Sind.

Q. We have got a list prepared in which the results of every settlement have been shown. It appears therefrom that in 20 cases the assessment has not been enhanced and in 31 cases it has been enhanced. Do you still maintain that opinion?

A. I speak from my own experience.

Q. You further state that if the accounts of the Agricultural Department farms are inspected, it will be observed that they do not even pay so much as is required for the upkeep.

Q. Do you know the accounts of any such farm?

A. In the Naushahro taluka, I know of a farm which existed in Gamoo's village where it was so.

Q. You also say that there is no room for further improvements. Therefore settlement should be extended to 30 years as in the Presidency. Do not the canals in Sind require improvements?

A. No.

Q. But if improvements are necessary, should the period also be extended?

A. They are not imminent.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Is the batai the same in all lands—poor as well as rich?

A. Where haris are many, the share is great, and where they are few, it is less.

Q. If a piece of land produce Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 per acre, will the zamindar cultivate it?

A. If the fallow assessment is due, he will cultivate it; in the other case, he will not cultivate it except in exceptional circumstances.

Q. Can he get haris for such poor land?

A. If there are many haris, he can get for such a land even.

**Opinion of Mr. Hiranand T. Lala, Deputy Collector, and
Assistant Manager, Incumbered Estates in Sind.**

1. The standard period of settlements in Bombay, Madras, Orissa and the North-Western Provinces for many years past has been a 30 years' term. In the greater part of the province of Punjab and in the Central Provinces the shorter term of 20 years has been the recognized rule. In other parts of the Punjab 30 years' term has been granted. Shorter terms are permitted in Sind, Burma and Assam. Sind as a rule has had 10 years' term. A few exceptions have, however, recently been made where 15 years' terms have been sanctioned for the Garhi Yasin, Sukkur, Sehwan, Dadu and Johi talukas.

2. The principle laid down in the recent despatch of Lord Curzon enunciating the Land Revenue Policy of the Indian Government is that where the land is fully cultivated, rents fair and agricultural production not liable to violent oscillations, it is sufficient if the demands of Government are re-adjusted once in 30 years, *i.e.*, once in the life-time of each generation. The shorter terms are permitted only in case where the opposite conditions prevail, where there are much waste lands, low rents and a fluctuating cultivation, or, again, where there is a rapid development of resources owing to the construction of roads, railways or canals, or to an increase of population, or to a rise in prices.

3. The claim now is that Sind has advanced and gained sufficient steadiness of agricultural conditions to justify the extension of the period of settlements to 30 years.

4. The literature on the decennial settlement of Sind is already before the committee and I need not dwell upon it at any length. The history of the Sind decennial settlements may, however, be summarized as follows. The first settlement called the fallow diffused settlement was given a ten years' term on the ground that it was purely experimental and the resources of the country had yet to be developed. Then came the revision settlements, the temporary settlements known finally as the irrigation settlements. They were given similar terms for the identical reasons that the railways, roads and irrigation of the country were yet in the course of improvements.

5. The opinion of Sind officers, as gathered from the latest settlement reports, generally are that in the present day conditions 10 years is too short a term for settlements. The reason evidently is that the majority of talukas in the province are now well-settled and have passed the stage called the transition stage and there is little scope for improvement in their railway connections, transport facilities or even the irrigation. Rents and prices are fairly steady in those talukas and except for the effects of steady administration no serious changes are expected.

6. The lands in Sind are now fully cultivated as far as the water-supply is available, so much so that it has been found necessary to restrict cultivation on almost all the important canals. Even on the Jamrao, recently constructed on the modern and upto-date designs, the cultivation is restricted to one-third of the individual holding in a year.

So Sind has practically satisfied all the conditions laid down for a longer settlement. The land is fully cultivated, rents are fair, the assessment compare very favourably with its sister provinces. The agricultural production is not liable to any violent oscillations as is evident from the settlement reports of the different talukas. Almost at every revision there is an enhancement of rates. That in itself is evidence that the agricultural production is not liable to "violent oscillations." There seems, therefore, no reason why Sind should not have the concession of a longer settlement than 10 years or even 15 years.

7. The question of rise in prices is one which affects the whole of India in general. All the important markets are so closely connected with one another by the network of railways scattered throughout the length and breadth of India that Sind should form no exception to the general rule. If the longer periods of settlements in other provinces of India are not affected by the fluctuations in prices, there is no reason why Sind should be singled out for shorter settlements on that score.

8. In connection with the present decennial term of settlement, the question naturally arises whether the short term has in any way injuriously affected the Sind zamindars. No reply to this is possible in the absence of actual experiences in long term settlements but it is an admitted fact that long term settlements are for the good of the people as in the end they leave more money to them. The testimony of more eminent authorities on this point is so completely unanimous that it is unnecessary to labour it, so seek to establish it. Thirty years' term is the order of the day and a province having satisfied the necessary conditions can legitimately claim the concessions enjoyed by her sister provinces.

9. It is urged by some that short term settlements retard improvements and depreciate the value of land.

I do not personally know of any instances in which improvements have been retarded on account of the decennial settlements in Sind. Where a zamindar can afford to dig a well or improve his soil by removing kalar or making other improvements, he often does it. He rarely waits for the settlement.

As for depreciation in value, no accurate estimate can be made, as Sind has never enjoyed a long term settlement. But with a long term the value is bound to improve. The land will have a long term of assessment. I might quote an instance on the point with which I am familiar. It is one of the conditions of the leases of the Incumbered Estates and Court of Wards Departments that in the case of an enhancement of assessment on account of the revision of settlement in the currency of the lease, the lessee will have to pay the enhanced rate. This fact he naturally takes into consideration when he fixes the premium on the lease.

10. The short term settlement has also another disadvantage. The soil in Sind does not bear constant cropping. Cultivation once in three years is the normal rule except in the case of rice lands and gardens. A 10 years' period for such lands means only three cultivation seasons, and in the case of some only two.

11. The present irrigational settlement has a self-adjusting mechanism about it. Increase in revenue takes place automatically with improvements in agricultural industry. A man converts his lift land into flow by lowering its level. He has forthwith to bear increased assessment. Another converts his land cultivated with cereals into a garden or other rice crop land. The rate of assessment instantly varies. A man digs a well in barani land. He has to pay an increased rate of assessment. With settlement so far-reaching it is unnecessary to observe halting periods.

12. Under sections 55 and 105 of the Land Revenue Code, Government have always the power to fix an additional rate for the use of water. If at any time the great irrigational scheme under contemplation, such as the Sukkur Barrage, the two canals on the right and left bank of the Indus, are undertaken and completed, the Government interests would be quite safe. Additional water-rate could forthwith be levied as was done in the case of the Jamrao Canal. In the case of the improvements effected in the present canals, Government is recompensated forthwith by extension in cultivation. If the lift lands get flow water they pay the higher flow rate at once.

13. In my opinion, therefore, the time has come when Sind should be put on a level with, and given the rights enjoyed by, her sister provinces. Twenty years like Punjab should be the rule, with 30 as the maximum. Government have of course the choice of deviating from the rule if there are exceptional circumstances in justification of the deviation.

14. The Sind zamindar is by no way better off than his brother zamindar in the Punjab which has the privilege of enjoying 20 and 30 years' term of settlement. Both are victims to the vagaries of the river. The Punjab commands better irrigation facilities, better class and a larger number of cultivators. There is a dearth of indigenous haris in Sind. They are the masters of the situation in the field. The zamindars have generally to pay large sums as takavi to peasants, who are mostly penniless and who always live from hand to mouth. The zamindars often raise this amount from banias on their responsibility. In the case of failure of crops, the haris require more takavi for maintenance, and if it is not paid to them, they immediately leave their old masters and take up land from other zamindars, who are often found ready to satisfy their wants. They do not find much difficulty in finding out new masters. The takavi advanced by the old landlord in bad seasons often remains irrecoverable, and in many cases falls on him to pay. He has no legal means of recovery. If he goes to the Court the hari's necessaries in lift cannot be attached and the latter has nothing left with him to pay. This is one of the reasons of indebtedness of the Sind zamindars.

15. The burden of enhancement of each decennial settlement falls upon the zamindar generally as he has to pay assessment from his share of the produce. The hari generally does not contribute to the enhancement and the landlord has to bear the burden. He therefore feels the pinch and naturally but reasonably wishes a long term of settlement for his safety.

HIRANAND,
Assistant Manager.

Hyderabad, 3rd September 1915.

3rd September 1915.

**Examination of Mr. Hiranand Tahilram, Assistant Manager,
Incumbered Estates.**

By the President—

- Q. You are in favour of increase of settlement period ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. I understand that your main reason is that there are no particular grounds to make an exception of Sind ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. I gather that you do not consider that the present system is causing intense hardship though it must naturally weigh more heavily upon zamindars than a 20 years' or a 30 years' settlement ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Your opinion is that there is no reason that the people should not have this advantage rather than that the people are specially suffering by it. Or do you think that the people are suffering at present ?
- A. Yes. But if the settlement is longer, they will not suffer. The longer settlement will bring them more money.
- Q. Do you really think that there is no reason to distinguish Sind from the rest of India ?
- A. It should not be distinguished at least from Punjab.
- Q. Are you acquainted with the settlement period of the Punjab ?
- A. The irrigational settlement is in force in the Punjab, though I have not studied it closely. But it is said to be the same as in Sind.
- Q. Have you any authority for saying that the Sind irrigational system is in the force in the Punjab ?
- A. That is what I learnt from the Punjabis in the Jamrao tract. I have not studied it.
- Q. The Sufed Poshes or the Abadgars ?
- A. The Sufed Poshes as well as the Abadgars.
- Q. I understand that in the Punjab they have a fixed assessment in the land which is apart from the water-rate. Is that what you have heard, that the land revenue is separate from the water-rate ?
- A. I have not heard that.
- Q. But obviously where the land revenue is separated from water-rate, then you cannot compare these conditions with Sind ?
- A. No. The rates cannot be compared.
- Q. Surely you cannot compare the settlement period either fairly ?
- A. But the assessment figures will not have any effect upon the period of settlement.
- Q. The water-rate can be altered more frequently than the land revenue ?
- A. That is subject to improvement.

- Q. Under the Irrigation Act, I think it is the water-rate that can be altered according to the periods to be fixed by the Governor of Bombay. Is that not so?
- A. Yes. But that is also fixed just as the period of settlement.
- Q. By the Government of Bombay?
- A. Yes, by the Government who sanction the assessment.
- Q. At what period is the water-rate fixed, say in the Bombay Presidency?
- A. In the Bombay Presidency it is the same as the assessment period.
- Q. Do you know that?
- A. I am not quite sure.
- Q. You are aware, in the Bombay Presidency that the land revenue is separate from water-rate except in Sind?
- A. Yes.
- Q. The land revenue is a charge on land for which Government gives no direct advantage to the landholder. Is that not so? I am talking of land revenue as opposed to the water-rate. The land revenue is a charge on the land which a man pays for holding it?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Government does not bind itself to give any particular advantage because he pays land revenue under the land revenue code. It is paid for holding the land only.
- A. Yes.
- Q. The water-rate is a charge for advantages which he receives from Government at Government expense.
- A. Yes. But in Sind it is included in assessment.
- Q. Therefore where the two are combined as in Sind, a totally new state of affairs arises. Is not that so?
- A. Yes. If the two rates are combined, Government should charge much higher.
- Q. And the more frequently they enhance the water rate the more paying will be their expenditure on irrigation?
- A. Not necessarily.
- Q. Surely?
- A. If there is an enhancement, it does not follow that Government will spend more on irrigational works.
- Q. But my question is that it will repay Government better.
- A. Yes.
- Q. So it follows that if Government can recoup themselves more quickly they will be able to lay out more money on irrigation?
- A. Of course, if they care to do so.
- Q. That would be absolutely an argument for not making the settlement period so long in Sind as it is say in the Bombay?

- A. No, but if improvements are made, the Government gets its return also. The irrigational settlement is so adjusted that if there is an increase in the water-supply, Government revenue increases automatically.
- Q. But my point is rather different. For instance, there is an initial expenditure on a canal like Jamrao. If the assessment is fixed for 30 years, Government will not get the same return for expenditure on the canal as they would if it was fixed for 20 years?
- A. No. Government would get more if the period were shorter, provided there is enhancement.
- Q. I am only trying to show that where the water rate is combined with land revenue there are reasons for early enhancement which do not exist where the land revenue is separated from the water rate?
- A. Not necessarily.
- Q. But there may be, don't you think so? For instance, an irrigational scheme which might not pay if the period of settlement were 30 years may pay if the period were 20 years.
- A. But in that case a term is fixed only after all the conditions are settled. For instance, in the case of Jamrao, if the conditions of the tract were settled and you have sufficient data for assessing your fields, then of course there is no objection if a longer settlement is given.
- Q. You mean to say that the old canals are already settled. We took the case of a new canal. You would only give the long term settlement when all the conditions are settled.
- A. Yes. In the case of new canals short terms can be fixed with advantage both in the interest of Government as well as in the interest of the people.
- Q. You are in favour in the case of new canals of a shorter settlement?
- A. Yes, in order to gather experience.
- Q. What period do you recommend?
- A. I recommend a minimum of 20 years and a maximum of 30 years.
- Q. You consider that longer periods would really benefit the people. They would not pay so much in the long run?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Apart from the mere monetary benefit, in what other way would they be benefited? Are there any other ways?
- A. It will give them a sense of security. Probably it might go to increase the value of their land also. I mean to say the productive value.
- Q. In what way?
- A. For instance, in the case of our department when a lease is given out, a condition is imposed on the lessee that if during the currency of lease there is enhancement of assessment on account of revision of settlement, he would have to pay the assessment at the enhanced rate. The lessees take this point into consideration in fixing the premium.
- Q. Obviously the short settlement affects the leasing value of the land. If it does, we might assume that it also affects the sale value.

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- Q. In what way?
- A. For instance, in the case of our department when a lease is given out, a condition is imposed on the lessee that if during the currency of lease there is enhancement of assessment on account of revision of settlement, he would have to pay the assessment at the enhanced rate. The lessees take this point into consideration in fixing the premium.
- Q. Obviously the short settlement affects the leasing value of the land. If it does, we might assume that it also affects the sale value.

If a man takes the possibility of assessment being enhanced into consideration when he is taking a land on lease, will he not do so when buying a land ?

- A. He may not consider that point. When people buy the land, they do not think of revision. It is the productive value that is considered.
- Q. I understand then that the short settlement affects the leasing value of the land, but not the selling value of the land ?
- A. I am of opinion that it does not affect the sale value. The comparison is not possible for Sind as we have no experience of 30 years settlement.
- Q. But surely a man who is buying land at the beginning of the 10 years' period might give a better price than he would in the 9th year ?
- A. The people in Sind generally do not think of these things. They have not got the foresight to think of that.
- Q. What about improvements ? Do you think that zamindars would improve their lands more freely if the period of settlement were 30 years ?
- A. If they have got money they will do it.
- Q. Any how ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Could not the extension of the settlement period affect that at all ?
- A. The extension of the settlement period will not affect that. If they get more money they might invest it in the land.
- Q. But does not the fear of enhancement prevent the people at present from sinking money into the land ?
- A. I don't think so.
- Q. You say that the present irrigational settlement system always assures Government a profit on improvements of irrigation (paragraph 11) ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. If a man improves his land, he enjoys the advantages of it at once ?
- A. Yes, he does.
- Q. Is it your opinion that supposing there was a longer settlement, relations between hari and zamindar would be altered ? Would the zamindar give his hari better terms.
- A. No, I do not think so. The zamindar will save for himself as much as he can.
- Q. I presume, he will never give haris better terms than he is obliged to ?
- A. He will not.
- Q. Does the hari bear the burden of enhancement or escapes altogether ?
- A. I think he does not. It all falls on the zamindar.
- Q. You have never heard of any case in which a zamindar increased or decreased the share of his hari on account of enhancement ?
- A. No. The hari can commend his terms, on account of the demand for them.

Q. I think that the shortness of the settlement period is a small hardship to a zamindar compared with uncertainty of water-supply or dearth of haris ?

A. I am of opinion that there can be no comparison.

Q. But my point is that the hardship caused by the short settlement is small ?

A. Hardship is not caused every where on account of haris.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Does this trouble on account of dearth of haris lead to money loss or only to trouble ?

A. It leads to money loss also.

Q. That trouble would not disappear with the longer settlement ?

A. No ; that would not.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. You say in paragraph 5 of your note, "Rents and prices are fairly steady in these talukas." Have not prices been going up very steadily and rapidly ?

A. The prices of course are affected by the market, but so far as the conditions of the taluka are concerned the improvements which affect the prices are steady.

Q. But the prices have been rising rapidly in recent years ?

A. Yes, the prices are rising, but the conditions which affect them are steady.

Q. You mean to say that the local variations are small but the prices are rising ?

A. Yes.

Q. Rents, are they not rising too ? I mean in general.

A. Yes, in general. But the rents that are fixed between the hari and the zamindar are not rising steadily.

Q. Lease money, for instance, is that not rising ?

A. It is affected by the circumstances prevailing at the time.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. Suppose if the prices of grain are high, of course the leases fetch more or if the water-supply is good, the lease money is affected. Are these local conditions ?

A. No, these will be general conditions. But I mean to say that the local conditions which affect the rents and the prices are steady.

