

PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS
of
Aboriginal Rehabilitation
in Adilabad District

by
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*Adviser to H.E.H. the Nizam's Government
for Tribes and Backward Classes.*

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INTRODUCTION.

After an absence from Hyderabad of nearly eleven months I toured the Adilabad District from the end of July to the end of September 1945. During this tour I visited the taluq headquarters of Nirmal, Adilabad, Utnur, Rajura and Asifabad, but most of the time was spent at Marlavai where the Gond Education work was urgently in need of attention.

In discussions with the First Taluqdar, the Special Tribes Officer and the Second Taluqdar, Asifabad, all problems concerning the rehabilitation of the aboriginals and in particular the allotment of land to aboriginals under the *laoni khas* rules were reviewed in detail. During my stay in Marlavai, as well as in various camps, I had moreover the opportunity of talking to Gonds from most taluqs, and I gained thereby a first hand impression of recent developments in the greater part of the District. Anticipating my final conclusions I can say that in many respects marked progress has been achieved, and that the psychological state of the aboriginals shows a very considerable improvement. Particularly in Utnur Taluq, once one of the worst backwaters, the atmosphere has radically changed and the Gonds and other aboriginals of this area have now few concrete grievances. Elsewhere much remains to be done, but it is to the credit of the First Taluqdar and the Special Tribes Officer that in spite of various difficulties the policy of aboriginal rehabilitation is being carried out with good results.

1. THE LAND PROBLEM AND THE APPLICATION OF THE *Laoni Khas* REGULATIONS.

When two years ago Government reviewed the policy *vis-à-vis* the aboriginals of Adilabad, it was obvious that the economic and social future of the Gonds and other tribesmen would depend on their ability to retain the lands they were then holding—be it on *patta* or on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure—and to obtain sufficient new land to compensate them for the large areas from which during the last thirty or forty years they have been displaced. The Gonds are with hardly any exception peasants and only in the security of clear and inalienable rights to the cultivated land can a peasant population flourish; such security may be based on individual small

holdings or the protected status of *raiya*s with occupancy rights on the estates of landlords. Until recently the Gonds and other aboriginals of Adilabad enjoyed neither of these benefits; except for a small minority of *patta*-holders, amounting to hardly more than 10 per cent. of the aboriginal population, they either cultivated Government land on "one year's tenure" or the land of non-aboriginal landlords. From both they could be—and often were—evicted without notice, and the landlords were free to raise the rents at their own discretion.

The process that led to the aboriginals' loss of land and economic freedom has been described in detail in my reports published by the Revenue Department under the title *Tribal Hyderabad*,¹ and need not be recapitulated here. The two alternatives before Government were either to allow the deterioration in the aboriginals' status to continue, and that would have meant that within a few decades the majority of Gonds would have become a floating population of landless agricultural labourers and sub-tenants devoid of any occupancy rights, or to settle the aboriginals as a stable peasant community, secure in the possession of the land they tilled. The prospect of having on one of Hyderabad's most vital frontiers a restless, discontented and resentful tribal population despairing of the justice and goodwill of the authorities and hence receptive to the blandishments of political agitators, was undoubtedly disturbing, and the decision of Government to embark on a bold policy of aboriginal rehabilitation and to regain thereby the confidence of the tribesmen was as politically wise as it was just to a community whose interests had long been neglected.

The cardinal feature of the rehabilitation policy, first outlined in Mr. Grigson's Tour Notes of Farwardi 1353 and his note "The Policy to be adopted in the Tribal Areas of the Adilabad District"² and shortly afterwards put into practice, is the allotment of land under special *laoni* (i.e., grant of *patta* rights free of premium) to members of aboriginal tribes. In a part of the District notified as 'tribal area,' which, extending mainly over the highlands and forest tracts, includes a compact block of predominantly aboriginal populations, the allotment of land under special *laoni* as well as under ordinary *laoni* is for a period of ten years confined to aboriginals, but in the rest of the District the aboriginals share the benefits of

1. Hyderabad-Deccan, 1945.

2. Cf. Appendix.

laoni khas with Muslims and a large number of notified backward classes. The purpose of *laoni khas* is twofold : firstly aboriginals cultivating Government land on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure—and there were many hill-villages where none of the aboriginals had *patta* rights—are to be confirmed in the possession of the land which they already cultivate and granted *patta* for economic holdings; secondly aboriginals displaced from their ancestral lands by recent immigrants are to be given land in areas where they can be settled without infringing the rights of existing populations. In the former case the granting of *patta* rights meets with no particular difficulties, though personal inspection of the village by the allotting officer is desirable to assure that the holdings are consolidated and fair to all villagers. The creation of new holdings for the landless is less easy. In many aboriginal villages much land is held on *patta* by non-aboriginals, and the rights of these landlords cannot be disturbed. But often there is besides such *patta* land also a certain amount of Government land within the village boundary, and this, may it be *kharijkhata* or *parampok*, is available for allotment to the aboriginals. In some cases non-aboriginals are holding such Government land on *ek-sala* tenure in addition to their *patta* land and hire it out to the aboriginal cultivators; since these landlords have no permanent rights on such land, nothing stands in the way of its allotment on *patta* to the actual cultivators under *laoni khas*. In many villages there is, however, insufficient Government land to accommodate the majority of the landless aboriginals and from such areas tribesmen anxious to profit from the *laoni khas* regulation and to obtain land on *patta* will have to move into certain tracts in the highlands where land has recently been excised from the Reserved Forest.

It was soon realized that the resettlement of aboriginals—quite apart from other rehabilitation measures—could not be effectively carried out within the framework of the ordinary administrative machinery of the District. Government therefore appointed Mr. Moazam Husain, H.C.S. as Special Tribes Officer, and the allotment of land under the *laoni khas* rules was to be his primary task. Powers to grant *patta* rights under special *laoni* to aboriginals and other notified castes were, of course, also vested in the First Taluqdar and, to speed up the work, in the Second Taluqdars.

According to the Census of 1941 the Adilabad District has a Gond population of 71,874 and to these must be added many

thousand Pardhans, Totis, Kolams and Naikpods, not adequately returned in the Census. The number of aboriginals may therefore be roughly taken as 100,000, and according to even the most optimistic estimates only 10 per cent. of them were before the *laoni khas* regulation came into force, members of the households of *pattadars*. The formidable task before the District Officers was therefore to resettle an aboriginal population of about 90,000 many of them too ignorant and inexperienced or too much under the sway of landlords and money-lenders to grasp the implications of the *laoni khas* regulations and to apply in the manner prescribed by the rules. Not all aboriginals now cultivating the land of non-aboriginal land-owners will want to leave their villages and there are indeed cases where the relations between Gonds and landlords are fairly satisfactory, the latter having abstained from rack-renting even in the last years of rapidly rising rents. But such cases are the exception rather than the rule, and there can be no doubt that thousands of aboriginals burdened by high rents or tired of their insecure position as badly paid agricultural labourers, will avail themselves of the opportunities of *laoni khas*, even if this implies a move to another taluq.

Such transfers of populations—from the plains to the highlands and the non-tribal area into the tribal area—must be closely regulated and a systematic settlement of each group of villages has had to replace the usual procedure according to which the Revenue officers act only on individual applications for specific pieces of land, applications which have to reach them through the channel of patwaris and tahsildars.

Many of the Gonds who for generations have lived in the open country of the plains are still hesitant to move into the hilly tracts, where they feel threatened by tigers and are overawed by vast stretches of forest. But with the founding of new villages and the improvement of general conditions in the country round the Rural Reconstruction Centre of Marlavai, these fears are partly being balanced by the realization of the many advantages of life in a purely tribal area, where friction with economically stronger populations is excluded and tribal culture is a living reality.

The following table, based on the latest available figures supplied to me in Mehir 1354 F. gives the acreage so far allotted to aboriginals under special *laoni* by the First Taluqdar, the Special Officer and the Second Taluqdar as well as

the number of new *pattadars*:

Taluq	AREA IN ACRES ALLOTTED BY			Total	Number of new Patta-dars
	1st Taluqdar	Special Officer	2nd Taluqdar		
Utnur ..	..	24,388-30	..	24,388-30	1,627
Both ..	..	1,193-26	..	1,193-26	84
Asifabad ..	867-38	511-18	1,208-09	1,692-20	192
Rajura ..	3,505-34	3,090-03	1,107-29	7,703-26	521
Adilabad ..	999-10	6-5	56-34	1,062-9	78
Kinwat ..	2,059-13	..	1,825-04	3,884-17	243
Sirpur ..	2,917-8	..	934-10	3,851-18	257
Lakshetipet .	240-0	..	..	240-0	24
Nirmal ..	1,066-6	..	..	1,066-06	90
Chinnur ..	..	..	334-31	334-31	28
Adilabad District.	11,655-29	29,190-2	5,466-35	45,417-23	3,144

From this table it appears that the bulk of the work has been done by the First Taluqdar and the Special Tribes Officer, the latter having been responsible for more than half of the total allotments. The 3,144 new pattadars may be taken to represent a population of 10,000—12,000 aboriginals, that is allowing four to five members to the average household. If we assume that approximately 80,000 aboriginals will have to be resettled, allowing one fifth of the total number of 100,000 for those already cultivating their own land or content in the position of tenants of non-aboriginal landlords, the work, which has been *en train* for over a year, would—if it continued to progress at the same rate—take five to six years more.

The Special Officer has so far concentrated mainly on Utnur Taluq where 104 out of 165 villages have been settled. To complete the *laoni khas* work in Utnur Taluq will take him about two months more and I understand that he will then

take up intensive work in Asifabad Taluq, where conditions are much more difficult and intricate than in Utnur. If we take the number of taluqs with a large share in the tribal area as six (namely Utnur, Both, Asifabad, Rajura, Adilabad and Kinwat) and allow some extra time for the other taluqs we come to much the same conclusion as before: that the resettlement work in all these taluqs will take about five years more, unless part of it is done by officers other than the First Taluqdar and the Special Officer, or that these two officers are given a staff of special Naib Tahsildars to take over the routine work of village to village inspection.

I am convinced, however, that nothing short of a systematic survey of the available land and its subsequent allotment to landless aboriginals, as has been done in Utnur Taluq, can solve the aboriginal problem and give effect to Government's considered policy of settling the tribesmen once and for all and of removing thereby all causes for unrest and dissatisfaction.

The allotment of land under *laoni khas* by the First Taluqdar and the Special Officer has met with certain initial difficulties, which to some extent have delayed the actual occupation of the land by the new *pattadars*. These difficulties may be classed under four heads: (a) Claims of the Forest Department on the timber on the assigned lands; (b) Opposition of vested interests to the aboriginal rehabilitation policy; (c) Necessity for large-scale *phodi* operations by the Settlement Department, and (d) Claims of non-aboriginals on land within the Tribal Areas as compensation under the Forest Settlement procedure.

- (a) When the aboriginal rehabilitation policy was framed, it was clear that much of the land to be allotted to aboriginals under *laoni khas* would be in the open forest (*berun-i-mahsura*) and that in certain areas where the forest boundaries had been drawn without sufficient regard to the needs of the aboriginals, considerable areas would have to be excised from the Reserved forest. That the value of the timber (*chobina*) on such lands should not be recovered from the new *pattadars* was laid down by Mr. Grigson in his Tour Notes, dated 5-5-1353 F., and formal orders to the same effect were passed on the 3rd Thir 1354 F. Later it was decided that the Forest Department should hand over all the *berun-i-mahsura* areas in the

District to the Revenue Officers. But there was considerable delay in the execution of these orders, with the result that in many places the new aboriginal *pattadars* were not allowed to clear the land for cultivation unless they paid the full value of the timber. In certain taluqs, such as Rajura and Asifabad, the allotment of land under special *laoni* remained therefore until recently a paper operation. It was only during my visit to Asifabad that the orders regarding the free grant of the timber to the cultivators were issued to the local Forest Officers. By close co-operation between Revenue and Forest authorities similar delays could in future be easily avoided.

- (b) A certain opposition of local vested interests to the aboriginal rehabilitation policy of Government will surprise no one who knows what profits absentee landlords and money-lenders have in the past derived from the exploitation of the uneducated and helpless aboriginals. The allotment of land under special *laoni* and the establishment of Gond schools heralded the end of the days when unfortunate Gonds and Naikpods would work as agricultural labourers for an annual pay of Rs. 50 (without food) or, once they were indebted to the landlord, simply for their scanty keep; when tenants would deliver two-thirds of their crops to their landlord or pay as much as Rs. 80 or Rs. 100 rent for land of a revenue of Rs. 10 or less; and when debtors could be easily cheated and sued for loans, they had acknowledged by thumb-impres- sion, but never received in full. There was, of course, also resentment that since the notification of the tribal area and the suspension of all ordinary *laoni* in that area, land made arable by Gonds or Naikpods and cultivated by them on *siwa-i-jama-bandi* could no longer be acquired by simply applying for the auction and then bidding against no other competition than that of impecunious aboriginals.

Though mainly of a local character, this opposition against the new policy found a certain echo in Hyderabad. For during the time of the development of the Adilabad District through the improvement of communications, land could be had for

the asking, and many Residents of Hyderabad and other big towns obtained *pattas* for land of considerable acreage in Adilabad. Most of these new landlords came from urban circles and neither they nor their heirs had any connection with the land, which was cultivated largely by aboriginals and managed by local bailiffs. When the prospect of Gonds obtaining land on *patta* seemed to endanger the supply of cheap and pliable labour, some of these absentee landlords, joined the chorus of those local men who protested against the rehabilitation policy of Government as "contrary to the interests of other communities."

In the resultant agitation the opponents of Government's policy overlooked that (a) the new regulation encroached in no way on the existing rights of *pattadars* and touched them indeed much less than for instance the reservation of forests or irrigation schemes which necessitate the acquisition of land by Government or at least an exchange of land, (b) that in a large part of the District including most of the fertile plains *laoni khas* was not restricted to aboriginals, but was extended to a large number of cultivating classes including backward Muslims, (c) that any migration of Gonds from the estates of landlords to the newly allotted lands in the highlands could at the worst result only in a temporary embarrassment to landlords; for the pressure on the land in the neighbouring Karimnagar and Nander Districts is so great that any vacuum must be very shortly filled by newcomers, some of them far superior to Gonds in agricultural methods and consequently better able to pay high rents, and (d) that the policy of Government was to remedy to a small extent an injustice done to the aboriginals at a time when whole villages were allotted to outsiders as *maqtas* or *ijaras* or on ordinary *patta* without the aboriginals being given even a chance to prove their far older claims on their ancestral land.

