MEMORANDUM

ON THE

Report of the Prakasam Committee

ON

CONDITIONS IN ZAMINDARI

AND

OTHER PROPRIETARY AREAS

"Next to war, pestilence, and famine, the worst thing that can happen to a Rural Community is absentee landlordism."

Prof. Carver.

K. G. SIVASWAMY,
Member,
Servants of India Society.

The Report of the Prakasam Committee on Conditions in Zamindari and other Proprietory Areas.

INTRODUCTION.

In the following pages the report of the Prakasam Committee on the conditions prevailing in zamindari andother proprietory areas is examined. It is not possible to say on the basis of the materials placed before the public by the Committee, whether its recommendations are beneficial or not to the cultivator. In the first place the Committee has excluded a certain class of proprietory units from the scope of the report, even though sufficient evidence has been collected about them. In the second place, the Committee has made no recommendations from the point of view of protecting the cultivator. The report was concerned with interpreting the juridical interests of the occupier of land, be he the farmer of revenue, or the absentee rayat, or the cultivating rayat with hired labour, or the rayat working by himself with the aid of family labour, who had an immediate engagement to pay the land revenue to the zamindar. Consequently the interests of the cultivating rayat have not been protected, even though the report admits that his lands have passed to moneylenders, that he has become a tenant-at-will, and that competition among such tenants for land is extremely keen and leads to undercutting.

The proposals made by the Committee do not point also to any hope that the protection of the cultivator will receive any fair attention a tthe hands of Government. The report says that 'persons who rush to the landholders and offer competitive rates each year cannot be treated as undertenants.'

Again it says, 'There were such under-tenants in exercise of their own customary rights at the time of the Permanent Settlement.' Having deprived the latter of their rights, and converted them into tenants-at-will, does it lie in the mouth of the Government to say now that they are no more than tenants-at-will? Secondly, the report has shown an unwillingness to propose the grant of occupancy rights to tenants at-will by calling them, in respect of inam lands, squatters of 1933, while it was to such tenants that the C. P. Tenancy Act gave occupancy rights in 1920, and the present U. P. Bill is now granting such rights? Thirdly, the report wants to increase the compensation to be paid to proprietors of the soil upto the purchase price of the land; while any land policy is based on the supreme right of the State to prevent opportunities for farming out lands for lease even by proprietors of the soil. Fourthly, the Hon. the Revenue Minister said in the Legislative Assembly on Dec. 3, 1938 in a reply to a question by Mr. H. S. Hussain.

> The Government have received representations from Congress Committees and others with regard to the necessity of passing tenancy laws in this province. The giving of fixity of tenure to lessees under rayatwari owners of land means taking away from the ful ownership of the pattadar, and such a step is not under consideration.

So then the supremacy of proprietory rights in the soil over the national interest of conservation of land, for being used for agriculture, and cestainly not for giving opportunities of profiteering by non-agriculturists by rackrenting the cultivator, has been solemnly affirmed by the Government on the floor of the Legislature. Under these conditions one should be excused if he prejudged the issues yet to be reported upon, and come to the conclusion that the dice have been heavily loaded against the cultivator.

On the merits of the report, one should be grateful to the Committee for the great pains it has taken in properly interpreting the Permanent Settlement Regulation. Under that Regulation and the Regulations connected with it, the zamindar has no right to collect more than the total assessment fixed in 1801. He has no right to collect more than the established rents in 1801 on waste lands. He has no mining rights, nor rights to keep rayati lands as private lands, nor any rights over hills and forests and uncultivable lands. According to the Regulation, the zamindar can distribute waste lands, supervise communal lands and is responsible for irrigation works. But he has hardly discharged his responsibilities in respect of these matters in the interest of the rayat. The Committee recommends that these powers cannot be removed from him as they form part of the Permanent Settlement.

Again the Committee recommends that the rates of rent prevailing in 1801 should be adopted as they form part of the Regulations connected with the Permanent Settlement. Now this may fairly be agreed to by the zamindars; they may be willing to go back to the rents of 1801, but they may demand a share of the produce and refuse its commutation on the basis of prices of 1801, as recommended by the Committee, as it is nowhere said in the Patta Regulation that a rayat has a right to commute his payment from kind to money as and when he liked. While one may agree that, according to the Patta Regulation, the rate of rent should not exceed the rates of 1801, it does not always mean that rents shall not be fixed below the maximum rate of 1801. When the British came, the system of farming out revenues under the pre-British rule had two defects, namely, the revenue fixed was fluctuating, and the persons appointed as farmers of revenue were too often changed. The Regulation cured the revenue administration of these two defects, and Government have so far not gone back on these two reforms introduced in 1801. They had also reserved the right "to enact regulations as they may think necessary for the protection and welfare of the dependent Taluqdars, rayats and other cultivators of the soil." (Permanent Settlement Regulation of 1793). Consequently, Government have every right to fix fair rents, povided they do not exceed the rents fixed in 1801 and do not reduce the total assessment on which the peshkush was based. There is therefore no need for the Committee for stickling to the pre-Settlement rate, and saying that it cannot be reduced on any account. The Patta Regulation to refers to the rates of 1801 as a guide to determine rents; it does not say that it is the rate that ought to be fixed for each holding. In fact, the rates of 1801 were very indefinite, as they included abwabs and as they included produce-sharing on a customary basis, and payment of grain rent.