Q. For instance ?

A. Communications, canals.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. You do not think that rents are rising rapidly ?

A. No.

- Q. Now take the haris' rents 20 years ago ?
- A. His expenses have now increased and so the cost of labour and the seed.
- Q. But he gets more ?
- A. Yes, but his expenses have also increased.
- Q. In the same way he pays more ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Don't you think that the rents have risen ?
- A. Yes, in value they have.
- Q. You say lands are fully cultivated in Sind as far as water is available but if a greater water-supply was available there would be more cultivation ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. The possibility of development exists in Sind. The fact that it has been found necessary to restrict cultivation on canals means that if water was available cultivation would increase ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You say in paragraph, 11 "Increase in revenue takes place automatically with improvements in agricultural industry." In the case of barani land, has the zamindar to pay an increased rate of assessment ?
- A. The barani rate is 8 annas in Johi and Dadu talukas. As soon as the zamindar sinks a well he pays Rs. 2-8-0. In the case of wells they have to pay lift rate for kharif if they cultivate in rabi.

By Mr. Macmillan—

- Q. Do you know in your experience of any instances in which low lease money was given on account of revision of settlement ?
- A. Only recently, when the Tando settlement was being made, a direct question was put to the Deputy Manager who auctioned the leases whether the rates would increase. And when informed that they would have to pay the enhanced rates, they offered less premium.
- Q. Do you think that the zamindar on the whole considers that revision means enhancement even though in about 20 cases there has been no enhancement ?
- A. Generally, that is the opinion of the people that revision means enhancement.
- Q. But the question of the terms of batai—is it affected. I think in some parts of Sind when the ordinary batai is made the hari hands over something else to the zamindar ?
- A. Something in the form of *kharch*.
- Q. But that is variable ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. But is not adjustment made in that way ? Does not that increase the zamindar's share ?
- A. Yes. If a zamindar is powerful he gets more out of his hari.

- Q. Then it depends on the influence of the zamindar? He can get more?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Then it is possible that the terms of batai vary?
- A. No. Generally a zamindar finds it difficult on account of dearth of haris.
- Q. Then you say that the people when purchasing land do not take into consideration the question of increase in assessment. But would that be the case if the person purchasing was a capitalist and was investing money?
- A. Of course, if he is shrewd enough.
- Q. But you have never come across any instance.
- A. No, I have not.

By Professor Shahani—

- Q. Government, zamindar and hari, these are the three interested parties in the matter?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You say a long term settlement will not promote improvement?
- A. I do not say that.
- Q. Are improvements defeated by short term settlement?
- A. Not to my knowledge.
- Q. You say all depends upon capital, so that a long term settlement will not promote improvements?
- A. It will leave more money to the zamindar. It is all a question of money.
- Q. So then, on the whole, you think that a long term settlement will leave more to the zamindar as his share?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Which he will invest in his land?
- A. Of course, that is left to him to invest or to use it otherwise.
- Q. You say that sale value of the zamindar's land does not improve?
- A. I say, it is likely to improve. I cannot say with certainty, because we have had no experience of a long term settlement.
- Q. But if you cannot give an answer from experience, can you give your opinion?
- A. It will have some effect.
- Q. And the lease value of land is improved by a long term settlement?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You have said that the hari will not be benefited by the long term settlement. The zamindars would not give them better terms even if they have more left to them for their share.
- A. That will depend upon the circumstances of each zamindar. The inconvenience he has for want of haris. If he has difficulty in getting haris, he will make concessions.

Q. But will the fact of a zamindar getting more, incline him to give the more to his hari ?

A. Yes. But it would depend on the circumstances.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. Will not Government benefit by the long term settlement ?

A. People will gain more.

Q. Some part of Government revenue, legitimately their due, will be sacrificed by the long term settlement ?

A. Silence.

Q. I want to know from you if any portion of the share of the agricultural produce due to Government will be sacrificed by the adoption of the long term settlement ?

A. Yes. The enhancement that would otherwise come with the revision of settlement will be sacrificed.

Q. But do you consider the enhancement accruing at different revisions is fair ?

A. I cannot say that.

Q. What about the fair enhancement, will that be sacrificed by the long term settlement ?

A. Yes, that will have to be sacrificed.

Q. So then the long term settlement would be unfair to one party ?

A. It will not be unfair.

Q. Then what will it be ?

A. This question is this, the people claim a long term settlement as their legitimate right. Therefore we cannot say that any undue share has to be given up.

Q. But what makes their right legitimate ?

A. The orders of Government themselves.

Q. The Government orders are that there shall be a long term settlement ?

A. The Government orders are that 30 years should be the rule.

Q. In the case of Sind ?

A. No.

Q. Then why has settlement of 10 years been fixed for Sind ?

A. That is an exception—fixed according to local conditions.

Q. What are the local conditions ?

A. These local conditions have been given in the settlement reports to be the unsettled conditions of the agricultural classes, improvements, water-supply.

Q. Will you consider the phrase "unsettled conditions" ? What is the significance of that. Are the conditions such as to ensure a fair share to Government ?

A. I don't understand. These conditions in Sind which induced Government to give a short term settlement do not exist now.

Q. But you might then say what conditions justify a long term settlement?

A. These are the conditions, when the land is cultivated rents fair, etc., are given in the note.

Q. So you think that the conditions of Sind are settled and a long term settlement is desirable?

A. Yes.

Q. With regard to the expenses charged by the zamindars. These vary according to the influence of the zamindar?

A. Yes. It is like this, when the zamindar changes his hari he sometimes makes alteration in his expenses.

Q. So then in the same locality different rates of batai will prevail?

A. No. It is kharch which is affected.

Q. Is kharch included in the batai?

A. No.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Are there any other ways, besides the modification of the batai terms, in which the rates between zamindars and haris are affected?

A. He can only do it by giving him easy terms.

Q. Is there no concession, or something of this sort—for instance takavi?

A. The takavi he has to give generally.

Q. I mean there are no ways in which the terms can be altered?

A. No. Hari will not make alteration in his terms.

Examination of K S. Dhanl Bux.

3rd September 1915.

By the President—

Q. Where is your land ?

A. In Nasirabad and Mehar talukas.

Q. What is its peech ?

A. Ghar Wah, Naro Wah and its branches.

Q. Is it rice land ?

A. It is rice land mostly.

Q. What is your opinion regarding the period of settlement ?

A. It should be 40 years ; if not 40, it should be 30 at least.

Q. Will you gain thereby ?

A. Not only we but Government also.

Q. How will Government gain ?

A. Because the uncultivated land will also be cultivated and so Government will get increased land revenue. For instance, of an area of 500 acres, 200 acres being bad are not cultivated. If the period is extended, it, will enable the zamindars to convert bad land into good and cultivate it. Thus the increased cultivation will bring increased revenue.

Q. Is the water sufficient for increased cultivation ?

A. The supply being dependent on the Indus varies. On the whole, it is sufficient for cultivation.

Q. Is there complaint in some years ?

A. Yes.

Q. In such years how will the supply of water suffice for the increased cultivation when it does not suffice for the present area ?

A. The bad land which is not cultivated would be improved and cultivated and the profit derived from good land would be invested in the bad land.

Q. Is there a restriction on the giving out of new land in your dehs ?

A. Yes.

Q. Therefore you cannot cultivate more land ?

A. No.

Q. The land you cultivate is improved land ?

A. It is not all improved, some of it is not in an improved condition.

- Q. You mean to say that were it not for the short term settlement, you would improve the land which is not cultivated annually at present?
- A. Yes, the bad land will be improved.
- Q. But is that bad land cultivated?
- A. Yes. If I do not cultivate it, it becomes liable to fallow assessment.
- Q. You cultivate it for fear of fallow assessment, but it does not pay you?
- A. It does not pay as much as the improved land.
- Q. When was the settlement last revised in your taluka?
- A. The first settlement was made between 1892-94, it was revised between 1902-04, and finally revised in the present year.
- Q. In what taluka?
- A. Mehar.
- Q. Has the assessment been enhanced now?
- A. Yes. The rates of the 3rd class of the proposed settlement are higher than the rates of the 1st class of the settlement of 1892 by 2 annas.
- Q. Do the zamindars think that revision means enhancement?
- A. Yes, they think so.
- Q. Have you any other difficulty on account of the short term settlement?
- A. There is the fear of enhancement.
- Q. Has the price of land increased or decreased?
- A. It has increased in certain cases and decreased in others.
- Q. Has the value of rice land increased?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is the land on which rice could not be cultivated before, being cultivated with rice?
- A. That has depended on water-supply. Where more water has been available, rice have been cultivated.
- Q. Do the zamindars mortgage their lands nowadays?
- A. Some may have done so. I have no list of them.
- Q. Have you ever mortgaged your lands?
- A. No.
- Q. And you do not know if mortgaging brings more or less?
- A. I can't say. On account of the revision coming this year, many leases were given up. I know of one Dost Mahomed who had given his land on lease to a bania. When the bania came to know of the enhanced rates he gave up the lease and the matter went to Court and is still pending.
- Q. But the bania must have known beforehand that the settlement was to be revised and the rates were to be enhanced?

- A. Yes, but he never thought that the increase would be as much as 8 annas per acre. He expected an increase of 2 annas or so, because he felt that the lands he had taken up were situated at the tail of the Dhamrao.
- Q. You say that if the period is extended the lands would be improved. What sort of improvements will they be?
- A. For instance, improving saltish land, converting lift land into flow, raising the level of lands that are low-lying.
- Q. Is it customary to do so?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Has lift land been lowered?
- A. It is difficult to do so everywhere. Only 2 or 3 lift numbers which adjoin flow land could be converted conveniently. It is difficult to convert a truly lift land.
- Q. Do all the zamindars know about the settlement period?
- A. Yes, all know. Even those holding 5 acres know about it.
- Q. Have any small landholders spoken to you about it?
- A. Yes. They also feel it, and told me to represent them.

Examination of Bhai Narumal, of Larkana district.

3rd September 1915.

By the President—

Q. Where is your land ?

A. In the Warah taluka, peeched by Ghar Wah.

Q. What is the extent of your holding ?

A. About 500 acres.

Q. Is it rice land ?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the water-supply sufficient ?

A. No. This year it was very defioient.

Q. What is your opinion about the period of settlement ? Should it be extended ?

A. Yes. It should be extended to 30 years at least.

Q. Will you gain thereby ?

A. Not only we but Government as well.

Q. How will Government gain ?

A. Because bad land will be improved and cultivated. This will increase Government revenue. In short term settlements the zamindars are not able to improve their lands ; if the period is extended to 30 years, they will be able to do so.

Q. What land will be improved ?

A. That land which is cultivated at present for fear of fallow assessment.

Q. Is the rice land cultivated annually ?

A. Sometimes on account of deficiency of water juari is cultivated in rice lands.

Q. But if there is sufficient water, rice will be cultivated every year ?

A. Yes.

Q. Then it is not the fear of fallow assessment which obliges you to cultivate bad land ?

A. No.

Q. You never leave it fallow ?

A. Yes, but we would not leave it fallow if we had capital.

Q. Is there restriction on land grants in your taluka ?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the water-supply deficient ?

A. Yes, because our lands are at the tail of Ghar Wah, where water comes late.

Q. Have you ever mortgaged your land ?

A. No.

- Q. When a land is leased or sold, is an inquiry made when the settlement is to be revised ?
- A. People do inquire.
- Q. If it is known that a revision is due after one or two years, would they pay less ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you say from experience ?
- A. No.
- Q. Is any condition to that effect put in the *kabuliat* ?
- A. I do not know.
- Q. Has the price of land increased ?
- A. It has increased on account of improvements.
- Q. Are the zamindars hard pressed ?
- A. Yes, they are.
- Q. What is the reason ? Is it because of the deficiency of water-supply ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So the complaint is about the deficiency of water-supply. If that is increased, you will not complain of the settlement period ?
- A. The complaint is about water as well as the settlement period. People will still complain of settlement period even if they get sufficient water.
- Q. When was the last revision of settlement made in your taluka ?
- A. Three years back.
- Q. Was there any enhancement ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you consider the rates too high ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Are they unfair ?
- A. If Government levy, we have to pay. As a matter of fact, my land is at the tail of Gharwah and cannot be improved.
- Q. But if the supply were sufficient, you would pay the assessment gladly ?
- A. Yes, we will pay it gladly.
- Q. Do the zamindars complain about the settlement period ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is there scarcity of haris ?
- A. That depends upon cultivation. If the cultivation is good, there is not scarcity, otherwise they run away.

Examination of Kazi Ahmed, of Dadu.

3rd September 1915.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land ?
- A. In Dadu taluka.
- Q. Is it rice land ?
- A. It is rice as well as juari.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding ?
- A. About 25,000 jirebs.
- Q. It is not all rice ?
- A. No.
- Q. How much of it is rice land ?
- A. About 400 acres.
- Q. And the rest ?
- A. About 500 acres is juari.
- Q. Is it lift or flow ?
- A. Both.
- Q. What is its peech ?
- A. It is irrigated by our private karias.
- Q. When was the settlement revised last ? Was it revised in 1913 ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And this revision was made after 20 years ?
- A. In the year 1867 the rate was 4 annas per acre. It is Rs. 5 per acre now. It is on this account that whole dehs are not cultivated. The produce is not sufficient to pay the Government assessment even. It is all over with us. It is for you to look into our difficulties and remove them.
- Q. Is the state of zamindars bad ?
- A. Yes, it is very bad. We cannot get grass even one rupee a maund.
- Q. Since how long has it been so bad ?
- A. Since 10 or 15 years. The fallow assessment is a great burden. I have been paying it for several numbers since 1901 in order to save it from being fallow forfeited. Some, however, have been fallow forfeited.
- Q. What is your opinion regarding the settlement period ?
- A. We are content with what we get, because it does not rest with us to have it extended.
- Q. Will you gain if the period is extended to 30 years ?
- A. I think if the period is extended we will feel inclined to make improvements. The high rates and fallow assessment are unbearable.

- Q. Is there complaint about water ?
- A. The greater complaint is about settlement period ; the complaint of water comes next.
- Q. Then the supply of water is deficient ?
- A. Yes ; not only that, but owing to high assessment, we do not save anything. It is the good land that pays us just enough to enable us to save our bad land from being fallow forfeited. So the good and bad land taken together do not pay us.
- Q. Has the assessment been increased on all lands or on rice lands only ?
- A. The assessment on rice is Rs. 4 per acre.
- Q. Is it unfair ?
- A. Yes ; in some places rice lands produce 30 kasas per jireb, but our lands produce only 10 kasas per jireb.
- Q. You mean to say that the assessment should be decreased ? Will it satisfy you if the period is extended to 30 years ?
- A. We are afraid of enhancement. We are haris of Government and seek their protection.

By Professor Shahani—

- Q. In your written opinion you state that much public money is wasted. How is that ?
- A. I mean to say that the money we spend on improvements is wasted as it results in enhancement of assessment.
- Q. You also state that your exertions bring you nothing. What do you mean thereby ?
- A. Because the assessment increases with the improvement of land.

Examination of Dost Muhammad, Jatol.

3rd September 1915.

By the President—

Q. Where is your land ?

A. In the Dokri, Larkana, Nasirabad and Mehar talukas.

Q. What is the extent of your holding ?

A. It is between 6 and 7 thousand acres.

Q. Is it all rice land ?

A. It is rice and lift as well.

Q. Is the water-supply sufficient ?

A. It is sufficient in some places and deficient in others.

Q. When was the settlement last revised ?

A. It has been revised at different times in different talukas.

Q. I think in Larkana it was last revised in 1910, in Dokri in 1909, Nasirabad in 1913 and in Mehar this year ?

A. Yes.

Q. Has the assessment been enhanced in all these cases ?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the water-supply sufficient ?

A. Not everywhere.

Q. Is there restriction on land grant ?

A. Yes.

Q. Should the period of settlement be extended ?

A. Yes, it should be.

Q. To how many years ?

A. At least 30 years.

Q. Are other zamindars also of the same opinion ?

A. The people of our talukas are of that opinion. In the Punjab and other parts of India there is the long term settlement, and we do not know why it is not so in Sind.

Q. Would you like to have the settlement of the Punjab ?

A. Yes.

Q. But in Punjab the term is 20 years ?

A. Then the Punjab seems to be unfortunate. But it is longer in other parts of India.

- Q. What will you gain by the 30 years' settlement ?
- A. Lands will be improved and will produce more.
- Q. Do zamindars generally think that settlement means enhancement of assessment ?
- A. Experience has shown that.
- Q. Does your land pay you or not ?
- A. It pays us, sometimes it does not.
- Q. Does it pay you generally ?
- A. Sometimes it does, sometimes it does not.
- Q. It seems it does not pay you when you make improvements in your land ?
- A. I could prove it by documentary evidence. I made improvements in a survey number measuring 3 acres, by the construction of bunds and removal of mounds. It cost me Rs. 100 per acre and I have not been able to recoup myself yet.
- Q. Have you got the accounts of this improvement ?
- A. No. If ordered, I can send copies.
- Q. What are the improvements generally effected by zamindars ?
- A. Construction of bunds, levelling of lands, removal of mounds, removal of kalar, conversion of lift land into flow, etc.
- Q. Have you ever converted lift land into flow ?
- A. I have converted a few plots on which I have suffered loss.
- Q. If the settlement period is extended to 20 or 30 years, will it benefit the zamindars ?
- A. If the settlement is extended to 30 years, the zamindars will certainly gain.
- Q. Has the price of land increased ?
- A. Where the water-supply is good, the produce of land has increased and the price has gone up. But where the water-supply is deficient, the price has not increased.
- Q. Has it decreased ?
- A. Yes. This can be seen from the fact that Government have remitted fallow assessment in some dehs.
- Q. Have you ever leased your land ?
- A. I have taken on leases as well.
- Q. Did you inquire when the settlement would be revised ?
- A. We always know that it would be revised every 10 years.
- Q. Did you take this fact into consideration ?
- A. Yes.