As long as the District officers confined themselves to allotting only vacant land to aboriginals under special *laoni*, the latent opposition found no opportunity of coming into the open, but when in the tribal area of Both Taluq the creation of several aboriginal holdings by the Special Officer necessitated the allotment to aboriginals of a few acres of Government land, previously held on *siwa-i-jamabandi* by five non-aboriginals, the transfer was taken as a pretext for a violent campaign, including attacks against the policy of Government in the press. Subsequent investigation revealed that not one of the five

evicted non-aboriginals was a genuine cultivator, that some of them had large *patta* holdings in other parts of the District, that their temporary occupation had in no case lasted more than three years, and that part of the land had indeed *never been brought under cultivation*.

Anyone familiar with the District knows that in previous years—my own experience covers the years 1941-1943 before the notification of the tribal area—the transfer of *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land from one cultivator to the other was the order of the day, and that annually many an aboriginal was evicted from land which he had perhaps for many years cultivated on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure, only because an affluent non-aboriginal had applied for the same land and been given preference. That a *cause célèbre* should have been made of the transfer of a few acres of, partly even uncultivated, land to aboriginals, can only have been due to the instigation of vested interests opposed to any betterment of the aboriginals' status and to lack of information on the part of the public and the press.

But the same attitude of the land-owning classes that inspired the agitation in Both, has elsewhere been responsible for obstacles, not so much to the *allotment* of land under special *laoni*, but to the *occupation* of the land by the new *pattadars*. Gonds, who had been allotted land by the First Taluqdar or the Special Officer, told me that non-aboriginal land-owners and patels tried to prevent them by threats and intimidation, and in a few cases even by physical violence, from occupying these lands. The village officers, the lower revenue staff and the minor police are often in sympathy with such locally important land-owners, and the aboriginals cannot count on their wholehearted support. There are cases where Revenue Inspectors and *patwaris* took unduly long in demarcating the new holdings and handing them over to the aboriginal *pattadars* and thereby gave the non-aboriginal land-owners time to put forward claims to the lands in question and challenge the First Taluqdar's authority to allot them under *laoni khas*.

Such opposition of non-aboriginals will no doubt gradually cease if local bullies and bigwigs realize that Government is determined not to be deflected from its considered policy of aboriginal rehabilitation, that nothing is to be gained by agitation and the introduction of political and communal issues into an essentially economic problem. But the Second Taluqdars and Tahsildars will have to keep a close watch to ensure that

the lands allotted to aboriginals under special *laoni* are really given into their possession even where it comprises land previously held on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure by non-aboriginals.

- (c) In Utnur Taluq, and to a lesser degree elsewhere, much of the *parampok* land assigned to aboriginals under special *laoni* could not yet be handed over to the new *pattadars*, because its subdivision into manageable survey numbers has still to be done by the Settlement Department. It is of vital importance that this *phodi* work is undertaken soon after the rains, if possible simultaneously by two separate parties, one in Utnur Taluq and the other in the Tilani area of Asifabad Taluq, where, it is hoped, by that time the excision of roughly 35,000 acres from the Reserved Forest will have been carried out.
- (d) Other obstacles to the allotment of land under *laoni khas* to aboriginals are claims of non-aboriginals to whom compensation is due for *patta* land now included in the Reserved Forest. During the period previous to the reservation of forests when Government aimed at developing the District many non-aboriginals were granted *patta* rights on large tracts of country. In many cases they did not succeed in bringing all their land under the plough, and when later such land with good forest growth was included in the Reserved Forests they were entitled to compensation elsewhere. In some cases these compensatory lands were not immediately put in their possession and in other cases the Settlement Officer passed orders that compensation would be allocated from land within the boundaries of a certain village or within a certain large *parampok* number without specifying the exact location of the land to be allotted. Many of the non-aboriginals whose claims for compensation had thus been admitted did not press for the demarcation and handing over of the acreage to which they were entitled, but waited till land within the area where they were to receive compensation was cleared of forest growth and brought under the plough by aboriginals cultivating on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure. Only then did they raise

their claims on specific lands, and in many cases succeeded in obtaining *patta* rights on land in the possession of Gonds and Kolams and avoided thereby the expense of making the land arable and paying the *chobina*. Where such *patta* rights have already been granted the land cannot be restored to the original aboriginal occupants, but during my stay in Asifabad I found that a good many cases are still pending and that non-aboriginals are raising such claims on *siwa-i-jamabandi* land actually in possession of aboriginals and allotted to them under the *laoni khas* rules.

When the *laoni khas* rules were drafted such a contingency, *i.e.* non-aboriginals' claim to land in the Tribal Area under the compensation procedure, was overlooked, and Executive orders clarifying the position are urgently required. For it would be contrary to the spirit of the *laoni khas* regulation and the notification of a Tribal Area, if non-aboriginals were to be granted *patta* rights inside the tribal area on land held and cultivated by aboriginals. There are cases where non-aboriginals have disputed the validity of new *pattas* granted by the First Taluqdar to Gonds cultivating on *siwa-i-jamabandi* on the plea that the land in question had been earmarked for them by the Settlement Officer, although no *patta* rights had yet been conferred on them. Such non-aboriginals should be given compensation outside the Tribal Area.

2. *Siwa-i-jamabandi* TENURE OF NON-ABORIGINALS IN THE TRIBAL AREA.

According to the Tribal Area Notification all *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land within that area should be reserved for allotment to aboriginals, and the Revenue Member has recently restated that "no temporary cultivation by non-aboriginals should be permitted within the Special Tribal Area, as the granting of even *eksala* or *sesala* rights will merely give rise to further difficulties in the future." Such non-aboriginals as are already holding Government land on temporary tenure may be classed into three groups.

- (a) Some land-owners occupy in addition to the land which they hold on *patta*, adjoining pieces of *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land on *eksala* tenure. In the case of an absentee landlord not even a moral right to such land can be claimed, and if a

resident land-owner cultivates with hired labour, besides his substantial estate of perhaps 100 acres, Government land on which he has no permanent rights or hires it out on *batai* he suffers no injustice if such land is allotted to landless aboriginals, who perhaps are already the actual cultivators. For years he has had the opportunity of acquiring the land in auction, and had he carried out any improvements he would no doubt have done so.

- (b) There may be here and there a few members of non-cultivating communities, whose position as clerks, chaprassis or policemen afforded them the possibility of acquiring temporary rights on *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land which they then hired out to sub-tenants, usually on *batai*. The number of such persons is small, and since they are unlikely ever to cultivate the land themselves and possess no permanent rights, their claims should not stand in the way of the allotment of the land to aboriginals.
- (c) A third class of non-aboriginals holding *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land on temporary tenure are genuine small cultivators, who own either no *patta* land or only a few acres, which of themselves do not constitute an economic holding. This class is mainly composed of Kunbis, Mahars, Inkars, Marars, Andhs, Kapus, Malas, Madigas and a few Muslims as well as Lambaras and Mathuras. The eviction of genuine small cultivators of this class without compensation would obviously cause great hardship, and there can be no intention to remedy the grievances of the aboriginals by treating impecunious peasants of other communities with the same lack of consideration which has in past years been evinced *vis-à-vis* the aboriginals' interests.

The present practice of the Revenue Officers is not to disturb small holdings of cultivators of this third class, and I have heard of no single case where a genuine small cultivator was dispossessed of land which he has been holding on *siwa-i-jama-bandi* tenure. I think this practice should be continued, and after a certain number of years when the resettlement of aboriginals has been completed, the position *vis-à-vis* the non-

aboriginal small cultivators in the Tribal Area should be reviewed.

There is however, on the part of non-aboriginal land-owners and village officers the definite tendency to retain a certain control over the *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land by handing it over to poor non-aboriginal cultivators who are not likely to be ejected when land is allotted to Gonds under *laoni khas*. Such non-aboriginals, often introduced from elsewhere, are financially so completely dependent on their sponsor, that the position remains nearly the same as when the land was held by the non-aboriginal big land-owner or patel. This movement which is possible only owing to the connivance of some girdawars and patwaris is even leading to the expulsion of aboriginals from land they have been cultivating on *siwa-i-jama-bandi*. Even in the short time of my stay in the District I have come across a good many aboriginals who were this year evicted from *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land, both inside and outside the tribal area. These evictions had, of course, not the sanction of the First Taluqdar, but they were effective and the land has been occupied by non-aboriginals. One example may suffice: Garelapalli in the Tribal Zone of Asifabad Taluq, was until a few months ago a purely aboriginal village. The non-aboriginal and non-resident patel, an Ayavar, holds part of the village-land on *patta* but there are several hundred acres of *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land which were cultivated by the Gonds. This year the patel evicted twenty Gonds from the *kharijkhata* land which they had been cultivating for years, uprooted their already sown crops and settled on the land 15 families of Perkos, non-aboriginal Telugu peasants, whom he had brought from a neighbouring village. The Gonds reported the matter to the Tahsildar but no immediate action was taken, and the Perko protégés of the Ayavar patel are in occupation of the land. Their expulsion, which will have to be effected, and the restoration of the land to the previous Gond cultivators may easily be construed into a violation of the interests of small non-aboriginal cultivators, and care will have to be taken that other big land-owners do not try to make use of similar devices to secure or retain a hold on Government land by pushing forward what appear to be genuine small cultivators.

There will, of course, be border cases between groups (a) and (c) *i.e.* genuine small cultivators who hold say 10 and 15 acres on *patta*, but cultivate also several acres of *kharijkhata* land. Such cases will have to be judged on their merits, and

will have to be dealt with differently in areas where land for allotment under *laoni khas* to aboriginals is ample and in areas with great pressure on the land.

In Utnur Taluq every aboriginal in need of land can be accommodated provided he is prepared to move into the highlands excised from the Daboli block. But in the tribal zone of Both and Kinwat land is very short, and even in purely aboriginal villages much of the land is owned by big landlords. Consequently every piece and corner of *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land will have to be scraped together for allotment under *laoni khas*, if the policy of aboriginal rehabilitation is to become at all effective. It is to be expected therefore that the outcry of non-aboriginal landlords will be loudest in these taluqs. The distinction between the deserving small cultivator and the land-owner who can well afford to lose a few acres of *kharijkhata* land will have to be made with particular care, and the pressure which influential landlords will exert on the village officers and the lower Revenue staff will be very great. Personal inspection of the villages by responsible officers will here be absolutely essential.

The figures at present available for the *siwa-i-jamabandi* holdings of aboriginals and non-aboriginals *within the Notified Tribal Area* are as follows:—

Taluq	Siwa-i-Jamabandi land held by Aboriginals	Siwa-i-Jamabandi land held by non-aboriginals	Total Siwa-i-Jamabandi Area
Adilabad	1,179-15	1,163-32	2,343-07
Nirmal	107-36	367-10	472-06
Lakshetipet	478-35	44-12	523-07
Kinwat	526-12	1,079-28	1,606-00
Utnur	10,508-31	11,010-08	21,518-39
Asifabad	5,338-23	2,178-00	7,511-23
Rajura	1,288-03	1,073-29	2,361-32
Both	2,096-02	5,289-20	7,385-22
Total ..	1,354-37	22,203-39	43,729-36

These figures are probably not quite reliable, for I have noticed cases where the village figures on which they are based, are fairly wide of the mark. I believe that they err by understating the areas held on *siwa-i-jamabandi* land held by non-aboriginals. It is clear that in taluqs such as Nirmal, Lakshetipet and Kinwat the area held by non-aboriginals on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure is not sufficiently large to constitute a major problem. It is mainly in Utnur, Asifabad and Both where the disposal of such land will need careful consideration.

So far I have been able to obtain detailed figures for the actual distribution of this *siwa-i-jamabandi* land only from Utnur Taluq, which contains a larger acreage of *kharijkhata* and *parampok* land than any other Taluq.

In Utnur Taluq there are altogether 893 non-aboriginal *pattadars* and they hold on *patta* a total area of 27,869 acres. Among these *pattadars* there are 199 persons who hold in addition to their *patta* land also land on *siwa-i-jamabandi*, altogether 3,289 acres. Moreover there are 698 non-aboriginals who own no *patta* land, but hold land on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure, the total acreage of such land being 7,755 acres.

A few examples will demonstrate the position in villages where substantial *pattadars* hold, besides their own land, also *siwa-i-jamabandi* land:

1. In Mahagaon the sons of a recently deceased Lambara hold in addition to their *patta* land which is distributed over several villages, 182 acres on *siwa-i-jamabandi*; of these they cultivate only 40 acres and hire out the remainder on *batai*.
2. In Varkwai a Lambara holds in addition to his *patta* land 49 acres on *siwa-i-jamabandi*.
3. In Ashepalli a Muslim holds in addition to his *patta* land 115 acres on *siwa-i-jamabandi*; of these he cultivates 20 acres himself and 45 acres with hired labourers, and he hires out 50 acres on *batai*.
4. In Indraveli 554 acres are held on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure by 24 persons who own in addition also *patta* land; these 24 *pattadars* belong to the following castes: Mahar (6), Goldsmith (1), Wanjari (8), and Maratha (1). The Mahars and some Mathuras cultivate themselves, but all others have the land worked by landless cultivators whom they pay in cash and kind.

In my opinion no injustice would be done if the *siwa-i-jamabandi* land of the landlords mentioned under 1, 2, and 3 was allotted under special *laoni* to landless aboriginals. For leaving them in undisturbed possession of this *siwa-i-jamabandi* land would be tantamount to making wealthy landowners a present of Government land several times the maximum acreage which under the special *laoni* rules may be allotted to any one individual.

The position in Indraveli is different. There some of the *pattadars* cultivate their *siwa-i-jamabandi* land themselves, and in cases where such a cultivator's *patta* land is less than an economic holding eviction from the *siwa-i-jamabandi* land would cause hardship. On the other hand, the *pattadars* who have to employ hired labour to cultivate additional *siwa-i-jamabandi* land have not even a moral claim to such land.

But the majority of the non-aboriginals holding land on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure in Utnur Taluq, have no *patta* land of their own, and those who are genuine cultivators and not strawmen for big landlords and money-lenders deserve certainly consideration. In seven villages where a large acreage is held by non-aboriginals on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure, the occupants belong to the following castes:

1. Wargaon: 320 acres held by 7 Mathuras, 17 Lambaras, 4 Wanjari.
2. Narsapur: 511 acres held by 1 Maratha, 1 Mali, 1 Tailor, 3 Mathuras, 1 Brahmin, 21 Lambaras, 1 Madiga, and 1 Wanjari.
3. Dasnapur: 169 acres held by 16 Andhas, 1 Mang, 5 Lambaras.
4. Harkapur: 281 acres held by 17 Andhas, 6 Banjaras and 1 Reddi,
5. Bhimpur: 1,505 acres held by 47 Lambaras, 4 Dhers, 32 Inkars and 1 Sikh.
6. Shampur: 67 acres held by 16 Dhers, 4 Wanjaris, 1 Muslim, 2 Mangas and 1 Lambara.
7. Lakharam: 63 acres held by 1 Wanjari, 1 Potter, 4 Kunbis, 2 Muslims, and 3 Lambaras.

