



THE PERSIAN LAND REFORM  
1962-1966

THE PERSIAN  
LAND REFORM  
1962-1966

---

Ann K. S. LAMBTON

CLARENDON PRESS · OXFORD

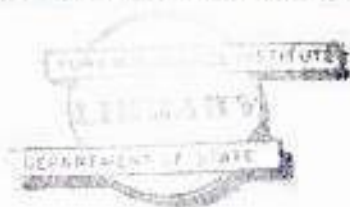
1969



*Oxford University Press, Ely House, London, W.1*

GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON  
CAPE TOWN PALEMBANG IBRAHIM NAIROBI LUSAKA ADDIS ABABA  
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI LAHORE Dacca  
KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE HONG KONG TOKYO

© OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS 1959



HD 926

. L 3

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
BY BUTLER AND TANNER LTD  
FROME AND LONDON

## PREFACE

---

THE land reform which began in January 1962 is one of the most important events which has happened in Persia since the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-6. It is still too soon to make a final assessment of the effects of land reform, but the time has come when it may be useful to give an account of the general way in which the reform has been put into operation, the problems encountered, and the results achieved. During the summer of 1962, 1964, 1965, and 1966 I travelled fairly widely in districts in which the land reform had been, or was being, implemented. What follows is an account of my observations on these journeys. Time did not permit me to visit the whole country, and the account cannot claim to be complete. Some districts were visited when the land reform had just started, others after it had been in operation for some time. For example, I went to Āzarbāyjān and Gilān in 1962 and 1964 during the first stage of the land reform, whereas I did not go to Khurāsān and Fārs until 1965, when the second stage had already begun. I had travelled extensively in the country before land reform started and was, therefore, familiar, in some measure, with conditions existing before the reform began.

I should like to express my deep sense of gratitude to the Persian government, and in particular to Dr. Hasan Arsanjani, Minister of Agriculture from 1961 to 1963, and to his successor, General Riahi; to Mr. Abbas Salour, the head of the Land Reform Organization from 1962 to 1964, and to his successor, Dr. Valian, for their help and the facilities which they generously placed at my disposal. Similarly, I should like to record my warm thanks to Mr. Amir Parviz, the managing director of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation from 1963 to 1965, and to his successor, Mr. Mossaed, for their generosity and kindness in giving me every assistance during my journeys. I was free to choose which villages and co-operative societies I should visit and saw a fair cross-section of land reform districts

and rural co-operative societies. My visits were, in almost all cases, of an informal nature. I wish also to record my deep sense of gratitude to my friends, too many to be mentioned by name, in the Land Reform Organization and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation for their help, and to pay tribute to the work which they have done and are doing. Lastly, since this is a book largely about the Persian peasants and their reception of land reform, it is fitting that I should also express my esteem and affection for them. I am deeply indebted to them for much hospitality over a long period of years, and their friendship has contributed to my knowledge and understanding of the Persian countryside.

My thanks are also due to Professor Doreen Warriner, who generously gave much time to reading through the text and to whom I am greatly indebted for her advice and encouragement. I would also like to express my thanks to Mr. J. D. Gurney, Dr. K. S. McLachlan, and Mr. Matthew Wordsworth for valuable suggestions. The responsibility for the views expressed is, however, mine alone. I also wish to express my gratitude to Dr. G. F. Cushing who read the text and suggested many improvements and to whom I am also much indebted for help in proof correction.

Finally, it is my hope that this work may, in spite of its imperfections, contribute in some measure to a fuller comprehension of what has been achieved by the Persian land reform and of the problems which it still faces.

# CONTENTS

	NOTE ON transliteration	ix
	NOTE ON THE CALENDAR AND CURRENCY	xiii
i	The Country and the People; the Land Tenure System	i
ii	The Political, Social and Economic Background; Village Councils; <i>Khālīqeh</i> ; the Distribution of the Shah's Estates; the Abortive Land Reform Law of 1960	31
iii	The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962	60
iv	The Execution of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962; The Additional Articles; The Peasants' Congress	87
v	The Suppression of Opposition and the Extension of the Reform to the Whole Country	112
vi	The Implementation of the First Stage: Variations in Practice: <i>Khurāsān</i>	131
vii	The Implementation of the First Stage: the South and South-East	144
viii	The Implementation of the First Stage: the West	168
ix	The Second Stage: The Regulations for the Additional Articles	194
x	The Execution of the Second Stage: Tenancies	216
xi	The Execution of the Second Stage: Sale, Division, the Agricultural Unit, and Purchase of the Peasants' Rights	241
xii	The Investigation and Solution of Disputes	257
xiii	Irrigation	274
xiv	The Co-operative Societies and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation	291
xv	The Co-operative Movement, 1962-4	303
xvi	The Co-operative Societies, 1965-6	325

xvii	Achievements, Problems, and Trends	347
	POSTSCRIPT	357
	GLOSSARY	367
	INDEX	377
	MAP ( <i>as folder</i> )	<i>at end</i>



## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

---

**THE** system of transliteration used is, with some modifications, that adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society. It will not entirely satisfy those who would have a rigorous transliteration or those who would prefer a system based on phonetic principles. My main concern has been to use a system which will enable the reader both to turn the word into the Arabic script and also to obtain a general idea of its pronunciation. For both purposes the use of a number of diacritic marks is unavoidable. Since the letters ذ, ز, ض, and ظ are pronounced alike in Persian they have all been transcribed by the letter *z*, with various diacritic marks to distinguish the one from the other. Similarly س, ش, and ص, which are pronounced alike in Persian, are represented by *s* and differentiated by diacritical marks.

The letter *a* is used to represent the vowel approximating to the vowel in the northern English 'man'; and *ā* for the vowel in the English word 'bark'. The letter *u* is used to represent a vowel approximating to the vowel in the English word 'book', and *ū* the vowel in the English word 'boot'. The letter *i* is used to represent the vowel in the English word 'bed'. When, however, it precedes the 'silent *h*' in a final position, although it approximates to the same sound as that heard in the English word 'bed', the combination has been transliterated by *eh*, this differentiating it from a word ending in an *h* which has its full value as a consonant, as in *dih* (village). Where a relative adjective has been made out of a word ending in the 'silent *h*' a ' has been added after the 'silent *h*' before the relative *i*, thus, Ganjeh' *i* (a man of Ganjeh). The letter *ī* has been used for the vowel in the English word 'beat'. *Hamzeh* and 'ayn, although both tend to be pronounced in Persian as a glottal stop, have been differentiated in the transliteration by ' and ' respectively.

Certain proper names such as Ithna 'Asharī (a twelve Shi'ī) have been retained in their conventional form. Similarly some place names have been written in the form in which they are best known in English. Thus Tehrān has been preferred to

Tihirān. On the other hand, the forms Yazd, Mashhad, and Rasht have been used on the grounds that they are consistent with the system of transcription adopted and more nearly represent the Persian pronunciation than the conventional forms, Yezd, Meshed, and Resht.

The following table gives the Arabic letters with the equivalents used in the Latin script. The conventional transcription, where this varies, has been put in parenthesis.

<i>Arabic letter</i>	<i>Latin equivalent</i>
ب	b
پ	p
ت	t
ث	ṡ ( <u>th</u> )
ج	j
چ	ch as the sound represented by <i>ch</i> in the English <i>church</i> .
ح	h
خ	kh as the sound represented by <i>ch</i> in the Scot- tish word <i>loch</i> .
د	d
ذ	ḏ ( <u>dh</u> )
ر	r
ز	z
ژ	zh as the sound represented by <i>j</i> in the French word <i>jour</i> .
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḏ ( <u>d</u> )
ط	t
ظ	ḏ ( <u>z</u> )
ع	ʿ as the glottal stop between the words <i>India</i> <i>Office</i>
غ	gh this represents a glottal fricative or plosive according to phonetic context. The sound does not occur in standard English, but when a glottal fricative it corresponds to the initial <i>r</i> in some Northumbrian dialects.