Q. If the revision is due after 7 or 8 years you would pay more, but if it is due after 2 or 3 years you would pay less. Is that so?

A. We do not think so much of this in purchases of land as in leases, because in the former case we only think of interest. Nowadays people do not consider business paying and if they keep the money in their houses, there is the fear of thieves, and if they deposit it in banks there is the fear of their failure. So they consider it a safe investment to go in for land, thinking it will pay them in some years atleast.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Can you say from experience that if a person wants to sell, mortgage or lease his land, it will be difficult for him to do so because the revision of settlement is due?

A. It will affect the mortgages and the leases but not the purchases.

Q. Are there many such instances?

A. Yes. I have documents to show that.

Q. If the leases and mortgages are stopped about a year or two before a settlement is revised, will there be a large number of them after the settlement is revised?

A. I meant to say that they will fetch less before the revision than after, not that they will be stopped altogether.

Q. Then there will be sales also?

A. Yes, but at a low price. In places where there is no settlement there is no sale, i.e., kacha and barani lands.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. But there is settlement of kacha and barani lands?

A. No. It is no settlement when they have to pay no assessment if they do not cultivate that land.

Q. You mean to say that there is no survey in those lands, not that there is no settlement?

A. Silence—

By Professor Shahani.

Q. In your written opinion you state that lands which were originally worth Rs. 200 per acre are at present worth at Rs. 33-5-4?

A. Yes, I have said so. It is thus: The produce of an acre of land is worth Rs. 10. Of this Rs. 5 go as assessment to Government. Of the remaining Rs. 5, Rs. 3, are spent on improvements, interest on takavi, cost of seed, etc. The remaining Rs. 2 is the net produce. The current rate of interest is $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per mensem. If the produce, which is worth Rs. 2, is taken as interest on capital, it follows, from the current rate of interest that the capital invested is Rs. 33-5-4, whereas an acre of land costs Rs. 200. Also the prices that are shown in the deeds are not true because the zamindar gets only Rs. 33-5-4 from the banya, and the banya goes on adding interest to it and puts the whole figure at Rs. 200 as the cost of land.

Q. But what has that to do with the settlement question ?

A. It is on account of the fear of settlement that land is not improved and does not pay.

Q. It is due to short term settlement that land worth Rs. 200 is sold at Rs. 33-5-4. If the period were extended, it would sell for Rs. 200, is that so ?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you prove that the short settlement is the cause of this ?

A. I know of an instance in which a man sold 3 acres of land for Rs. 100.

Q. But was that due to the settlement ?

A. Owing to increase of assessment.

Q. Then you say that zamindars of barani lands are better off than the zamindars having lands irrigated by canal water ?

A. This is clear from the fact that there is no sale of barani lands.

Q. Is it because they are not cultivated ?

A. There is no sale because fallow assessment is not levied on barani lands.

By Mr. Martin.

Q. Would you like to exchange your rice land with barani ?

A. I have got some barani land, I am glad to have that.

Q. But what about produce ?

A. When it rains it yields much.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. What, according to you, should be the Government share of assessment out of the produce ?

A. It should be one-third, but Government will not accept it. I think at present the major part goes to Government.

Q. Let us take the produce of an average acre of land to be worth Rs. 16. How will you distribute this ?

A. Of this, Rs. 8 will go to the hari ; of the remaining Rs. 8, Government take Rs. 5 as assessment ; of the remaining Rs. 3, the expenses of cultivation, etc., amount to Rs. 2-8-0 ; being a net profit of 8 annas for the zamindar.

Q. If Government take Rs. 5, you get annas 8. Is it so ?

A. We sometimes get even Rs. 4.

Q. How much do you get on an average ?

A. The average will be between Rs. 2 and Rs. 2-8-0.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. How is it then that people give Rs. 12 per acre of rice land ?

A. It is due to competition.

Q. Do you know of a person who made any profit ?

A. Those who are only foresighted.

Q. Can you give an example of a person who made a profit ?

A. There may be some, I do not know.

Q. Then the profit is three-fourths of the assessment ?

A. In some cases, I say.

Q. Then the lease money ought to be Rs. 2 per acre ?

A. It may be Rs. 3 at the most.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. You say that the period of settlement should be extended to 30 years so long as there are no improvements to be made. If improvements are contemplated, what should be the period of settlement ?

A. I mean to say that if all the improvements are made, there should be permanent settlement.

Q. But you state, " Our prayer is that until Government improve the Sind canals or the River Indus, whereby water would be accessible to every inch of land and Survey No., as in the Punjab, and until the land is also improved, the long term settlement should be made the rule, that is to say, the period of settlement should extend to 30 years or even more. What do you mean thereby ?

A. By that I mean as I just said. -

Examination of Shamsuddin Bulbul, Secretary of Zamindars' Anjuman, Mehar.

By the President—

- Q. You are the Secretary of the Zamindars' Anjuman, Mehar ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Where is your land ?
- A. In Mehar taluka.
- Q. What is its peech ?
- A. Gul Muhammad Wah and Rajo Wah.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding ?
- A. 300 acres.
- Q. Is it rice land ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. The settlement has been revised this year ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Were the rates increased ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the period of settlement.
- A. I am of opinion that there should be a permanent settlement as all the improvements have been effected. Government should take one-third of the produce. Now they take half, since there are no improvements to be made. Government should be content with this, unless Government increase the produce of the land.
- Q. You say that Government should get one-third, but why should it be so ?
- A. Half of the produce is taken by the hari ; of the remaining half, half should go to the Government and the other half to the zamindar.
- Q. Is it your opinion or is it the custom prevailing in India ?
- A. Yes, it is the custom prevailing in India.
- Q. Government takes one-third of the produce for the land it gives ; but for the water it supplies it should take more ?
- A. But now there is no increase in water-supply. If Government introduces a longer scheme it may take more.
- Q. I mean to say that Government take one-third of the produce in places where they do not give water, *i. e.*, in barani lands ; but in places where they supply water by canals they should take more, *i. e.*, interest on their expenditure ?
- A. But it is one half now.
- Q. No. What is the rate per acre in your taluka ?
- A. It is Rs. 5-6 per acre.
- Q. What is the produce ?
- A. Thirty kasas per acre.
- Q. What will be the price of that ?
- A. Rs. 22.

- Q. Of this the zamindar's share is Rs. 11; of these Rs. 11, Government take Rs. 5 as assessment and the zamindar gets Rs. 6?
- A. Yes, Government spend on water-supply while the zamindar increases expenditure on takavi, bullocks, seed, etc.
- Q. If the permanent settlement were not introduced but if the term were extended to 30 years, would you gain thereby?
- A. Provided the rates are not enhanced.
- Q. Zamindars think that revision means enhancement, is that so?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Therefore, if the period of 10 years is extended to 30, will it satisfy you?
- A. Yes, it will.
- Q. Will you be satisfied with 20 years' settlement?
- A. It will be too short.
- Q. But it is more than 10 years?
- A. Yes, still the period should be extended to 30 years.
- Q. In that case will the zamindars pay less to Government?
- A. Yes. Also they will have no fear of enhancement of assessment.
- Q. Is there any other gain?
- A. No. The land yields less and less day by day. Formerly it yielded 50 kasas per acre; now an acre yields only 10 or 15 kasas.
- Q. Since how long has it been cultivated with rice?
- A. Since 25 years.
- Q. Does it yield less produce at present that it yielded in the beginning?
- A. Yes; it has been yielding less day by day.
- Q. Has the price of land gone down?
- A. No.
- Q. But if the produce has decreased the price should also?
- A. I am the editor of newspapers; I know what the banias do. In the sale deeds they show a high price by adding interest after interest to the small sum which they originally lend.
- Q. But has the price increased or decreased in fact?
- A. It has increased.
- Q. But I cannot understand how it has increased when the produce has decreased?
- A. Formerly there was no water; so the price was low. When new canals were opened it began to increase.

- Q. Is it increasing now-a-days ?
- A. No. Only by adding interest a high price is shown in the sale deeds.
- Q. Has the mortgaging value of lands increased ?
- A. The banias do not accept the mortgages on account of Act XIV.
- Q. Has the leasing value of land increased ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Why ?
- A. Because the cultivation has increased.
- Q. You say that land yields less now ?
- A. But now it is rice land, formerly it was juari land.
- Q. But rice is being cultivated since 20 years. You said formerly land yielded 30 kasas per acre, now it yields 10 kasas ; how does the leasing price then increase when the produce has decreased ?
- A. When a Hindu takes up a land on lease, the haris are in his hand because he gives them money and keeps them bound. The lessee thus gets the greater share of the produce and pays a high price for the lease.
- Q. But when a Muhammadan takes up a lease from a Muhammadan, would the leasing price be as high ?
- A. I do not know of such cases.
- Q. If a Hindu took up a lease of 20 acres of rice land 20 years ago, what would he have paid then ?
- A. As the assessment was less, he would have paid less. Now as the assessment is high, he would have to pay more.
- Q. But if the assessment has increased, how has the leasing price increased ?
- A. Because the haris take more.
- Q. What was the haris share before ?
- A. It was one half. Now it is more than that.
- Q. What share do you give to your haris ?
- A. I have given my lands on contract to the haris. The understanding between us is that he should give me 15 kasas per acre out of a produce of 30 kasas per acre.
- Q. That means the haris' share is one half ?
- A. It is my estimate only.
- Q. Do you know of any case in which the hari's share is more than one half ?
- A. Yes, Wadero Dost Muhammad Thebo gives more than one half to his haris.
- Q. Is that in rice land ?
- A. Yes.

Q. Is that customary ?

A. No. It is since 4 years owing to high assessment.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. But the haris have not to pay the increased assessment ?

A. Hari gets the greater share because the cost of labour has increased. It is not owing to increased assessment.

Q. You said that the assessment has increased and therefore the leasing price has also increased. How can that be ?

A. The leasing price is more now than what it was 20 years ago. But now it is decreasing.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. Have you sent your written opinion ?

A. Yes.

Q. In that you state that if the assessment were fixed properly, it will be better to have even a settlement shorter than 10 years ?

A. Yes. If the Settlement Officer investigates thoroughly.

Q. Then you are in favour of a short term settlement ?

A. Provided the assessment is just.

Q. If the assesment is properly fixed, why do you consider a short term better ?

A. Because the lands yield less day by day. And sooner the rates are revised the better because they will be decreased at every revision.

Q. Are the present rates fair or unfair ?

A. They are more than what they should be.

Q. What should be the fair assesment ?

A. Taking all things into consideration, it should be between Rs. 3 and 4 per acre instead of Rs. 5 and 6 as at present.

Q. Do you think that by revision it will rise even to Rs. 10 per acre ?

A. Experience shows that it is increasing and will still increase.

Q. Therefore you wish that it should remain steady ?

A. Because we have no hope that it will decrease.

Q. The rates have been reduced in the case of Tatta, Ghorabari, Mirpur Sakro, Dadu, Sehwan and Johi. Knowing this, are you prepared to change your opinion ?

A. There must be reasons for that. I am speaking of my own taluka, where it has always increased.

Q. You also state that in 1904-05 rates were as follows :—

1st class	...	Rs.	4	12	0
2nd class	...	„	4	4	0
3rd class	...	„	3	12	0

The average of these will be Rs. 4-4-0, but the settlement prepared by the committee shows that it is 3-12-0?

A. Perhaps that may be more correct.

Q. Next you state that there are instances in which the sum of Rs. 5 lent by a bania to a hari is put to Rs. 5,000. Can you give any instances?

A. Yes. This is given in books.

Q. I should like to see it?

A. I can show it.

Q. What does a Muhammadan pay for land per acre when he purchases it?

A. I know of no such instance.

Q. Is there no such instance?

A. There may be some. But they are very rare. I think in such cases the selling price may be between Rs. 50 and 60 per acre.

Q. What would a bania pay per acre of land?

A. That rests with the bania. It may even be Rs. 200 per acre.

Q. What would a Muhammadan pay per acre when he takes up a land on lease?

A. I cannot say.

3rd September 1915.

Examination of the Seraj Shah Muhammad Lahori.

By the President—

Q. Where is your land?

A. In Kambar and Larkana talukas.

Q. What is the extent of your holding?

A. 25,000 jirebs.

Q. Is it mostly rice land?

A. Yes.

Q. It includes all kinds, I suppose?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the water-supply good?

A. It is pretty good. It is sufficient in some lands and deficient in others.

Q. Is there restriction on land grants on all canals?

A. Yes.

Q. Are you in favour of extending the period of settlement?

A. Yes.

Q. How long should the period be?

A. It should be over 30 years.

Q. At least 30 years?

A. Yes.

Q. Will that benefit the zamindars?

A. It will benefit Government also.

Q. At present the zamindars are afraid that revision means enhancement?

A. Yes.

Q. In the case of Larkana and Kambar, has revision brought enhancement?

A. Yes.

Q. In the case of Kambar, when was the settlement last revised?

A. It was in 1910.

Q. When was the one before that revised?

A. Nearly 20 years before that.

Q. Do you think that the zamindars are at present very afraid of revision?

A. Yes, they are.

- Q. The big zamindars or small?
- A. All.
- Q. They also know when the settlement will be revised?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Suppose there were a longer period, would the zamindars improve their lands more?
- A. Yes. Zamindars do not clear off jungles in 10 years, which in 30 years they will do.
- Q. This land which you say is covered with jungle, is it kabuli?
- A. Yes. It is not liable to fallow assessment.
- Q. If it were liable to fallow assessment, I suppose they would give it up?
- A. Yes, unless they could improve it by sinking wells.
- Q. Why is it not liable to fallow assessment?
- A. Owing to deficiency of water.
- Q. So that Government would not gain if the jungles were cleared?
- A. Sometimes water rises and they could be irrigated. Also there is water available for rabi which is not utilized at present.
- Q. Can you suppose any other kinds of improvements?
- A. Levelling of lands.
- Q. Does anybody do so?
- A. Yes. There are some pieces which are kalar and they are also improved.
- Q. How are they improved?
- A. We put manure and remove kalar.
- Q. Do you think that people will make improvements with longer settlement?
- A. They will do with the longer settlement.
- Q. What about the price of land?
- A. It has increased except where there is no water.
- Q. Of course shortness of water affects much more than the settlement question?
- A. Water is the first and settlement the second. When the water is sufficient the price is high.
- Q. The price has gone up; has it gone up considerably where there is water?
- A. In Kambar and some dehs of Larkana it has gone up considerably.
- Q. Are the figures correct?
- A. Mostly.
- Q. Does the zamindar get a return from his lands?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Your only complaint is that he does not get enough?
- A. Yes.

- Q. Have you any experience of leasing land ?
- A. Yes. It was in 1908 that I wanted to lease my land but the bania would not take it up as the settlement was coming in after two years.
- Q. Did you manage to lease your land then ?
- A. I gave up the idea.
- Q. Subsequent to the settlement did you lease it ?
- A. No. By that time I had given up my studies and managed the lands myself.
- Q. So the banias are afraid of taking up the land on lease just before the settlement ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is that the only instance you know or you know of other instances too ?
- A. I know of no other instances.
- Q. Do you manage your own land ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You say people consider land a safe investment ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is much land bought or sold in your part of the world ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is it sold by big zamindars or small ?
- A. Sometimes it is sold by big zamindars and sometimes by small.
- Q. Who are the purchasers ?
- A. Mostly banias who will not like to keep money in their houses.
- Q. Through fear of dacoity ?
- A. Yes. They do not invest money in banks because they have failed. They think that land is the only safe investment.
- Q. But they would not consider it a safe investment if it brought no profit ?
- A. They consider it safer than others.
- Q. Apart from the bania class, do any other people from big towns buy lands, I mean traders ?
- A. Country people purchase more.
- Q. Mostly the money-lenders ?
- A. Yes.

By Mr. Macmillan—

- Q. Do you know the leasing price per acre of a good rice land in Kamar or Larkana taluka ?
- A. I think it is between 7 to 10 rupees per acre.
- Q. Or even more ?
- A. It may rise as far as 12 rupees.

Q. Does it go up as high as 16 rupees.

A. No, not as high as 16 rupees.

Q. But it does go up to 10 rupees?

A. Sometimes that is so.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Is the water-supply satisfactory?

A. In some parts.

Q. Is it capable of improvement?

A. No improvement is required in some canals.

Q. Can others be extended?

A. It is not necessary.

Q. Is there waste land in your taluka?

A. Not much waste land.

Q. Is it a fact that a new Railway is going to be opened through Shahdadkot, Kambar, &c.?

A. I cannot say.

Q. But you have stated that a new Railway is to be opened?

A. Yes.

Q. Have roads been improved in recent years?

A. No.

Q. No bridges?

A. No, the condition of roads is not good.

Q. Has not Government given funds for improvements?

A. Yes, but they are not properly utilized.

Q. Does not the District Local Board spend money?

A. Yes.

Q. How is the money spent?

A. It is handed over to the Muktiarkar for being spent.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. You say that the value of land has gone up?