From this list it appears that in most villages the individual holdings are small, but there are cases, such as in Wargaon and Bhimpur where comparatively large areas have been occupied by Mathuras, and Lambaras, not all of whom cultivate

their entire holding themselves. Most Mathuras and Lambaras are very recent immigrants, and not a few of them have forcibly occupied land previously cultivated by aboriginals. I have personal experience of many such cases and I see from the files of the Special Officer that even recently he has had to take action against several Lambaras who forcibly encroached on the holdings of Gonds, Kolams and Naikpods. When Lambaras have obtained possession of *siwa-i-jamabandi* land by such methods, their temporary occupation should certainly not be a bar to its allotment under special *laoni* to the previous aboriginal occupants.

The members of depressed classes, on the other hand, such as Inkars, Mahars and Mang, occupy as a rule only small holdings, and it would not be fair to evict them in favour of Gonds or Kolams. I would suggest therefore that such small cultivators should be left in undisturbed possession until after the expiry of the time limit set for the *laoni khas* regulation, when the position can be reviewed once more.

A special problem has arisen in places like Asifabad Taluq where large areas are held by a small number of big landlords, whose *patta* land has not been demarcated with any accuracy. It is the opinion of the local Revenue Officers that in many of the villages in which the entire land, amounting to say 300 to 500 acres, is claimed by one non-aboriginal who hires it out to Gonds and Kolams, his *patta* rights according to the village papers cover only 100 to 150 acres. This position is due to the fact that in the past influential landlords expanded their holdings with the connivance of the patwaris in an irregular manner, often by encouraging aboriginals to clear forest adjoining their *patta* land. In many cases the land they occupy now in excess of their *patta* does not appear in the Taluq figures for *siwa-i-jamabandi* land held by non-aboriginals, because on paper only the original *patta* holding is under cultivation and it goes without saying that in this way Government suffers a considerable loss of revenue.

I would suggest that in all cases where *pattadars* are found to hold land in excess of the acreage entered in the village papers such land should be allotted under the *laoni khas* rules to aboriginals in the Tribal Area and to members of other notified communities in the rest of the District, preference being given to those actually cultivating the land.

In Asifabad Taluq it will be particularly necessary to measure and demarcate the holdings of the big landlords of

Brahmin, Komti and Velma caste, who by their interrelation with the watandar patwaris and patels have succeeded in occupying a great deal of land on which they have no valid claim. Close co-operation of the police will be necessary to secure the aboriginals in the possession of such land withdrawn from the illegal possession of influential landlords and allotted under special *laoni*.

3. FOREST POLICY.

A. Forest Boundaries.—Readjustment of forest boundaries and restoration to the aboriginals of certain limited areas originally in their possession, but subsequently included in the Reserved Forest are vital items in the scheme for aboriginal rehabilitation. It has been found that in many places forest lines were drawn without full consideration of the aboriginals' needs, and while in the lowlands large forests were completely sacrificed to the land-hunger of immigrant settlers of non-aboriginal stock, the aboriginals of the highlands (whose traditional system of cultivation had been compatible with the existence of these forests for centuries !) were expelled from localities where they and their forefathers had dwelt and cultivated for generations. In other villages situated in the midst of the forest, enclosure lines were drawn so close to the village site that there was not only no room for expansion, but most of the land previously cultivated on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure fell within the Reserved Forest.

It was therefore decided to reconsider the existing forest boundaries, and to excise, as a first step, a large area suitable for cultivation and the settlement of aboriginals from the Daboli block in Utnur Taluq. This excision has been carried out and in Utnur Taluq there is now ample land for allotment to aboriginals.

A similar excision of cultivable land from the Tilani block in Asifabad Taluq is now under consideration and if the proposals embodied in the joint report of the Special Tribes Officer and the D. F. O., Asifabad Division are accepted, sufficient land for the aboriginals' needs will become available in that area.¹ The report proposes the excision of 35,000 acres, but it must not be imagined that this acreage consists entirely of land fit for plough cultivation. The area proposed for excision comprises hills and narrow valleys where the existing forest growth will be retained for the use of the villages.

1. This excision has now been sanctioned.

While the revision of the forest boundaries in the Daboli and Tilani area solves two major problems, it would be a mistake to assume that no further rectifications of forest lines are required. In his note "The Policy to be adopted in the Tribal Areas of the Adilabad District" Mr. Grigson has subscribed to the view that boundaries will have to be changed not only in the Daboli and Tilani blocks, but also in such areas as the Satmala and Manikgarh block. "The whole question resolves itself," runs the relevant passage, "into one of detailed discrimination between the land which should be retained as forest and land which should be handed over to the village for allowing to the villagers concerned sufficient *nistar* and other requirements (of the Central Provinces ryotwari *minhai* forests). A pressing further problem everywhere in the District is how to push back the forest boundaries which are too close to the *abadi*."

While I do not envisage the excision of cultivable land from other Reserved Forests on the scale of that carried out in the Daboli block I am of the opinion that joint inspections by the Special Tribes Officer and the respective D. F. O. of the Rali, Dhanora, Manikgarh and Satmala State Forests will reveal many cases where the proximity of the existing forest lines to aboriginal villages causes definite hardship, and where rectifications can be carried out without any great sacrifice on the part of the Forest Department. In certain areas the forest boundaries have obviously been drawn without local inspection and so it happened that entire villages, as for instance, Rompalli in the Rali State Forest, an old aboriginal settlement of 80 houses and several hundred acres of cultivated land, were included in the Reserved Forest. The evacuation order given to the inhabitants of Rompalli was fortunately never enforced, but their residence and cultivation in what has been notified as Reserved Forest is technically an offence and should be legalized by the creation of an enclave. There are similar cases in the Dhanora and Manikgarh State Forest, and I would therefore suggest that the Special Tribes Officer should, before he begins in a taluq allotting land under *laoni khas*, inspect the forest boundaries jointly with the D. F. O. and submit such proposals for rectification as both officers consider advisable.

During the joint inspections provision can also be made for the *podu*-cultivation of Kolams and Naikpods, and the many cases of what is now illegal cultivation can be regularized. I

have dealt exhaustively with the problem of Kolams and Naikpods in *Tribal Hyderabad* (pp. 96-104, 140-142) and in para 10 of the note quoted above Mr. Grigson has outlined the procedure by which *podu* should henceforth be legalised. As far as I know the Forest Department has not yet taken any action in this matter but with the extension of the rehabilitation work into the taluqs of Asifabad and Rajura, the issue of definite rules framed on the lines of Mr. Grigson's note of 1-5-1353 F. will become necessary.

Particularly acute is the position in the Manikgarh State Forest, for it seems that there are not only large numbers of Kolams and Naikpods live and cultivate within the boundaries of the Reserved Forest, but that many Gond villages have never been established as enclaves. A glance at the $\frac{1}{2}$ " Survey of India Map shows that there is a large number of villages inside the Manikgarh block, and I know from personal experience that some of them are big settlements of over sixty houses. When I discussed their position with the D. F. O., Asifabad, he explained that there existed no reliable map showing forest and cultivated land, and that to his knowledge none of the villages had been formally established as enclaves. If this is so, thousands of aboriginals live in the Manikgarh block only on tolerance, and difficulties will arise when *pattas* are to be granted for the land which they now cultivate on *siwa-i-jamabandi* tenure.

B. Forest Produce.—The question of the aboriginals' rights on the forest produce needs urgent clarification. The aboriginals are entirely in the dark as to what forest produce they may utilize and I have found a wide diversity in the application of the Forest rules in various parts of the District.

Since it is obvious that the aboriginals are in need of timber, bamboo and grass for housebuilding and agricultural purposes, and as nothing will—nor indeed should—prevent them from gathering edible minor forest produce, the question is in what way access to these products of the forest can be regulated.

In former years the practice of the Forest Authorities was to levy a plough tax (*nagar patti*) of Rs. 2-2-0 to Rs. 3 per plough in commutation of the value of firewood and of timber used for agricultural purposes, and to assess the price to be paid for timber and bamboos used in house-building on valuation. In theory a Gond who wanted to rebuild his house had to approach the Ranger for permission to fell a certain

number of trees and had to pay for them a sum fixed by the Ranger, but in practice the cultivators usually made informal arrangements with the Forest Chowkidar and paid him a certain amount for permission to extract timber either from the open forest or the reserve.

The levy of a plough tax has now been declared illegal and the Inspector-General of Forests has issued orders for the abolition of *nagar patti*. Nevertheless *nagar patti* is still collected by Forest guards in many parts of the District, both in the Nirmal and the Asifabad Division, generally at a rate of Rs. 3 per plough, but no receipts are given to the cultivators.

Now that *nagar patti* has been declared illegal the question arises how are the aboriginals to obtain wood and timber without infringing the forest rules. The areas where coupes are within reach of all villages are few, and in practically the whole of the central highlands (comprising large parts of Utnur, Adilabad, Rajura and Asifabad) there are no coupes from which the aboriginals could buy wood.

The Forest Department has recently put forward proposals for the prohibition of all free removal of fuel. The relevant paragraph in the proposals runs as follows:

“No free removal of fuel must be permitted. In Marathwara there is no need for this. Forests are too few and far between. In Telingana there are sufficient felling series all over the Reserved Forests and the villagers can easily purchase their requirements from the coupes under working. Where there are no coupes under working near any village the I. G. F. can be authorised to allow villagers to remove fuel by head loads only on payment of a licence fee. This fee will be 0-0-6 to 0-1-0 per head-load.”

I feel that these provisions cannot be successfully applied to the Tribal Area of Adilabad District. There are very few coupes, and none at all in the purely aboriginal tracts, and it would be impossible to count the head-loads of wood brought in by Gonds and Kolams living in small settlements in the depth of the forest. Moreover the levying of fees per individual head-load, even if workable, would no doubt open the door to the very practice of extorting *mamul* and bribes which the new rehabilitation policy is aiming to suppress.

The proposals of the Forest Department do not refer to timber for house-building and it is still not clear how the

aboriginals of the interior, living perhaps in villages where the forest boundary skirts the villages site and the cultivated land, are expected to obtain timber and bamboos.

Another controversial point is the auctioning of grass and the levying of grass fees by contractors. In Utnur Taluq no grass has been auctioned and no fees were collected, but this concession has not been extended to other taluqs. There the contractors, most of whom do not remove and sell any of the grass for which they obtained the contract, follow the old practice of collecting from the villagers a fee of Rs. 2 per house, irrespective of whether the householder extracted any grass from the forest or not. Orders have been issued by the I. G. F. to abolish this system, but so far no effect has been given to these orders, and the contractors do not seem to have been informed that the levying of fees per house is illegal. On the contrary Gonds have been told that they must pay these fees in areas where grass has been auctioned.

The position regarding *chironji* (the edible kernels of *Buchanania latifolia*) and *mahua* and *parka* (the corollæ and oil-containing seeds of *Bassia latifolia* respectively) is in most areas similar to that regarding grass. The contractors do not arrange for the collection of these products, but as a rule levy fees from the villagers without even trying to ascertain whether each individual household consumed the produce in question or not. There is no uniformity in these fees, and while *mahua* and *chironji* were auctioned in some localities, there were no auctions in Utnur Taluq and certain other areas. It seems that no clear rules have as yet been framed, and that the old regulations allow of several different interpretations.

The grazing fees have this year been raised by 100 to 200 per cent. and this is no doubt a hardship on many aboriginals. The argument that free grazing encourages cultivators to keep old, useless cattle is sound, and even the Gonds would do well to slaughter and eat more of their old cows. The new grazing fees provide that genuine cultivators should pay for up to 24 animals as. 8 per cow or bullock and Re. 1 per buffalo, and above that number of animals as. 12 and Re. 1-8-0 respectively. But it is my experience that in many places as. 12 per cow or bullock were collected irrespective of the number of animals and as much as Re. 1-4-0 for goats and sheep instead of the prescribed as. 8. The reason for such overassessment is the vicious system of farming out the collection of grazing fees to 'authorized licence vendors.'

I feel that at a moment when Government has just entered upon a policy of improving the position of aboriginals and many of them are in the difficult stage of transition from sub-tenants and agricultural labourers to independent cultivators the miscellaneous fees which make so great a demand on their meagre cash resources, should be reduced rather than increased. But the actual position is that the grazing fees have been greatly increased, while the abolition of other *pattis* has in most areas remained on paper. For despite the I.G.F.'s orders both the subordinate staff of the Forest Department and the contractors continue to collect these *pattis* as usual. The psychological effect on the Gonds is unfortunate, for they feel that not only have the promises regarding the abolition of *pattis* made by the First Taluqdar at the Keslapur Meeting not materialized but that a new burden has been imposed on them by the raising of grazing fees.

I think that different treatment should be accorded to the cattle-owner who sends his animals to graze during the summer months to distant forest areas, and the aboriginal whose village lies on the edge of the forest, and who cannot prevent his cattle from straying across the forest line. While the former sends his cattle to the Reserved Forest in order to derive the special benefits of better grazing, the latter has no choice but to pay the grazing fee demanded by the Forest Department.

I would suggest therefore that inside the Tribal Area the grazing fees for the first 24 agricultural animals should be lowered to the old rate of as. 4 per cow or bullock and as. 8 per buffalo, whereas for animals above the number of 24, the present increased rates may continue. Such a concession would greatly benefit the aboriginal cultivator, without reducing the income of the Forest Department from the grazing fees paid by the owners of the large commercial herds driven annually into the forest areas of the central highlands.

The collection of *pattis* by contractors and of grazing fees by 'licence vendors' causes a great deal of friction and delegates parts of the powers of Government to private individuals over whose conduct the departments concerned have very little influence.

When framing the regulations regarding the use of forest products by the aboriginals allowance will have to be made for the fact that Gonds as well as Kolams and Naikpods have lived for centuries in forest areas, and rely in their traditional

economy much more on forest produce than advanced populations of the open country. The regulations will have to be not only equitable but also practicable, for there is no point in issuing elaborate rules which may be admirable for the densely populated areas of the plains, but cannot be enforced in the highlands where villages are separated by miles of unbroken forest.

The simpler the rules, the greater the likelihood that they will be observed, and the smaller the danger that the aborigines get into the habit of breaking forest laws, because there exists neither an adequate machinery for their enforcement, nor legitimate ways by which they can satisfy their needs.