ف	f
ق	q see غ above
ك	k
ج	g
ل	l
م	m
ن	n when followed by ه in the same word = m.
و	(i) a consonant = v (conventionally w);
	(ii) preceded by ع in some Persian words و is not pronounced and is represented by w;
	(iii) a vowel = ū as the vowel in the English word <i>boot</i> ; and
	(iv) a diphthong = ou (conventionally au or aw) approximating to the diphthong in the English word <i>no</i> .
•	h where h in a final position represents the 'silent h' the preceding vowel is written e, the combination together being eh (convention- ally ah or a).
ی	(i) a consonant = y;
	(ii) a vowel = ī, as the vowel in the English word <i>beat</i> ;
	(iii) a diphthong = ay (conventionally also ai) approximating to the diphthong in the English word <i>bay</i> ; and
	(iv) the <i>izāfeh</i> after ى or و = -yi (convention- ally i or -i).
<i>Hamzeh</i> is represented by ʾ if in a medial or final position. It has been omitted from the transliteration in an initial position.	
ʾ (initially)	ā as the vowel in the English word <i>bark</i> .
ـَ or <i>fatheh</i>	a approximating to the vowel in the English word <i>bad</i> but slightly less rounded and more fronted.
ـِ or <i>kisreh</i>	i approximating to the vowel in the English word <i>bed</i> .
ـُ or <i>zammeh</i>	u approximating to the vowel in the English word <i>book</i> .



The *igāfeh* (conventionally represented by *i* or *-i*) is represented by *-i* unless the word to which it is attached ends in *l* or *j*, in which case it is represented by *-yi*.

## NOTE ON THE CALENDAR AND CURRENCY

---

### THE CALENDAR

THE Muslim era is used in Persia. It dates from A.D. 622, the year of the flight (*hijra*) of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina. For civil purposes a solar year beginning on 1 Farvardin, which falls normally on 21 March, is in use. The year 1349 therefore corresponds to the year running from 21 March 1961 to 20 March 1962.

### CURRENCY

The official unit of currency is the *riāl* composed of 1,000 *dinārs*. The buying and selling rate of the U.S. dollar was fixed at 75.00 *rs.* and 76.50 *rs.* respectively in December 1963. Conversion into sterling has been made in the following pages at the rate of 220 *rs.* to the £ sterling.

## CHAPTER I

### THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE; THE LAND TENURE SYSTEM

---

THOSE who drew up the plans for the Persian land reform of 1962 had, like other reformers, to deal with a situation limited and largely formed by natural conditions and the circumstances of the past; and for the implementation of their plans they were dependent upon the available physical and human material. Variety was the keynote of the situation, from the point of view of both physical geography and social and economic conditions; and from this variety stemmed some of the difficulties which the reformers faced in devising a plan which would be applicable to the whole of the country.

Iran, or Persia, to use the term by which the country has been known in the English language throughout history and which I shall use in this book, consists of some 628,000 square miles, and extends for some 1,400 miles from the north-west to the south-east and some 875 miles from the north to the south. It is bounded on the west by Turkey and Iraq, on the south-west and south by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, on the east by Pakistan and Afghanistan, and on the north by the U.S.S.R. and the Caspian Sea. Most of the country consists of a tableland ringed by high mountains, with narrow lowland strips bordering the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea.

The Zagros Mountains, a series of parallel ranges trending from north-west to south-east, extend in an arc from Armenia to Balūchistān. The north-west part of the Zagros is stony undulating country broken by high peaks such as Mt. Savalān (almost 16,000 ft.) west of Ardabil, and Mt. Sahand (12,000 ft.) south of Tabriz. West of Mt. Sahand, Lake Rīzā'iyyeh (Urūmiyyeh), into which the Ājt Chāy, Šūfī Chāy, Murdī Chāy, and Jaghatū drain from the east, the Tātāvū from the south, and nine small rivers from the west, forms a large down-throw basin bordered on the west and south by the

mountains of Kurdistān. Rising in these mountains, the Diyāleh and the Karkheh rivers flow into the Tigris. South and south-east of Kurdistān the mountains of Luristān and the Bakhtiāri, in which several peaks rise to over 13,000 ft., form the central part of the Zagros, which extends south-east to Bandar 'Abbās. The River Kārūn rises in the Bakhtiāri mountains. It is joined below Shūshtar by the River Diz, and flows through the flat alluvial plains of Khūzistān into the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab at Khurramshahr (Muhammara). The drainage of the central Zagros follows a complicated pattern. The valleys are mostly covered with vegetation and some are wooded. The south-east part of the Zagros, desolate country consisting largely of bare rocks and sand desert, is formed by a plateau of an average elevation of 6,700 ft., rising from a narrow coastal plain. The Jaz Muriān basin is situated at the eastern end. Its lowest part has an elevation of 1,000 ft., and is separated from the central plateau by a ridge of high land.

In the north between the Caucasus and the Hindu Kush, there are the Elburz Mountains and the Kopet Dagħ. The former rise in a series of steep narrow folds from the Caspian Sea, which is 88 ft. below sea level. Mt. Damāvand, the highest peak, rises to over 18,000 ft. The northern slopes are covered by thick deciduous forest up to 7-8,000 ft.; close to the Caspian shore there are sand dunes and lagoons. The River Saḡid-rūd, known in its earlier course as the Qizil Ūzun, rising near Sanandaj in Kurdistān, enters the Caspian Sea east of Rasht after a tortuous course of nearly 500 miles. The River Hirāz, after flowing through the Lār plateau, where it is known as the River Lār, enters the Caspian Sea near Āmul. The River Gurgān rises in Khurāsān and, after a course of about 200 miles, enters the Caspian north-west of the town of Gurgān (Astarābād). The fourth large river to flow into the Caspian is the Atrek, the source of which is near Qūchān. After some 300 miles, during part of which it forms the Perso-Russian frontier, it enters the Caspian at Hasan Qull.

On the eastern side of the central plateau between the Kopet Dagħ and the Zagros, there is an irregular highland region of barren jagged peaks, drifting sand, and great extremes of climate. To the south of it lies the basin of the River Helmand.



The central plateau comprises a number of closed basins, the lowest parts of which have an elevation of 2-3,000 ft., except in the south-east where they fall to 1,000 ft. During heavy rains and when the snows melt, innumerable streams flow into the depressions of central Persia, or into the perennial rivers which flow into salt swamps. The water of many of these rivers dwindles to a mere trickle or ceases altogether in summer. Among those which have a larger flow are the Rivers Jāī-rūd and Karaj, rising north and north-west of Tehrān respectively, the Abhar-rūd (Shūreh-rūd), rising near Sultāniyyeh, the Qarāsū, rising near Hamadān, and the Qumm. The Zāyandeh-rūd flows from the Bakhtiārī Mountains through the fertile region of Isfahān to be lost finally in the Gāvkhāneh swamp to the south-east of Isfahān. In Fārs the River Kūr with its tributaries flows into Lake Bakhtagān. The central, eastern, and south-eastern parts of the plateau are formed by the great deserts of the Dasht-i Kavir and Dasht-i Lūt, uninhabitable uncultivable wastes.

The climate is one of extremes. There are great variations in rainfall. High winds are common, especially in the south-east. The seasons on the plateau are regular. Summer temperatures are, in general, high with a rapid fall of temperature at night. The mean day maximum in July at Tehrān is 99° Fahrenheit, at Mashhad 92°, and at Kirmān 101°. In Sistān the temperature may rise to over 120°. The average January temperature on the plateau is 35° Fahrenheit in the north and north-west and 45° in the south and east. In the north-west, temperatures below zero Fahrenheit are not unusual. There is heavy rainfall well distributed throughout the year in the Caspian littoral with a maximum in early autumn, varying from 50-60 inches in the west to 20 inches in the east, and rising to over 100 inches on the northern slopes of the Elburz. Bushire has an average of about 10 inches and Khūzistān 10-12 inches with a maximum in December. The eastern end of the Persian Gulf littoral comes under the influence of the south-west monsoon. The average rainfall in Sistān is 2.9 inches and in Balūchistān 3.4 inches. Within the mountains the plateau lies in the rain shadow. In general the 10-inch rainfall line follows the inner foothills of the Zagros-Elburz-Kopet Dagh ring of mountains and marks

the boundary between districts where cereals can be cultivated extensively without irrigation and districts dependent upon irrigation. The summer grazing of the nomadic tribes also lies on, or near, the 10-inch rainfall line. Rain begins in November and continues intermittently to the end of March; and in the south and north-east to the end of April. Heavy snowfalls are common on the mountains and plateaux in winter.