Government has also got power, under the Permanent Settlement Regulation already quoted, to regulate the distribution of waste lands and the use of natural facilities by rayats, and to control the forest resources in zamins.

The recommendations of the Committee in regard to Inams are most disappointiug, as they indicate a retrograde policy of taking away the rights already secured by cultivators under the existing Act.

The fixation of rent, so as not to exceed the rates of 1801, and the total assessment as fixed in the same year will be justifiable only if the measure helps the cultivator. The proposal will reduce the existing rents by four-fifths. But every proprietor of the soil is not an agriculturist. We have at the top the under-farmers who were the early farmers of revenue. Why should the zamindar be deprived of his existing rents for their benefit? Again there are absentee rayats who live by exploiting the cultivator. Why then should rents be reduced, while the tenants-at-will are not protected? Fair rent not exceeding the rates of 1801 should be fixed for the tenant-at-will, and he should be declared as an under-rayat with permanent rights of occupancy. Above them are the occupancy rayats. The tenants under the under-farmers should also be granted occupancy rights. It is too late in the day to find out who were the original under-farmers, They can therefore be classified only on the basis of the area of their holdings. Those holding, say, above 100 acres dry or 33 acres wet may be classified as under-farmers, giving them the right to use the holdings below the prescribed area as private farms, and making also the existing tenants occupancy rayats in the rest of their lands. The extent of private lands of a zamindar may also be limited in the same manner, and occupancy rights granted in the rest of the lands. Some limited rights in these private lands of under-farmers and zamindars may be given to the tenants, namely, a five-year occupancy on the same rent.

Subleases in lands of occupancy rayats should be prevented. These rayats may be given five years to undertake direct cultivation, failing which hereditary rights should be granted to the sub-tenant, subject of course to the payment of a defined rent. In the case of rayats who purchase lands for the future and who are newly admitted to possession, the subtenant should be placed in their status, if these rayats are found to habitually sublet, and on the same rents which they are paying to the zamindar. There will be no injustice in such a proposal as the rayats take or buy lands with a full knowledge of the law against subleases.

As regards rents they may be fixed at the rayatwari rate for the under-rayat, at ½ of it for the occupancy rayat, and at 12½% less than the rate for the latter for the under-farmer, the rent to be so proportioned as neither to exceed the total assessment on the estate nor the customary rates of 1801.

If, without enlarging tenancy rights of the cultivator and fixing his rent, any reduction in the rents collected by the zamindar is made, the result will be the creation of an army of rent receivers, and larger avenues for rack-renting, the ruination of the agricultural industry, and the placing of the lives of the agriculturist cultivating classes at the mercy of superior holders, however well-intentioned the latter might be. Should the State do so today, when it has certainly larger resources and greater strength than it had in the 18th century to take care of the interests of every single individual in the country ?

The recommendations of the Committee are an invitation to the cultivator to fight his battles, unaided by legislation, with his superior holder for better living conditions. At the one end the Hon. the Premier says, "Collective bargaining is a very crude appartus employed for the purpose of settling labour disputes. I do not think it is good. But it is a necessary evil. I should like to end it as soon as possible." (Budget speech on the Industries Demand, 25th March, 1938, Pp. 785 and 786). At the other end the supreme duty of the State to protect proprietory interests at the cost of the lives of millions of people is proclaimed by the Hon. the Revenue Minister. Between these two pronouncements, may we request the Government to tell us what it is they expect of the cultivators ? To surrender their lives in the hands of 'village communities' which, under the proposed recommendations, are to be the custodians of common law rights? There can be no greater calamity to the people of India than such a proposal. If rights that existed in 1801 for the occupier of the land are to be protected, why then should not the same rights of the subtenant be protected? We live in a strange world. Official policies of the Congress seem to be different from those declared in its resolutions. Possibly, the millions of cultivators must pass through the same tribulations, sufferings, privations, strikes and class conflicts as the industrial workers do, to establish an obvious principle that property in land can be justified only if land is used for agriculture, and not if it is to be used for collecting rents. And if that is so, the future for the agricultural industry is extremely gloomy. However, we still hope against hope that better judgment would prevail and the calamity would be averted.

POONA 4.
12-1-1939.

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Appendices

I

A PATENT MEDICINE FOR AGRICULTURAL INDEBTEDNESS.

AMONG the ponderous seventeen volumes issued by the Madras Estates Land Act Committee lies hidden a medley of information, some of which may require authentication and documenting. And there are announcements too of new policies which will escape the public eye except of very careful readers. We do not know whether the Committee as such takes any responsibility for the views expressed in Part II of the Report. That part contains a scheme for removal of agricultural indebtedness. It makes a candid statement of the results of the Madras Agriculturists' 'Relief Act' in the following terms.