I would therefore suggest the following measures to be adopted in the Tribal Area such as notified for purposes of *laoni khas*:

(a) Where no forest-coupes exist within easy reach of the villages, village-forests should be established, if necessary by excision of suitable areas from the Reserved Forest, and the aborigines should be permitted to extract wood and timber for genuine domestic and agricultural use either free of charge or on payment of a small surcharge on the land-revenue. They should, moreover, be permitted to remove head-loads of dead wood from the Forest Reserves. Where there is no bamboo in the village-forest and there are no coupes, aborigines should be enabled to obtain from the Forest Ranger permits for extracting bamboo from the Reserve against a fixed payment per 100 bamboos.

(b) All *pattis* (i.e. grass *patti*, *mahua patti*, *parka patti*, *chironji patti* and whatever other *pattis* there may exist) should be commuted into a surcharge on the revenue and the aborigines should have unhindered access to all the minor forest produce which used to be auctioned. The surcharge should be determined by dividing the total land revenue paid by all the villages in the Tribal Area through the average receipts from the auctions of minor forest products (inclusive *mahua*) in the same area during the last ten years. If, to take a hypothetical case the land revenue was Rs. 100,000 and the average total auction receipts were Rs. 5,000, the surcharge on the land revenue should be 5 per cent. The income from this surcharge which should be collected with the land revenue, could then be distributed between the Revenue, Forest and Excise Departments according to the share they had in the average receipts from the auctions of the produce concerned.

Arrangements should moreover be made that such valuable minor forest produce as are not, or only partly consumed by the aboriginals, should be collected through co-operative sale-cum-purchase societies, and sold to contractors (or in the case of *mahua* direct to the agents of the Distillery at Kama-reddy). If villagers can deliver such produce to conveniently situated branches of a co-operative society and know that they will be paid cash at fixed rates, there is a much better chance for an effective exploitation of minor forest produce than that afforded by the system of contractors who content themselves with levying fees from the villagers.

While point (a) is applicable probably only to the amply wooded Tribal Area, point (b) might be considered as a possible arrangement for the entire district, an arrangement whereby without loss to Government all cultivators could benefit and which would create no administrative difficulties, a fixed surcharge on the revenue creating much less work for officers than the annual auctioning of a number of minor forest products.

4. RURAL RECONSTRUCTION.

A. *Co-operative Societies.*—When two years ago the extension of a co-operative organization to Gond villages was under consideration I suggested that a beginning should be made in Marlavai and that the Gond Training Centre should gradually be expanded into a Rural Reconstruction Centre, supported by all the nation-building departments. I pointed out that co-operative marketing and the purchase of necessities would be of great advantage to the aboriginals, but that in order to be a full and immediate success and to replace to some extent the local money-lenders a co-operative grain bank or any other co-operative enterprise in Marlavai would have to start with a substantial grant from Government, repayable after a limited number of years.

Co-operative work among the Gonds was begun in Khurdad 1354 F. when a Co-operative Inspector came to Marlavai and, with the help of the Special Officer and the Headmaster of the Training Centre, enrolled 242 members for the Co-operative Rural Bank Marlavai and sold shares to the value of Rs. 5,410 of which at first, however, only the sum of Rs. 316-8-0 was collected from the members. The members are Gonds and Kolams from 21 villages within a radius of 10 miles from Marlavai. The Co-operative Inspector left Marlavai after a

fortnight and at the end of Thir another Inspector took charge of the Co-operative Development. But between then and the middle of Aban, when I left Marlavai, he spent only about four weeks at Marlavai. In his absence most of the work was done by Mr. Jogalkar, the headmaster of the Training Centre, for the Gond Secretary of the grain bank, who is in charge of the grain store and the cash, is of course not yet sufficiently experienced to act independently. But the important task of assessing the credit worthiness of the members of the grain bank has not yet been started, and until it is completed no credit can be obtained from the Central Co-operative Bank at Adilabad. Consequently the grain bank has for the moment no other function than the joint purchase and transport of grain from Utnur to Marlavai by the members; there will for instance, be no money to purchase grain from the Gonds after harvest, though thereby it would be possible to break into the pernicious system under which they cart grain all the way to distant places such as Adilabad or Asifabad in order to satisfy creditors and to obtain some cash, and during the months before harvest borrow grain from sahlukars in those same places and transport it again all the way back to the hills.

By the end of Shehrewar the number of members had risen to 393 and that of shares to 675. The paid up capital was Rs. 1,350, and of this Rs. 1,020 was spent on the purchase of jawar and Rs. 270 on the purchase of jaggery, all of which were partly sold against cash and partly given on loan to the shareholders.

A large part of the co-operative work has so far been done by the Revenue officers and the members of the Marlavai Training centre. It was due to the initiative of the Special Officer, and later to the Tahsildar that Gonds of a wide circle of villages came to Marlavai and enrolled as members, and the bank was kept going by Mr. S. B. Jogalkar, the headmaster. Without the assistance of the Training Centre the Co-operative Bank could have neither been established nor kept functioning during the long periods when the Inspector was away.

It is my opinion that certain changes in the present organization will be necessary if the co-operative movement is to succeed among the aboriginals. There are two alternative possibilities for the reorganization of the co-operative work.

(a) The Co-operative Rural Bank at Marlavai could be run on the present modest lines, but should increase if possible the range of commodities for sale by obtaining from the

Supply Department small quotas of such articles as cloth and iron at controlled rates. In that case there is no need for a Co-operative Inspector or Organizer with a salary of Rs. 70, but the practice that the Headmaster of the Training Centre does the greater part of the work should be regularized and Mr. Jogalkar given an allowance from the Co-operative Department.

(b) The Co-operative Rural Bank at Marlavai could be built into a Rural Reconstruction Centre for all the aborigines, first of the highlands and then of the whole of Utnur Taluq. This would have to be organized rather differently from the ordinary co-operative societies in advanced areas. At least during the first years the initiative would have to come from Government, which would also have to advance funds in order to put the Co-operative movement on its feet and convince the Gonds of its usefulness.

The posting of a young, energetic and enthusiastic officer of the Co-operative Department at Marlavai would be the *conditio sine qua non* for any success of a co-operative scheme among the tribesmen. But to make it bearable for an officer of rather more than usual qualifications to stay throughout the year in Marlavai it is essential to provide him with adequate accommodation. At present there are no quarters in Marlavai nor is there a grain store for the Rural Bank.

I would therefore propose the construction of a building comprising living quarters, office, shop and grain store. Local materials could be used throughout, except for a cement floor and cement half-walls for the grain store. The accommodation for the co-operative clerk and peons will be no problem if Gonds are appointed on these posts.

I think it will be essential to provide the Inspector with a sufficient staff of Gonds who have local influence and can interpret to the aborigines the aims and the working of the society. Students of the Marlavai Training Centre could be attached to the co-operative Inspector for training, and could later be employed as organizers by the Co-operative Department.

Once the material basis for an efficient working of the Marlavai Co-operative centre has been created, a determined drive should be started to replace in the aborigines' economy the *sahukar* by a co-operative credit and purchase-cum-sale society. Societies with specialized functions may be useful in

towns, but in rural and particularly in aboriginal areas, only multi-purpose societies can benefit all aspects of village economics.

What we should try to provide for the aboriginal is efficient marketing of his cash crops and other products, essential goods and improved seed at reasonable and stable prices, and last not least cheap credit, given by an institution which aims at helping him, and not like the *sahukar*, at leading him into debt and economic dependence. All this can be achieved only if Government advances to the multi-purpose co-operative society a substantial amount, say Rs. 30,000, which will enable the society to lay in a stock of goods, such as cloth of various kinds, iron, certain implements, jaggery, oil and matches for sale to the tribesmen, to purchase their surplus crops and such products as ghee from Gonds and honey, wax, and other minor forest produce from Kolams, and to give credit in cash or grain to members owning land. If hand in hand with the provision of these facilities compulsory debt reconciliation was taken in hand, many Gonds could within a short time be freed from their subservience to money-lenders.

Co-operative Rural Banks can get loans from the Central Co-operative Banks at a rate of interest of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. up to a sum five times the total land revenue of all the members but I feel that this facility is not broad enough a basis for an effective reorganization of aboriginal economics on co-operative lines, and that the interest of the tribesmen can be awakened only if they see immediate benefits.

Once the aboriginals have become used to the sale of their products and the purchase of essential commodities through the co-operative society, experiments in co-operative farming can be launched. But *co-operative* farming must not be confused with *collective* farming for which the Gonds are not yet ripe. They are not likely to waive their rights in personal property in land or live-stock in favour of a society or to subordinate their daily activities to the directives of the head of a collective farm. But co-operation in the purchase of improved seeds and more modern agricultural implements might appeal to them, and a village community as a whole could afford agricultural machinery which is above the means of the individual cultivator. Expert guidance would be necessary; there is, for instance, little point in supplying Gonds with vegetable seeds without teaching them the ways of growing novel vegetables.

B. Agricultural Demonstration.—This brings us to the problem of improvements in the aboriginals' method of cultivation. There is no doubt that the Gonds are experienced in a type of cultivation particularly suited to the highlands, i.e. the growing of kharif crops in the stony red soil on the flat tops of the hills. But they have much to learn in the cultivation of heavy black soils, in irrigation and drainage and particularly in the growing of vegetables and fruit trees.

With the idea of teaching the prospective Gond school masters under training in Marlavai improved methods of farming, 26 acres of good farm land have been allotted to the Training Centre, and it is planned to develop this into a model farm. But the realization of this plan has been held up firstly by the delay in the sanction of the proposed funds for the farm—the money was not available until Amardad—and secondly because the Headmaster cannot possibly spare enough time for the development of so large a farm.

In the past year the Agricultural Assistant, Adilabad, has advised the Headmaster on the outlay of the farm land and has arranged for the supply of seeds. But without the whole-time attention of a trained agriculturist the land cannot be developed into a model farm of instructive value, and I would therefore suggest that the Agricultural Department is asked to post a Demonstrator at Marlavai. His responsibility will be to direct the work on the farm in co-operation with the Headmaster, who will have to allocate the students of the Training Centre to the farm work as conditions necessitate. Two boarders could be specially delegated to the farm work and later sent to one of the Government Model farms where, I understand, two year courses for the training of agricultural *kamgars* are held.

The farm in Marlavai would serve the double purpose of acquainting the Gond schoolmasters and the future village officers with modern methods of agriculture and improved crops and vegetables, and of experimenting with the varieties of crops most suitable for the peculiar climate and soil-conditions of the highlands still almost exclusively inhabited by aboriginals. The propaganda value of a well-run farm in Marlavai would be considerable, for there is no other place in the district visited by as many Gonds from every taluq.

The Agricultural Demonstrator would be a most valuable help to the Co-operative Inspector, for he could advise him on the type of seeds which should be ordered for sale to the

various villagers, and he could instruct the members of the society in the cultivation of crops which bring good cash returns.

C. *Medical Relief.*—The development of Marlavai as a Centre, not only for the training of Gond teachers, but also for other rural uplift activities makes it necessary to provide more efficient and more easily accessible medical help than is available at present. The dispensary at Utnur is a long way off, and at the height of the rains there are days when the track is not even passable for bullock-carts. Moreover Utnur is very often without a medical officer or indeed any doctor. This year two doctors asked for and obtained a transfer one after the other, and Utnur was for months without a doctor. When I arrived in Utnur on the 26th Shehrewar, there was no doctor and the compounder had only just reported; previous to his arrival the dispensary was closed. When I left Marlavai in the middle of Aban no doctor had yet been posted to Utnur, and this at a time when cholera was rampant in Nirmal and Adilabad and might have broken out in Utnur any day. Cholera vaccine had been sent to Utnur but there was no one to inject it, and I failed to get the staff of the Training Centre and the Gond schoolmasters inoculated.

The question of a Touring Dispensary for the aboriginal area between Utnur and Asifabad has often been deliberated. I think that the moment has come for concrete action, and I would suggest that a small dispensary and living quarters are built in Marlavai, and that a doctor and a compounder are posted there. They should alternatively tour, first a smaller and later a wider circle of aboriginal villages, and while the doctor is on tour the compounder should keep the Marlavai dispensary going and *vice versa*.

The doctor could do a great deal of good among the aboriginals and might moreover be asked to impart simple instruction in elementary hygiene to the Gond teachers under training. Perhaps the Gond Education could give him a small allowance, which would to some extent compensate him for the lack of private practice. But in the case of the doctor as of other officers, the construction of quarters is an absolute necessity. The expense of a touring dispensary based on Marlavai can well be justified. In the large aboriginal area in the centre of the district there are no facilities for medical relief, and in Utnur Taluq there is, at the best, only one doctor to a population of 24,122.

The doctor in charge of the Touring Dispensary, who must be young should be selected rather for his keenness and enthusiasm for rural uplift, than for his experience (and should not be posted to Marlavai as a punishment!). One of his important tasks would be to stamp out yaws by carefully planned tours that lead him repeatedly to the same villages, and thereby enable him to give to yaws patients the full course of injections. Malaria is fairly wide-spread in Utnur Taluq and adequate supplies of quinine or quinacrine must therefore form an essential part of the dispensary's outfit. My recent experience on the North-East Frontier has convinced me that to win the tribesmen's confidence in modern medicines it is more valuable to have a small but carefully selected stock of first-class patent medicines such as M & B., Quinacrine, etc., than to dispense a large amount of mixtures of lesser efficacy. It is better to *cure* a limited number of people, than to disperse ones resources by giving temporary relief to thousands, most of whom relapse after a few days and lose thereby all faith in modern medicines.

The Medical Department should therefore be asked to bestow special care on the selection of personnel and outfit for the Marlavai dispensary; for the attitude of a large aboriginal population to Government doctors and medicines will be shaped by their experiences with the Marlavai dispensary.

D. Education Centre.—I am dealing with the problems of the Gond Education Scheme in a separate note, and will refer here only to those aspects of the educational work which have a bearing on the plans for the creation of a many-sided rural reconstruction centre in Marlavai.

In spite of great financial difficulties, arising from delay first in the sanction of the 1354 F. budget and then in the disbursement of the sanctioned amount, the Gond Education Scheme has made good progress. This is entirely due to the undaunted enthusiasm of the Special Officer, who somehow managed to make both ends meet, even when as late as Isfandar no money could be drawn from the Treasury either for salaries or other purposes, and of the Headmaster Mr. S. B. Jogalkar, who carried almost alone the burden of the teaching work in the Training Centre, and undertook in addition extensive inspection tours. How heavy his responsibilities were may be judged from the fact that in the whole of 1354 F. he managed to take only ten days leave, and was the rest of the time in Marlavai or on tour inspecting village schools. From his example it is clear that for a conscientious worker

it is possible to stay throughout the year in Marlavai. Thanks to his efforts the programme set for 1354 F. has been largely realized, and while at the beginning of the year only sixteen Gond village schools were functioning, their number has now risen to thirty, and this despite the fact that four Gond teachers were diverted to patwari work, one has been appointed as forest guard and one very unfortunately died. Thus a network of Gond schools has been created, which covers already large parts of the District.