Both irrigated farming, using water from rivers, wells, and *qanāts*, and dry farming are practised, the latter in large areas of Āzarbāyjān, Kurdistān, Kirmānshāhān, in the Caspian littoral, and to a lesser extent in parts of Fārs and Khurāsān. *Qanāts* (or *kārīz* as they are called in eastern Persia) are found in most parts of the Persian plateau. They are underground conduits, which by using less slope than that of the soil surface, bring water to the surface. The *qanāt* starts in a water-bearing layer at a depth of 50-300 ft. In the upper section the *qanāt* collects through one or more galleries; in the lower section it conducts the water through impervious layers to the spot where it reaches the surface. From this point it continues as an open channel. The excavated soil is lifted to the surface through vertical wells in buckets, usually made of skin, by a rope on a wooden wheel. Where the water-bearing layer is deep and the slope of the country slight, the *qanāts* are lengthy. The making of a *qanāt* is a highly skilled operation.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the country, perhaps one half, is desert and waste. About 18 per cent is forest and pasture, and some 10 per cent cropland. The rest could perhaps be cultivated if given water. Compared to most Middle East countries the proportion of forest, pasture and cropland is fairly high. Wheat and barley are staple crops, and are grown as irrigated and unirrigated crops up to 10,000 ft. Wheat is mainly a winter crop, but in the high valleys of the Zagros it is also a spring crop. The main grain-growing areas are Eastern Āzarbāyjān, Hamadān, Kir-

<sup>1</sup> See further my *Landlord and Peasant in Persia*, O.U.P. (Oxford, 1953), pp. 217 ff.; Hans E. Wulff, *The traditional crafts of Persia*, M.I.T. Press (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1967), pp. 349 ff.; and H. Goblort, 'Dans l'ancien Iran, les techniques de l'eau et la grande histoire' in *Annales économiques sociétés civilisation*, No. 3, May-June 1969, pp. 499-520, and 'Le rôle de l'Iran dans les techniques de l'eau' in *Revue de l'enseignement technique*, Nos. 155-6, January-February 1962, pp. 7-18.



mānshāhān, Khurāsān, and Isfahān. Rice is grown mainly in the Caspian littoral, but also in the Linjān and Alinjān districts of Isfahān; there is some small scale cultivation in Fārs, Khūzistān, Kurdistān, and elsewhere. Maize and millet have also been grown since early times. Cotton is cultivated as an irrigated crop up to 5,000 ft. and various pulses and oilseeds are widely grown. Tobacco, in the north-west and south-east Zagros and in the Caspian provinces, and sugar-beet are important crops. Tea is cultivated in Māzandarān. Various dye plants have been cultivated since early times, mainly in the central Zagros and Kirmān; and a small quantity of jute in Māzandarān. A wide variety of vegetables is grown, especially near the large urban centres. Persia has been famous for her fruit since early times. Vines grow up to about 4,500 ft. Apricots, peaches, nectarines, figs, melons, pomegranates, plums, cherries, pears, and apples are widely grown. Dates are an important crop in south Persia as also are citrus fruits both in that region and in the Caspian littoral. Olives, which were more widely cultivated in early times, are now mainly grown in the Rūdbār district of Gilān. Almonds and nuts are important in Isfahān, Kirmān, and Āzarbāyjān, and pistachios in central Persia. Vegetable gums, tragacanth, and asafoetida are produced; as is oak-gall, mainly in Kurdistān.

Everywhere agriculture is subject to interruption by the capricious climate. Drought, due to insufficient spring or winter rain, causing partial or total crop failures, and floods after sudden storms, which destroy irrigation channels and *qanāts*, are of common occurrence. Earthquakes are another contributory factor, causing local and temporary dislocation. Ravages by pests and locusts not infrequently cause heavy losses. High winds and violent hailstorms are other detrimental factors. Deterioration of the soil because of a change in the water-table, caused by over-lavish irrigation or inadequate drainage, or both, is a major problem in some parts of the country. In some cases, the lowering of stream-beds through normal erosion, and the consequent lowering of the water-table itself, has left irrigation canal intakes above the new water level. In some places on the central plateau the soil is salty and the water too saline to be used for irrigation. On the southern and south-eastern

borders of the central desert, there is a marked tendency for the desert to encroach on the surrounding area. Soil erosion is widespread; its primary causes are climatic and geological, but uncontrolled grazing by goats and the destruction of forests for fuel have steadily increased it.

In the past other factors interrupted or militated against agriculture. Among these were invasion and dynastic struggles, tribal warfare and raiding, and insecurity of tenure. From early times there was a dichotomy between the settled elements of the population on the one hand and the nomadic and semi-settled elements on the other. In certain areas of the country nomadic pastoralism has allowed large numbers of the population to adapt themselves to climatic conditions. Whenever the tribal population and its flocks rose above the level which could be maintained by the limited pasture available, either because of a period of drought or because of natural increase, there would be a movement, violent or otherwise, into the settled areas. The balance between the two elements in the population was always precarious, and adversely affected agriculture on the borders of the tribal regions; and the line between the desert and the sown fluctuated, depending in part on rainfall and population movements. In addition to the sudden expansions and more violent outbreaks from the tribal areas into the settled areas, there was also constant seepage of population from the former into the latter. In recent years, it is probable that the tendency has been for the settled areas to encroach upon the pastoral.

The distribution of the population in the past was mainly determined by physical conditions. The site of settlements depended mainly on the availability of water. The dominant type of settlement was the village, not the isolated farm. Irrigation works could best be carried out as a corporate enterprise. Similarly, resistance to predatory elements and extortion was possible only if sufficient numbers were banded together. Further, government policy from early times encouraged group settlement, since it was easier to deal with the village as a unit than with individuals. For purposes of revenue assessment and collection, the government continued, in many cases, to deal with the village as a unit down to the twentieth century. Thus,



from early times the population in the settled areas organized itself in villages for social, economic, and political co-operation. The isolated farmstead remained the exception.

The lay-out of the village was influenced by two factors: natural conditions and security. If a village was situated in a valley or against a mountain wall there was little room for variation. In the plains, ordinary caution demanded that the village should be walled or have a walled enclosure into which the population could retire with their animals in times of emergency.<sup>1</sup> In many parts of the country security from raiders is recent. Hamlets attached to villages in most areas also tend to be walled for security against both raiders and depredation by wild animals. Often, as the population of a village or hamlet grew, the settlement spread beyond the original walls. The village houses tended to be clustered together. If the village had gardens or orchards, these were usually on the edge of the village rather than in it; the cultivated lands were situated round the village or further afield, and beyond them were the village pastures, if such existed.

The village land is normally divided into ploughlands, the usual term for which is *juft*. In east Persia it is called *zouj*. Both terms mean a yoke of oxen, hence the amount of land a yoke of oxen can cultivate. In Fārs and Khūzistān the ploughland is known as *khūsh*, which means a plough. The equality of the shares into which a village is divided is not strictly quantitative, but also takes quality into account. The size and shape of the ploughland may therefore vary; the common factor is that the holdings are such as can be cultivated by one plough or yoke of oxen. The ploughland usually consists of several strips in different parts of the village land. In some landlord areas, especially Fārs and Kirmānshāhān, it was customary before land reform for the ploughlands to be redistributed periodically by lot or by some other means. In certain areas, notably in east Persia, it is not uncommon for a varying number of ploughlands to be grouped together and worked by a number of plough-

<sup>1</sup> See further Xavier de Planhol's review of A. Z. Rosenfeld, *La kala, type d'établissement fortifié iranien* (*Sovietskaia etnografiia*, 1951, No. 1, pp. 28-38), entitled 'Les villages fortifiés en Iran et en Asie Centrale', *Annales de Géographie*, 1958, pp. 256-8.

teams. The ploughland, although normally regarded as belonging to the head of the family, is expected to provide for the needs of the family group. In many areas it is split up among a number of peasants, who may hold half or less of one ploughland. Such holdings also consist of strips in different parts of the village land. More prosperous peasants sometimes hold two or more ploughlands. One of the rights attaching to a ploughland was that of using the village pastures and of collecting scrub for fuel from them.<sup>1</sup>

In some areas, notably in parts of Kirmān, the village land is divided into a varying number of *habbehs*, usually 96, or *sha'irs*, of which there are also 96. Occasionally the village land is divided into a number of shares or *sahms*. Lastly, in some districts the village holding is reckoned by reference to a share of the water. This arrangement is typical of areas where land is cultivated mainly with the spade, as in some villages near Isfahān; it is also found in mountain districts where water and the configuration of the land, and not the capacity of the plough-oxen, are of paramount importance. In such cases the water is divided into a varying number of shares of equal duration and apportioned to the land. In the neighbourhood of Yazd, however, land and water are often separately owned, and the size of the holdings is not roughly equalized by the capacity of the plough-oxen or by an equal share of the water, but depends rather on the ability and enterprise of the individual peasant.