A. In some parts it has gone up, but the figures shown are incorrect.

Q. In your written opinion you say that land sells on account of frequency of revisions at 1-6th of its value. Do you stick to this?

A. No.

3rd September 1915.

Examination of K. S. Kambu Khan Choro.

By the President—

Q. What is the extent of your holding ?

A. Between 2,000 and 3,000 acres.

Q. Is it irrigated by the Mithrao ?

A. By the Jamrao also.

Q. What is your opinion as regards the period of settlement ?

A. It will be good if the period is extended. The land yields less day by day and the assessment is enhanced at every revision. So the longer it is extended the better.

Q. When was the settlement last revised in Pithoro ?

A. I cannot say.

Q. It was in 1907, and Mr. Covernton has seen the lands this year. Do you know about it ?

A. No. I am not aware of that.

Q. Do the zamindars think of the settlement ?

A. Yes, they do.

Q. But they do not even know that the settlement is to be revised this year ?

A. I cannot say But it is all in the hands of your honour.

Q. That is strange. While you think so much of the settlement you do not even know that it was to be revised this year. Do you know that on the Hiral it is proposed to reduce the assessment ?

A. We have had no such information.

Q. In that case if the period were 30 years you would have suffered ?

A. We want the favourable consideration of Government. Nothing else.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Did Mr. Covernton make no enquiry from you when he visited your place ?

A. We heard that Sahib saw the Hiral Wah but we were not called.

Q. But your men were there ?

A. Yes. They told me so, but I was not called.

Q. Have you to say anything else ?

A. No.

4th September 1915.

Examination of Pirzada Abdul Rahman.

By the President—

- Q. Your land is in Sukkur district?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding?
- A. 2,500 acres.
- Q. Is it irrigated by the Sukkur Wah?
- A. A little portion of it is irrigated by the Sukkur Wah, the rest is irrigated by Garang Wah and Chithi Wah.
- Q. Is it lift land?
- A. It is both lift and flow.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the period of settlement?
- A. It should be extended.
- Q. To how many years should it be extended?
- A. The more it is extended the more thankful we will be to Government.
- Q. You will gain, I think?
- A. Yes.
- Q. The zamindars generally think that revision means enhancement?
- A. Yes. Experience has shown that.
- Q. In what year was the settlement last revised in your taluka?
- A. In the year 1910-11, by Mr. Martin.
- Q. Were the rates enhanced then?
- A. Yes.
- Q. How will the zamindars gain by the extension of the settlement period?
- A. If the period is extended, the rates will be enhanced after a longer lapse of time than at present.
- Q. Would the zamindars refrain from improving their land for fear of short settlement?
- A. Yes. Sometimes it is so.
- Q. Do you know of any instances?
- A. The rates are fixed after considering the state of the crop. If the crop is good, the rates are enhanced.
- Q. But you said if the period is extended zamindars will make improvements. Is that not so?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What improvements will they make?
- A. They will manure it, construct ridges, remove mounds, &c.

- Q. Do they carry out such improvements ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now you gain less because after 10 years the rates will be enhanced ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So that will improve the state of the country ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What is the state of water-supply in your taluka ?
- A. It depends upon the river. If there is much water in the river, we have ample ; otherwise we have a deficient supply.
- Q. Has the price of land increased in the past 20 years ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Are the zamindars hard pressed ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Why ? What is the matter with them ?
- A. While the land yields less and less day by day on the one hand, the assessment is enhanced on the other.
- Q. Has the price of land increased ?
- A. It has increased generally.
- Q. How has the price increased when the produce is decreasing day by day ?
- A. Lands have generally been improved and therefore they fetch higher price than before.
- Q. You have some land on the Sukkur Wah ? Have you ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is it cultivated annually ?
- A. That portion of it which is flow land is cultivated annually, while the lift portion is not annually cultivated.
- Q. Compared with other canals, more land is cultivated on the Sukkur Wah ?
- A. In years of good water-supply it is so.
- Q. Do lands on Sukkur Wah fetch more value than on other canals ?
- A. Even in the case of other canals lands which are irrigated by the first half of the canal fetch more price than the rest.
- Q. But lands irrigated by the Sukkur Wah are dearer in price than those irrigated on the other canals. Is that so ?
- A. Yes, but the lands irrigated by the first half of the canal only are dearer.
- Q. You mean to say that the more a land is cultivated the higher is its price ?
- A. Yes.

Q. Do you know of a zamindar who has mortgaged his land ?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you ever mortgaged your land or received in mortgage ?

A. No.

Q. Can you say what the mortgaging price of a land is ?

A. It is half of the actual price of the land. People think of the interest and all things and offer only half the price.

Q. Does the mortgaging price decrease at the time of revision ?

A. Yes. People do think of the enhancement which the revision generally results in.

Q. Has Government carried out any improvement on your side ?

A. Yes. Gerang Wah has been taken over by Government. Sukkur Wah has been improved.

Examination of Khan Saheb Sher Muhammad.

4th September 1915.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land ; I think on the Begari Wah ?
- A. Yes ; on the Unerwah and its branches also.
- Q. Is it rice land ?
- A. No.
- Q. Is it lift land ?
- A. It is lift, flow, juari, bajhri, wheat and peas.
- Q. Is the water-supply good ?
- A. Sometimes it is sufficient and sometimes not.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the settlement period ?
- A. We have only to ask the concession from Government.
- Q. If the period is extended, you will gain ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You think that the rates will be enhanced after a longer period than at present, if the period is extended ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do the zamindars think about revision settlements ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Big zamindars may be thinking about it, but do the small ones also ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did they ever think of it before ? Or is it only nowadays that they have come to think about it ?
- A. They did think of it formerly ; but nowadays they are very keen about it.
- Q. Did they ever represent their case ?
- A. At the time of revision they did.
- Q. Have they ever represented that the period should be extended to 20 or 30 years ?
- A. I do not know.
- Q. Have you ever thought of the necessity of the extension of the period before ?
- A. I have thought, but not represented.
- Q. Do the zamindars improve their lands on the Begari on your side ?
- A. A few of them do ; but not all.

- Q. Perhaps owing to the deficiency of water ?
- A. Partly due to that.
- Q. If the period is extended to 20 or 30 years, will they improve their land ?
- A. I hope they will.
- Q. And if they get more water ?
- A. That will also encourage them.
- Q. But deficiency of water is the main difficulty ? If they get a good water-supply, they will not complain of the rates ?
- A. Yes. Deficiency of water-supply is the first thing. If there is more water, cultivation will increase and Government revenue will also increase.
- Q. In what taluka is your land situated ?
- A. In Shikarpur, Kandhkot and Thul talukas.
- Q. Has the assessment increased in all of them ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. When was the settlement last revised in Thul ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. About how many years back ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. While you think so much of the settlement, you cannot say when it was last revised in Thul ?
- A. Silence.
- Q. When was it last revised in Shikarpur ?
- A. Silence.
- Q. I think this was many years back ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Suppose a zamindar wishes to lease out his land just when the revision is due, will he get less money than otherwise ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do the banias take this point into consideration ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And if he wants to sell his land when the revision is due ; will he get less ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So you will gain if the period of settlement is extended ?
- A. Yes.

Q. Have other zamindars spoken to you about it ?

A. Yes.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Do the zamindars gain from their land ?

A. Some do and some do not.

Q. Do the zamindars think of improving their land ?

A. Yes.

Q. If the water-supply is increased the zamindars will not think much of any enhancement, for more water will return them a better crop. Is that so ?

A. Yes; but a short settlement gives us a sense of insecurity. We do not therefore feel inclined to improvement.

Q. But the deficiency of water-supply is the main difficulty ?

A. Yes.

Q. If the water-supply is increased, you will pay the enhanced assessment willingly ?

A. It is in your Honour's power ; we have nothing to say.

Examination of Khan Sahib Shah Nawaz.

By the President—

Q. Is your land on the Sind Wah ?

A. Yes ; also on Begari Wah and Sukkur Wah.

Q. Is it rice land ?

A. The portion irrigated by the Sukkur Wah is rice land, the portion irrigated by the Sind Wah is rice and lift land, and the portion irrigated by the Begari Wah is juari and lift land.

Q. Is your land situated in the Shikarpur taluka ?

A. Both in the Garhi Yasin and the Shikarpur talukas.

Q. What is your opinion as regards the period of settlement ?

A. The longer it is, the better.

Q. Will the zamindars gain ?

A. Yes, because the assessment will be enhanced after a longer period.

Q. When was the settlement last revised in Shikarpur taluka ?

A. Mr. Martin made the inquiry in 1911, and the increased rates were brought into force from 1914.

Q. In Shikarpur taluka there has been no settlement for 17 years ?

A. Yes.

Q. And the zamindars generally think that after revision they will have to pay more than they do at present ?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the state of water-supply on your side ?

A. It was deficient, but since 2 years it has been good.

Q. As to the Begari Wah, is its water-supply good ?

A. Yes, since 2 years it has been good.

Q. You seem to think mostly of water ; more water will bring you more gain ?

A. Of course, cultivation depends upon water.

Q. If you get more water, you will not care for enhancement.

A. We always care for enhancement.

Q. Are there many haris available ?

A. On Begari Wah there are a few haris and on others their number is moderate.

Q. Why are they not available on the Begari ?

A. Because most of the land dependent on the Begari Wah is uncultivated.

Q. There are more haris, when there is more water ?

A. Yes.

- Q. I think that in Garhi Yasin and Shikarpur talukas a good deal of land is lying uncultivated.
- A. Yes ; mostly the portion between the Sind Wah and Begari Wah where the water cannot reach conveniently.
- Q. Do the zamindars think of improvements ?
- A. Yes, they improve the land that is worth cultivating. Since 1901 there has been no improvement by Government ; only a little improvement has been carried out by the zamindars. Still every revision has brought enhancement. Therefore the people do not improve their land because they think that it will result in enhancement.
- Q. But during these 10 years, I think, the value of the produce has greatly increased ?
- A. It has increased a little.
- Q. Therefore the zamindars must have gained a little ?
- A. If the zamindars get a little more, they have to spend much more. The cost of labour, of seed and of bullocks has increased too.
- Q. So if every one gets more, why should not Government get more ?
- A. But the prices are not reliable ; if Government increase the rates on that ground, how are we to be compensated if the prices fall.
- Q. The settlement period has been extended in Shikarpur taluka ?
- A. Yes ; it has been extended to 15 years. As a result of that, so many improvements have been made by the zamindars.
- Q. You said that the zamindars think that Mr. Martin has enhanced the assessment over their land because they improved them. Therefore the fear of enhancement prevents them from improving their land ?
- A. What I mean is that if we have the consolation that the assessment on our land will not be increased for some time to come, we would at once begin to effect improvements in our land. The short period of 10 years does not enable us to get our expenses out of our improvements.
- Q. Has the price of land increased after settlement ?
- A. No ; it has decreased.
- Q. But the period of settlement has been extended to 15 years, why has the price decreased then ?
- A. I will produce documents to show it. I know of an instance in which the land when sold fetched more price than it did in 1914.
- Q. What is the decrease due to ?
- A. To enhanced assessment.
- Q. Is that rice land ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Perhaps the increase on rice cultivation is the greatest ?
- A. Yes ; it is 12 annas per acre.
- Q. Has the rice cultivation decreased ?
- A. Yes, to some extent.

- Q. Is it due to enhancement of assessment ?
- A. There are 2 reasons : enhancement of assessment and deficiency of water.
- Q. Has any other cultivation increased ?
- A. Yes, juari.
- Q. Is the water-supply sufficient ?
- A. Yes, it is good now. It was not so in the beginning.
- Q. Has the price of any other lands except rice increased ?
- A. No. The price of all the land has decreased.
- Q. But there has not been much enhancement on lands except rice ?
- A. It is 8 annas per acre.

By Mr. Martin—

- Q. What is the increase in the case of lift lands ?
- A. It is the same. In the case of moki lands it is 4 annas per jerib, *i.e.*, 8 annas per acre.

By the President—

- Q. The assessment on lift land has not been increased. Has there been any rise in its price ?
- A. I cannot say that there has been some rise, but I am not certain how much it is.
- Q. In your taluka the settlement has been guaranteed for 15 years. Has the price of lift land increased on that account ?
- A. I do not think so.
- Q. Then I do not think that the price of land will increase if the period is extended to 30 years ?
- A. It may increase.
- Q. But here is an example before you. Formerly the settlement period was 10 years and when it was extended to 15 years, the price remained the same ?
- A. Silence.

By Mr. Martin—

- Q. Do you know that the settlement reports are available for sale. They show why rates are enhanced ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. Can you say why the rates have been enhanced ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. You just said that the enhancement is due to improvements carried out by the zamindar ?
- A. We think it is so. There appears to be no other reason.
- Q. If the settlement report were available for sale, would you be inclined to read it ?

- A. I have not read it.
- Q. You can read it by purchasing it ?
- A. But it is the improvements that are the cause of enhancement.
- Q. Do you know that there has been a considerable rise in the prices of grain during the last 20 years, e.g., if a kharar cost Rs. 40 twenty years ago, it costs Rs. 50 to 60 now ?
- A. But sometimes the prices so decrease that a kharar fetches Rs. 35 only.
- Q. But if the prices increase, the Government share should also increase ?
- A. It is not fair to increase the rates on account of a rise in prices because these are not reduced when the prices fall.
- Q. But during the last 30 years the prices have generally gone up ?
- A. Sometimes they went up and sometimes they went down.
- Q. What has generally been the case ?
- A. Sometimes they may have fallen too.
- Q. If the prices go up, don't you think that the Government share should increase ?
- A. I would say that Government share should increase only when improvements are made by Government and not when prices rise.

By Mr. Macmillan—

- Q. Is the batai fixed or variable ?
- A. It is generally fixed. It is different in the case of lands newly taken up.
- Q. What is it in that case ?
- A. The haris get more than normal. Sometimes they even get two-thirds.
- Q. What is it usually ?
- A. It is half to half in the case of moki lands.
- Q. In the case of newly taken up lands, have the haris to give anything extra to the zamindars ?
- A. If the rates are increased, the zamindar has to bear the burden. The hari gets the same share of produce.
- Q. Is leasing stopped 2 years before the revision of settlement is due ?
- A. Yes. In the case of sale there is a little difference in the price of land.
- Q. Do the people wait to give the land on lease till the settlement is revised ?
- A. No. But a condition is put that if the rates are enhanced the deed would be cancelled.

By Professor Shahani—

- Q. You say that the produce of land decreases day by day, can you say what it was per acre in 1899 and what it is now ?
- A. I cannot say now.

Q. Can you make a rough estimate ?

A. I can send it if required.

Q. Supposing an acre of land yields a produce worth Rs. 16. Of these Rs. 8 go to the hari and Rs. 8 remain for the zamindar. Of the remaining Rs. 8, the zamindar pays Rs. 4 as Government assessment and Rs. 4 remain for him. If the zamindar's share is Rs. 4 now, what was it in 1899 ?

A. I cannot say that. I have no figures with me.

Q. In the present instance, do you consider that the zamindar gets a proper share ?

A. No. He has to incur a large expenditure.

Q. What, according to you, should be the Government share ?

A. Two-thirds should go to the zamindar and one-third to Government.

Q. How much does the zamindar spend to cultivate an acre of land ?

A. That varies with the circumstances of the case. In some cases a large expenditure has to be incurred on the clearance of karias, in others there is no such expenditure. The zamindar has to supply the seed, advance takavi, etc.

Q. But does the zamindar supply the seed also ?

A. Yes, in some cases. This concession is given when the land is not improved.

Q. In how many cases out of 10 has the zamindar to supply the seed ?

A. In the case of wheat lands the zamindar has to supply it, while in the case of rice lands the hari sows his own.

Examination of Khan Saheb Saifaldin.

4th September 1915.

- Q. You have your lands in the Shikarpur taluka ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Have you lands in any other taluka ?
- A. In Thul also.
- Q. Is your land dependent on Begari Wah and Sind Wah ?
- A. It is dependent on Shahi Wah and Begari Wah.
- Q. Is your land rice or lift ?
- A. It is all lift in Shikarpur taluka. In Thul it is both lift and flow.
- Q. Is the water-supply sufficient ?
- A. It is not at all sufficient. The branch has been closed as it is poor even in the upper reaches.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the settlement period ?
- A. It should be extended.
- Q. In the Shikarpur the settlement has not been revised for the last 17 years ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. I think the last settlement was guaranteed for 15 years instead of 10.
- A. Yes.
- Q. And in Thul the last settlement was revised 10 years back ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is the water-supply sufficient in Thul ?
- A. In some places it is sufficient, in others it is deficient.
- Q. But it is better than in Shikarpur.
- A. Yes.
- Q. If the settlement period is extended, how will you gain ?
- A. We will improve our lands by levelling, manuring and removing mounds, etc., which will bring us greater produce.
- Q. Will they have to pay less to Government if the period is extended ?
- A. Of course.
- Q. Has the price of land gone up in Shikarpur ?
- A. In lift lands it is very low owing to deficiency of water.
- Q. But has it decreased or increased ?
- A. It has decreased.
- Q. How is it in the case of flow lands ?
- A. It has not increased.
- Q. Is that owing to deficiency of water ?
- A. Yes.