The Training School in Marlavai is the one part of the envisaged Rural Reconstruction Centre which is already fully functioning, and the limited success so far achieved on the co-operative side is largely due to the active help given by the Headmaster and to the reputation Marlavai enjoys among the local Gonds. But the Training Centre itself is far from fully developed, and while in the first experimental stage expenditure on buildings was purposely kept low, it is now imperative that the Training School as the centre of an expanding circle of village schools, an institution to which the teachers return annually for refresher courses, is adequately housed. The open, grass-roofed shed in which the classes are held, has long become too small and the lack of a proper school building is seriously impeding efficiency. Similarly the Headmaster cannot indefinitely live with his wife and two children in a dark and narrow mud and bamboo house in no way superior to a Gond house. The construction of a school building and a house for the Headmaster, provision for which is contained in the budget proposals for 1355 F., should not be delayed, and the difficulty over skilled workmen could be reduced if the Departments concerned would agree to construct the school-building and headmaster's house, the co-operative building and the dispensary at the same time. Such a building programme may make it worth a contractor's while to collect outside labour, and to post an efficient overseer in Marlavai.

I have drawn out rough plans for both the Headmaster's house and the School so that the estimates could be made, but I do feel that an architect ought to be invited to Marlavai to draw up a comprehensive plan for the lay out of the educational and rural reconstruction centre with buildings which can be built largely of local materials and are designed to harmonize with rural landscape. Such bricks and tiles as would be required could be manufactured in Utnur, and although

it would be possible to use local hand sawn timber for structural purposes it would probably be more practical to have windows and doors made in Nirmal and brought up by lorry. Cement would also have to be brought from outside. Unskilled local labour would be available from December until the end of April but the skilled masons, carpenters, etc., would have to be imported and arrangements would have to be made for their food and housing.

I understand that the Local Fund Engineer has prepared plans for the improvement of the ghat section of the fair weather track from Utnur to Marlavai. A new alignment at the main ghat would open the track to lorries and I suggest that the Local Fund is requested to undertake the construction of the road immediately after the rains so that certain building materials can be brought to Marlavai by road not later than January.

E. Co-ordination of Rural Reconstruction Activities.— Ever since Marlavai has been the headquarters of the Special Tribes Officer, the task of supervising the Gond Education Scheme and co-ordinating its activities with that of other departments has fallen to him. By keeping the First Taluqdar and the Tahsildars informed of the requirements of the various village schools, he obtained for the Gond teachers, the invaluable help of the Revenue Authorities, and he maintained all contacts with other departments such as the Forest Department and the Agricultural Department, which provided respectively timber for Gond schools and improved seeds. He also appointed some of the Gonds under training as patwaris and arranged with the Forest authorities that others were appointed forest guards. It is obvious that without his guiding hand the Gond Education Scheme could not have been so successfully built into the general policy for aboriginal rehabilitation.

It cannot be expected, however, that the Special Tribes Officer will indefinitely use Marlavai as his headquarters; he has devoted the best part of a year to Utnur Taluq and his work there is nearly completed; in the coming touring season he will transfer his activities to the taluqs of Asifabad and Rajura. It will then be difficult for him to keep so close a touch with the work in Marlavai and I feel strongly that if Marlavai is to be developed as a multi-sided Rural Reconstruction Centre, the co-ordinating influence of a Revenue Officer will be indispensable. I therefore suggest that a Naib Tahsildar may be

posted at Marlavai and invested with the authority to co-ordinate the various activities of the Rural Reconstruction centre. This would relieve the Special Officer from the responsibility of making detailed arrangements with the Revenue and Forest Authorities about the sites and building material for the new Gond schools, and the Naib Tahsildar could supervise the building programme in Marlavai and the marshalling of local labour—no mean task if the buildings are to be ready before the rains set in. At the same time he could direct the training of Gond village officers and arrange for their posting after the completion of their course. But his most important task would be to follow up the measures for aboriginal rehabilitation taken by the Special Officer in Utnur Taluq, to see to it that after *phodi* work there is no hitch in the occupation of the newly allotted patta-lands, and to organize the colonization of the area excised from the Daboli block by new settlers from other taluqs. While the Special Officer is touring in Asifabad and Rajura, it will be difficult for Gonds from the western part of the District to go to him and as Marlavai is known as a place where aboriginals can seek advice and, if necessary, get applications drawn up in a proper form, many aboriginals will no doubt continue to go to Marlavai. The Naib Tahsildar could help them in minor difficulties and forward more serious cases to the Special Officer.

A precedent for the post of such a Naib Tahsildar is that of the officer in charge of the Rural Development work on the Amrabad Plateau, whose special responsibility is to guard the interests of the Chenchus both on the lower and the upper plateau.

It would be advantageous to create this post immediately after the rains, so that when the Special Officer, completes the allotment of land under *laoni khas* in Utnur Taluq, he can initiate the new Naib Tahsildar into the aboriginal rehabilitation work. Perhaps a suitable candidate could be selected from among the Tahsildars under training at Patancheruvu.

It is obvious that the Naib Tahsildar will have to have quarters in Marlavai. The First Taluqdar has already agreed to the construction of a Local Fund Rest House in Marlavai, and this could at first be used as the Naib Tahsildar's quarters. Till its completion the Naib Tahsildar could live in the Forest Rest House or in the house which I built for myself and which in my absence has been used by the Special Officer.

F. Training of Aboriginal Staff.—Finally I may point out the value of a multi-sided rural reconstruction centre at Marlavai for the training of Gonds. In the years to come Gonds who have become familiar with the working of rural grain-banks, purchases-cum-sale shops and improved methods of cultivation would be most useful on the staff of co-operative societies, and minor rural reconstruction centres in their respective taluqs. Rural reconstruction cannot be indefinitely carried out with towns people, and the difficulties over personnel in Marlavai make it clear that with rare exceptions only men with a village background will make satisfactory co-operative organizers, agricultural demonstrators, and schoolmasters. It has been proved that Gonds can be trained as village schoolmasters and patwari, and there is no reason to believe that if given the necessary training, they would not be able to provide for the Tribal Area also the subordinate staff for all the other nation-building departments. I would suggest therefore that full use should be made of the officers of the various departments posted to Marlavai and that these officers should devote some of their time to instruction at the Training Centre. Even when the full number of teachers required for the Gond schools of Adilabad are trained the Marlavai Centre will fulfil an important function in training aboriginals as village officers and for other vocations. With the help of the Naib Tahsildar, Revenue Instructor, Agricultural Demonstrator, the Co-operative Inspector and the Doctor a nucleus of rural workers could be developed that be of the greatest value for rural reconstruction in the Tribal Area.

5. THE PROBLEM OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF TRIBAL AREAS.

While the allotment of land under special *laoni*, the Gond Education Scheme and the general protection afforded to the interests of the aboriginals by the Special Tribes Officer has made a good beginning in the rehabilitation of the Adilabad tribesmen, it is yet clear that a complete reorganization of the Tribal Area cannot be easily achieved within the framework of the same administrative machinery as the development of advanced parts of the District. Regulations and administrative systems suited to populations of urban character or engaged in modern industries, cannot be adapted to the needs and problems of primitive aboriginal tribesmen, whose economy is far less developed than even that of the ordinary Indian villager. That special treatment has to be

accorded to such tribal population in order to ensure their safe transition to a more complex economy and more elaborate patterns of social life, has been widely recognized and has in British India led to the establishment of areas with a simplified administrative system, designed to protect the aboriginal from exploitation or oppression such as the Agency Tracts of Madras and Orissa, or the Excluded Areas of Assam.

The creation of similar Agencies in Hyderabad has for the last two years been under discussion, and Mr. Grigson refers in his note of 1-5-1933 F. to the necessity of drafting a Tribal Areas Regulation on the lines of the Madras Agency system. He proposes that the Regulation should be promulgated as an *A'in* rather than as a *Dastur-ul-Amal* and should include "a provision whereby no ordinary law of the State shall apply in a tribal area unless special notification to that effect is issued and that in so applying such a law the Government may vary it as it thinks necessary to suit the special circumstances of all or any tribal areas." The great advantage of such a Regulation would be that Government could go ahead legislating for the progressive areas of the State without being continuously hampered by the thought of how every law might affect backward areas, and that the executive officers in the Districts, would not be faced with the impossibility of enforcing complicated regulations among backward tribal populations. It would also obviate the need for special concessions—such as the aboriginals' exemption from the grain levy—which complicate the work of Government.

With the development in Adilabad of industries in the eastern part and the building of the railway through Both, Kinwat and Adilabad, the contrast between the progressive and the backward areas will tend to sharpen, and the officers whose divisions or taluqs contain important industries and large urban populations as well as hill-tracts inhabited by aboriginals will find it increasingly difficult to devote sufficient time to the latter's interests and needs. From this point of view the distribution of taluqs is unfortunate, for with the exception of Chinnur, Sirpur and Nirmal, every taluq contains part of the Notified Tribal Area. The result is that any centralized control and organization of the aboriginal rehabilitation policy is practically impossible.

I am therefore of the opinion that in order to put the new policy vis-à-vis the aboriginals on a firm and lasting basis, a certain readjustment of the administrative units within the

district will be unavoidable. Should a Tribal Agency as envisaged by Mr. Grigson materialize, such a readjustment would take place as a matter of course, but even failing the establishment of areas subject to special legislation a redistribution of the Taluqs and Divisions would have great administrative advantages.

The aboriginal populations of the district are mainly concentrated in the central highlands, and here and there a strip of country, along the foothills, and there is in most places a clear division between these hill tracts and the open plains occupied largely by non-aboriginal populations. The central highlands, which coincide to a large extent with the Notified Tribal Area, consist of the whole of Utnur Taluq and large parts of Adilabad, Both, Asifabad and Rajura ; the parts extending into Lakshetipet and Nirmal are insignificant.

The concentration of the aboriginals in a fairly compact block would make it possible to establish one homogeneous division with a predominantly tribal population, divided into two taluqs. The eastern taluq would consist of the aboriginal areas of Asifabad and Rajura and a few villages of Lakshetipet Taluq, but I would suggest that for administrative reasons it should (unlike the notified Tribal Area) not go beyond the Asifabad-Rajura road. The taluq headquarters could for convenience remain Asifabad, although the tribal zone skirts the town and Asifabad town and Jangaon need, of course, not be included in the Tribal Division. The western taluq would include the whole of the present Utnur Taluq and the adjoining parts of Adilabad and Both. It is a questionable point whether it should, like the Notified Tribal area, extend into Both west of the Nirmal-Adilabad Road, or whether the road should be its western border. There are, it is true, several predominantly aboriginal areas in Both and Kinwat, but their inclusion might make the western taluq unmanageable, and they may therefore have to remain inside the respective taluqs as existing at present. The seat of the Second Taluqdar should preferably be in the western part of the division where the construction of a new headquarters for Utnur is already under consideration. But it would also be possible to have his headquarters in a more central position, somewhere on the highest plateau near Marlavai, which is climatically far superior to the vicinity of Utnur, and could easily be linked with the Gudi-Hatnur-Utnur road by the construction of ten miles more of an all weather motor road.

Though both Adilabad and Both would thus cede some areas to the new tribal Division, the only two taluqs seriously affected by the excision of their aboriginal tracts would be Asifabad and Rajura which could at a later stage perhaps be fused into a unit based on the road, the railway and the new industrial enterprises which have already sprung up along the railway and are planned in connection with the Godavari Scheme.

The advantages of such a redistribution of taluqs are obvious. Not only would it greatly facilitate the establishment in the Tribal Area of an administrative system comparable to the Agency system and suited to the needs of the aboriginals, and pending this make more effective the present aboriginal rehabilitation policy, but it would also enable the officers in the advanced areas to concentrate on the work connected with the industrial development of the district, and free them from the obligation of lengthy tours in the backward aboriginal tracts.

I am not unconscious of the fact that fairly large numbers of aboriginals particularly in Both and Kinwat would still remain outside such a Tribal Division, but that cannot be helped, and they would of course continue to benefit from the provisions of special *laoni* and other rehabilitation measures.

The establishment of a Tribal Division in the central highlands of the Adilabad District would create favourable conditions for a revitalization of tribal life, for in that division the aboriginals would no longer form a minority, but would constitute the bulk of the population and would therefore have to shoulder civic responsibilities and participate fully in public activities. It would consequently be a matter for consideration whether certain administrative measures which have been found of value in aboriginal tracts of other parts of India, might not here be introduced with benefit. It is a common misconception that tribal populations are necessarily backward and primitive. They may be backward in the assimilation of modern ideas and goods, but many of them have retained and continue to develop forms of tribal and village self-government whose collapse in the more progressive parts of India is deplored by sociologists and economists alike. The cohesion of village-communities and the civic sense of the individual are often more highly developed among aboriginals than among other rural populations and local self-government is in many tribes still an effective and vital institution. To retain such

valuable features must be the aim of every administration and in *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* Mr. W. V. Grigson has shown how successfully village self-government and tribal jurisdiction were restored and regularized by the Administration of Bastar State.

Conditions in Bastar and in the Agency Tracts of Madras and Orissa are not in every way comparable to those in Adilabad, but during a recent visit to Bihar I had the opportunity of gaining first-hand experience of the Santal Parganas. The Santals are in a position similar in many ways to the Adilabad Gond. They live partly in a compact highland block and partly in the land surrounding that block in symbiosis with immigrant, non-aboriginal populations. I was struck by their general prosperity and high standard of living, by the effectiveness of the protection Government has afforded them from exploitation and land-alienation, and, most of all, by the highly developed and smoothly working local self-government. Indeed, I realized that a policy which is considered revolutionary in Adilabad has there been followed as a matter of course for half a century. The following suggestions for a resuscitation of tribal life and local self-government, are therefore to some extent influenced by the observable success of the administrative system prevailing in Santal Parganas.

A. Local Self-Government.—The loss of Indian rural life owing to the decay of village self-government embodied in the *panchayat* is today generally recognized, and various attempts have been made to revive the ancient *panchayat* organization and to re-educate the villagers to take an active part in the management of their own affairs. The aboriginal tribes too had their own forms of local self-government and since their contact with more complex bureaucratic systems of administration is in many areas of comparatively recent date, indigenous institutions of village self-government and jurisdiction are among many of them on the whole far less disintegrated than among more progressive communities. Thus while in the average Indian village, divided into castes, classes and factions, institutions of local self-government have laboriously to be built anew, in many aboriginal societies with their strong spirit of tribal solidarity and the fundamental equality of all members of the tribe, such institutions are still very much alive and need only official recognition to become important pillars of the civic structure.