The village houses are made mainly of sun-baked mud bricks. If wood is available locally for beams, the roof is usually flat; if not, it is domed. In the Caspian provinces, because of the heavy rainfall, the roofs are sloping and made of wooden slates. In some of the Kurdish mountain villages stone is used for housing. In the south and south-east until recently many of the villages consisted largely of huts of reed matting. Stables tended to be close to the dwelling houses and in some places, especially in areas subject to raiding, to form the bottom storey of the house.

The size of the villages varies widely. In south-east and east Persia the village is generally small. Often it consists of two or

<sup>1</sup> See further *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 4 ff.



three peasant families only. In Iṣfahān, on the other hand, they tend to be larger and often consist of several hundred families. In Āzarbāyjān many of the villages have a population of several thousands. In spite of the large numbers involved, the characteristics of these rural agglomerations are those of the village and not of the country town.

The population of the village consists variously of the landlords, if they are not, as is usually the case, absentees; peasants, who cultivate the land on a crop-sharing agreement (where the crop-sharing agreement has not yet been abolished) or tenancy; peasants cultivating market-gardens, summer crops, or *daymī* (unirrigated) land; peasant proprietors, agricultural labourers, squatters, and shepherds; village officials, such as the *kadkhuda* (the village headman); village craftsmen, such as the blacksmith and carpenter; tradesmen, such as the village shopkeeper; and members of the religious classes. The peasant who cultivates a share of the village ploughlands enjoys a position of privilege compared with other classes of peasants, except the peasant proprietor, and agricultural labourers. Any villagedweller who is not a landowner or peasant engaged in the cultivation of the land is known as a *khwushnishīn*.

The total population of the country, according to the 1966 census, was some 25 million. Some 70 or 80 per cent were thought to derive their living from agriculture or stock-raising. The heaviest concentration of population was in Āzarbāyjān and the Caspian provinces. Most of the large cities are situated along the inside of the Zagros and Elburz Mountains. Some were dynastic foundations, such as Tehrān, founded near the old site of Ray, an earlier capital city; others were manufacturing towns, such as Kāshān, though the manufacture of silks, brocades, and velvets, which once made it prosperous, has now decayed; others were entrepôts of trade, such as Tabriz and Kirmānshāh; or ports, like Khurramshahr and Bandar 'Abbās; or towns which had grown up round a shrine, such as Qumm and Ardabīl. But most were market towns, situated in the centre of an irrigated or cultivated area, at a road junction or at the foot of a mountain, and having a strong connection with the surrounding areas and centres. Some, notably Bihbahān and Ardakān (in Fārs), situated on the edge of tribal

country, acted as collecting centres for the produce of the tribes and financed their commercial operations.

Administratively, Persia is divided into a number of governorates-general (*ustān*), which are sub-divided into governorates (*shahristān*); these in turn consist of a number of districts (*bakhsh*). These governorates-general are known by numbers. Broadly speaking, they correspond to the provinces into which, with modifications from time to time, the country was divided over the centuries. These provinces fall into three main groups: (i) those to the north of the central desert, including Āzarbāyjān, Khurāsān, and the Caspian provinces of Gilān, Māzandarān, and Gurgān, (ii) Iṣfahān and the southern provinces of Fārs and Khūzistān, and the provinces ringing the central desert on the south-east, namely Kirmān, Balūchistān and Sistān, and (iii) the western provinces of Kirmānshāhān, including Īlām, and Kurdistān. There are a number of other provinces which do not fall neatly into any of these groups. Tehrān, by virtue of its position as the capital, has a special position. Politically and economically, together with the towns along the northern rim of the central desert, it belongs to the northern provinces, but physically it shares many of the characteristics of Iṣfahān, parts of Fārs and Kirmān. Agriculture can be carried on in the plains of Qazvin, Tehrān, Simnān, and Dāmghān only if water for irrigation is available. Hamadān and Bijār have in some ways more in common with parts of Āzarbāyjān than with the Kurdish west, while Arāk has affinities with both Hamadān and Iṣfahān.

Āzarbāyjān, which today is divided into East and West Āzarbāyjān, with capitals at Tabrīz and Rīzā'iyyeh respectively, is one of the most fertile areas of Persia. The events of the nineteenth century gave it a political importance: it is situated on the frontiers of Russia and Turkey, and Tabrīz was usually the seat of the heir-apparent; also, Āzarbāyjān was the main recruiting ground for the army. Although the province lost its special position after the rise of the Pahlavī dynasty, it remained one of the most important parts of the country and continued, perhaps more than anywhere else except Tehrān, to be subject to outside influences.

Rolling plateaux divided by mountain ranges, on the slopes



of which are extensive pastures, undulating plains, and fertile valleys, many of which are wooded, occupy much of the province. The agriculture is varied. Wheat, of which there is a large exportable surplus, is the main crop. Cotton, barley, rice, maize, millet, legumes, tobacco, castor oil, sesame, and other crops are also cultivated. There are many orchards, vineyards, and gardens, mainly in Western Āzarbāyjān; dried fruits are an important export. Stock-raising plays a major part throughout the province; and a seasonal movement of flocks takes place from the lowlands to mountain pastures.

The population of Āzarbāyjān and the area extending south to Hamadān and thence north-east to Qazvīn is predominantly of eastern Turkish extraction and speaks a Turki dialect. The settlement of Āzarbāyjān by Turkomans first took place in the eleventh century A.D. under the Saljūqs. Later during the reign of the Mongol Ilkhān, Hūlāgū, Āzarbāyjān became the centre of the empire, with its capital first at Marāgheh and then at Tabriz. There were further movements of Turkomans back into Āzarbāyjān from regions further to the west in the fifteenth century A.D. In the districts bordering Turkey in Western Āzarbāyjān and south of Lake Rīzā'iyyeh in Mahābād (Sā'uj Bulāgh), the population is Kurdish, belonging to the Mukri and Dihbukri groups of Kurds. They are Sunnī Muslims, while most of the rest of the population are Shī'ī Muslims. In Western Āzarbāyjān many of the Kurds are semi-settled and society is tribal. In the Rīzā'iyyeh district there are numerous Armenian and Assyrian villages. The Shāhsivan are the largest of the semi-settled tribes in Eastern Āzarbāyjān, and are centred in the Mughān steppe.

The Caspian provinces extending from Āstārā, which administratively belongs to Eastern Āzarbāyjān, through Gilān, with its capital at Rasht, and Māzandarān to Gurgān, form a contrast to the rest of Persia. Bordering the Caspian Sea there is an extremely fertile alluvial strip, the width of which varies from about two to thirty-five miles; it is widest where the rivers entering the Caspian Sea form deltas. These lowlands, originally covered by jungle and swamp, have been mainly cleared for cultivation. To the south of the lowlands lies a series of mountain ranges clothed with thick luxuriant forest to about

2,000 ft., and with smaller trees up to 8-9,000 ft., beyond which bare rocky peaks extend upwards to the watershed. Among the lower forest-clad hills, there are numerous villages surrounded by rice-fields, and above these, small villages with wheat and barley cultivation. The middle and upper zones of the mountains are mainly used for summer pastures for cattle and sheep. Spring and autumn pastures are to be found in the lower hills.

In the northern part of Gurgān lies the fertile alluvial Turkoman steppe, the Turkomānsarāy. The main crop of Gilān and Māzandarān is rice. Tea, flax, tobacco, citrus fruits, and olives are also important. Formerly there was a considerable trade in silk cocoons. In Gurgān, the main crops are grain, grown as an unirrigated crop, and cotton, which is irrigated.

The people of Gilān, who speak the Gilakī dialect, differ somewhat from their neighbours, the Māzandarānis. In the Āstārā region there is a considerable Turkish element in the population. In the Gurgān steppe, the local inhabitants are Turkomans speaking Turkī and are Sunnī Muslims. Formerly they were mainly occupied in stockraising; they now also engage in agriculture. Recently, there has been a large influx of Sistānis, mainly from Zābul, into the province. In Nūr and Kujūr there are settlements of Kurds.