> " Naturally the agriculturist finds himself in trouble with regard to credit. The old sowcars whose debts have been cut down under the Act would not be enthusiastic and ready to lend moneys to the agriculturist to the extent to which they were doing before the Act was passed. Numerous complaints have been made before our Committee on this question. "

This view is rebutted in a press note No. 7 of the Development Department dated 6th December 1938, which says that the co-operative movement is giving every help and there is no need to entertain any feeling of the contraction of credit of a ryot. In fact, time after time the Hon. the Premier has disabused the public mind of any fear of shrinkage of credit by the operation of the Agriculturists' Relief Act.

Let us now pass on to give a summary of the scheme of rural credit as has been formulated in the report of the Madras Estates Land Act Committee.

According to the report the following were the causes of indebtedness, firstly the replacement of the corporate life of the villagers by the individual ryotwari system, secondly the enhancement of rent by the zamindars and Inamdars from their tenants, and of revenue by the Government from their ryots, and thirdly the cost of litigation in courts of law. The first was no doubt a cause of indebtedness, as individual ownership of lands in the place of communal ownership put in possession of ryots a tangible security in land on which they could borrow. But if what was gained by individual ownership was taken away by high rent or revenue on the produce of the land, the ryots or tenants were no better than serfs, and what they should have suffered from is not from a growing debt but want of credit. The amount of debt is less in zamin areas because no one would lend to tenants whose produce is hypothecated to zamindars for the rents due to them. High rents are the cause of want of credit. If land revenue is the cause of debt in ryotwari areas, (it was so in the early decades of the last century owing to high assessments and the varying methods of village leases and direct assessment adopted by the East India Company), then how will the committee explain the investments in land by non-agriculturists, and the leases that have increased both in the zamin and ryotwari areas? Even in zamin areas where rents are indeterminate, sub-leases have enormously grown at high rates, as are evidenced from the collectors' reports published by the Estates Land Act Committee. And even if high assessments or high rents were the cause of debt, they could not explain its growing volume, for no one would lend indefinitely to an agriculturist who has no margin to repay his debts. On the other hand, the economic history of India teaches us that an increase in the price of produce and value of land, the individual ownership of lands, the growth of land as a good security for raising credit owing to the creation of a record of rights, facilities for registration, the introduction of a civil law, and the facilities given by courts to money-lenders to recover the loans according to the law of the land are the causes for the growth of indebtedness.

The report then refers to a scheme of agricultural banks formulated as early as 1882, and says that it failed because the Government would not give a guarantee required of them. Again it says that:

> It was not to the interest of the British that *such village banking system* (italics ours) should be established in this country, the proposals and schemes had been thrown out, and in their place co-operative Societies Act was passed.

The chief merit of the scheme of Agricultural Banks, according to the report, is that, while Government wanted that the banks should restrict themselves to productive objects, their authors emphasised the need for liquidating old debts and for lending for all useful objects, the bank concerning itself only with the due security for the loan. The report therefore jumps to the conclusion that, because the proposal was for issue of *credit* for all objects, the scheme of Agricultural Banks was for carrying out multi-purposes, in addition to the grant of loans as has recently been recommended in one of the publications of the Reserve Bank of India We will now examine the correctness of these propositions.

An agricultural bank was proposed in 1882 to function as a company bank. It was quite the opposite of the village banking system. The Government of India were against agricultural banks in 1882, because the tenants had no security in land in Upper India provinces, and the scheme was workable only in ryotwari provinces. Also, without a clearance of the huge-amount of debts, the bank could not really start work. According to them

> Improvidence of cultivators and uncertainty of seasons are elements which are liable to interfere with a bank's success, and the difficulties might be met by prudent management. Yet the bank could not hope to succeed, unless it could start in a field where he agricultural classes were unencumbered with debt, or were enabled to liquidate their existing debt on reasonable terms.

Secondly, a multi-purpose society is a Co-operative society. It combines credit, supply of requirements and sale of produce. It is based on the faith that village leadership would be discovered to sufficiently understand the economic conditions of the people, to plan out a programme of development, and enthusiastically carry it out for the benefit of the rich, the middleclass, the small holder, the deficit holder, the tottering village craftsmen, the agricultural tenant and labourer, and the various classes of rural occasional and unemployed labour. It is rather surprising that the report believing in village banks, praises quite the contrary scheme of agricultural banks, and believing in village co-operation condemns the co-operative Societies Act and its working. The fundamental difference between Agricultural Banks and village Co-operative Societies cannot be put better than in the words of Sir Frederic Nicholson himself which we quote below from his report on agricultural banks.