The aboriginals of Adilabad too have retained many features of their old tribal self-government and most disputes

between Gonds, as well as between Gonds and Kolams, are still settled out of court by the machinery of tribal jurisdiction. To give, as has been done in Bastar and Bihar, official sanction and support to the valuable work done by tribal councils should form an important item in the aboriginal rehabilitation work. So far the village self-government of the Gonds has not only remained unrecognized, but it has in many places been disrupted by the appointment of non-aboriginal and often non-resident patels in purely aboriginal villages. In *Tribal Hyderabad I* have dealt with this practice at some length (pp. 82, 85-90). When I recently inquired from thirteen of the Gond teachers trained in Marlavai who the patel of their village was, I found that in all but one of these Gond villages chosen as suitable places for schools for their large aboriginal population, the patel is a non-aboriginal outsider. That means that the Gond headman, as the natural leader of the community, enjoys not even the modest measure of official authority vested in a police patel.

The first step in restoring a vigorous community-life to those villages will be to replace the non-aboriginal patels by prominent Gonds enjoying the confidence of their co-villagers. In the case of patels appointed by Government this will be a simple administrative measure, but the position is more difficult where the present patels are the *gumashtas* of *watandars*. There is a general consensus of opinion that the *watandari* system which provides non-aboriginal village officers for aboriginal villages is opposed to the interests of the tribesmen, and will have to be abolished in the Tribal Area. Pending the necessary legislation on the part of Government pressure may be exerted on the *watandars* to appoint in Gond villages as the *gumashta* patels only aboriginals approved by the District Officers. Another, and on the whole more effective measure applicable in a large number of cases, would be the separation of Gond hamlets (*mazra*) from non-aboriginal villages (*mauza*) and their establishment as separate villages. Such a reshuffling of villages has been successfully carried out in the Samasthan of Paloncha, where many Koya settlements were established as separate *mauzas* under their own patels. In Adilabad District many Gond settlements of forty and more houses have only the status of *mazra*, and these could at once be established as new *mauza*. Where Gond *mazras* have less than forty houses, two or three could be grouped into one *mauza* with aboriginal village officers. I do not think that the right of Government to appoint its own patels in such newly

created *mauza* can be contested by the old *watandars*, for a man who held *watan* rights in a certain village with its *mazras* would seem to have no legal claim over settlements which have ceased to be *mazras* of his village, and have been established as separate *mauzas*. In regard to the patelship of such newly created aboriginal *mauzas* the same procedure may be followed as outlined by Mr. Grigson in para 8 of his note of 1-5-1353 F. which refers to newly established aboriginal colonies.

I am of the opinion that the reshuffling of villages and the appointment of aboriginal patels in aboriginal villages should be done systematically taluq by taluq, and that as a first step the Tahsildars should be asked to provide the necessary data and to put forward proposals for the consolidation of Gond *mazras* and the establishment of such *mazras* as separate aboriginal villages.

The desirability of having aboriginal patels in villages with a predominantly aboriginal population will not be disputed, but the question is whether in order to achieve the maximum efficiency of village self-government the position of the patel should not further be strengthened. I may quote here the opinion of the Santal Parganas Inquiry Committee on the *pradhan* system of the Santals. (The Santal *pradhan* corresponds closely to the patel of a Gond village):

“It is important that the value of this institution to the district should be fully realized. The *pradhan* has a triple function. He is firstly the head of the self-governing village community. As such he has social and religious duties to perform and he decides disputes and is head of the council of elders. He is secondly the representative of the village in its dealings with the landlord and is its bulwark against the interference and harassment by the landlord or his Amla. Under this system the landlord has very little connection with the village except to receive the rents paid to him by the *pradhan*. He cannot exact abwabs, salami or forced labour. He cannot sue the raiyats but only the *pradhan*. The *pradhan* controls the settlement of waste land and the settlement of *fauti* and *ferari* holdings, subject to supervision in certain cases by the Subdivisional Officer. Thirdly the *pradhan* represents the village in its dealings with Government. He collects the cess and the *chaukidari* dues, he has police duties in connection with the reporting of crime and the arrest of offenders and

he is the guardian of the village record of rights. It is his duty to see that forest and other rights are properly exercised, that the roads, paths and irrigation works are maintained, etc. The *pradhan* often fails to fulfil the role allotted to him and he is often a slack guardian of the village rights: but, however he may fail, his essential value to the community as their bulwark against the interference of the landlord remains. This system makes for contentment in the village and freedom from oppression; in normal times it results in better and more punctual collection of rents than *khas* management and it reduces litigation and expense both for the landlord and the raiyat; and it also keeps alive the village community spirit and its independent character. All these are features too valuable to let go and the contrast in areas where the system has died out or has never existed is marked. We therefore attach the greatest importance to its preservation." (Report of the Santal Parganas Inquiry Committee, para 137. Patna 1938).

The position of a Santal *pradhan* is obviously much stronger than that of a police patel in Adilabad, and it is a matter for consideration how best to expand the patel's function and make him into an effective guardian of village rights. This is particularly important in *ijaras* and in villages where most of the land is held by one or two big landlords. As soon as the Tenancy Act has come into force an arrangement might be initiated by which the patel becomes responsible for the collection of the rents fixed by Government, and the landlord is held to deal with the other members of the village-community only through the patel recognized and supported by Government. Legal advice will have to be sought in order to ascertain whether special legislation would be necessary for the introduction of such a system. In any future "Tribal Area Regulation" a strengthening of the village headmen's powers on these or similar lines should certainly be provided for.

The councils of elders that meet in aboriginal villages whenever there is a dispute among tribesmen, are at present without any support or recognition by Government. Yet they fulfil an important function and are able to settle most quarrels between aboriginals. If an agency system is introduced in the Tribal Area of Adilabad a regularization of these village *panchayats* will be necessary, and I think that here the system prevailing in Bastar can within certain limits be taken as a model.

I would suggest that the village-council under the guidance of the patel and two respected men of different clan proposed by the community and confirmed by the Tahsildar, should have jurisdiction over cases of simple hurt, of theft involving a value of less than Rs. 20, of damage to crops by cattle, all disputes connected with marriage, brideprice, adultery and divorce, as well as other minor offences and disputes to be specified in detail. The council should have the power to impose fines up to a certain limit say Rs. 10 and to award damages or compensation up to say Rs. 50. Fines should be used for the traditional tribal reconciliation feast or for village improvements at the direction of the council. Cases in which members of different village communities are concerned in a dispute should be dealt with by a composite council comprising the patels and elders of both villages. It should be the responsibility of the patel in whose village the council sits to keep a simple record of its finding and award. But at the present juncture literacy could not be insisted on as an indispensable qualification for the position of patel; village headmen would have to employ young literate villagers as clerks, while their sons or nephews are trained at Marlavai or in one of the other Gond schools.

In villages with a non-aboriginal minority the latter should be represented on the village council, and should in disputes between villagers be subject to its decision.

The present practice of the Adilabad Gonds is that if a dispute cannot be settled by the ordinary village *panchayat*, it is brought before one of the tribal heads, *i.e.* either one of the Rajas of Atram clan, or a Gond Mokashi or Deshmukh. Some of these tribal heads, such as Jakpat Rao, the Utnur Raja, still enjoy a great deal of prestige and have a fair measure of authority, but the influence of others has for some time been waning. Yet the system is still sufficiently alive to serve as an instrument of tribal self-government. In Bastar appeal from the village council is to be the pargana headman, and in the Santal Parganas there is a system of Parganaits with very considerable powers. A quotation from para 177 and 178 of the Report of the Santal Parganas Inquiry Committee will give some idea of the way in which the Government utilizes the tribal headmen to maintain law and order:

“The importance of maintaining intact the indigenous institutions of the district has already been stressed. Among these the *parganaits* in the Damin-i-koh play a

very important part. They were originally the tribal leaders of the Santal settlers and have continued ever since to hold their position as heads of the community. They appear to have been recognised at an early date as fiscal heads of local areas. With the establishment of the Santal system they were recognised by Government and came to occupy a mixed position: partly as leaders of the Santal community vested with social and tribal functions and powers to decide disputes both civil and criminal; partly as fiscal heads of the area who were responsible for looking after the collection of the revenue and settling down disputes; partly as police officials responsible to Government for maintaining law and order and for the reporting and investigation of crime. The *parganait* came to be the main channel of communication between the village community and the *Hakim*. In the Damin-i-koh Government estate (the part of the Santal Parganas where the aboriginals are in an overwhelming majority) there are no regular police and police functions are exercised entirely by the *parganaites* under the direct supervision of the Sub-divisional Officers. The Superintendent of Police has no jurisdiction. The *Parganait* system is still necessary and well-suited to the requirements of the Damin-i-koh where the vast majority of the population consist of aboriginals living in primitive conditions."

I do not envisage that the *parganait* system of Bihar could or should be exactly copied in the Tribal Area of Adilabad. To invest, for instance the tribal heads with the full powers of a Sub-inspector of Police, and abolish all regular police would be impracticable. It would be equally impracticable to set up the tribal-headmen as fiscal heads of their respective area. But the introduction of recognized village councils leads naturally to the establishment of some higher tribal authority, and I consider that it would be useful and feasible to group villages into large units, which may be given the ancient designation *pargana*, and appoint such tribal headmen—be they *rajas*, *mokashis* or *deshmukhs*—as are eligible in view of their status, personal authority and integrity, as *pargana* heads.

The head of the *pargana* would preside over a kind of court of appeal for all disputes which could not be settled by the village councils. This court should be composed of all the village-headmen of his *pargana* except those whose villages are involved in the dispute and who sat on the original council

which failed to achieve a settlement. Moreover civil cases involving property of a value say above Rs. 25 and below Rs. 200 should have to come before their council, and it may be considered whether certain specified criminal offences, punishable by fines from Rs. 10 to Rs. 100, may not also be judged by them.

Appeal from the *pargana* courts should be to the Special Tribes Officer or any other authority sufficiently well versed in tribal law to be able to judge the merits of a case, which could not be settled by the tribal courts.

The *pargana* heads could moreover act as intermediaries between Government and the tribesmen. If all regulations and orders affecting the aboriginals were brought to their notice they could promulgate and explain them to the people of their *pargana* and many misunderstandings which now often strain the relations between Government and the aboriginals could thus be avoided. At the same time the *pargana* heads would be the proper channels through which the tribesmen can voice legitimate grievances. Once or twice a year the First Taluqdars should call a conference of all *pargana* heads, discuss with them all matters of interest to the tribesmen and keep them informed of the policy of Government.

While in some areas the choice of the *pargana*-head will be self-evident, it must not be expected that the whole system can be created by a stroke of the pen. Mokashis and desh mukhs who are completely impoverished and have no personal influence, may not be eligible as *pargana* heads, and in such cases it may be necessary to leave the position of *pargana*-head vacant until one of the village patels within the *pargana* has shown clear signs of powers of leadership, popularity and integrity. At first it may be necessary to rely largely on persons predestined for the position by birth and traditional status, but where they fail the office of *pargana* head should be within reach of any headman of exceptional ability. Indeed the village patels of a *pargana* may be given the right to propose to the First Taluqdar the replacement of a *pargana*-head by a more suitable candidate. Though preference may be given to the capable and well educated son of a *pargana*-head, the position should not be hereditary.

The remuneration of the *pargana*-heads, is a question for consideration. In Bihar the *parganais* receive a commission on the land-revenue, but in Adilabad the *pargana*-heads will

not collect the revenue. Consequently other means of remunerating them for the services which they render to Government and to their community will have to be found. One possibility is that they are paid a small fixed annual sum, which is drawn from a fund into which all fines imposed by their courts are paid. The fact that the sum would be fixed and the fund controlled by Government would discourage all attempts to impose exorbitant fines for the sake of the commission.

These are only the rough outlines of a system of local self-government which would be suited to the conditions in Adilabad District and details will have to be carefully worked out, before it can be put into practice.

B. The Administration of Justice.—A common feature of all systems of administration specially designed for backward tracts with predominantly aboriginal populations is the control of all departments of the administration by one officer, usually the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, and the maintenance of close personal contact between him and his subordinates on the one hand and the villagers on the other. For this reason all courts, revenue, criminal and civil are placed under his control and there is no separation of the Judicial from the Executive. The employment of legal practitioners is usually restricted or excluded, and the code of procedure is simplified.

I consider that a similar system should be adopted in any Tribal Area which may be established in Hyderabad on the model of the Madras Agencies, and that in such areas the separation of Judicial and Executive should be abandoned. There is moreover the need for special civil laws for aboriginals and for a modification of certain criminal laws in so far as tribals are concerned. It is obvious for instance that the Gonds, who have their own customary law can neither be judged by Hindu nor Muslim law, and that such cases as disputes over inheritance and succession ought to be decided according to their own customary law. Similarly certain acts which according to the Penal Code are criminal offences, punishable by imprisonment, are according to the tribal code in no way objectionable. While for instance, the forcible abduction of an unmarried girl is according to the Hyderabad Penal Code a criminal offence, 'marriage by capture' is a recognized Gond custom and indeed so much considered a correct way of getting married that even in some prearranged marriages the 'capture' of the bride is staged. Similarly adultery and the abduction of a married woman with her consent is in Gond eyes not

a serious offence, and if every case of adultery came before the regular courts, most Gonds would spend half of their time appearing as witnesses, defendants or complainants before the courts.

In the Santal Parganas there are special Santal Civil Courts which work under a code of procedure known as Santal Civil Rules. There the administration of justice is simple, inexpensive and speedy and the rich man has not the advantage over the poor man that he has in the regular courts.

Certain features of this system might with advantage be introduced in the Tribal Area of Adilabad. There should be a Special Civil Court working under a simplified procedure. Pleaders should be excluded and in civil cases in which one or both parties are aboriginals there should be no appeal to any court outside the District. This court should work under the supervision of the First Taluqdar; or at least in all cases affecting rents, tenancy and rights on land the last appeal should be to the First Taluqdar. I have seen time and again how affluent non-aboriginals have worn out an aboriginal opponent by repeated appeals. The expenses of a journey to Warangal or Hyderabad and of the employment of a pleader at the High Court are for most aboriginals prohibitive and in their ignorance they are incapable of holding their own in such courts. The position cannot be expressed better than in the words of Mr. Grigson, who wrote in his Foreword to *Tribal Hyderabad*: "In backward forest tracts, where men are poor and ignorant and distances are great, justice delayed or justice that is not cheap is justice denied. What are needed are touring officers combining executive and judicial powers, able to punish the tyrant or the exploiter on the spot. The transfer of revenue officers' judicial powers to distant, non-touring Judicial Courts has meant that the touring officers are largely impotent to give immediate relief against oppression, while aboriginal victims of the oppressor cannot face the heavy expenditure, the waste of time and the psychological disturbance involved by recourse to the distant, dreaded, uncongenial courts." (pp. X—XI).