Khurāsān, bordered on the north-east and east by the U.S.S.R. and Afghanistan, on the south-east by Sistān, and on the south by Kirmān, is a large and varied province. On the west and south it marches with the Dasht-i Kavīr and the Dasht-i Lūt respectively. It lay in the path of invaders from Central Asia and has undergone many vicissitudes. Naysāpūr in the early middle ages was a great centre of civilization. More recently in the nineteenth century Khurāsān was the scene of prolonged disorders and unrest. Its capital, Mashhad, contains the shrine of the Imām Rīzā, the eighth *imām* of the Ithna 'Asharī Shī'ī sect, and is one of the main Shī'ī pilgrimage centres.

The climate of Khurāsān is extremely varied and all types of agriculture are found. In the north and north-east crops typical of the *sardsīr*, the cold temperate lands of Persia, are grown, and in the south dates and other products of the *garmsīr*. Wheat,



barley, cotton, sugar beet, saffron, fruit in great quantity and variety, vegetables, and other crops are cultivated. In the north and north-east there are large areas of dry farming as well as irrigated farming. Stock-raising is important, especially in Sarakhs and Darreh Gaz and in some other districts such as Qūchān. The mountains in the north are covered by forest. On the inside of the mountain ranges on the side of the central desert, as in the districts of Nayshāpūr, Sabzavār, and Kāsh-mar, irrigated farming mainly by *qanāts* is practised. In Firdous, Tabas, and Qā'ināt, the oasis type of cultivation and farming is found, comparable to districts on the southern borders of the central desert.

The population of Khurāsān is varied. In the outlying areas there are numerous tribal groups: Turkomans in the north and north-east, who, as in Gurgān, are Sunnis, and Taymūriya, Jaghatāys, and Barbaris in Turbat-i Jām. In the neighbourhood of Qūchān there are some Kurdish settlements. In eastern and southern Khurāsān there are traces of settlement by Arab tribes in early Islamic times, but these have become assimilated to the surrounding Persian population.

Physically there is an enormous contrast between the northern and the southern provinces. There is also considerable diversity among different parts of the southern provinces. While there are large areas of dry farming in the north-west and north-east of Persia, this is not true of the south; and such dry farming as exists in Fārs and Khūzistān is more subject to failure from insufficient rainfall than the dry farming areas of Āzarbāyjān and Khurāsān. *Qanāts* play an important part in agricultural prosperity in the south, except Khūzistān, and are vital to it in Isfahān, Yazd, and Kirmān.

Isfahān was one of the most important cities on the plateau in the middle ages, became the capital of Persia under Shāh 'Abbās in the sixteenth century A.D., and did not finally lose its pre-eminence until the rise of the Qājārs at the end of the eighteenth century. It has one of the best climates on the plateau, and is the centre of a fertile district watered by the Zāyandeh-rūd, which rises in the Zard-i Kūh in the Bakhtiāri Mountains, and has now been joined by the Kūhrang tunnel to the source of the River Kārūn on the south side of the

watershed. The Iṣfahān plain is also watered by numerous *qanāts*. A great variety of crops is grown, including wheat, barley, rice, pulses, cotton, tobacco, oil seeds, and large quantities of fruit and vegetables. Iṣfahān is bordered on the west and south-west by the Bakhtiārī country with its mountain pastures in Firaydan and Chahār Maḥāll, to which the Bakhtiārī tribes bring their flocks in summer from their winter pastures in Khūzistān. To the south lies the province of Fārs; and to the east and south-east the oasis districts of Nā'in, Ardistān, and Yazd, in which agriculture offers a precarious and arduous living.

The Bakhtiārī tribes are divided into two main groups, the Haft Lang and the Chahār Lang. They are closely akin to the Lurs of Luristān, who are also related to the tribes of the Kūhgilūyeh, the Boir Ahmadi, Tayyibi, Bahma'i, and Mamasani. There were formerly a small number of Armenian villages in Firaydan. These have been evacuated since the end of the second world war, the inhabitants migrating to the U.S.S.R.

Fārs, the province in which the capitals of the Achaemenid and Sasanian empires were once situated, includes many different types of natural environment. The modern capital, Shīrāz, an Islamic foundation, is situated in a long fertile plain, some twelve miles across, in which various crops, including cereals and cotton, and vines are cultivated. The north of Fārs, between Shahriṣā and Dibbīd, is a plateau, consisting of undulating country between high ranges, which reach their greatest height in Mt. Dinā in the south-west. East of Shīrāz lies the inland drainage area of Lake Bakhtagān. Fasā and Dārāb are situated to the south of the lake in broken mountain country, with level plains between the hills, which are often covered with scrub-oak, wild almond, and other trees. The south and south-eastern part of the province belongs to the *garmsīr*. To the west of Shīrāz lies the Dasht-i Arjan, formerly an oak-covered plain, and beyond it there is a series of limestone ranges descending in steps to the Persian Gulf. Cultivation in much of the province is the oasis type; irrigation is by river, *qanāt*, and well. Dry farming is also practised in parts of the province. All types of crops, those of the *sardsīr* in the north and those of the *garmsīr* in the south and south-east, are grown.



Much of the province consists of mountain pastures and there is a seasonal movement of flocks.

The most influential and numerous of the tribes of Fārs is the Qashqā'i, which is a Turkish tribe speaking a Turkī dialect. The Bahārī and 'Aynālū tribes of the Khamseh confederation, both now much decreased in numbers and settled, are also of Turkish origin. The 'Arab tribe of the Khamseh, as its name suggests, is of Arab extraction. There are also Arab tribes in the Persian Gulf littoral.

Khūzistān, or 'Arabistān as it used to be called, consists mainly of alluvial plains watered by the large rivers, such as the Karkheh, and minor streams, such as the Jarrāhī and Hindijān; and dust-blown hills, some of which are covered in spring for a brief period, if the rains come, by a thin covering of vegetation. Mountains frame the province to the north and east. In recent years the construction of new, and the repair of old, dams has made it possible to increase the area under cultivation. The summers are hot and the winters mild. A wide range of crops is grown in inland districts, such as Dizfūl, Shūstar, Rām Hurmuz, and Bihbahān. Dates are an important crop in the Persian Gulf littoral. In many parts of the province, especially in the Arab areas, agriculture is backward. In Sūsangird (Dasht-i Mishān) the main, and, until recent years, almost the only crop was rice.

The lower slopes of the Bakhtiārī and Luristān mountains in the south have sometimes been included administratively in Khūzistān. The Kūhgilūyeh, the mountain district between Bihbahān and Ardakān, was also sometimes administered from Khūzistān. Bāsht normally came under Khūzistān; but the neighbouring district of the Mamassanī was more usually reckoned as belonging to Fārs. The population of the plains of Khūzistān is mainly Arab. In the mountain areas of the north and east Lurs and Bakhtiārīs predominate.

To the east of Fārs lies Kirmān, bordered on the north by the central desert and the south by the Persian Gulf. Climatically the province falls broadly into three main regions. The first, the *garmsīr*, includes Bam, Narmāshīr, and Shahdād, which border the central desert, and Jiruft, separated from the northern part of the province by a high range of mountains.

Dates and citrus fruits and other crops belonging to the *garmsār* are important in this area. Jiruft is one of the most fertile districts in the province. It also produces high quality wool. The second region consists of the district round the town of Kirmān, Rafsinjān, Zarand, Rāvar, and Kūhbanān, which have a hot summer and mild winter climate. Pistachio nuts and fruit are important in these districts; little grain is grown. Agriculture is carried on in the plains and mountain valleys. For the most part the slope of the land in the plains is slight, and the *ganāts* tend to be long. The third region, comprising the districts of Aqṭā', Chahār Gurpbad, and Sirjān, is upland country with a temperate climate and crops.

In Kirmān there are a number of enclaves in which tribes of Turkish extraction are found, including the Buchāqchī in the Sirjān area, and the Afshār in Rāvar. In the eastern and southern parts of the province there are Balūch.

Balūchistān and Sīstān to the south-east and east of the central desert have an individuality of their own. Balūchistān consists of four main regions: the extremely inhospitable Mīkrān coast, which, given water, will, nevertheless, grow tropical plants; the desert oases of Bampūr and Irānshahr, the main produce of which is dates, but which also grow a little grain and cotton; the mountain oasis of Sarāvān, which also produces dates; and the mountainous frontier region in the east, the highest peak of which is the volcanic Mt. Taftān (over 13,000 ft.). The province is inhabited by Balūch, who form a close community. They are distinguished from the surrounding population particularly by their adherence to Sunnī Islam and by their language.