- Q. Has the price of land increased in Thul ?
- A. I cannot say as I have not purchased land myself. I think it has not increased.
- Q. Has it decreased ?
- A. I think it is the same.
- Q. Is the water-supply better now ?
- A. Yes. It is better in some places.

By Mr. Martin —

- Q. It is better on the Begari ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. On the Shahi Wah ?
- A. It is good.
- Q. Unar Wah ?
- A. I can't say as I have no land there.
- Q. Your land is peeched by Begari and Shahi Wah ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And that peech has been improved ?
- A. Yes. In some places it has been.
- Q. How is it generally ?
- A. This year there was no water for a month or so.
- Q. Have the prices gone up during the past 10 years ?
- A. Yes. The expenses have also increased.
- Q. Then why has the price of land not increased, although the peech has been improved and the prices have gone up ?
- A. It is owing to increase in assessment.
- Q. But the settlement has not been revised during the last 10 years ?
- A. Silence.

By Mr. Macmillan—

- Q. The zamindar gets the same share ?
- A. No; it varies.
- Q. Has the produce of land decreased ?
- A. No.

By the President—

- Q. Why then has the price of land not increased ?
- A. Because the expenses have increased.
- Q. The price of land has decreased in Thul ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Have you ever bought or sold land ?
- A. No.

- Q. Then how do you say that the price of land has decreased ?
- A. I learnt from persons who have sold lands from Rs. 15 to 30 per acre.
- Q. But this is not due to the settlement period ?
- A. The assessment has increased and so have expenses.
- Q. Before the last settlement was revised you paid Rs. 2-5 per acre on an average, and now you pay Rs. 2-7 per acre. Has this increase of 2 annas per acre decreased the price of land ?
- A. The productivity of the soil has decreased.

By Mr. Martin—

- Q. Does the fear of short term settlements prevent the zamindars from improving their lands ?
- A. They do improve them. It depends upon capital.
- Q. Some make improvements and others do not ?
- A. Those who have capital improve their lands.
- Q. That is not due to settlement but want of capital ?
- A. Their want of capital is due to short term settlement.
- Q. Why do they not make improvements ? On account of fear of revision of settlement or want of capital ?
- A. On account of the settlement period.
- Q. Bahadur Khan has improved his lands and others don't. What is the reason ?
- A. He is a rich man.
- Q. Does he make a profit thereby ?
- A. That is best known to him. I think he does it because he gains by it.
- Q. Has he grown poor thereby ?
- A. He may have gained.

By Mr. Macmillan—

- Q. You say that the prices have increased and so have expenses and the margin of profit left to the zamindar is not sufficient to cover the increase in his expenses ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What is the cost of labour ?
- A. At present it is about 12 annas per head.
- Q. What was it before ?
- A. It was 3 to 4 annas.
- Q. Has the zamindar increased his share of batai ?
- A. No. He has to pay more to the hari. He gives takavi, which sometimes he gets back and sometimes does not.
- Q. Now that the cost of labour has increased, does the hari help in the clearance of karia ?
- A. No.

Opinion of Mr. Djalma Doulatram.

I have the honour to state as under :—

The question to be solved is whether 30 years' or shorter settlements be given to Sind. There are two sides to that question: one, that of the Government and the other, that of the zamindars who have to pay the water rate. The settlements are admittedly irrigation settlements. Lands are divided into different classes and in each class separate rates are charged for different crops raised according as they require more or less water. Government have also taken power under section 55 of the Land Revenue Code to charge special rates whenever a larger supply of water is given to zamindars. By that it is obviously meant that the same zamindars should be able to raise in those areas crops requiring a larger quantity of water per acre of cultivation. Section 55, Land Revenue Code, safeguards the interests of the Government to the fullest possible extent. There should, therefore, be no hesitation on the part of the Government to sanction longer settlements. The only revision that should be thought of is that of grading different dehs into different classes. In practice, it will rarely happen that a poor soil can be converted into good soil except by the personal exertions and extra expenditure by the zamindars. In principle such efforts are admittedly not taxable. From that point of view also the Government does not stand to lose by granting a longer term of settlement. On the other hand, short term settlements have been fraught with serious consequences for the zamindars. As a rule, each new settlement has increased the rates and altered the grading of the lands into higher class, with the result that each new settlement has meant a considerable enhancement of rates for the zamindars, for the batai terms with the haris continue practically unaltered.

Question 2 (a) as put is not easy of any satisfactory answer. In no part of Sind has 30-year settlement been introduced to enable a comparison. In practice, the zamindars do feel discouraged from improving their lands. And their conduct is easily intelligible in theory also for obvious reasons. Those reasons have been repeated so often that I venture to believe that the committee are well aware of them.

It is not easy or appropriate to cite examples of other zamindars. I can with greater confidence speak of what I have felt and done with regard to our family holding. We hold lands in deh Ghari Mahrab in Jacobabad taluka. The lands originally were very poor and the only crops raised were juari, bajri with a rotation of 3 or 4 years and wheat in a few acres of it. That was its condition in 1892-93 when we purchased it. We invested large sums of money in sinking wells, levelling the land, removing the jungle and roots and converted a large part of it into wheat land. The Government was benefited immediately, inasmuch as formerly we could raise juari crop only once in 3 or 4 years, while with the use of manure we could raise wheat crop every year, paying Government assessment each year.

Again, paddy crop was unknown in those parts. We imported skilled paddy cultivators on payment to them of heavy takavis without interest and introduced paddy. That crop is the most highly assessed crop and in course of time we could grow the second (Dubari) crop also. That also resulted in converting kalar land which did not produce any crop into land yielding the highest assessment to Government. The improvements took us about 12 years. All those improvements were due to our personal exertions and investment of capital. During the whole period no large improvements were made to the Begari canal, which irrigates the land, nor were any new roads or railways constructed near us in the interval. The rates at the new settlement were raised and our lands were classed as 1st class lands paying the highest rates in the taluka. The last settlement came into force in 1907. That acted as a damper on further improvements. I may be permitted to mention that some of the original takavi advances have not yet been recovered. While thus Government was able to derive double benefit out of our exertions, we got no compensation when the Government could not supply water to the people for

3 years from 1911-12, owing to a low inundation and silting up the Begari head. There is no provision of law similar to section 55, Land Revenue Code, in favour of the subject.

It will be said that Government gave remissions but they did not meet the situation exactly. Remissions are not given if the total gross produce is estimated at double the assessment. Under the contract with the hari, half and sometimes two-thirds of the produce goes to him. The zamindar got only enough to pay the Government demand which failed to take into consideration the expenses incurred by him, his superintendence charges, interest on capital invested, &c. Again, the remission rules are worked usually with very great rigour. In such circumstances, Government should have remitted generally a portion of the land revenue in cases not covered by the remission rules. If there were certainty that the rates will not be raised if improvement was made by the zamindar, at least for a fairly long time, many zamindars, I venture to believe, will be willing to erect pumping stations to ensure their crops in lean years.

As to the second part of the second question, it will at once be intelligible that the value of the land to the zamindar will not be less than otherwise, if the lease or mortgage executed relates to a less period than the time when a new settlement is due. If, however, it is to occur during such term the very great probability of the rates rising must enter into the calculation of the investor and affect adversely the zamindar. That is an economic truism which cannot be gainsaid. Sale is a transfer of ownership out and out, while a lease or a mortgage has reference to such transfer for a shorter period. The same considerations, therefore, apply to sale of lands. If it were intended to prove this beyond any shadow of doubt, permanent settlement may be tried in any selected area in Sind when the value of that land will appear to have gone up several times its present value. Without some such experiment it is not easy to give any example of the difference the short settlements make.

It may perhaps be urged that as a matter of fact the value of land has gone on increasing. That has happened in spite of the short settlements, not because of them. That rise in value has other causes to explain it. The causes which operated to raise prices all round are responsible for raising the price of agricultural land. As an instance in point, the value of non-agricultural land has also risen, and the ratio is higher in favour of non-agricultural land than in that of agricultural land.

If there were long term settlements, I venture to think that zamindars as a class will be induced to use machinery in the different departments of agriculture. The agricultural shows have failed to produce the necessary results, more because of the short settlements than want of enlightenment among the zamindars.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) DIALMAL DOULATRAM,

Zamindar, deh Ghari Mahrab, taluka Jacobabad.

13th July 1915.

Examination of Mr. Djalma Doulatram.

4th September 1915.

By the President—

Q. In what talukas have you got land ?

A. Jacobabad taluka.

Q. What is the peech ?

A. Begari.

Q. How much land do you own ?

A. 500 acres.

Q. Is it rice land ?

A. It is mostly rice.

Q. When were the rates increased ?

A. They were increased in 1906-07.

Q. Are you of opinion that the settlement period should be extended ?

A. Yes.

Q. What period do you think is suitable for Sind ?

A. It should not be less than 30 years.

Q. What is your reason for thinking that it should be 30 years ?

A. Because we will be able to realize expenses on improvements. The assessment charged does not leave any margin for profit.

Q. Can you tell me what is the rate of assessment on your land ?

A. It is Rs. 4-8 per acre on rice.

Q. In your written opinion you remark that your land has been raised to a higher group on account of improvements ?

A. It may be a mistake.

Q. At any rate assessment has been enhanced ?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you get your land ?

A. In 1892-93.

Q. What was the nature of the land then ?

A. It was jari and bajri and 30 acres of wheat land.

Q. You subsequently turned that into rice ?

A. First it was turned into wheat land by sinking wells and building paka khuhadas to water it.

Q. Is it rice land now ?

A. No.

Q. What was the improvement you carried out in your land ?

A. Levelling the land and clearing the jungle.

- Q. But clearing the jungle is hardly any improvement ?
- A. That is necessary for cultivating wheat specially. Bushes have to be removed. Otherwise the land is juari land.
- Q. You mean to say that in juari land you would not mind leaving the bushes growing ?
- A. Yes, cultivators do not mind it.
- Q. And in wheat land have they to be taken out ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is there any other improvement you carried out except clearing the jungle ?
- A. We cleared the jungle, levelled the ground, sank wells and built sluices.
- Q. Am I to understand that your assessment was enhanced because you carried out these improvements ?
- A. That is what I believe.
- Q. What is the total area of the deh in which your land is situated ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. But your land is only a small portion of it ?
- A. It is perhaps one-third.
- Q. Your assessment was enhanced chiefly because the village was put in a higher group ?
- A. It was not put in a higher group. The rates were enhanced.
- Q. But you do not mean that the whole group was raised because you improved 500 acres ?
- A. I think the adjoining land was also improved.
- Q. But none of the neighbours has sent in such statement ?
- A. I cannot explain that.
- Q. I think your statement will not stand by itself. You are the only one that has given an example ?
- A. I do not know of others. I think some instances are wanted.
- Q. Certainly. It appears to me that it is an assumption on your part that improvements were really the cause of enhancement ?
- A. I cannot say. I was not consulted.
- Q. Who manages your land ?
- A. My brother Mr. Chandiram.

By Mr. Martin—

- Q. He might have been consulted ?

By the President—

- Q. Have you read the settlement report of Jacobabad taluka ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did you read the reasons for which the rates were raised ?
- A. Yes.

- Q. Did they mention your improvements amongst them?
- A. I am sorry, they did not. They only looked at the produce realized. Indirectly they looked to my improvements.
- Q. That is a suspicion on your part. I think Mr. Baker, or whoever did the settlement, must have given reasons as to why the rates should be enhanced. Did he mention the fact that the lands have become more productive?
- A. He has taken the average of certain dehs. He considered that 40 per cent. of the total income would be fair.
- Q. Of the gross produce coming to the zamindar?
- A. Yes.
- Q. But still this criticism would apply to the settlement even if it were for 30 years?
- A. If that were the only consideration.
- Q. I mean that this does not bear directly on the shortness of the settlement period?
- A. It does this way. At present the assessment is enhanced every 10 years. If the period is extended to 30 years, it will be enhanced once in 30 years instead of thrice as at present.
- Q. Oh I see. You mean to say that you would rather be treated unjustly once in 30 years than three times?
- A. The assessment being raised, it leaves a smaller margin for profit.
- Q. Yes. I understand. But are you aware that zamindars are deterred from improving their lands on account of short term settlement?
- A. I cannot say that of others. We have not done it since.
- Q. I suppose you can only take out stumps once?
- A. That is true. But there are other improvements.
- Q. Do you think that the other zamindars are deterred?
- A. I think I should not speak of other zamindars.
- Q. But you are?
- A. Yes. I am deterred from spending money because I fear that there will be enhancement of assessment.
- Q. Not owing to your improvements?
- A. Because I think that the produce will increase on account of my exertion.
- Q. You are afraid that if the crops are too good they will be used as test?
- A. They have once been used.
- Q. Have you purchased land since 1892?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you say that lands have gone up in value?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Even of the unimproved lands?
- A. Yes, of all lands.

Q. And of course prices of grain have arisen ?

A. Yes, they have.

Q. So whenever there is any settlement you would expect an enhancement in the natural course of things ?

A. Yes.

Q. In fact that would be just as it should ?

A. I would not say so.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. The prices would be only one factor. If a certain proportion were fixed, it would be more just. As it is, there is no profit left to the zamindar ?

A. Silence.

Q. I mean to say that the prices are going up, the value of the crop goes up, the hari gets more money for his share, the zamindar gets more money for his share. Why should not Government get more profit ?

A. The prices prevailing at the time of settlement are taken into consideration. At the end of 10 years, perhaps, the zamindar may get something more. For instance, our settlement took place in 1906-07, the rate was fixed at Rs. 4-8 per acre. Mr. Baker put 40 per cent. of the gross produce of the zamindar for Government share. That leaves 60 per cent. to the zamindar. Out of that he has to incur expenses, *e.g.*, on clearance of karias, removal of silt, advance of money, bad debts. If all these are taken into consideration, it will be found that I am left nothing, and if at the end of 10 years I may get anything by the rise in prices I should not be deprived of it.

Q. You said just now that you consider that the Government share ought to be a fixed one ?

A. Yes. But it should be a reasonable one.

Q. But you think that there should be a fixed share ?

A. I would not say that it should necessarily be.

Q. Then you don't agree ? My point is that Government should take a fixed share. Do you think so or not ?

A. If the assessment is considered to be a tax it may not be fixed. If it is a proprietary right it may be fixed according to the policy of Government.

Q. The land revenue in Sind is partly made of land revenue and partly of water rate. Regarding it as a water rate, Government must recoup themselves as an expenditure on canals ?

A. Yes. As a certain rate of interest which can therefore always be fixed without change.

Q. But that would be an argument against fixing a certain share throughout the whole of Sind ?

A. I cannot say that.

Q. The value of land has gone up for leasing also ?

A. That depends on the produce if the land is so improved.

- Q. I am talking of the general state of affairs ?
- A. I am not aware of any such leases.
- Q. You stated that the sale value has gone up ?
- A. Yes. For instance if I were to sell my land, it will fetch more than what I paid for it.
- Q. Has the value of unimproved land gone up ?
- A. I think it has gone up.
- Q. What is that due to ?
- A. I think it is due to world causes.
- Q. Are the people influenced when they buy, sell or lease land by the consideration of the settlement period ?
- A. They always inquire about assessment payable and the period for which it is to last and generally the lessees undertake to pay assessment to Government.
- Q. My point is, supposing a man sells his land at the beginning of the 10 years' period, would he get a better price than when he sold it in the 10th year of the settlement period ?
- A. I do not know about sales.
- Q. But as regards leases ?
- A. I do not know. I have not taken up leases.
- Q. But it is your opinion ?
- A. Theoretically speaking, it may not be true.
- Q. What period would you recommend ?
- A. Not less than 30 years. I would prefer a longer period, but as it is a period fixed for the whole of India, I do not press for a longer period.

By Mr. Martin—

- Q. What assessment do you pay on your well cultivation ?
- A. Rate for Charkhi.
- Q. Do you pay more than when it was flow ?
- A. There has been no change.
- Q. Then you can't say that your improvement is taxed as regards wells ?
- A. But my other improvements are certainly taxed.
- Q. I am first dealing with your well cultivation ?
- A. Now we do not cultivate paddy on wells ?
- Q. You have given up these improvements, *i.e.*, those improvements are not taxed ?
- A. I mean in this way ; after the improvements we were able to increase the produce of our land, and the produce was taken into consideration at the time of revision.
- Q. The rise in Jacobabad took place mostly on rice land ; rice land is now assessed at Rs. 4-8 per acre and moki land at Rs. 2-12. Do you think that the assessment on rice land is unreasonably high as compared with that on moki ?

A. There is more produce in the case of rice land, that may be admitted. But the question should be looked at from another point of view, *viz.*, does it leave sufficient for the zamindar.

Q. Does it not leave more than any other crops have? Have you got any general idea?

A. I give this instance: In 1912-13 I grew juari on account of deficiency of water. Juari did not pay me at all. That was partly due to bad land, also the kalar.