A reorganization of the administration of justice in the tribal area of Adilabad is therefore no less urgent than the solution of the land problem, and I am convinced that the oppression of the aboriginal will not cease as long as wealthy landlords can drag ignorant aboriginals before a court where they are from the beginning at a disadvantage. Nor can it be

denied that the lesser police often sides with wealthy landlords, and during my last visit to Adilabad I came across two such cases where in the course of a land dispute between aboriginal and aboriginals, the latter were arrested on a trumped up charge.

Before Government has decided in principle whether Tribal Areas under special legislation will be established in Adilabad and other parts of the Dominions or not, it would be premature to enter upon the details of their administration. For the moment the aim must be to afford to the aboriginals as much relief from oppression as possible under the existing laws, and I am of the opinion that the first two steps should be:

- (a) Replacement of non-aboriginal patels by aboriginals in all villages with an aboriginal majority.
- (b) Separation of aboriginal hamlets (*mazras*) from non-aboriginal villages (*mauzas*), if necessary by fusion with other aboriginal *mazras* or *mauzas*.

To enable the Special Tribes Officer to carry out these measures parallel with the allotment of land he will have to be invested with special powers and I would suggest besides his other powers he should be armed with police powers equal to those of a Second Taluqdar in the whole District, so that he can combat cases of oppression on the spot.

6. THE TENANCY ACT.

So far I have not referred in this report to the new Tenancy Act, for it has not yet come into force and such details as the fixing of maximum rents are still under consideration.

But certain aspects of the relations between landlords and raiyats have a direct bearing on the problems of village self-government and indirectly also on the administration of justice. As long as the non-aboriginal landlord holds, as he often does, the office of police patel and deals individually with each of his raiyats, the latter are at his mercy whatever may be the provisions of the Tenancy Act. To guard the aboriginal raiyats against exploitation and oppression it will therefore be necessary to set limits to the interference of the landlord in internal village matters and to ensure that in every aboriginal village where all or most of the land belongs to a non-aboriginal there is an aboriginal patel *through whom alone* the landlord deals with the raiyats. This system is working well in the Santal

Parganas where the *pradhan* or village-headman is an effective bulwark against any encroachment by the landlord on the villagers' rights. It may therefore be considered whether the patels could not be made responsible for the payment of the rent admissible under the Tenancy Act to the landlord. Of course, only close supervision by Revenue and Police officers would ensure that the landlord does not extort further *mamul* or services, but the very existence of a representative of the raiyats recognized by Government will have a deterrent effect and enable the aboriginal tenants to obtain redress of grievances.

My personal opinion is that many landlords particularly in Asifabad and Rajura are at present attempting to get rid of aboriginal raiyats who have for many years cultivated their land and to whom the new Tenancy Act may give greater rights and to replace them by newcomers who will have no occupancy rights. The exploitation and oppression of aboriginals by non-aboriginal landlords is one of the features in which no change for the better is yet to be noticed, and the attitude of the landlords reveals itself in their hostile attitude towards the new Gond schools which they consider a danger to their hold over the aboriginals.

If the principle of the appointment of village-headmen in the villages of non-aboriginal landlords were to be accepted, I would propose that the rules determining the rights and duties of the headmen of aboriginal villages should contain the following provisions :

1. This regulation shall only apply to villages where all or more than 60 per cent. of the cultivated land belongs to one proprietor (*ijadar*, *pattadar* or other landlord).
2. There shall ordinarily be a village-headman for every village (*mauza*) and where more than 50 per cent. of the inhabitants are aboriginals the village-headman shall be an aboriginal.
3. Where there is a hamlet (*mazra*) or several hamlets with a total of more than 40 houses and more than 50 per cent. of the inhabitants of this hamlet (or these hamlets) are aboriginals, and the headman of the village (*mauza*) is not an aboriginal, there a separate aboriginal headman shall be appointed as village headman for the hamlet (or hamlets).

4. The village headmen shall be appointed by the First Taluqdar who can delegate his power of appointing village headmen to the Special Tribes Officer or the Second Taluqdar.
5. When a village headman dies, resigns or absconds, the landlord must report this to the First Taluqdar who shall within three months appoint a new village headman from among the aboriginal residents of the village; preference shall be given to the son or heir of the deceased village-headman, but in cases of personal unsuitability of the heir, the First Taluqdar shall exercise his discretion in appointing a successor. The landlord shall have no right of veto against the appointment of a village headman.
6. During the period he holds office, it shall be the duty of the village headman:
 - (a) to collect rents from the raiyats and to pay it punctually to the proprietor or other landlord,
 - (b) to perform the prescribed police duties,
 - (c) to report promptly to the First Taluqdar the sale, purchase, or transfer of land made in contravention of the provision of the Hyderabad Tenancy Act (1954 F.) and any other infringements of the rights of the raiyats of his village,
 - (d) to realize from the raiyats and pay over to the proprietor or other landlord or Government any such taxes, dues and fees as may be prescribed by Government from time to time,
 - (e) to assist all Government officers in the execution of their lawful duties,
 - (f) to reside in the village.
7. During the period he holds office, a village-headman shall be entitled:
 - (a) to receive as commission from each riyat, one anna in the rupee on the rent collected by him from the raiyats,

- (b) to deduct as commission on the whole or any portion of the rent paid by him to the proprietor or other landlord on or before the *kist* date one anna in the rupee,
 - (c) to deposit in the tahsil office the rent in case the proprietor or other landlord has made no provision for taking delivery of the rent on the *kist* date at any place within the Taluq in which the village is situated.
8. The proprietor or other landlord shall not be permitted to collect from the raiyats any part of the rent, or fees, dues or *mamul* in kind either personally or through any agency other than the village headman. Any attempt at such collection or at the exactions of free services by the proprietor or other landlord shall be reported to the First Taluqdar by the village headman.
 9. If a proprietor or other landlord or his agent levies from a village headman or from a raiyat, or a village headman levies from a raiyat any sum of money or anything in excess of the legal rent, the local cess or the fees and taxes due to Government, as the case may be, or the interest payable on an arrear of such rent or cess, such proprietor or landlord or his agent, or village headman, as the case may be, shall be punishable with simple imprisonment for a term to be fixed by Government, or with a fine, to be fixed by Government or with both.
 10. If the village headman fails either because of fraud or of negligence to pay up in due time one year's rent to the proprietor, he shall be liable by order of the First Taluqdar to dismissal. If he is found guilty of fraud or of embezzlement of the rent collected from the raiyats, he shall forfeit his holding in the village up to the value of the embezzled amount, independently of such criminal prosecution as the case may warrant.

These regulations will, of course, need amplification and the question as to whether village-headmen should be allowed official holdings free of rent for their services, and to what extent they should be liable to the landlord for such rents as

they failed to collect for no fault of theirs will have to be considered in accordance with the spirit of the Hyderabad Tenancy Act.

7. ABORIGINALS AND THE GODAVARI DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Among the most important post-war plans of the Dominions is a Scheme for the Industrial and Agricultural Development of a large area along the Godavari including parts of Chinnur, Lakshetipet, Asifabad, Nirmal and Both taluqs. This scheme includes the creation of a great industrial town on the banks of the Godavari near Mancherial, Reservoirs and Hydro-electric plants on the Kadam River and the irrigation of some 713,000 acres of cultivable land in the Godavari valley.

It would be unrealistic to assume that the materialization of this plan will leave the aboriginals of Adilabad unaffected; nor can it be the intention of Government to close the door to any progress which can raise the aboriginals' standard of living. Contacts with the modern world can be beneficial for a primitive population, but they can also be destructive by leading to economic and social disorganization. Our aim must therefore be to control these contacts with industrial development in such a way as to enable the aboriginals to participate in the prosperity resulting from the Godavari Scheme without exposing them to the dangers of proletarianization and loss of their distinct tribal culture.

For this I see at present three possibilities, which are not alternative but complementary.

1. The existence of a large urban population in the Godavari valley will favour the intensification of cultivation in the vicinity. In the industrial town there will be a large market for vegetables and fruit, and factories will require vast quantities of such raw materials as long staple cotton and oil seeds. Apart from the valley area which will come under irrigation, there are close to Mancherial the plateaux of the Rali and the Tilani area, and their elevation of more than a thousand feet above the Godavari level may make them more suitable for the cultivation of certain vegetables and fruit trees than the hot valley area.

For the growing of cotton on the other hand, there is ample scope in the large areas of heavy black soil in the valleys of the central highlands, and the Gonds raise good crops of oil seeds on the light stony soils of the flat hill-tops. I would therefore suggest that experts from the agricultural department should

explore the possibilities for the growing of vegetables and fruit and that the cultivation of cotton and oil-seeds should be encouraged by the supply of suitable improved seeds and by a marketing organization on a co-operative basis which assures the aboriginal cultivator of adequate returns for such cash crops. The co-ordination of industrial needs with agricultural production by a planned selection and distribution of seeds and a centralized purchase of crops would benefit both the cultivator and the industries.

2. I understand that the establishment of irrigated forests for the growing of high class timber is foreseen in the Godavari Scheme, and for the work on the channels and in the plantations a stable labour force will be required. But as a rule labourers from the open country dislike living and working in the forests, and with plenty of employment open in other spheres of the scheme, it will no doubt be difficult to obtain sufficient labour for forest work. The aboriginals of Adilabad District on the other hand have never lost touch with the forest, and both Gonds and Kolams would be most suitable for forest work. In Lakshetipet Taluq there is a fairly large population of Gonds who have been dispossessed of their land by Velmas and other immigrants, and are now leading a precarious existence as agricultural labourers. I think it should be possible to resettle such Gonds in special villages, where they would have to be given small plots of land for their domestic needs in addition to regular employment in the irrigated forests. I think that such an arrangement would be in the interests of both the Gonds and the Development Scheme which would gain thereby a settled and steady labour force for forest work, but I think that conditions of pay and hours of work would have to correspond to those in the other industries, if the labourers are not to drift gradually into employment which offers more favourable terms.

3. There can be no doubt that a great industrial city practically at the gates of the Tribal Area will attract a certain number of aboriginals. There will always be Gonds, Kolams, and Naikpods, who are either landless or in financial difficulties and such men are likely to seek employment in the new industrial centre. They will certainly not be the best nor the most intelligent of the aboriginals, and if left to their own devices they must drift into the lowest class of unskilled casual labourers. Yet the employment of so valuable a human material as the aboriginals of Adilabad in the new industries should not be left to chance.

The experience of the Gond Education Scheme has taught us that Gonds are not only reliable and steady, but that many of them are of high intelligence. Young men who two years ago were practically illiterate are today village schoolmasters proficient in Gondi, Marathi and Urdu and conducting classes of over fifty boys. I believe therefore that Gonds could equally well be trained as skilled workmen, and I would suggest that the training of young literate Gonds as carpenters, mechanics, fitters, etc., should not be deferred until the industries of the new Godavari town have come into being, but should be taken up at once. If we can build up a small stock of trained Gond workmen of fairly high qualifications and literate in Urdu, these young men can become the nucleus and leaders of an industrial Gond colony and serve as an example that for the aboriginal industrial employment does not necessarily mean casual labour at a low wage and life in an uncongenial, squalid environment, but that an industrial worker can enjoy as high or higher a standard of living and as good housing as an independent cultivator.

Gonds have a very full community life, which is enriched and vitalized by innumerable feasts and religious rites. Outside their own tribal society they feel lost and unhappy, and I have no doubt that they would detest living in ordinary labour lines. Even the much more detribalized Koyas of Yellandu did not like living at the collieries, but used to walk in daily from their villages. When the collieries were shifted to Kothagudem, which was too far from their villages, many of them stopped working rather than move into labour lines. I have no doubt that the Gonds' reaction would be similar.

I would suggest therefore that when the time comes for the laying out of the industrial town provision is made for the establishment of several aboriginal settlement on the edge of the Rali and the Indaram State Forest. In these settlements, sufficient land should be made available for garden plots, and the construction and arrangement of the houses should be left to the settlers. The most responsible of the trained workers should be appointed as village officers and it would be for them to recruit settlers, look after the villagers' welfare and assist in their training for industrial labour. Arrangements could be made that the Marlavai Training Centre provides for each settlement a Gond school with a specially selected teacher, and it may be advisable to attach to these schools instructors to teach industrial crafts. Thus it would be possible to create a

stable and well trained aboriginal labour force attached to their villages and bound by many ties of kinship and tradition to the nearby agricultural hinterland, and I do not think it beyond the bounds of probability that already in the second generation these Gond settlers could be 100 per cent. literate, and consequently suitable for training as skilled workers.

It is not likely that in the first years large numbers of aboriginals will be drawn into industrial employment, but the growth of an indigenous industrial population will largely depend on the conditions of work and housing created for those aboriginals who first seek work in the industrial town.

My suggestion would be to begin by training a small batch of Gonds who have passed through the Marlavai Training Centre and are therefore literate in Marathi and Urdu, under a special instructor either in the workshops of the Bellampalli collieries or any other suitable industrial establishment in Adilabad District. They could later be temporarily employed, but if possible as a group, in Railway Workshops or elsewhere until employment in the Godavari Scheme is available. By the time work begins in the industries of the Godavari town, several batches could be fully trained and the nucleus of a Gond colony of skilled workmen could be established.

I think this should make it clear that the present policy of educating and rehabilitating the aboriginals is in no way opposed to the industrial development of Adilabad District and that quite on the contrary a prosperous and educated aboriginal peasantry organized on co-operative lines will not only be able to produce valuable raw materials such as cotton and oil-seeds but that from such a peasantry a far better type of industrial worker can come, than from a drifting population of ignorant, landless labourers. Even when the majority of Gonds has been allotted land under *laoni khas* there will always be families with several sons, some of whom will find no livelihood on the paternal land, and in many of the taluqs it will in any case not be possible to settle all aboriginals on their own land. The initial cost of training young Gonds for industrial work will be negligible compared to the crores of rupees spent on the material side of the Godavari Development Scheme, and if such training results in the formation of a stable indigenous labour force, bound to the District by tradition and sentiment, every rupee invested will bear ample dividends.

The necessity of planning for industrial development has been generally recognized. Towns and industries cannot be allowed to grow haphazardly without a co-ordinating plan. But

industries consist not only of machines, but also of human material and the quality of that material is often more decisive for the quality and quantity of production than the machinery. Planning and organization cannot be confined to the material side of industry, but must include the formation of a high class labour force.