Sīstān was formerly one of the granaries of Persia. To the north and west it is bounded by a large lake, the Hāmūn. The River Helmand enters Sīstān from Afghanistan and divides into two branches, the Pariān, which later subdivides into a number of streams, and the Sīstān river. Water, led in canals from these rivers, irrigates the province. Dykes are constructed along the banks of the rivers to ensure the irrigation of the land and to prevent flooding. Proper regulation and control of irrigation works are essential to the prosperity of the area. The cattle breeders and fishermen of Sīstān are among the most



primitive communities in the whole country. Immediately after the Second World War, dereliction and decay prevailed in Sistān. The main causes of this were to be found in the oppression of the local landowners (the *sardārs*), the malpractices of government officials, inadequate control of irrigation, absence of health services, and the insecurity of tenure of the peasants. In more recent years, as stated above, there has been a great exodus of peasants from Sistān, in particular Zābul, to the Turkomānsarāy.

The western provinces, Kurdistān and Kirmānshāhān, have much in common with Āzarbāyjān, and, in the *garmsīr* of Ilām, with Khūzistān. Kurdistān, with its capital at Sanandaj, consists of wide undulating plains in the east, and irregular broken mountain country in the west along the Iraqi frontier. Irrigated farming is practised in the mountain valleys and in the neighbourhood of the rivers and streams which flow through the country. Irrigation by *qanāt* is the exception. The area between Sanandaj, Dīvān Darreh, Bijār, Dasht-i Ūbātū, and Tikāb (which belongs administratively to Āzarbāyjān) consists of a great expanse of open rolling country in which dry farming is practised, except along the streams and river valleys. Grain is the principal crop. Some rice is grown in the river valleys. Tobacco is one of the main crops in Marīvān. Flocks play a less important part in the economy of Kurdistān than in the Kurdish districts of Āzarbāyjān.

Kirmānshāhān is a large and varied province, consisting of mountain ranges between which lie fertile plateaux, such as Shāhābād and Māhidasht, Şahneh and Dīnavar, rolling uplands, such as Bīlīvār, Sunqur, and Kullīā'ī, tangled mountainous country with wooded valleys, such as Gūrān and Kirind, warm lowlands, such as Qaşr-i Shīrīn on the edge of the plateau and Ilām with its wooded uplands and arid dust-blown *garmsīr* on the Iraqi frontier. Grain is the main crop of the province; oil seeds, pulses, legumes, cotton, sugar-beet, and some rice are also grown.

The Kurds of Kurdistān are distinguished from those of Mahābād by the fact that they are, broadly speaking, settled. The ethos of society is, nevertheless, tribal. They too are Sunni. Adherence to various darvish orders is widespread,

especially to the Naqshbandī order in Marivān and to the Qādiris in Bāneh. In Kirmānshāh the villagers mainly belong to the Kirmānjī group of Kurds and are for the most part Shī'ī. In Sanjābī, many of the population, except in the north and north-west where they are Sunnī, belong to the Ahl-i Haqq. In Gūrān they are mainly 'Alī Illāhīs. In Īlām the population is mainly Lur but in Mihrān it is Arab. There are also some Kurdish villages in Īlām.

From the above it will be realized that Persia is a country of infinite variety. It is also one of great beauty. The magnificent peaks of the Elburz, the rugged splendour of the Bakhtiārī mountains, the wild beauty of the Kūhgīlūyeh with their oak-covered lower reaches, the hills of Īlām studded with trees, the steep and tangled valleys of Kurdistān, the wide rolling country of Tikāb and Divān Darreh, the wonderfully clear and limpid waters of Lake Galleh Gahar set among steep rocky mountains, the oases on the plateau where one is seldom out of sight of mountain ranges, the colours of which constantly change in the clear atmosphere, the thick Caspian forests, and the central desert with its fantastic shapes and grim beauty, the blossom of the wild almond and pistachio trees in the mountains of southern Fārs, the glorious splash of colour made by the fields of wild anemones in spring, the exquisite beauty and delicacy of the mountain flowers, the tree or garden watered by a *qanāt* or spring offering refreshment and peace in the midst of a barren landscape—these and many other scenes belong to the magic of Persia. It is, perhaps, not wholly fanciful to see the beauty of this physical scene mirrored in the discreteness of the Persian mind; and in the perfection of the isolated moment, which finds its expression in Persian lyric poetry and miniature painting.

In a country so diverse, it is no matter for surprise that provincial particularism should have been strongly marked. The various ethnic groups and tribal communities and even the different villages had their own distinctive characteristics and organization, which affected their relations with each other and outside bodies. In many cases, the difference in their social ethos is still unmistakable. Time and again in the past the great empires were overthrown and the central government des-



troyed. In such times of crisis, the local leaders carried on the administration and handed down the traditions of civilization. Society and agriculture showed an astonishing recuperative power, which was, in part, due to the semi-autonomous nature of the local communities.

In addition to this tendency towards local particularism there was another and contrary tendency towards unity. In the physical sphere this was marked by the great trunk roads, in particular the Khurāsān road running from Baghdad to Central Asia with side roads leading to important provincial centres. Invasions and military expeditions largely followed the line of these roads, but so also did trade, civilization, and Islamic learning, transcending provincial particularism. Thus there grew up also a consciousness of a common heritage expressed in terms of both Islam and *irānīyyat*, a kind of Persian consciousness, handed down by men of Islamic learning, the *ʿulamā*, and men of letters, the *adabā*, respectively. So there was not only variety but also unity. The Persian peasant, as well as the townsman, was the heir to this civilization. He often lived, and sometimes still lives, in primitive conditions, but in general he is not primitive. This is an important fact which is sometimes forgotten.

The contrasts in the physical field were matched in the social and economic spheres by various cleavages in society, a brief consideration of which is relevant to an understanding of the background to land reform and to its assessment. First there was the long-standing dichotomy between the governed and the government, which did not in any sense regard itself as the servant of the people. Its main contact with the rural population was through the collection of taxes and the levy of soldiers. It was normal for government officials to live on the country. The second great dichotomy was that between the rural and urban population. Islam was an urban civilization and favoured the urban community. Agricultural prosperity, however, was traditionally regarded as the basis upon which stable government rested; medieval Islamic philosophers and encyclopaedists regarded agriculture as the basic industry upon which the good order of the world and the continued existence of the human race depended. Nevertheless, the townsman looked upon the

countryman with scorn and contempt, although many of the towns were market towns depending for their prosperity upon the neighbouring countryside. In modern times, with the provision of greater amenities and the spread of education in the towns, the discrepancy between urban and rural life became still greater. The landowners, moreover, had become more fully integrated into the urban classes than before. Contact was thus eventually lost between the two sectors of the population. A complete lack of understanding ensued. Neither side understood or accepted the other. This was, perhaps, especially true in the case of those who had had a western education (see further Chapter II).

Land ownership had always, to some extent, been an urban phenomenon: many of the landowners lived for at least part of the year in the towns, and not, as in the medieval west, in castles or manors scattered through the countryside. There was nothing in the nature of a hereditary landed aristocracy, although the 'old' families enjoyed a certain social, but not functional, pre-eminence. Repeated conquest and the inheritance laws of Islam effectively prevented the emergence of a hereditary landed aristocracy. The special position of the *sayyids*, the descendants of the prophet Muhammad's son-in-law 'Ali and his wife Fāṭimah, admittedly derived from hereditary descent, but their influence was not due, except by coincidence, to the ownership of land. The only other class, which had some claim to be regarded as a hereditary aristocracy, was that constituted by the tribal leaders; but their authority was essentially personal, and derived from the possession of flocks and tribal followers, not from the possession of land, though they often acquired it. It is, nevertheless, true that land ownership gave social prestige, wealth, and political power, and that the large landowners and tribal chiefs held an immensely privileged position in society. But the vicissitudes of conquest, invasion, and economic pressure caused frequent changes in the composition of the landowning class, though not in its privileges and functions, and brought about the dispersal of tribal groups and the disappearance of chiefly families.