> It is clearly useless for any bank outside a very small circle to think of supplying the countryside with the credit it needs. Nor is it conceivable that the borrower could obtain from such a bank either facile, cheap, or safe credit, the expense of enquiry, the risks of loss on petty loans to unknown persons, would preclude facility, while the element of safety would be largely wanting, since safety requires that the destination of the loan should be a productive

> one etc. Credit banks cannot and do not enquire into the purpose of a loan, provided the security is sufficient, whereas it is of the essence of village credit that the lending institution shall be a powerful aid to the borrower in checking extravagance and in suggesting useful outlay."

The Madras Estates Land Act Committee, pinning its faith in what is called a multipurpose Co-operative Society, says in the following words that the Co-operative movement has failed

> "Because it gave facilities for a handful of people who were at the head of the co-operative movement to speculate and gain as much profit as possible at the cost of the agriculturists."

It further says that the reason for the failure of the movement was:

> That the Constituents of the societies are not all agriculturists but non-agriculturists. Even though it has failed, and it is acknowledged by the best of the gentlemen who have been working it, still there are people who are resisting the proposals to reform the system by introducing multi-purpose Societies, which the Government of India itself proposed to do nearly 60 years back.

It is pathetic to see the report consistently repeating a glaring untruth that the proposal of an agricultural bank is simultaneous with the formation of a multi-purpose society.

The two reasons it gives for the failure of the Co-operative movement are 'the profiteering nature of the men at the top at the expense of agriculturists and the non-agricultural constituents of the societies.' If one looks into the constitution of the co-operative structure, it will be found that it is so purely federal that the representative of the village Co-operative Society has every power to elect his leaders who are at the top of the movement. And if they are bad, it is a reflection on the village leadership which is unable to discriminate, or being able, is indifferent or self interested. And it is to this village leadership that the report recommends more onerous duties of discharging the functions of a multi-purpose Co-operative Society, namely credit, supply and sale. It has became the common practice to cavil at district and provincial leadership, as those in power only come in touch with the latter, not realising that these leaders, with the best of intentions, are unable to make a move on, in a federal constitution, as they have to choose between office and power, and cannot have both. And it often happens that the village representative who can consolidate votes and has local influence over a clan or community has a larger control over, men at the top. And if the cause for the failure of the co-operative movement is to be laid anywhere, it should be laid at the poor character of village leadership and the absence of a watchful village public opinion. Men at the top have hardly stood in the way of the proper working of village societies, but on the other hand, have given them every help to make them more serviceable and useful to the people.

The fact of the matter is, that the advantages which were claimed for the village Co-operative Society by Sir Frederic Nicholson have not all come true. They have not drawn local capital. They have not helped the small men with petty loans. It was expected that, while agricultural banks might not be able to scale down debts, the village banks would do so, and pay the creditor and realise the settled amount from the member.

But the co-operative movement has come to grief both in Madras and the C. P. by undertaking liquidation of past debts. It was again said that honorary unpaid work would be forthcoming and therefore the cost of credit would be cheapened. On the other hand village secretaries have to be paid and societies have to employ clerks. There is an army of supervisors who have also to be maintained to assist the societies in their work. In fact, so much has the staff increased in the movement that it is maintaining itself because of the issue of loans on the basis of security rather than on that of repaying capacity, and because also of the utilisation of the profit realised from reserve fund in recurring expenditure. The following were the other advantages claimed by Sir Frederic Nicholson and none of them have come true.

> "Their ability to act as agents and brokers for their members in the sale of produce and purchase of necessaries; their capacity of acting as village granaries, lending grain for maintenance and seed; their ability to act as intermediaries between the State and the individual, whether in matters of loans for land improvements, cattle etc.,"

The multi-purpose society does not seem to have any larger objects in view than these above mentioned. The only difference it makes as compared with the village co-operative society is that it will have jurisdiction over a larger area. That means that village leadership has to be discovered from more than on village. All success that has been achieved in co-operation has come through individuals, rather than through the average village leadership. In the class conflict that exists to-day in the village, it is hardly possible to expect the absentee landlords to be serviceable to tenants or labourers. Neither the big landholder would be interested in the needs of the small-holder as the community of interests between them is little. The problem of organising agriculture is further complicated by the fact of existence of long term debts, uneconomic holdings, and want of employment. The supply of credit for agriculture is less important to the average cultivator than that of work to engage himself. In other words, we want an agency not only to help the villager in agricultural production and marketing, but also to utilise his labour power in remunerative activities. The leadership that is therefore required should combine a knowledge of conditions, a capacity to organise industrial activities, a sympathetic outlook to help all classes, and an earnestness to push a scheme through. A trained and well-paid agency duly controlled from the top and working under an agricultural bank and branches will give far better service to the village ryots and labourers than a co-operative society of the two latter classes. And though India has not to-day a developed citizenship to rehabilitate village life, it has certainly a large army of enthusiastic young men who have been educated in the universities and who are pulsating with a new life to share in the great task of building the economic life of the country. The working of the Spinners' Association has shown what can be done by a central body to help the masses. And if only we had asked the villagers to run spinners' societies, they would have become dormant long ago. What little success can be claimed for co-operation in the Sunderbans in Bengal is due to the working of the societies under the supervision of a single estate which runs a supply store, and markets the paddy of its tenants. Almost every success of a village co-operative society can be traced to a single person in whose absence the society goes to sleep. The way therefore lies in the liquidation of debts by reducing them to a repayable size, and arranging for their repayment by mortgage banks, and by floating an agricultural corporation for each province with branches for carrying out the multi-purposes which are expected to be carried out by a small village society. That way the U. P. Government we understand, are planning, and we hope Madras will take a lesson in this matter from them.