I do not want to hold out hopes that the aboriginals of Adilabad will from the very beginning come forth in thousands for the work on the Godavari Scheme. Aboriginals are set in their ways, and do not rapidly change over to a new economy. They have the traditions of peasants, and the greater part of their contribution will be in the products of their fields and forests. But if approached in the right way they are eager to learn and I have therefore no doubt that the training of Gonds for industrial work is not only feasible, but is likely to lead the growth of an aboriginal industrial community of a standard of efficiency equal to that of any Indian labour force.

8. CONCLUSIONS.

Summarizing the impressions gained during the two months of my tour in Adilabad District I should like to pay tribute to the work done by the First Taluqdar, Mr. S. M. Kamruddin, H.C.S. and the Special Tribes Officer, Mr. Moazam Husain, H.C.S. Despite innumerable difficulties and the opposition of vested interests, they have carried out the policy laid down by Government with remarkable success, and the healthier atmosphere which I found among the aboriginals of most parts of the District is largely due to their efforts. The tribesmen have now realized that they are no longer a community without rights and that where their interests are endangered they can get redress of their grievances by appealing to the First Taluqdar or the Special Tribes Officer. The sympathy shown to their cause by them & other Revenue officers has convinced them that Government is aware of their difficulties and anxious to help them as much as is possible. A greater centralization such as exists in tribal areas of British India, would certainly facilitate the work of the First Taluqdar and enable him to bring immediate relief whenever legitimate grievances of aboriginals come to his notice. But it is to be hoped that even failing the establishment of a Tribal Agency, the other Departments concerned with aboriginal matters will gradually fall into line with the policy of the Revenue Department, and that increased co-operation between Revenue, Forest and Police authorities will ultimately eliminate such obstacles as still stand in the way

of the rehabilitation of the tribesmen. Encouraging as is the progress of the allotment of land under *laoni khas*, the development of the Education Scheme and the general improvement in the status of the aboriginals, the rehabilitation policy is only in its beginning.

Continuity of policy and sustained effort are required to ensure the full and lasting success of the Gond Education Scheme and other measures for the benefit of the aboriginals. The whole rehabilitation policy must now be placed on a permanent basis, for the development of the backward areas of the Dominions cannot be achieved by short term measures, but has to be planned and organized over a period of several decades.

Rural construction work is by its very nature multi-sided and institutions like the Marlavai Training Centre must be organized in such a way as to meet all the vital needs of a backward population. School education alone is of little value if it is not combined with instruction in practical matters. The training and subsequent appointment of aboriginal village officers, for instance, has done as much to raise the status and better the material condition of the Gonds as the opening of schools. Social workers in backward areas have to deal with all aspects of peasant life, and it is therefore impracticable to split up rural reconstruction work between different departments. Educational, co-operative, agricultural and medical experts have all to make their individual contribution, but the planning and co-ordination of their activities must be the responsibilities of one department. If a team of well trained and enthusiastic rural workers, fit to fill such responsible posts as that of the Headmaster of the Marlavai Centre, is to be built up, it is indispensable to establish an organization in which they can be provided with permanent posts. No one can be expected to give his best if he is either only temporarily employed, or is lent by one department and must fear that his specialization on the problems of village uplift and rural reconstruction may prejudice his future chances of promotion in his own department. The creation of a separate cadre of officers and social workers in the Rural Reconstruction Department is therefore an urgent *desideratum*. Only by organizing all those who have given proof of their ability for work in aboriginal and other backward areas as a permanent body of expert rural workers will it be possible to succeed in the great task of bringing enlightenment, better living conditions and a just social order to all the remote village of the Dominions.

APPENDIX.

*Extract from the tour notes of the Hon'ble Revenue and
Police Member (W. V. Grigson, Esqr., C.S.I., I.C.S.)
Adilabad District.*

1st-4th Feb. 1946/30th Isf.—3rd Farwardi 1355 F.

3. I inspected the aboriginal school at Keslapur and was delighted to see the excellent progress made in imparting literacy to Gond boys and adults. They are becoming literate in Gondi, Urdu and Marathi. The spontaneous, easy singing of tribal songs was a refreshing contrast to the dreary nasalisation of Marathi or Hindi songs in the average school in the Central Provinces aboriginal areas. Actual experience of the Marlavai Education Scheme convinces me of the soundness of the general recommendations in respect of aboriginal education in my Central Provinces report, though the results could not have been achieved without the presence of workers of the calibre and public spirit of the Haimendorfs to get things going. The most practical feature of the scheme is the selection and training of tribesmen to work as teachers in tribal areas, thus overcoming the chronic reluctance of men from the plains and towns to teach in aboriginal villages. I am in very substantial agreement with the further measures for tribal rehabilitation outlined in Baron Haimendorf's last (September 1945, Aban 1354 F.) report on the rehabilitation of aboriginals in Adilabad District. I hope that this will be now printed as soon as possible (with my 1353 note on the policy to be adopted in the tribal areas of the districts as an appendix to it) for submission to the Executive Council as a formal *guzarish*. Obviously the time has come to put all this work on a permanent and expanding basis. The first class work that has been done by Mr. Jogalkar, the Superintendent of the Marlavai Training School, must be recognised, at least by giving him permanent employment. We should also as soon as possible get all the tribal teachers and workers employed on a permanent basis.

*The policy to be adopted in the Tribal Areas of the
Adilabad District.*

The special *laoni* case was discussed at Keslapur. The note prepared by Mr. Moazam Husain, Special Officer, dated 14th Isfandar '53 F. in consultation with Baron C. von Fürer-Haimendorf can now be taken as the basis of a notification for special *laoni*. The boundaries of the areas to be notified are stated clearly in para 3 of the note. With the exception of Nirmal, Sirpur, and Chinnur Taluqs, roughly speaking the rest of the area now to be notified is all the central plateau from the west of Boath and Kinwat Taluqs to the hills just west of a line from Rajura through Asifabad to a point about half way between Mancherial and Lakshetipet, excluding the actual Godavari plain, though the eastern boundary at two points projects to the east of this line, and though a substantial enclave of non-aboriginal villages between Boath and Ichora (on the Nirmal-Asifabad road) is excluded from the tribal area. This notification will thus leave large areas in which ordinary *laoni* is available to non-aboriginals in Boath, Kinwat, Adilabad, Rajura, Sirpur, Chinnur, Lakshetipet and Nirmal Taluqs. Outside the areas where special *laoni* is thus reserved for aboriginals, special *laoni* should be allowed to all those castes and tribes and communities who have been allowed special *laoni* in Nalgonda and other Districts.

In the taluqs of Nirmal, Sirpur and Chinnur the tribal areas have not been defined. We have, however, from the census list a clear indication of villages where the tribal population is 40 per cent. of the whole. The notification might also, therefore, restrict special *laoni* to the aboriginals in those villages where the population of aboriginals (excluding Banjaras, Mathuras, Andhs and Kolis) is 40 per cent. of the total. The lists given by the Statistical Department will need checking up against the village returns so as to exclude members of these tribes from the tribal population.

This, however, does not go quite far enough. The point is that in this tribal area of Adilabad we have also to refuse ordinary *laoni* to non-aboriginals, while we should also include the village *kotwals* as persons to whom *inam* land may be given on special *laoni*.

The tribes to be notified for the tribal areas will be Gond (including Raj-Gond), Koya (including Racha-Koya), Pardhan, Thoti, Kolam, Naikpod and Ojha. Banjara, Andh and Koli may safely be omitted; Banjara are in some areas regular exploiters of aboriginals and Andh and Koli are recent, de-tribalised immigrants.

Apart from prohibiting ordinary *laoni* in favour of non-aboriginals in the tribal area, it is necessary also to prevent the alienation of aboriginal land to non-aboriginals. [Recent enquiries made by me in Yeotmal and Chanda Districts, both bordering on the Adilabad District, show the enormous extent to which aboriginals have been expropriated from their lands in those areas and we must check the process in Adilabad before it gathers momentum there.]

Forest Question.

The outstanding questions have hitherto been regarded as the Daboli Block in the Nirmal Forest Division, and the Tilani Block in the Asifabad Forest Division, in Utnur and Asifabad Taluqs respectively. Baron C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, the Taluqdar Sahib, Adilabad and the Special Officer have pointed out that if my previous suggestion of entirely dropping the reservation of Daboli and Tilani were to be accepted, the Gonds and Kolams of the Satmala Block and the Manikgarh Block would feel that this was unjust discrimination. Moreover, there are in both the Daboli and the Tilani Blocks areas of good forest where cultivation could not conceivably be allowed. The whole question then resolves itself into one of detailed discrimination between land which should be retained as forest and land which should be handed over to the village for allowing the villagers concerned sufficient *nistar* and other requirements (of the Central Provinces ryotwari *minhai* forests). A pressing further problem everywhere in the district is how to push back the forest boundaries which are too close to the *abadi*. Then there is the question of meeting the local demand for land now included in notified or proposed reserved forests. The Taluqdar Sahib, Adilabad, says that there are taluq registers showing the areas which have been asked for. Many of these are included in deserted villages, which are now shown as within the reserves. There has been no correlation between these applications and the stock maps of the Forest Department. When the Nirmal Division working plan was made, Utnur Taluq was excluded and no stock

maps of Utnur Taluq forests have yet been prepared or at least received in the D.F.O.'s Office, the D.F.O. says, however, that Mr. Bhogle, then Probationary Assistant Conservator, was deputed here last year for preparing a working plan for Utnur Taluq, but no copy of his report is available. The Asifabad Forest Division Working Plan is under revision. It should now be possible to decide, therefore, definitely whether any area for which cultivation applications have been received is definitely needed as a part of a forest reserve, and so to earmark as available for special *laoni* not only *kharij-i-khata* lands outside the reserves, but also lands now included within the forests which never will be of any use as forest and can be earmarked for aboriginal colonisation. When the Forest Department says that any land applied for should be refused because of its forest value, there should be a joint inspection by the D.F.O. and the Taluqdar or Special Officer.

The first task, therefore, of the Special Officer (Mr. Moazam Husain, H.C.S.) will be to take in hand the classification of lands within the Utnur Taluq and the Tilani Block. In such areas we should appoint no *watandar patwari* or *patel* under the existing rules, but should let the leader of the colony be the *patel* and allow qualified *watandari* rights to be earned by efficiency once a village has become permanent, on lines similar to Central Provinces rules for granting *watandari* rights to the *patel*-founders of the new ryotwari villages. No notice need be taken of nominal existing *watan* rights where these have long ceased to have any value because a village after its inclusion in a reserve has been deserted.

Another problem for the Taluqdar and the Special Officer will be to secure land for *podu* cultivation for Kolams and Naikpods; the areas where this will be necessary are the Rali, Tilani, Dhanora and Manikgarh forests of the Asifabad Forest Division and the Satmala and Kawal State Forests in the Nirmal Division. The areas involved are small and the population for which provision has to be made only a few hundred families. The annual requirements per family may be taken as $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres and no plot should be allowed to be cultivated for more than two successive years. Hill slopes with light forests are preferred and these require 10 years' rest between the fellings. This means that for each family $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres will be required, with a small reserve for new families. We should, therefore, take on the average 10 acres per family divided into $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres plots, each to be cultivated once in 10 years for 2 years at a

time as our basis. The distribution of the land should be left to the people themselves, provided that it is restricted to the delimited area and the rotation rules are followed. If the population increases under this regularisation of what is now an illegality, then any further land can only be provided by taungya cultivation. The position can be reviewed at yearly intervals and in the meantime all possible efforts should be made by means of special Forest Co-operative Societies and otherwise to provide the Kolams and Naikpods with decent plough-lands and the means of cultivating them.

Forest Villages.

The Special Officer and the special forest staff will also have to take into account the need of land for forest villages. One effect of any large distribution of land on special *laoni* for the foundation of new villages on lands at present within the reserves or proposed reserves will be greatly to reduce the labour available for forest work. There are now only three forest villages in the District, all in Nirmal Division. Provision has been made in the new Forest Bill for power to regulate forest villages by rules. There is an enormous area in Srichelma, Utnur and Ajharwajhar State Forests without revenue or forest villages. In deciding, therefore, whether the deserted villages are better suited for excision for cultivation or for retention within the reserve it should be remembered that the need of forest villages as well as the forest capacities of land are criteria for retention within the reserves. The standard of living of the local Gond is comparatively high and if he is to be persuaded to work in a forest village it will be essential for the forest village rules to secure that he gets a full daily wage for his labour.

Settlement.

The Utnur Survey-Settlement is now due. A major problem is the position of tribal cultivators of lands held by non-aboriginal pattadars. These will be affected by the coming enactment of the Tenancy Bill. It will then be necessary to consider how the work of determining tribal tenants' rights under the Bill will fit in with the settlement of Utnur and the re-settlement of other parts of the District. Almost certainly in this district we shall have to depart from the usual Hyderabad practice of having the settlement conducted by parties controlled from Hyderabad by the Settlement Commissioner and instead shall have to have someone in the District with

the powers of a Settlement Officer, either the Taluqdar or the Special Officer or both. To facilitate this work, and also the whole process of setting in order the tribal areas of Adilabad in particular and also other parts of the State it is now necessary to get promulgated a Tribal Areas Regulation on the lines that the Taluqdar of any District containing a tribal area should be the Agent to the Government with any special officers appointed for the areas normally working under him as Special Assistant Agent; it may sometimes be necessary to have a special Agent with full Agency powers. Normally every Second Taluqdar whose Division includes all or part of a tribal area should be an Assistant Agent. As moreover this Regulation should be a permanent feature of the Constitution and will deal with certain things outside the legal purview of the new legislature, it is probably desirable to get it promulgated as an *A'in* rather than as a *Dastur-ul-Amal* or an Act of the Legislature. It should include special rule-making powers and above all a provision whereby no ordinary law of the State shall apply in a tribal area unless special notification to that effect is issued and that in so applying such a law the Government may vary it as it thinks necessary to suit the special circumstances of all or any tribal areas.

Co-operative Organisation.

I should like the Co-operative Department to experiment with the foundation of at least one village on a collective farming basis, fostering it with generous assistance from either the Rural Welfare Trust or the budget allotment for aboriginal tribes.

For the 1354 F. budget a small Co-operative staff might be provided of, say, two Organizers for dealing with Collective Farming, formation of Purchase and Sales Societies and Co-operative Forest Societies. I have said two, although in the scheme tentatively worked out by R.C.S., the Taluqdar Sahib of Adilabad and Baron C. von Fürer-Haimendorf one only was mentioned, because there should be some relief so that each can have a recess for part of the year and because communications are difficult and it is necessary to try more than one area at a time.

W. V. GRIGSON,
REVENUE MEMBER,
1-5-'53 F.