Q. Which is the most valuable land?

A. Paddy land.

Q. Which is the most productive land?

A. Paddy land produces as much as wheat land.

Q. Considering all these facts, do you think that the rise in the case of rice was unreasonable?

A. It was unreasonable. I think it was with the intention of stopping rice cultivation.

By the President—

Q. You say that you do not even get interest on capital invested?

A. Yes.

Q. Let us take the net profit. What do you call profit?

A. I think I will be satisfied with 4 per cent.

Q. How much do you get?

A. Hardly 2 per cent.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Are you taking the superintendence charges into account?

A. Yes. I would be satisfied if I get 4 per cent.

By the President—

Q. On the capital invested?

A. If the value of the land is taken into consideration, it would not be even 1 per cent.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Has the value of land increased?

A. Yes.

Q. What is it per acre?

A. It would be about Rs. 200 per acre.

Q. Will people buy that if it yields 1 per cent.?

A. There are a few purchasers.

By the President—

Q. A businessman would not profit by it?

A. I don't think so.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. But business people buy it ?

A. They may be buying. In 1911 I invested money, but I have not got even 3 per cent.

By the President—

Q. Do you live on your land ?

A. I pass my holidays and vacations there.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Your land is better than most of the zamindars' ?

A. I cannot answer that.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. Do you consider those improvements as improvements or as ordinary preparations which a good cultivator would make on his land ?

A. Whatever alters the land from its former condition is an improvement.

By the President—

Q. Ploughing ?

A. Ploughing is on a different basis.

Q. Harrowing ?

A. That would be the ordinary work of a cultivator. That for which the zamindar has to pay would be an improvement.

Q. What is the general rise in the price of grain in the past 20 years.

A. I think the rise may be about 30 per cent.

Q. And in the cost of labour ?

A. Almost double.

Q. 100 per cent. ?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you pay for the clearance of karias and the removal of silt ?

A. Yes, formerly we paid 4 annas, now we pay 8 annas.

Q. You said that you give advances to the cultivator without interest ?

A. Yes; cash, grain, harvesting charges and often their maintenance charges.

Q. I mean advances of takavi ?

A. Cash as well as grain.

Q. When you advance them grain, do you receive back the same ?

A. I charge them the rate at which I get it from the bazar.

Q. You don't take the same number of maunds ?

A. I charge their value.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. How would you estimate the share of the zamindar per acre? How much does an average acre yield?

A. May I refer to the estimate of Mr. Baker at 40 per cent. he has put the rate of Rs. 4-8; so the zamindars' share would be about Rs. 6-12 per acre.

Q. And the cost of clearance per acre?

A. It is about Rs. 1 per acre.

Q. And the cost of jungle clearance?

A. It is done once for all, and it is done by the cultivator.

Q. And the cost of clearance of silt?

A. It is about 8 annas per acre.

Q. How much takavi do you advance per acre?

A. An ordinary cultivator takes Rs. 50.

Q. Do you give seed to the haris?

A. Yes.

Q. How much?

A. About 45 kasas of paddy for 16 acres.

Q. Have you to make any other concessions to the haris?

A. Sometimes I advance them more for finishing up the work earlier. On the whole I give them Rs. 100 for 10 acres.

Q. What would be the interest on that?

A. 6 per cent.

Q. And any other expenses that a zamindar has to incur?

A. There are many bad debts also.

Q. How much do you not expect to recover?

A. On an average it would be 25 per cent. In 1900 I advanced Rs. 1,000 which I have not been able to recover yet.

Q. So that the expenses amount to Rs 5 per acre?

A. Yes. Commercially it is a dead loss.

Q. Is the majority of zamindars sufficiently far-sighted to consider settlement as preventing them from making improvements?

A. Everyone is thinking of it now. Very probably some of them do. For myself, I have been considering this question for some time past.

Q. If the rise in prices is not considered a sufficient reason for short settlement in Bombay, would you think it a sufficient reason for short settlement prevailing in Sind?

A. Sind conditions are not very much different from Bombay conditions.

Q. The soil of Sind is rapidly changing in character.

A. Yes, I think so.

- Q. If greater irrigational facilities are given to the zamindars, will Government be sufficiently protected by the long term settlement?
- A. I think I have referred to section 55 of the Land Revenue Code.
- Q. If a canal deteriorates, will Government be sufficiently protected under the long term settlement?
- A. I am afraid, it is not.
- Q. Do short term settlements cause any disturbance?
- A. I think they do.
- Q. Are short term settlements good from the administrative point of view. Do they cost much?
- A. They do cost something to Government.
- Q. Then do you think that on the whole it is time that the short term settlements should be done away with?
- A. I do think so.

Examination of Syed Najaf Ali Shah, of Tatta.

by the President—

- Q. Where is your land situated?
 A. In the Tatta taluka.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding?
 A. About 1,500 acres.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the settlement period?
 A. It should be extended.
- Q. In Tatta, the settlement was last revised in 1906?
 A. Yes.
- Q. Were the rates increased in that revision?
 A. They were decreased by 4 annas.
- Q. The first settlement took place in 1882?
 A. Yes.
- Q. That is to say, the next settlement took place after 23 years?
 A. Yes; during that period some dehs of 1st class were transferred to the 2nd class.
- Q. At how many years should the settlement period be fixed?
 A. At 30 years.
- Q. But if a 30 years' period were given to you, you would have suffered?
 A. Yes.
- Q. Why then do you ask for a 30 years' period?
 A. I think of the whole Sind.
- Q. Do not the zamindars of your taluka think that the next settlement will bring them enhancement?
 A. They find that in other places it is so; therefore they also think so.
- Q. Is the water-supply still deficient?
 A. Yes, sometimes we have floods and sometimes drought.
- Q. No improvement has been made during the past 10 years?
 A. No.
- Q. Has the price of land decreased?
 A. It has increased after settlement. It is because people generally wish to extend their holdings, while pensioners and merchants wish to be zamindars.
- Q. Is it not profitable to have land?
 A. If there is no improvement there is no gain.
- Q. Has there been any improvement by zamindars after the settlement?
 A. Where the water-supply is good there has been improvement.
- Q. Have you to say anything else?
 A. Nothing.

Examination of Haji Khair Baksh.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land ?
- A. In the Sujawal taluka.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding ?
- A. It is between 2,000 and 3,000 acres.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the settlement period ?
- A. It should be extended.
- Q. The settlement was last revised in 1900 ?
- A. Yes ; in that revision there was no increase owing to floods.
- Q. Now you have been leniently treated ?
- A. Yes, owing to very poor condition of the country, Mr. Lawrence recommended a reduction of rates by one-fourth.
- Q. Is the state of water bad at present ?
- A. Yes ; last year there was a good crop because there were floods in Tatta. If there are floods on the other side of the river, we have a good season ; if there are floods on our side, the other side has a good season. The Superintending Engineer (referring to Mr. Gebbie) has often visited the floods on our side. Government gave me 850 acres of land which were in the 2nd group. In the present revision it has been raised to the 1st group, although I have only improved 400 acres of it.
- Q. But the revision has not been sanctioned as yet ?
- A. We know that it will be so.
- Q. So you fear ?
- A. Yes. The assessment has been fixed at Rs. 3-8 per acre.
- Q. Do the zamindars think very much of the settlement period ?
- A. Yes, very much.
- Q. Has the price of land decreased ?
- A. No ; if people have money they invest it in land.
- Q. But on your side the people are poor. Do they purchase ?
- A. No ; only those who have some money go in for land.

Examination of Mr. Metharam Ajitsing.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land?
- A. In Shahbandar and Jati talukas.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding?
- A. Eight hundred acres.
- Q. Are there floods or deficiency of water-supply?
- A. When the inundation is high we have floods.
- Q. I think you have been leniently treated in the matter of assessment?
- A. Yes. Chouth has been remitted since the last 4 years.
- Q. Should the period of settlement be extended?
- A. It should be extended subject to the condition that when there are bad years Government should reduce the assessment.

By Professor Shahani—

- Q. But if there are improvements?
- A. The improvements are made by the zamindars. There is no possibility of improvements being made by Government.

By the President—

- Q. Do the zamindars think more of the settlement period than the floods?
- A. There is always the fear of floods.
- Q. Has the price of land decreased?
- A. If the land is improved the price goes up.
- Q. How is it improved?
- A. By constructing bunds, removing jungle, kalar, etc.
- Q. When was the settlement revised last?
- A. First in 1900, and then in 1910.
- Q. Was the settlement revised in 1900?
- A. Yes.
- Q. When did the revision take place before the year 1900?
- A. In 1887.
- Q. That is nearly 30 years ago. You have no reason to complain then?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You fear for the future, I think?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Are you a bunyadi zamindar or have you purchased the land?
- A. I am a bunyadi zamindar.

Q. Have you ever sold land ?

A. No.

Q. Have you leased it or taken on lease ?

A. No.

Q. Do you know about the price of lands ?

A. Yes; from the experience of the neighbouring zamindars.

Q. Are there many sales ?

A. Not generally. I know of some in the year 1904.

Q. Has the price of land increased or decreased

A. It has increased generally.

Q. What is the reason ?

A. Because many Muhammadans go in for it, as they do not charge interest.

Q. What about Hindus ?

A. They also purchase lands as they are afraid of thieves, failure of banks, etc.

Q. Do they profit by it ?

A. Yes.

By Professor Shahani—

Q. You said that Government remitted chouth. Can you say why ?

A. Because people were hard pressed.

Q. Was it fair ?

A. Yes.

Q. Now that it has been reassessed, is that fair ?

A. I do not think so.

Q. What is the produce per acre of your land ?

A. Thirty kasas.

Q. What will be price of it ?

A. About Rs 18.

Q. What do you pay as assessment ?

A. Rs. 2-4.

Q. Then you get Rs. 15-12 ?

A. But out of this, Rs. 6 go to the cost of clearance, seed, etc. The har gets something in addition to his his fixed share.

Q. Does the zamidar supply the seed generally ?

A. Yes.

Examination of R. B. Seth Vishindas Nihalchand.

By the President—

- Q. Where is your land ?
- A. In Kotri and Hala talukas.
- Q. What is the extent of your holding in Kotri taluka ?
- A. About 10 thousand acres.
- Q. Is it barani land ?
- A. It is barani, charkhi, sailabi and moki.
- Q. What is its extent in the Hala taluka ?
- A. 2,000 acres.
- Q. Is it charkhi ?
- A. Yes, it is all charkhi.
- Q. What is your opinion as regards the settlement period ?
- A. It should be extended.
- Q. What should be the period ?
- A. The longer it is, the better. The Government will also gain when the period extends to 10 years, the zamindars do not make improvements because they fear enhancement. If the period is extended, they would make improvements.
- Q. In Hala taluka, the irrigational settlement was introduced in 1884. Has there been any enhancement in the rates since then ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. I do not think so ?
- A. I think there has been some increase. We paid Rs. 4 per acre at first, then it was raised to Rs. 5, and then to Rs. 6; now I do not think it is less than Rs. 5.
- Q. What is the rate of lift land per acre ?
- A. It is Rs. 7 per acre.
- Q. It is only 2-12 per acre ?
- A. I have not understood. I was speaking of the zamindar's share.
- Q. Then there has been no increase in the rates during the last 30 years ?
- A. No, none.
- Q. Therefore you have no complaint as regards rates of assessment in the Hala taluka ?
- A. We have no complaint as regards the rates in Hala, but the rates in Karachi are too high. The 8,000 acres in Karachi district do not yield as much as 2,000 acres of Hala taluka.

- Q. But I am speaking of Hala where there has been no increase for the last 30 years. Do the zamindars improve their lands there?
- A. Yes.
- Q. How have you improved your land?
- A. By ploughing, manuring, cultivating nangli, removing kalar, etc.
- Q. Has the price of land increased?
- A. Yes on account of improvements.
- Q. When was the settlement of the Kotri taluka revised last?
- A. The first was in 1889 and the next in 1899.
- Q. Have the rates increased after 1889?
- A. No.
- Q. Therefore you have no reason to complain as regards the rates in Kotri taluka?
- A. But the lands of Kotri are very poor. Even the rate of Re. 1 per acre should be too high for them. The fact that general remission has been sanctioned for some of the dehs of Kotri and Tatta talukas shows this.
- Q. Have you anything more to say?
- A. No.

Opinion of Mr. Sundersing.

In compliance with your notice, dated Karachi, the 25th May 1915, I most respectfully beg to express my ideas before the Settlement Committee.

Answers to Questions Nos. A and B.

A.—The following expenses discourage zamindars from improving their lands within the short period fixed for present settlement:—

- (1) Labour for taking out the roots of trees and bushes.
- (2) Labour for making into proper level, high, low and slope land.
- (3) Labour for digging out new watercourses.
- (4) Labour for reconstruction of outlets.
- (5) Labour for refilling old water branches, etc.
- (6) Labour for washing the kalar and digging out the nalis to take away the effected water.
- (7) Cost of purchasing ploughing machines instead of common ploughs.
- (8) Cost of purchasing ploughing machines for watering instead of common wheels which are in present use.
- (9) The above noted expenses for improving the land are too high and so the zamindars cannot make good from their products within the fixed period of present settlement, so the results affect zamindars to borrow money on a heavy interest through private means, gradually they will be degraded to such a step as to sell their properties.

As regards to extend the settlement to 30 years, I think it quite sufficient for the zamindars to make good their expenses for improvement of their land and shall have no chance to borrow money, neither through private means nor from the Government.

B.—The dealers to whom the land is sold, leased or mortgaged have to pay all the same expenses which other zamindars pay for the improvement of the land and in all cases they think for the heavy expenses that they have to suffer for the improvement of the land as well as the shortness of the present period of the settlement and increasing of assessment for the next settlement, consequently they do not pay the fair price.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) SUNDERSING MANGALSING,
Zamindar, Jamrao Canal, Sind.

Deh 308-A.

12th July 1915.

Examination of Mr. Sundersing Mangalsing.

By the President—

Q. Your land is in Jamesabad taluka ?

A. Yes.

Q. What is its extent ?

A. I have 28 blocks in Jamesabad and 33 in Mirpur Khas.

Q. What is your opinion as regards settlement period ? Should it be extended ?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you hold land in the Panjab ?

A. Yes.

Q. Where ?

A. In the Rawalpindi district. My brother has got land in Lyalpur district.

Q. On the Chenab, you mean ?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the period of settlement in the Panjab ?

A. Twenty years.

By Mr. Martin—

Q. Is it 20 years in both the districts ?

A. It is 15 years in Rawalpindi and 20 years in Lyalpur.

Q. In Lyalpur, land revenue and water-rate are separate, I think ?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know what is the rate of land revenue ?

A. I cannot say with certainty. I think land revenue is Rs. 2 per acre.

Q. Whether cultivated or not ?

A. In barani land the land revenue is payable whether the land is cultivated, or not but in the case of land irrigated by canal water, land revenue is payable only when the land is cultivated.

Q. What is the water-rate on the Chenab ?

A. I think it is Rs. 7 now.

Q. That is Rs. 9 per acre.

A. Yes. But there we have a right to take water for 75 per cent. of our land. And the water-supply is so much that cent. per cent. of land could be cultivated. We can cultivate Dubari also.

Q. Does the productivity of soil decrease on account of cultivation in the Panjab ?

A. No.

Q. But the Sindhis say the more the land is cultivated, the less it yields ?

A. The land of the Panjab is better than that of Sind. And the people there work harder also.

- Q. Is the land there good for cotton cultivation ?
- A. Formerly it was, now it is not so good. But still it is better than the land of Sind.
- Q. What is the rate of assessment on Jamrao ?
- A. It is Rs. 4 per acre for the 1st class cotton cultivation and Rs. 3-12 for the 1st class wheat cultivation in Rabi.
- Q. Do the Panjabis improve the land ?
- A. The Abadgars do. Because their children do not get education. When the son is 9 or 10 years old, he is put to the field; the women generally do the work on the farm.
- Q. The Panjabi Abadgars are more hard-working than Sindhis ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do Sufed Posbes improve their lands ?
- A. Not with their labour. They spend money, therefore they do not improve as much as the Abadgars. They do not take out the roots but only the bushes. It is their haris who have to do the work.
- Q. Perhaps the Sufed Posbes have not got good haris ?
- A. They have got good haris but they do not spend money.
- Q. But the Sufed Posbes get their lands better cultivated than the Sindhi zamindars ?
- A. The Panjabis improve the lands better than the Sindhis. But those who have much land do not spend as much.
- Q. Do the Sufed Posbes think very much of the settlements ?
- A. Most of them do not. But they fear enhancement. They think that the water they get is not sufficient.
- Q. Even so they improve their lands ?
- A. Not as much as the Abadgars.
- Q. Is it the fear of enhancement that deters them from making improvements ?
- A. No, it is the question of money, which they think they can not make good in 10 years.
- Q. Do you think, by spending more they will gain more ?
- A. They cannot spend much.
- Q. If the Abadgars gain, why cannot the Sufed Posbes ?
- A. The Abadgars use their own labour, while the Sufed Posbes spend money, and in a short period of ten years they cannot recoup themselves.
- Q. Is the assessment on the Jamrao high ?
- A. No.
- by Professor Shahani—
- Q. If there were 50 Sufed Posbes on the Jamrao, how many would improve their lands and how many would not ?
- A. Those who have been Abadgars in the past would improve more than others.
- Q. What will be their number ?
- A. Very few.

Opinion of Mr. Chandiram Lalsing.