II.

Rates of rent or Waram paid by subtenants to rayats and ryots to zamindar.

Extracts from reports of Collectors

(Published by the Government for the Estates Land Act Committee.)

	Dry land		Manavari land		Wet land	
	By Sub-tenants	By rayats	By Sub-tenants	By rayats	By Sub-tenants	By rayats
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Vizagapatam Dist.						
1. Kurupam	Rs. 3 to 6	Rs. 1 to 4	...	...	Rs. 10 to 20	Rs. 5 to 13
2. Mandaras-Zamindars generally got half the produce from their subtenants.						
3. Vizianagaram	Rs. 8 to 15	As. 4 to Rs. 8	...	...	Rs. 10 to 30	Rs. 3 to 32
4. Parlakimedi	...	As. 8 to Rs. 3	...	Re. 1 to 4½	...	Rs. 2 to 7

The rayats collect from subtenants from 50 per cent to 66 p. c. of the produce on wet lands.

5. Mohagam	10	5	12	5	28	23/8
6. Talasamudram	...	...	20	4 to 40	...	...

(1) Kind rent on wet lands paid by rayats ranges between 8 and 20 garce per acre and that paid by tenants between 10 and 23 grace.

(2) In a number of estates of Vizagapatam district the report mentions that one rupee per acre for dry lands and Rs. 2 for other class of lands is paid to the ryot in addition to the rent due to the Zamindar.

(3) Some others mention half the produce as what is paid by subtenants.

(4) In some others 5 to 15 putties for dry lands, 5 to 20 putties for manavari lands, and ten to thirty putties for wet lands is mentioned as the kind rent paid by subtenants.

Thongedu Gotwada	Rs. 2 to 6	Rs. 1-4 to 4-12	...	...	10 to 25	7-11 to 19-8
Salur	Half share produce. Subtenants to bear costs of cultivation.					
Shermahamadapuram	4 to 20	Rs. 1 to 5	...	Rs. 1 to 5	8 to 30	Rs. 5 to 16
Kesavarayanipalem	8 to 15	1 to 10	...	...	...	...

	Dry		Manavari		Wet	
	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtentants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats
Madgole	Rs. 1 to 25	4 as. to Rs. 25	...	...	10 to 50	Rs. 1 to 35
West Godavari Dist.						
Gundefalle	10	4	...	...	5 bags of paddy per acre	8
Mirzapuram	...	6–4	...	...	7 to 12 bags	8
Nidadavole	5	10–0	...	...	6 to 15 bags of paddy	9–2

Note:—Dry rates are generally double, while paddy rates are half the share of the produce.

One half of the produce by subtenants after appraisement of the crop.

E. Godavary.						
Kottam and Pithapuram	Subtenants generally pay twice the rental paid to estates.					
Estates in Amalapuram Tq.	Average rates of rent paid by rayats on dry lands are less than half of what is paid by subtenants. In the Wet lands the subtenants pay a rent up to 10 bags of paddy or 200 Kambambs or 100 Kunchams per acre, while the rayats pay to the Zamindar up to Rs. 37 per acre.					
Kapileswaram Tq.	10 to 25	2 to 18	...	...	...	...
Pittapuram Tq.	10 to 30	2 to 18	...	...	...	...
Gopalapuram Estate	10 to 35	4-12 to 5-15	...	...	...	...
Palivela Estate	10 to 30	3 to 20	...	...	...	...
Ramachandrapuram Tq.	Rates paid by subtenants are generally double of what rayats have to pay the zamindars.					
Kistna Dist.						
Devarakota	10 to 30	4 as. to Rs. 6	...	...	...	...
Gudivada Tq.	Rs. 2 to 5	Rs. 2 to 3	...	8 to 12 Bags of paddy	...	2-4 to 14-8
Nandigama Tq. Vissanapet	The tenant pays on dry lands twice the assessment payable to the proprietor on the land. Half produce system in wet lands.					
Nuzvid Tq.						
Vuyyur, Mirjapuram	...	...	Rs. 100 to 180	Rs. 2 to 37	...	...
Estates in Bezwada Tq.	Rs. 2 to 35	5 as. to 12 – 5 as.	...	...	Rs. 40 to 50	Rs. 6 to 18
Nellore Dist.	In Venkatagiri half the yield is paid by subtenants on Wet lands.					