Throughout medieval times the land system showed in many respects an astonishing continuity. The most important medi-



eval institution connected with the land was the land assignment, the *iqṭāʿ*, different aspects of which were later known as the *ṭuyūl* and the *ṣuyūrghāl*. It was a grant of land or its revenue, or both, with or without immunities, made by the government to its officers and others. In some respects it resembled the revenue farm; in others the provincial governorate. It was closely connected with the levy of troops and was in many cases given in return for their provision; it was also granted in return for other forms of service, and as a pension, or a gift. Except in the last-mentioned case, the grant was not normally hereditary. There was throughout a close connection between the land revenue system and the land assignment on the one hand and the levy of troops on the other, but basically the system was bureaucratic, not feudal. In its essentials it lasted until the beginning of the twentieth century. The dominant need of the state at the time when this system began to emerge was for money to finance its operations. The crucial problem facing the state was not the question of 'protection', which had been the dominant need in western Europe when the feudal system had developed, but the payment of its civil and military officers. Hence it seized upon and transformed the financial and administrative institutions of the state. From this stems a fundamental difference between the feudal institutions of western Europe and the land assignment of Persia, namely that a contractual relationship was an essential characteristic of the former, but the element of contract never became a feature of the latter. The holder of the land assignment, although he often succeeded in transforming it into private property, which he transmitted by inheritance, held his assignment solely at the will of the ruler and as a matter of grace. It might be revoked or assigned to someone else at any moment, in which case the only remedy of the original assignee was to defend it by force. If the central government was strong, there was close control over the land assignment system, which did not itself involve decentralization; but more often the central government was weak, and those to whom the land was assigned usurped control. In the course of time the functions of the provincial governor, the provincial military commander, the tax collector, the tax farmer, and the man to whom the land was assigned tended to be combined in

one person. This led to the emergence of large landed properties in which the holder carried out most of the functions of government to the virtual exclusion of the central government. Those features of the Persian land system which are sometimes loosely described as feudal derived not from feudalism but from the arbitrary nature of power.<sup>1</sup> All power in medieval Persia was essentially arbitrary. This profoundly affected social conditions and was also an obstacle to economic growth.

Among the first actions of the National Consultative Assembly convened in 1907 was to abolish the grant of *tyūls*. The immediate effect of this measure probably varied considerably in different parts of the country, according to its remoteness or otherwise. One writer suggests that this step was in fact detrimental to the peasants. He argues that the holders of *tyūls* had ceased by that time to draw large benefits from them and did not, therefore, suffer great loss when this form of grant was abolished. The peasants on the other hand, he maintains, became subject to all kinds of oppression and extortion at the hands of government officials, there being no longer any other force to counter their influence or to restrain their actions.<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt some truth in this. The strong landowner did give his peasants 'protection' from outside interference, whether from government officials, or raiding groups, or simply from the encroachments of neighbours, but in return for this 'protection' the peasant was for the most part kept in a position of subjection and ignorance.

The arrival of government officials in the more remote areas after the abolition of *tyūls*, even if not wholly beneficial, nevertheless introduced a new factor into the local situation, and in some measure reduced the dependence of the peasant on the landowner or *tyūldār*. In many areas, however, the local officials were often the nominees of the landowners and could not hope to exercise their functions without obtaining the goodwill of the latter, to whom they owed their appointment; this in turn was often only to be won by granting concessions.

<sup>1</sup> See further *Landlord and Peasant*, and my article 'Reflections on the Iqtā' in *Arabic and Islamic Studies in honor of Hamilton A. R. Gibb*, ed. George Makdisi (Leiden, 1965), pp. 358-76.

<sup>2</sup> 'Abdullāh Mustoufi, *Sharh-i Zindagi-i Mām* (Tehran, 1945-6), ii, 354.



Power continued to be for the most part in the hands of the large landowners and the tribal khans, who were still able to devote a considerable portion of the proceeds of their estates to the maintenance of irregular troops, and when necessary to defy the government.<sup>1</sup>

Broadly speaking the large landowners were composed of the following groups: (i) members of the ruling family and the leading members of the official classes, both military and civil, who had obtained their land by conquest, inheritance, gift, or purchase, or had acquired it during the course of office; they were for the most part absentee landlords; (ii) tribal leaders, who sometimes also belonged to the ruling family or to the official classes, and had acquired their land in the same way; they were less frequently absentees than the first group, but since they took part in seasonal migrations, they were inevitably absent from their landed properties for long periods, and as they became settled they tended to become absentees and to be centred in the capital or some provincial town; (iii) members of the religious classes, whose properties derived originally mainly from grants and pensions from the state, inheritance, purchase, and sometimes from the usurpation of *vagf* property; they were usually absentees; and (iv) merchants whose property derived mainly from purchase, and sometimes from their transactions as moneylenders; their purpose in the acquisition of land was usually to gain the social prestige conferred by the ownership of land, or security of investment; they too were absentees. In addition to the above groups there were large numbers of smaller landowners, who (a) had acquired land as the servants or bailiffs of the large landowners, or (b) were shopkeepers and tradesmen, members of the professional classes, and minor government officials, who had inherited land or invested in it to supplement their income from other sources. Lastly there was a small class of peasant proprietors, who were not, however, to be found in all parts of the country.

There were all kinds of gradation in the size of the landed estate, from the province or district to the village or part of the village, and in the income of the landowner. Many of the large landowners were extremely wealthy; some of the small

<sup>1</sup> See also *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 179.

landowners on the other hand were no better off than the more prosperous peasant proprietors. In the country as a whole, the dominant form of land ownership was that of the large landowner. In areas with difficult irrigation problems, as for example much of Kirmān, where the *qanāts* were long and the cost of their upkeep heavy, the land was mainly, if not entirely, in the hands of large landowners. This was also true of the wheat-growing areas of western Persia. Small landowners tended to be found in the less fertile districts round the towns. Peasant proprietors were on the whole confined to remote areas in which agriculture offered a low return, as, for example, mountain areas or the edge of the central desert.

Although it was not unusual for a landowner to hold several villages, for a variety of reasons, notably the fragmentation of large estates by inheritance, many of the large landed estates consisted of parts of different villages. When a large estate was split up into several shares, these were sometimes delimited, but frequently they were held on a joint or *mushā'* tenure by the heirs of the original owner, each having a right to a specific share of the capital and the income but not to a specific portion of the land. In such cases, one of the joint holders would usually be responsible for the running of the estate.

From early times the relation between the landlord and the peasant was based on a crop-sharing agreement; more rarely the peasant had a tenancy agreement. In the former case the payment to the landlord was mainly, or wholly, in kind; in the latter, in cash or cash and kind. Crop-sharing agreements, which were recognized both by Islamic law and the civil code, were mainly regulated by local custom. Five elements, land, water, seed, draught animals, and labour, were taken into consideration in fixing the shares of the two parties. A great variety of practice was found, and was influenced by the nature of the farming, whether dry or irrigated; the type of irrigation, whether by river water, *qanāt*, or well; and the type of crop grown. In the case of grain, the division of the crop was usually made on the threshing floor. The landlord's share of summer crops, on the other hand, was decided by valuation.

A third party was sometimes interposed between the peasant and the landlord in the person of the *gārband*. He provided the



draught oxen and was a kind of manager; he had an agreement with the landlord on the one hand and with the peasants on the other. He usually managed several ploughlands. The *gāband* was not, however, widely found, except in some districts near Tehrān.

In some areas the landlord levied dues in addition to a share of the crop, and the peasant was also subject to certain personal services. These were levied for the most part on the ploughland; more rarely they were assessed on the basis of the family or as a poll-tax. The most common was the liability of the peasant to transport the landlord's share of the crop from the threshing-floor to the granary or the local town. The most onerous was labour service, *bīgārī*. The provision of men for labour service had been a common obligation upon those who held land from the sixteenth century onwards, and probably from earlier times also. In the case of those who held grants of land from the state and performed, in the land assigned to them, some or all of the functions of government, dues and labour service were, to some extent, exacted by the assignee as the representative of the government. In the course of time, these dues and services tended to become attached to the land and to be exacted by the landlord as such. When *tiyāls* were abolished at the beginning of the twentieth century and local services were to an increasing extent provided by the government, labour service died out in many areas; but in others the landlords continued to levy it. This was the case in Kurdistān, Kirmānshāhān, Āzarbāyjān, Khūzistān, Kirmān, Sistān, and parts of Fārs. In central Persia, on the other hand, the levy of dues by landlords and personal services were rare.