I beg respectfully to express my opinion on the desirability of extending the period of settlement in Sind as follows :—

I would recommend that the present period of settlement be extended to 20 years. The shortness of the period will tend to affect zamindars unfavourably. If the improvements they make upon their lands lead to the increase of assessment they would naturally be discouraged from carrying out improvements. The land on which land revenue is liable to being enhanced after short terms will naturally sell for comparatively less, and will naturally realise less when it is leased or mortgaged. In the whole of Sind for a long time short term settlement has prevailed, so that comparisons of things as they are found in the different parts of the province throw no light on the validity or otherwise of the conclusions at which I have arrived. But when I compare things here with those in the Panjab especially, of which I have some knowledge, I feel disposed to attribute the comparatively greater agricultural prosperity of the Panjab to, among other causes, the comparatively longer term settlement prevailing there.

Specific instances are not possible.

So far as I know, two reasons have been advanced in support of short-term settlement.

(1) The hardship which a long term settlement involves in the case of cultivators adversely situated from the point of view of water or soil. But experience shows that assessments on revisions of settlement are seldom lessened. As a rule revision of settlement means increase of land revenue.

(2) Another reason advanced for short term settlement is the vagaries of the River Indus, in which case, too, suffering cultivators have to be protected. But here I would respectfully submit that the course of the river, except at few places in Sind, which may be dealt with in an exceptional manner, is fairly equable, so that a uniform long term settlement as a rule will be calculated, in my opinion, to do good to the province.

I have, etc.,
(Sd.) CHANDIRAM LALSING,
Zamindar, Mirpurkhas and Jamesabad.

14th July 1915.

Examination of Mr. Chandiram Lalsing.

By the President—

Q. How much land have you ?

A. 800 acres.

Q. You have had some years' experience, I believe ?

A. Yes, 13 years.

Q. What is your opinion about the settlement period ?

A. I have said that it should be extended to 20 years at least.

Q. I suppose the longer it is the better ?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you give reasons justifying that ?

A. Because zamindars have to incur expenses on extracting roots, manuring, levelling the lands and demolishing the old karias and they cannot recoup themselves with a short period.

Q. The extracting of roots is very rarely done on the Jamrao ?

A. It is often done.

Q. Have you ever known anybody who has extracted all his roots excepting an Abadgar ?

A. Myself and Professor Shahani.

Q. Anybody else ?

A. Many others.

Q. What is the ordinary course for extracting bushes ?

A. We engage coolies.

Q. What is the cost per acre ?

A. Rs. 2 or 3.

Q. You cannot recoup yourself for that in 10 years ?

A. I am not speaking of this improvement only.

Q. But that is one of the most important ?

A. Manuring is more important.

Q. But you would not manure unless the bushes are removed ?

A. They both go together.

Q. Am I not right in thinking that the majority of zamindars do not think of that. Not even one in a hundred ?

A. Silence.

Q. Ordinarily zamindars leave the *kirir* and *ak* growing in their lands ?

A. Yes. Many do so.

Q. Do you consider that if the settlement period were doubled, the zamindars would remove these *kirir* bushes.

- A. Most of them would do it.
- Q. What is the cost of doing this per acre ?
- A. Rs. 2 to 3 per acre, I said.
- Q. Once you remove, they don't grow again ?
- A. Generally not.
- Q. Would the removal make a great difference to the produce ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Then surely it is very unreasonable to say that a man cannot recoup himself in 10 years ?
- A. That is one of the improvements.
- Q. But why do they not consider that ?
- A. Silence.
- Q. I think you agree that the majority of the zamindars are so careless and slack that even if the period of settlement were extended, they would not materially improve the land ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What other improvements were you speaking of ?
- A. Manuring and levelling.
- Q. Do you level your land ?
- A. Yes. And demolishing old karias.
- Q. Apparently you do that now even with the short settlement ?
- A. Yes, we do.
- Q. Does it pay you ?
- A. Yes, it does pay.
- Q. In spite of the short settlement ?
- A. It would pay us more if a long settlement existed.
- Q. If it pays you to do it now, and if the other zamindars do not do it, do you think that they would do it with the longer settlement ?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. Would you yourself undertake more improvements if there is longer settlement ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What sort of improvements ?
- A. Even these improvements on a greater scale.
- Q. Have you got lift land ?
- A. Yes. A small portion.
- Q. You have made no attempt to lower it ?
- A. No.

- Q. Are there any other ways in which the zamindar is affected by the settlement? I understand that he pays more and I also understand that some zamindars are deterred from making improvements. Are there any others?
- A. The value of land is affected.
- Q. If you could be certain that the assessment would not increase for 20 years or 30 years, land would have a higher leasing value?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Can you tell me whether leases fetch more at the beginning of the 10 years period than they do at the end?
- A. They fetch more at the beginning.
- Q. Are you speaking from experience or it is your opinion?
- A. I have heard so.
- Q. If a man were selling his land, would he get a better price at the beginning than at the end?
- A. Yes. I think so.
- Q. That is your opinion. You are not talking from experience?
- A. No.
- Q. Do you consider that the price of land has risen?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Undoubtedly land is paying?
- A. But the price of other things has also risen.
- Q. Does it return any profit?
- A. Yes, it does.
- Q. How much?
- A. Rs. 3 to 5 per acre.
- Q. How much per cent., supposing you invest Rs. 5,000, would that bring in?
- A. I have not calculated.
- Q. But unless you calculate, how can you say that it does not bring you a fair return?
- A. I cannot say.
- Q. You are speaking roughly?
- A. Yes, from my own experience I say so.
- Q. Your own experience has been unfortunate?
- A. I was managing Professor Shahani's lands. I had contracts. I learnt from neighbouring zamindars.
- Q. You are talking of that?
- A. Yes.

Q. Your neighbouring zamindars are careless ?

A. Yes, they are.

Q. The Punjabi, I believe, especially Abadgars, have made money ?

A. Yes.

Q. The want of profit is largely due to bad cultivation ?

A. Not alone to that, but water also.

Q. It is largely ?

A. Yes.

By Mr. Gebbie—

Q. Does that affect the Punjabi equally ?

A. Yes.

By the President—

Q. Owing to want of haris, you are not cultivating your land as well as the Abadgars ?

A. No. The Abadgar is a zamindar and a hari both combined.

Q. Are there any other facts you would like to point out ?

A. The Takavi system on the Jamrao makes the land not paying. Haris run away. There is no remedy.

Q. But is it not also true that many zamindars make much profit by advancing takavi ?

A. It is only nominal interest that we take.

Q. I am not talking of you, the banias do ?

A. Yes, they do.

By Mr. Macmillan—

Q. If you say that land produces Rs. 3 to 5 per acre, what would such land cost per acre ?

A. About Rs. 25 per acre.

Q. That is a gain of 12 to 20 per cent. on your capital ?

A. But bad years also may be taken into account.

Q. On an average ?

A. Sometimes we do not get any thing.

Q. For 10 years what do you expect ?

A. Just enough to cover the cost.

Q. What is that ?

A. We pay the malkano, we spend on improvements, we pay for superintendence.

By the President—

- Q. You are better off after 10 years ?
- A. In the beginning we had a profit because there was plenty of water.
- Q. But why should any one purchase land now ?
- A. Because it is a safe investment.
- Q. Would you rather have your money back again ?
- A. No.

By Professor Shahani—

- Q. If the Government assessment were fixed, would more be left to the zamindar for his share ; and if more be left to the zamindar, would he make more improvements in his land ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. If the number of improving land holders increases, will it not have influence on the rest ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You said an acre produces 3 to 5 rupees. Will this be exclusive of supervision charges ?
- A. I have not excluded that.

**Opinion of Mr. Shewaram Dewanmal, Zamindar, Nawabshah
and Karachi.**

Karachi, 10th July 1915.

With reference to your notice in the Press inviting opinions on the extension of the period of settlement in Sind, I beg to offer my opinion on the subject as follows :—

The question of the extension of the period of settlement in Sind has been hanging fire since long, and it is really a great relief to zamindars to find that Government have after all appointed a commission to go into the question.

The period of 10 years' settlement now obtaining in Sind is indeed too short a period. When there are provinces in India where there is the permanent settlement system, 30 years and 20 years terms, why should Sind form an exception? No special conditions exist in Sind which justify this shortage of period. I would certainly recommend that the period should be extended to 30 years.

The shortness of the present period certainly affects zamindars unfavourably. It has been observed that at every settlement the rates of assessment are increased and not decreased. This deters zamindars in a great measure from effecting improvements on their lands. The rates of assessment are already very heavy in Sind and the condition of zamindars very poor, they are hardly able to make both ends meet; so when they know that their period is only 10 years and after another 10 years if their lands improve there is sure to be increase in assessment, they hardly care to effect improvements. The short period merely causes a feeling of insecurity among zamindars. If there was a longer term of settlement, say 30 years or more, they would know that the revision would come probably only once in their lifetime; and they will work at their lands with all their might and means and will spare no penny nor pains to make their lands profitable.

Comparison between the zamindars of different provinces where the different periods of settlement exist, will show that in Bengal where there is the permanent system the zamindars stand head and shoulders above those of other provinces, and in my opinion Sind zamindars generally will stand at the bottom in point of wealth, prosperity and well-being and other present conditions are not in a position to invest capital in improvements on their lands.

No doubt some of the educated classes have taken to land business now, but it is only because there has been an overcrowding in other profession where people cannot make their honest living and they have perforce to try this line, but many of them have found to their sad experience that it is not a paying concern. To cultivate the land well a good deal of capital is required for effecting improvements, such as the clearance of canals and watercourses cutting of the jungle which is so common in Sind and payment of takavi which is in many cases not recoverable. Added to all this the payment of assessment leaves very little for the zamindar.

Because of the tendency of the educated classes to take to agriculture the prices have gone up to a certain extent but these are wholly artificial and in spite of the short term. People go in for lands not because it is a profitable, but because it is considered a safe investment and gives a certain amount of status and position to the owner. The increase in the demand for land consequently in its price is independent of the period of settlement. On the contrary the shortness of the period goes greatly to decrease the value of the land which otherwise would fetch more. With the above items of expenditure

and, the knowledge of 99 per cent. certain increase of assessment at the end of 10 years a business like-purchaser would proportionately pay less price, which eventually affects the seller—the zamindar.

The period of settlement affects the sale price of the land in the same manner, though perhaps not to the same extent, as the period of 'patta' or lease in the case of building sites in large cities. The prices of these last are invariably in proportion to the length of the lease. A 10 years or 20 years 'patta' fetches very little compared to a perpetual or even 99 years' lease. A long period of settlement in agricultural land will similarly fetch a much better price to the zamindar.

I beg, etc.,

(Sd.) SHEWARAM DEWANMAL,
Zamindar, Nawabshah and Karachi.

Opinion of Mr. Westropp.

No. 2448.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
Collector's Office,
Mirpurkhas, dated 30th June 1915.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, Esquire., I. C. S.,
President of the Committee.

SIR,

With reference to your No. T-65, dated 28th May 1915, I have the honour to state that I have little hesitation in expressing an opinion based on the condition of the Karachi district that the periods of settlements should as a general rule be extended to 20 years.

In the delta, rates are low and the settlement reports in the past have indicated that owing to the precarious nature of the cultivation and the heavy expenses involved, it is inadvisable to make any very appreciable alterations in the rates. Errors due to faulty classification have now been removed and settlements carried out at short intervals of time must fail to give commensurate results, while they disturb the feeling of security which is so valuable in securing progressive cultivation.

Under sections 55 and 105 of the Land Revenue Code, Government have the power to fix an additional rate for the use of water when any really important improvement in the water-supply is brought about.

However, I hesitate to suggest a period of more than 20 years, as the economic conditions of Sind are open to such far-reaching changes that I doubt that such extension would be wise or warranted.

The following might be invited to give their evidence before the Committee :—

Tatta sub-division—

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S., Assistant Collector of Tatta.

Sayad Najaf Ali Shah son of Latif Ali Shah, of Tatta.

Shahbandar sub-division—

Haji Khair Baksh son of Ghulam Muhammad, of Sujawal,
Honorary Magistrate.

Diwan Metharam son of Ajitsing.

Kotri sub-division—

R. B. Vishindas Nihalchand, of Manjhu.

I have, etc.,
(Sd.) A. S. A. WESTROPP,
Collector of Karachi.

Opinion of Mr. Blathwayt.

No. 4203 of 1915.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
Collector's Office,
Larkana, dated 13th July 1915.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I.C.S.,
President of the Committee for enquiry into Settlements.

SIR,

With reference to your No. T-65 of 28th May last, I have the honour to state that I am in favour of extending the present period of settlement in Sind to at least 20 years.

2. Before giving my reasons I would like to call attention to a striking omission that the Honourable Members who have raised this question and the local papers that have discussed it have made. They have spoken throughout as if revision was synonymous with enhancement. They have evidently been thinking of the revisions, *e. g.*, in the Larkana division and in particular in the Tando division. Not one, so far as I know, has mentioned the case of the Tatta, Ghorabari and Mirpur Sakro talukas. The settlement of these talukas was revised by Mr. Hudson in 1905. Mr. Hudson, while keeping the Tatta rates practically unchanged, proposed reductions varying from 4 to 2 annas all round in Rabi in Ghorabari, and 8 annas all round on Kharif, and 4 annas all round in Rabi in Mirpur Sakro. Government went still further, and reduced, *e. g.*, the rice rates in Tatta by 4 annas and the Mirpur Sakro rates by a further 4 annas all round.

The total result was that the rice rates (the chief crop of the talukas) were reduced by 12 annas in Ghorabari and Mirpur Sakro and the *highest* rice rate in Ghorabari is now Rs 2 per acre and in Mirpur Sakro Rs 2-4. This is a most striking instance of neither the Settlement Officer nor Government being afraid of reducing assessments on revision, where reduction seemed called for, and it is remarkable that it has never been mentioned in this agitation. The natural inference is that, in such revisions as those of the Larkana and Tando Divisions, enhancement was not due to the Settlement Officer's feeling they were bound to enhance in any case (as the Hon'ble G. M. Bhurgri and others appear to imply) but to the fact that enhancement was equitable. The fact is that most parts of Sind have undoubtedly been improving and going ahead in recent years, but that where there has been deterioration there is no fear that reduction will not be allowed. I merely mention this to show that, though am in favour of a longer settlement, I am not in the least of opinion that in any recent settlement has there been any unfair enhancement.

2. The arguments in favour of the short terms of settlement that are customary in Sind, appear to be chiefly that the country is still undeveloped, there being much waste land, and that development is continuously and rapidly proceeding by means of new or improved roads, railways and, in particular, canals.

The vagaries of the river are also mentioned. Short terms of settlements under the conditions prevailing in Sind are said to be fairer both to Government and the cultivator. The possible injury that a long settlement might do to the cultivator may be dealt with and dismissed briefly. If any taluka suffers from any serious catastrophe, of which the effects are more than merely temporary, such as severe floods or deterioration of a main canal owing to its head going wrong, Government can temporarily allow a reduction of the assessment for any term of years it pleases. This has actually been done in the case of the Shahbandar division, in which in 1911, owing to the damage done by floods, Government sanctioned a 25 per cent. reduction in all rates for the remaining period of the settlement (4 years). The same concession was given to 2 tapas of the Tatta taluka. The interests of the cultivator are, I think, sufficiently protected.

3. The interests of Government are, I think, also well protected under long settlements. It is true that there is still much waste land in parts of Sind, and a good many schemes for new canals, though I think there is nothing really big that is not connected with the Sukkur Barrage and the Rohri Hyderabad Canal, which appear to be shelved for the present. But Government is not prevented from getting a fair additional profit if a large irrigational scheme is introduced during the currency of a settlement. Section 55, Land Revenue Code, and paragraph 2 of the notification at page 489 of Sathe's edition of Land Revenue Code show that Government may impose an extra cess or rate, or increase the existing rate, for the use of water supplied or increased by such means. This was done, I think, when the Jamrao Canal was first opened, though I believe it took the form of the imposition of an extra rate, on cotton alone, which takes more water. Except in connection with new canals, I do not think there is any great and sudden development of the country to be expected. Things are fairly settled now in most parts and road communications fairly adequate. Three light railways have already been constructed, and I do not know that there is much scope for more, except the Jacobabad-Shabdakot-Larkana line, which is sanctioned. This, however, could hardly necessitate an increase in the Larkana and Kambar rates, where rice is assessed as high as Rs. 5-12 already. The general conclusion I come to is that (except in the matter of new canals, in respect of which the interests of Government are already protected), there is no likelihood of such rapid and striking developments as to justify short term settlements in the interests of Government.

4. If it be admitted that the interests both of the cultivator and of Government would be sufficiently protected under long settlements in Sind, I think, that the *general* advantages belonging to a long term settlement as opposed to a short one are too obvious to need discussion. There is greater security for the cultivator, and there is an immense saving of labour to Government. Settlements come so frequently in Sind, that Assistant and Deputy Collectors are constantly being put on to settlement work; these Assistants and Deputies are naturally the best and most experienced available, and hence those that can least be spared from and that would be most valuable in their regular districts.

5. I am therefore of opinion that the period of settlements in Sind might very safely and advantageously be advanced to 20 years at least (I understand this is the same term as prevails in the Panjab, where the conditions as regards the river and the construction of new canals are much the same as here). So far as Larkana is concerned, the charge would not be very startling, 5 talukas already having settlements running for 15 years and the others for 10.