	Dry		Manavari		Wet	
	Subtenats	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats
Guntur Dist.						
Agraharams	Rs. 10 (average)	Rs. 2 (average)	...	...	...	...
Chengleput Dist.	Half the produce irrespective of the crops raised is payable by subtenants.					
Thinananur Enadur	For every ten markkal 50 or 55 to be paid to the ryot by subtenants.					
Pazhayanur	55% of the net produce i. e. after payment for village artisans, to the owner of the land. The straw belongs to the subtenant and the rent is to be paid by the rayat.					
North Arcot Dist.						
Kangundi	Half the produce if irrigated directly. Two shares to the ryot and three shares to the tenant if irrigated by bailling to the tenant.					
Chittoor Dist.						
Naragallu and two other villages	One third of the produce in dry lands and half the produce in wet lands.					
Gudipatti	Rs. 45 to 75	14 as to Rs. 4	...	...	Rs. 45 75	Rs. 5 to 22-6
	The high rate is for sugar cane lands. In other cases it is half the produce in kind.					
Policharlapoliem Estate	...	8 as to 6-3-0	...	...	...	4-1-0 34-11-0
	1½ share to subtenants and one share to rayats in dry lands. ½ share to subtenant and ½ to rayats if tank water is used and 1½ share to subtenant and one share to rayat if well water is used.					
South Arcot	No subtenants paying waram or rent except in Zamin Malliapat where it is half waram.					
Salem Dist.						
Salem Zamin Estate	Rs. 20	15 as to 13-14-0	Rs. 14	4 as to Rs. 6	Rs. 25	1-4-0 to 16-0-0
Animoor	15 to 24	2 to 6	5 to 15	7 as. to 5-9-0	10 to 15	3 to 5-12-0
Komaramangalam	25 to 35	Rs. 2-8-0 to 7-0-0	5 to 10	5 as to Rs. 5	25 to 35	Rs. 2-8-0 to 16
Konganapuram	8 to 25	1-4-0 to 5-6-0	5 to 15	3 as to 3-10-0	10 to 30	4-3-0 to 9-6-0

	Dry Subtenants	Dry Rayats	Manavari Subtenants	Manavari Rayats	Wet Subtenants	Wet Rayats
Kokkarayampettai	12-8-0 to 20-0-0	1 to 5-4-0	4 to 16	8 to 4-11-0	15 to 26-4-0	4-8-0 to 6-8-0

Bagalur — The rayats pay to the proprietor dry land rates varying from 8 as to Rs. 2-4-0 and on wet lands Rs. 2-12-0 to Rs. 7-8-0. One fourth of the produce harvested is generally paid by the cultivators to the puttadars in the case of dry lands and one half in the case of wet lands. The kist is shared equally.

	Dry Subtenants	Dry Rayats	Manavari Subtenants	Manavari Rayats	Wet Subtenants	Wet Rayats
Coimbatore Dist.						
Paravipalayam	20	3-11-0	10 to 15	11 as. to Re. 1 2 as.	...	...
Ramapatnam	20 to 25	1-2-0 to 4-3-6	10 to 15	7 as. 9 ps. to Re. 1 2 as.	...	...
Samathur	20 to 25	2 to 4-3-0	10 to 15	0-14-0 to 1-12-0	...	...
Uthukuli	20 to 25	3-2-0 to 4-3-9	10 to 15	0-13-9 to 1-9-11	...	...
Whole Inam villages	5 to 25	1-8-0 to 3-2-0	10 to 20	As. 10 to Re. 1	15 to 40	4 to 12
Vellimalaipalayam estate	10-15-0	9 as. to 1-8-0	8 to 12-0	9 as. to Re. 1	...	...
Trichinopoly Dist.						
Udayarpalayam	...	1-5-8 to 10-11-4	...	...	...	...

Half the yield is paid by subtenants.

	Dry Subtenants	Dry Rayats	Manavari Subtenants	Manavari Rayats	Wet Subtenants	Wet Rayats
Andipatti	Rs. 2 to 3	7 as. 4 ps. to 1-8-8	...	...	25	5-3-0
Kattuputtur	3 to 10	4 as. 6 ps. to 3-2-0	...	...	30 to 125	6-4-0 to 21-2-0
	Dry		Manavari		Wet	
Marungapuri	...	2-11-4 to 5-6-7	...	11 as. to 2-2-0	...	15 as. 5 ps. to 7-3-6

The subtenant pays half of the yield in the case of wet and dry lands, one third in the case of garden lands, and twice the assessment in the case of leases which are very few.

Inam Tiruppangili	2-4-0 to 4 Rs.	10 as. to 2-4-0	The subtenant pays on dry lands also at a waram rate of Rs. 30 to Rs. 29 Madras measures per acre.