6. Your second question, *viz.*, whether the shortness of the present period affects zamindars unfavourably in discouraging them from improving their land, etc., is not easy to answer. We have only experienced short settlements so far in Sind, and can only guess what the effects of long settlements may be. I must say that, so far as I can remember in the course of 30 years' service in nearly every part of Sind, I never heard any actual complaint from a zamindar that the short settlement discourage him from improving his land or decreased its value. I cannot therefore give any instances of such an effect. I should think also that the mass of Sindhi zamindars are not sufficiently far-sighted to consider settlement questions as affecting projected improvements on their land, nor in fact are such improvements very commonly made. But I should think, though I cannot quote instances, that the fact that the settlement is shortly to expire must affect the value of land for sale, lease or mortgage. Anyhow, I think that a lengthening of the period of settlement would have some beneficial effect in giving greater security to the people and in inducing at least the more progressive amongst them to go in for improving their land.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) C. H. BLATHWAYT,
Collector of Larkana.

Opinion of Mr. C. S. Campbell.

No. 5702 of 1915.

COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
Sukkur, 21st July 1915.

To

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE.

SIR,

With reference to your letter No. T-65, dated 28th May last, I have the honour to state that in my opinion the extension of the period of settlements in Sind should be by degrees, not by a sudden rise, which would assimilate us to the rest of the Presidency in treatment while we are almost entirely unlike in character. Some parts or people of Sind may have suffered from the present 10 years' system; but it seems evident that all have not: and there are many perhaps who will lose rather than gain from being rushed into the stream of conformity. No doubt a certain amount of uniformity is convenient; but unless the issues in this case are certain, it might be wisest to distinguish parts and peculiarities. But in any case, whether for one or all, I should humbly suggest that the first trial be from 10 years to 15 only, with a reservation, of course, for special schemes.

2. The following is the list of persons from the district who might give useful evidence on the question of settlements in Sind:—

K. B. Pir Baksh Mian Mahmud, Sukkur.

K. S. Shah Nawaz Drakhan, taluka Garhi Yasin.

Wadero Ahmad Khan Lund Sahib Khan Lund, taluka Mirpur Mathelo
Ghulam Nabi Mahar Rustam, taluka Sukkur.

Wadero Pir Baksh Khan Shujrah, his own village, taluka Shikarpur.

Kaisar Khan Bozdar, Garhi Chakar, taluka Mirpur Mathelo.

Allahyar Khan Pitafi, taluka Mirpur Mathelo.

Mukhi Raunumal, Khambar, taluka Ubauro.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) C. S. CAMPBELL,
Collector of Thar and Parkar.

Opinion of Mr. C. M. Lane.

No. 4083 of 1915.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER'S OFFICE,

Karachi, 8th June 1915.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I. C. S.,
President of the Sind Settlement Committee.

SIR,

Referring to your No. T-66 of the 28th ultimo, inviting my views on the desirability of extending the period of settlement in Sind from 10 to 30 years, I have the honour to state that I am of opinion that the time has not yet arrived for such extension generally throughout Sind.

With the exceptions of parts of the Thar and Parkar and Nawabshah districts, which derive a perennial supply from the Jamrao Canal, the province is chiefly dependant on old inundation canals which are susceptible of considerable improvement. In view of the large projects now under review, heavy expenditure on irrigational improvements will probably be incurred by Government within the next decade and the assured perennial supply which will then be available to the greater part of Sind and the improved inundation supply provided elsewhere in the province will justify a considerable enhancement in the current rates of assessment. Until such improved and settled conditions prevail I submit that the 10-year settlement should continue.

In the Karachi Canals District the condition of the zamidars is particularly backward. This is due chiefly to the low-lying lands of the delta being frequently flooded by excessive rainfall and breaches in the river embankments. The rates of assessment are in consequence considerably lower than in the other more prosperous districts in Sind. Government are, however, incurring heavy annual expenditure on the raising, strengthening and maintenance of the river bunds in this district as also on the provision of additional canal regulators, and it is reasonable to expect that the current low rates of assessment can fairly be enhanced to a considerable degree when more settled conditions are afforded by the protective measures in progress and in prospect.

Under these circumstances I am of opinion that it is inadvisable that the period of settlement in Sind should be extended from 10 to 30 years.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) C. M. LANE,

Executive Engineer, Karachi Canals.

Opinion of Mr. S. H. Covernton.

No. 456 OF 1915.

ASSISTANT COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,

Tando Muhammad Khan, 3rd/4th June 1915.

From

S. H. COVERNTON,

Assistant Collector, Tando.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I. C. S.,

President of the Committee on the duration of
Settlement, at Mirpur Khas.

SIR,

In reply to your letter No. T-66 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to state that in my opinion some extension of the usual period of settlements in Sind is required. The usual grounds for a revision of the assessment are either changes in the rates and prices of agricultural products, which have increased or diminished zamindars profits since the rates were imposed, or changes in the character of the soil, which in practice generally means the spread of kalar or sand; or changes in the irrigational facilities of a taluka or group of dehs. The first of these conditions is not peculiar to Sind, but exists equally in the Presidency, where the 30 years' rule is, I believe, invariably observed. Since, therefore, the fluctuation of prices is not considered a sufficient ground for short settlements in the Presidency, there seems no reason why it should be so regarded in Sind. The second reason for revision is not of frequent occurrence, and the process of change is usually a slow one. Ten years is hardly enough to produce a change over a large area sufficiently serious to warrant a reduction of the rates, except in very rare instances. The irrigational factor is of course by far the most important. The working of a canal, and specially an inundation canal, may vary from year to year. But it is impossible to provide for such temporary vicissitudes in any settlement, and even a 10 years' period is wholly ineffective for dealing with such changes as these. On the other hand, I am inclined to think that a 10 years' period is often very insufficient to enable a Settlement Officer to judge whether a change that appears to have taken place in the irrigational condition of a taluka is of a purely the temporary character, or is likely to continue. Apart from such temporary vicissitudes, and apart from improvements effected by the construction of new canals, or the reconstruction of old ones, the irrigational conditions of a taluka do not change very greatly as a rule in a period of fifteen or twenty years. It is always possible to provide for improvement of this kind by the imposition of a water rate, or by the insertion of a clause in the guarantee that if any important irrigational improvement is carried out during the period of settlement, the rates shall be liable to enhancement. A clause of this kind has actually been included in the guarantee of several recent settlements.

Moreover, the revision of a settlement necessarily causes a good deal of disturbance and uncertainty among all classes connected with agriculture, in the talukas affected. It seems undesirable that this should recur more often than is absolutely necessary. I may point out that the present period of ten years is inconveniently short from an administrative point of view. Every year the settlements of several talukas in the province expire, and it is often found difficult to arrange for revision inquiries to be carried out at the proper time, the result being that the current settlements have to be extended for a year or more. In fact in many talukas a settlement has been allowed to run for 15 or 20 years, partly because no one was available to carry out the work of revision. (At least if this was not the reason, it must have been

because it was thought that there was not sufficient ground for revision at the end of the ten years, and this conclusion would appear to support the proposal to extend the period.) If the guaranteed period were longer, settlement revisions would fall due much less often, and it would be easier to arrange for the work being carried out at the right time.

On the other hand, I think that a 30 years' period would be too long for an irrigational province such as Sind where the water rate is combined with the land rate, and especially so at the present time when the whole irrigational system of the left bank at least may be changed within the next 30 years. It is impossible to provide for the Barrage Scheme satisfactorily by any system of extra water rates, for the construction of the proposed Sind Canals would almost certainly involve a recasting of the boundaries of dehs, talukas and districts almost as complete as was found necessary in the Jamrao tract. I am therefore in favour of a period which should be not less than 15 and not more than 20 years. It would be necessary to allow some discretion to the Settlement Officer; in some talukas 20 years might possibly be too long. It appears unnecessary to fix any period as a rigid rule applicable to all talukas alike.

I have, etc.,

S. H. COVERNTON,
Assistant Collector, Tando.

Opinion of Mr. Kallichbeg F. Mirza.

TANDO THORO,

5th June 1915.

To

C. E. CHATFIELD, Esquire, I. C. S.,

President of the Sind Settlement Committee.

SIR,

With reference to your letter No. T-66, dated 23th May 1915, I have the honour to state as follows :—

1. During the 30 years of my service I have seen the revision of settlements and assisted in the preparation of the settlement reports in the Naushahro and Larkana divisions and in the Upper Sind Frontier. Although I do not remember the details now, this much I remember well, that everywhere on such occasions the inclination and readiness of Settlement Officers was to recommend a term of more than 10 years, but almost in every case, when the sanction of the Government came, it was for 10 years only. I think in some cases the Survey Superintendent and the Commissioner in Sind too had agreed with the Collectors and recommended a longer period, but yet the sanction invariably was for 10 years. At the time I could not possibly imagine the reasons that really influenced the higher authorities in coming to this conclusion on each occasion. The apparent reasons seem to have been that the Sind soil was more productive than other parts of India, that cultivation was increasing day by day and that the River Indus, though very whimsical, was more fertilizing. One fact, however, was particularly striking, even in the case of settlements sanctioned for 10 years, and that was in making enquiries, submitting reports and carrying on further correspondence on that account, a further period of 3 or 4 year had to be sanctioned by the Government for the convenience of the old settlement, till the new one came into force. So, what was called a 10 years settlement, proved in practice to be nearly a 15 years' settlement.

2. It cannot be denied that the zamindars, chiefly those who are in better circumstances, do not like to spend money in improving their land on a large scale, knowing for certain that any important improvement will bring, as a result, an increased assesment. This fact could easily be perceived at the time of holding crop experiments. In one case, I remember a zamindar had to sink a well in his land which was to cost him only about Rs. 800 but as there was one year remaining for the completion of the old settlement, he postponed the work solely on that consideration.

3. It is but reasonable to suppose that the shortness of the settlement period or lease must discourage landowners from improving the land to a great extent, and it must naturally decrease the value of the land, either for the purpose of sale or mortgage. What is common with ordinary leases and contracts must necessarily apply to land tenures and settlements too. When the sale price of houses in towns, the leases for which are fixed for 30 or 50 or 99 years, is variously affected by the above principle, it is but natural to suppose that the land tenures must be affected in the same way.

4. We have also to remember that throughout India, wherever there is a temporary settlement, the term of settlement is 30 years. The same is the case with the Bombay Presidency excluding Sind, which is the only exception to the above rule. In the Panjab, I think, only lately the term was reduced to 20 years, for some peculiar reasons. It is true that the Government have a right to increase the assesment after a fixed period of settlement, if during that period some large irrigational works have been taken in hand resulting in a large extension of cultivation, as was the case in the Panjab lately. But in Sind, except the Jamrao and Nasrat schemes, no other improvement on a large scale has taken place, nor is any to take place in the near future, so far as I know. Ordinary local improvements effected by the zamindars themselves, or by the Government, in connection with the clearance of canals and construc-

tion of bunds, are, I believe, not to be taken into consideration, as no new extensive area are thereby brought under cultivation. Nor should the vagaries of the Indus affect the question at issue, as that only tends to convert *paka* into *kaohs* land and transfer one tract of land from one bank to the other. The zamindars alone are affected by this, inasmuch as they become gainers or losers in the amount of the area in their possession, but the Government is not affected at all, nor does the productiveness of some particular land increase or decrease necessarily on that account. But even if there should be any good grounds for increasing the assessment, the Government can easily do that, under the provision of the Land Revenue Code, not only at the end of the settlement period, but during that period even. And this in itself is sufficient guarantee that the interests of Government will be safeguarded during a longer settlement.

5. Considering the above facts, I think, there seems to be no harm if the period of temporary settlements in Sind is extended to 30 years. But should the Government have some other confidential reasons, that have been followed so long, notwithstanding the opinions and recommendations of local authorities, specialist and the general public, then a period of 20 years at least is very reasonable and fair, particularly when nearly 15 years are already allowed in almost each case and when it is remembered that everywhere else the period is 30 years, and even in the Panjab, where of late great land improvements have been made, it is 20 years. It is certain that the Government will not be losers thereby. On the contrary, they will be gainers, as the land will be improved and cultivation increased to a larger extent.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) KALICHBEG F. MIRZA,

Retired Deputy Collector.

Opinion of Khan Bahadur Mian Pir Baksh.

Sukkur, 2nd September 1915.

From

KHAN BAHADUR MIAN PIR BAKSH,
Retired Deputy Collector, Sukkur.

To

G. E. CHATFIELD, ESQUIRE, I. C. S.,
President of the Settlement Committee, Sind,
Hyderabad.

SIR,

With reference to your letter No. T-66, dated the 28th May 1915, I have the honour to submit my views as follows on the desirability of the extension of the period of settlement from 10 to 30 years.

2. The system of 10 years' guarantee, so far as I know, was adopted since 50 years back on the main ground that in Sind the irrigation system was not a complete one and further changes and improvements towards the direction were needed or were under contemplation of the benign Government. Since then several revisions in settlements have taken place and enhanced rates of assessment fixed on lands at each and every revision, a fact which should not be denied and which has caused feeling of insecurity in the minds of agricultural class. The decennial system of settlement has further proved to be detrimental to the improvement of lands, and the public voice is that a revision of settlement means the enhancement of assessment and this voice has been confirmed by an experienced district officer.

I entirely agree with the views of the District Officers who have also from time to time recommended that the period of settlement be extended to 15 or 20 or 23 years, and their recommendation, I believe, was based on the fact that since some decades the state of irrigation system had undergone great improvement and no extensive measures in general were expected in the near future.

3. I concede that some scheme for the greater improvement and complete system of satisfactory supply of water is in the contemplation of Government, yet this reason, if advanced, will not, in my humble opinion, be considered any way sufficient to come in the way of the extension of the period of settlement for 20 years. Any appropriation of water from any new canal if excavated, or from improved system, will call for the levy of special water rate and it could be levied on lands benefitted by the improvement under the provisions of the Land Revenue Code. On the other hand much of the area of waste land will be brought under cultivation by granting security for long term of settlement. This extension of cultivation will give more land revenue to Government, which means a reasonable return for the outlay without finding the necessity of increasing the rate of assessment.

4. It is no doubt an admitted fact that since of late a remarkable increase in the occupied area or cultivation has taken place as compared with the figures of past 20 or 30 years. But this increase is due to the following circumstance:—

- (a) The capitalists, especially Hindus, finding that an investment in commerce or buildings for the purpose of getting rent, is not a paying one and that the loans to haris could not be recovered without some inconvenience under the Agriculturists Relief Act, have resorted to the investment in agricultural land and to secure it as real and safe property for generations.

(b) A longer area of land has been confirmed upon retired officers and subordinates. A comparison of the number of Muhammadan and Hindu occupants in the present and past 30 years will justify my reasons.

5. The greater part of the Bombay Presidency enjoys the benefit of longer guarantee and there is no reason why Sind under similar circumstances should not have the benefit of the indulgence, especially when in some talukas of Sind the period of 10 years' guarantee has been extended to 15 or 20 years.

6. The 10 years' guarantee is not sufficient so far as the interest of Sind is concerned. Here the main crops are rice and juari. The cultivation of the former on the new canals is absolutely restricted while old lands are exhausted and do not give a profitable return for the labour and expenses, hence the people are obliged to resort to the cultivation of juari, which requires a fallow of 3 years at least, so with the 10 years' guarantee system a zamindar cannot use his land for more than 3 times. Under such circumstances it is not expected that any zamindar will invest his money in the improvement of his land for which settlement is guaranteed for only 3 turns of cultivation.

7. From the above it will be seen that it is now high time for Government to consider the desirability of the zamindars having a satisfaction of a longer guarantee than 10 years. Taking all the facts into consideration I respectfully suggest that the period should be one not less than 20 years.

8. In conclusion, I respectfully beg to add an instance in support of my suggestions. You are well aware that I have installed a pumping engine on the river for the cultivation of my land. The current expenditure for working it is not small, but in order to secure cultivators I choose to receive one-fifth of the entire produce from the cultivators as Haccobo and to divide the remainder between myself and the haris into equal parts, but in last Rabi I found the one-fifth of the produce not sufficient to cover the current expenditure of the engine. The outturn per jireb was very poor and the land needed to be manured, so I suggested to the haris that it would be in their interest as haris and my interest as zamindar if they manured the land and prepared it for coming wheat crop. To this they said with one voice that they would manure the land provided settlement of 3 or 4 years was guaranteed to them as for the first one or two years the land manured will not bring in sufficient profit to come upto the expenses of the manure.

Though one-fifth of the produce as Haccabo was not sufficient, I consented to receive it for 3 years considering that my land will be improved for the future.

Now, if during this term of my agreement with them, assessment on the basis of which I entered into an agreement is revised and I am made to pay more revenue, I suffer directly by such a bargain.

Considering (1) that there is no necessary sacrifice of future revenue to Government, as I am sure that the cultivation at the end of the suggested settlement of 20 years would be found very largely increased, (2) that reasons suggested for short term of settlement do not exist at present, (3) that the present period of settlement affects the zamindars and the haris unfavourably by discouraging them from improving their land, (4) that the people would have the satisfaction of previous assurance and certainty of long settlement in which, they consider, lies their present good, I am strongly of opinion that it now behoves the benign Government to fix a settlement of 20 years at least.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) PIR BAKHSI,

Retired Deputy Collector, Sukkur.