	Dry	Manavari	Wet
	2-11-1	11 as.	1-10-0

	Dry		Manavari		Wet	
	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats
Kadavur	35 to 60	...to 5—7—0	10 to 15	to 1-12-10	...	to 2—4—0
Tanjore Dt.						
Kadiramangalam	24	3—8-0	...	...	33 to 49—8—0 24-12-0	11-14-0 to 17-14-0
Thittacheri	9	3to7-8-0	...	...	to 37—2—0	18-0-0
Daraswaram	20	3-12-0	...	...	25 Kalams per acre	4 to 8
Mokhasa villages in Papanasam Tq.	Rs. 15 to Rs. 30	1-15-6 to 4-13-9	...	...	30 to 40 Kalams	16 Kalams
Perambur and Midamangalam	5 5 to 106	3-3-9 to 4-8-0	...	...	18 to 30 Kalams an acre.	...
Pattukottai Tq.	Rs. 3 per acre waram 3/5 to 1/3	Re. 1 to Rs. 5	...	...	Half produce	Rs. 3 to Rs. 7
Madura Dt.						
Ayakudi	10	5 as,9ps. to 5-12-1 ps.	...	...	40	1—1—3 to 17-15-11
Idayacottar	15 to 20	5as10ps. to 3-9-10	...	...	40 to 50	2—2—9 to 4—8—5
Ammayanayakkanur	Half the yield	14 as to 9-0-6	6 Kalams of 48 m. m.	0-11-8 to 8—2—0	...	...
Thevaram	One-third of the yield	0-8-4 to 1-7-4	...	...	Half the yield	1—0—8 to 10-6-8
Gandamanayakkanur	Rs. 7 to Rs. 15 per acre	11 as to 5-3-6	...	...	20	1-11-8 to 4—5—4
Vallamadhi	7 to 15	5as. 7ps. to 3-9-9	...	...	20	3—9—8 to 4—4—3
	1 to	5as. 9ps.			4-4-0	0-11-7

	Dry		Manavari		Wet	
	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats
Kannivadi	10	to 5-6-8	...	...	to 50	to 10-13-5
Peraiyur	Common expense 20°/₀ Remainder equal halves	1-12-0 to 4-11	...	...	...	2-9-0 to 5-5-0 ?
Saptur		8 as to Rs. 5	...	...	...	6-0-0 to 24-0-0

In dry lands the lessor gets one third and in wet lands 2/3.

Tinnevelly and Ramnad Dists.

Ramnad — Subtenancy does not generally obtain in the Zamindari areas as the waram tenure of wet lands seldom leaves anything to the cultivator after deducting the cost of cultivation etc. The dry lands are not fertile enough to yield a net harvest encouraging subtenancy.

Sivaganga — Tenants pay in kind to rayats in the ratio of 1:2 or equal shares after the deduction of cooly charges etc. Rents on dry lands in Sivaganga paid by rayats to the proprietor vary from 2 as. to Rs. 4. The wet land rate is Re. 1 to Rs. 25.

Other estates in Sattur, Srivilliputur and Koilpatti Tqs. — Subletting at high rents is common in the estates of Sivagiri, Palavanatham, Gollapatti, Sevalpatti, and Ettayapuram. They are generally three times the assessment.

Kuruvikulam	...	1-2-8 to 2-6-4	...	7 as. 5 ps. to Rs. 1 9 as. 6 ps.	...	3 to 6
Tiruvettanallur	...	0-5-7 to 7-1-3	...	...	...	3-3-10 to 21-5-4
Kulasekharam-anagalam	...	0-6-9 to 4-13-9	...	...	...	2-7-6 to 12-5-6
Singampatti	...	...	...	...	15 to 21 kottas per 1·62 acre	4-15-0 to 21-10-0 per acre
Urkad	...	...	...	...	13 kottas per 1·62 acre	10 to 105 per acre

	Dry		Manavari		Wet	
	Subtenants	Dry	Subtenants	Rayats	Subtenants	Rayats
Inam Vagaikulam	...	...	...	...	14 marakkals for every one kotta of yield i.e. 2/3	60 to 75
Ettayapuram	1 to 5	0-5-8 to 2-1-6	... ...	... ...	1 to 25	0-7-4 to 8-1-9
Kadambur	...	1-8-0 to 14-1-0	4 to 10	0-4-8 to 2-5-4	10 to 50	4-13-8 to 9-5-4
Inam Poovani	6	0-4-0 to 1-11-0	...	...	12-8-0	4-6-0

In the estates of Tinnevelly district the subtenants generally pay between 1/3 and half the produce in dry lands, and 1/2 and 2/3 of the produce in wet lands.

III

A Note on the village "as an autonomous republican unit."

The report of the Committee refers to the existence of village republics during the pre-British rule. But this is mistaking villages held in superior tenure by privileged classes, and the combination among revenue farmers in a village to pay the revenue to the rulers, as joint tenures. In the South there were agraharams granted free of revenue to Brahmins. There were other villages granted to Sudras who were religiousminded as Pandarasvadikais. In the country between the rivers South and North Pennar certain grantees were given a portion of lands revenue free. (Baden-Powell-village communities p. 367). In many of these villages the superior classes who could not cultivate, arranged for common "cultivation, but the plots were held in severalty. Mr. Baden Powell says that, as the Brahmins were non-agriculturists, it is quite likely that some families among them would hold jointly i. e. dividing the income, "while family quarrels and jealousies would lead others to divide the land itself." In some villages the lands were held in common and distributed periodically to the owners of shares, with a view to prevent certain sharers enjoying all the good lands, and certain other shares all the bad lands. There were again single landlord villages cultivated by tenants. The assemblies in these villages were no more than a meeting of the privileged shareholders to arrange for cultivation by tenants and slaves, and to distribute the profits among themselves. This work naturally brought in its train the further responsibility for the elders of arranging for transfers when a mirasidar left the village, and of admitting strangers to possession without the special privileges which the original settlers had. Curiously enough these superior tenures are to be found only in irrigated areas. The shares from land were divided into three kinds the melvaram (rayat share), thunduvaram (landlord's share), and kudivaram (the cultivating occupant's share). There were a number of villages too where the joint tenure did not prevail.

The report of the Committee mistakenly refers to nattamakars or village elders in Dindigul as the village community. These were four or five important families in a village who took the responsibility on themselves to pay the revenue to the rulers, and whom the villagers feared and respected owing to the quasi-official status they had in the village. Even in joint-ownership villages, the strength of the village community lay in the danger from without, and between the risk of a dismembered village which may be harassed by the nabob's men, and the evil of putting up with the administration by elders, the villagers preferred the latter. These village communities of elders existed so long as they had the official recognition. To the ordinary masses of villagers, quarrels among the elders were their only hope, when alone they could gain in importance. The State farmed out its revenues in ancient days to a few people in every village, because that was the only possible method of administration. As a result, these people claimed certain proprietory rights in land, rights over waste lands and forests. The Hon. the Minister and his committee want to restore these farmers of revenue styled mirasidars, and grant them the mining, water, and forest resources of the country.

If he will possibly go back a few more centuries, he could not have found inam villages, but certain superior settlers and original cultivators of the soil. Claims of property arose either owing to the clearing of a jungle and reclaiming it for cultivation, or conquest. Is it the idea to restore the proprietory ownership in the soil on this basis? Rights of property also change with the growth of a centralised government, which having picked up strength, is in a position to day to protect the individual right to live and work, instead of farming out the lives of the people to privileged tenureholders in a village. Should the State still think of delegating its larger responsibility of social and economic welfare to these village leaders, who have neither the capacity nor the strength of the bigger unit of the State to develop the natural resources of the country. We cannot do better than quote the conclusions of Baden-Powel about the character of village communities.

"Those who have hoped to see in the joint village anything of a communistic or socialistic type, will, I fear, be disappointed by a study of the real facts. By far the larger portion of the joint villages were in origin the result not of Communism but of conquest: of tribal and caste superiority, and of family pride in the common descent from a house that once held sway in the country around. Not a few are the descendants of successful 'farmers' (of revenue) auction-purchasers, and land speculators who in common with others acknowledge the joint family law and the consequent joint inheritance."—(p. 443).

IV

Extracts from the report of the Famine Commission of 1879.

(1)

ENLARGEMENT OF TENANT RIGHTS.

Where the subdivision of lands among tenants-at-will is extreme, and in a country where agriculture is almost the only possible employment for large classes of people, the competition is so keen that rents can be forced upto a ruinous height, and they will crowd each other till the space left to each is barely sufficient to support a family; any security of tenure which defends a part of the population from that competition must necessarily be to them a source of material comfort and peace of mind.... Measures should be framed to secure the consolidation of occupancy rights, the enlargement of the numbers of those who hold under secure tenures, and the widening of the limits of that security together with the protection of the tenant-at-will in his just rights, and strengthening of his position by any measure that may seem wise and equitable.

(2)

Protection of Sub-tenants.

Concurrently with the extension of rights of transfer, the practice of sub-letting by an occupancy tenant should be discouraged or even, if possible forbidden. If a tenant for a long period fails to keep up the stock required for cultivating his land or otherwise ceases to be by occupation and habit a *bona fide* cultivator, the rights he or his ancestors acquired by cultivating the soil might reasonably pass from him to the person who, having become the actual cultivator, occupies his place. (Para 31.)

(3)

Prevention of sub-leases in rayatwari areas.

In consequence of the tendency on the part of those who are recorded as ryots to sublet their lands or part of them and to live on the difference between the rents they receive and the revenue they pay to Government, a considerable class of subordinate tenants is growing up who have no permanent interest in the land, and who pay such high rents that they must always be in a state of poverty. These subordinates are not recorded or recognised in the Government registers, but the existence of such a class involves the same evils as we have dwelt on in the case of tenants in Upper India. We think that the question should be submitted to the consideration of Local Governments, whether it is contemplated under land revenue settlement, Government ryots should be permitted to sublet their lands, and if so, whether measures should not be taken for recognising the status of such sub-tenants, and recording the area they hold, the rents they pay, and the conditions of their tenure. (Para. 32.)