For the most part, the crop-sharing peasant had no permanent right to the land which he cultivated; there was periodic redistribution of holdings, sometimes by lot. In this respect central Persia was an exception; redistribution was not often found there. The main motives for redistribution were a desire on the part of the landlord to keep the allotment of dues proportionate to shares and holdings, and his wish to prevent the peasant from acquiring a vested interest in his holding. In some cases the peasant owned the house in which he lived. This gave him a slight measure of security, because the landlord, if

he wished to evict him, had to buy his house; but as against this, the peasant was responsible for repairs, whereas, if the housing belonged to the landlord, repairs were carried out by him. Similarly, if the peasant had a garden, the landlord, in the event of eviction, had to pay him compensation for any trees, fruit trees, or vines he had planted and any buildings he had erected. Tangible property of this kind was known as *ʿāyān*, as distinct from the land on which it stood, the *ʿarṣek*, and its ownership could be registered. On the whole, the landlords did not encourage the peasants to make gardens, mainly because they feared that this would improve their economic position and increase their independence. Some landlords took the view that if the peasant had a stake in the land he would cultivate it better, but they were a small minority.

The peasant also paid a share of the crop or a due to the village officials, such as the village headman (the *kadkhudā*), the man responsible for the protection of the village fields from thieves and wild beasts (the *dashbān*), and, in irrigated areas, the official in charge of the distribution of water (the *mīrāb*). In some areas, notably in east Persia, the village craftsmen, the blacksmith and the carpenter, also received a share of the crop from the peasant.

In many parts of the country the peasant supplemented his income by the keeping of flocks. The extent of this depended on the climate. On the borders of the central desert flocks played an unimportant part, but in parts of west Persia the livelihood of the peasants depended as much upon flocks as upon agriculture. In areas with an unfavourable climate and where there were no village pastures, only a few of the peasants kept one or two goats. Where conditions were more favourable, it was usual for the peasants to have five to ten head of sheep and goats, or even a small flock. The keeping of sheep and goats served three main purposes: first, they provided a small quantity of manure for the land; secondly, the curds, clarified butter, and cheese made from their milk formed an important article of diet for the peasant and his family, and, if surplus to their needs, were sold and supplemented their income; and thirdly, the hair of goats was used for cloth to make tents and ropes, and the wool of sheep for carpets. In many regions the weaving of rugs and



carpets was an important additional source of income for the peasants; and in some districts, notably Isfahān and areas round the central desert, many of the peasant women supplemented the family income by weaving a coarse cotton cloth for their own clothes and for sale.

In addition to private property (*milk*) there were three other types of land, (i) state lands (*khālīseh*), (ii) endowments (*vagf*, pl. *ouqāf*), and (iii) dead lands (*mavāt*) and waste lands (*bāyireh*). State lands were mainly the result of conquest, inheritance from former dynasties, and confiscation, and varied in extent and location with successive dynasties and rulers. They were usually administered by a special department, and from the grant of the constitution onwards there were various plans for their sale.<sup>2</sup> In modern times they were, for the most part, leased. The position of the assignee or tenant, in his relations with the state and the peasants, was virtually that of the landlord in private property; and he usually belonged to the same groups of people as the large landowner.

A *vagf* consists in the immobilization of property, the revenue of which is devoted to some special purpose, usually a religious or charitable one, such as the upkeep of a shrine or mosque, the performance of passion plays (*rouzehkhuwānīs*), the feeding of the poor, or the support of students in a *madrasah*, a school in which the religious sciences are taught. These properties became a very important category of land in the sixteenth century A.D. under the Safavids. The religious law lays down detailed provisions for the constitution of *ouqāf*. Technically a *vagf* cannot be dissolved, but throughout the centuries there have been numerous cases of the usurpation of *ouqāf* and of their decay from natural causes or because the purpose for which they had been constituted became impossible of fulfilment. In 1910 a ministry of education, *ouqāf*, and fine arts was established. When the civil code was drawn up, special provisions governing *ouqāf*, based upon the religious law, were included. In 1934 certain changes were introduced into the administration of *ouqāf*, giving the ministry of education greater powers of supervision, except in the case of those *ouqāf* of which the reigning shah was the administrator. These latter, which were exempted

<sup>2</sup> See further *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 298 ff.



from taxation, included the extensive and valuable *ouqāf* belonging to the shrine of the Imām Rizā in Mashhad, of which the office of *mutavallī* or administrator had been vested in the reigning shah since the sixteenth century A.D.<sup>1</sup>

*Vaqf* properties were to be found all over the country. They were often run by members of the religious classes as administrators. They were also frequently leased. The position of the administrator who ran the *vaqf* or the tenant who leased it vis-à-vis the peasants was similar to that of the landlord in private property. The general tendency was for *ouqāf* and *khālīqeh* lands to be badly administered. This was especially true if they were in the hands of tenants, because the latter had no permanent interest in the land. Long-term improvements were seldom undertaken.

In addition to charitable *ouqāf* there were also private or personal *ouqāf*. A private *vaqf* was known as *vaqf-i khāss* in contradistinction to *vaqf-i ʿamm*, a charitable *vaqf*, and consisted of property constituted into a *vaqf* for some private purpose, such as the benefit of the settlor's family. Its administration differed little from the private landed estate. Frequently one of the beneficiaries administered it on behalf of the others.

The last category, dead lands, was subject under Islamic law to special provisions, which were also largely incorporated into the civil code. It was a category of some importance, since the reclamation of dead land created a claim to ownership.<sup>2</sup>

It must not be imagined that because most of the agricultural land of the country was held by large landowners, the state, and religious endowments, that large-scale farming was practised. This was not the case. It is true that there was often general control or supervision by the landowner's bailiff, and sometimes seed was purchased and the crop marketed centrally, and investment in irrigation was from one source. Nevertheless in the main, both large and small estates were run on the basis of the ploughland, or the peasant holding. There were thus none of the economic advantages of large land ownership. Methods of cultivation were primitive. A few landowners, especially from about 1952, began to turn to tractors and combines in the

<sup>1</sup> See *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 230 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 204 ff.

grain-growing areas, but their number was small except in the Turkomānsarāy (see below, Chapter II). In the vast majority of cases the traditional methods continued to be used. Their primitive nature, combined with unfavourable physical conditions, resulted in poor yields.

The main draught animal employed on the plateau was the ox. Donkeys were also used, as were mules, especially in Khūzistān; and, in the Persian Gulf littoral, Mīāndūāb and Mahābād (both in Āzarbāyjān), buffaloes, and in Balūchistān, camels. Ploughing was carried out normally by a plough of the hook type, having a large or small steel share; a kind of harrow and levelling board were also used. Grain was cut with the sickle; scythes were also used in parts of Āzarbāyjān. Corn was brought in sheaves to the threshing-floor, where it was threshed by a threshing-board or wain, or trodden out by strings of oxen or other animals driven round the threshing-floor. Winnowing was done by wooden forks after which the grain was sifted.<sup>1</sup> There was thus an input of enormous labour efforts without regard to yield.

The amount of the crop available for sale or barter was usually extremely small. In the case of the crop-sharing peasant, his portion, after the deduction of the landlord's share and the payment of various dues, was often insufficient to maintain him and his family until the next harvest. The peasant himself performed all the operations concerned with the production and disposal of his crops. He was extremely sensitive to seasonal and other variations in price. His poverty prevented the accumulation of reserves. Thus he was seldom in a position to drive a bargain, but was forced by need to take whatever price was offered, however disadvantageous this might be. Inadequate communications made it difficult for him to do anything but sell his goods at the nearest market. The almost permanent state of need and temporary crises which were the normal concomitant of peasant life forced him to dispose of his produce immediately after harvest, if it was not already pledged before. Barter was common, especially with travelling merchants and local shopkeepers.

<sup>1</sup> See further *ibid.*, pp. 359 ff., art. *filāḥa* in *Encyclopædia of Islam*, new ed. (Leiden, 1960- ), and H. E. Wulff, *The Traditional Crafts of Persia*, pp. 260 ff.



The peasant was constantly in need of money for capital requirements to replace livestock and agricultural implements, and for current expenses such as the provision of seed. To provide these he had, in many cases, to borrow. Often, too, he had to borrow merely to feed himself and his family. In such cases the harvest sometimes sufficed only to pay off his debts; in bad years it did not even do this, so that the peasant remained permanently in debt. Loans were normally raised on the security of the next harvest. Rates of interest were high. It was common in some areas for the landowners to give advances to peasants working on their land. The terms of these varied, and were often unfavourable to the peasant. For example, advances would be given in winter when his need was greatest and prices were at their highest, and repayment would be made in summer at harvest time when prices were low.

Many strands thus went to make up the complicated and varied pattern of rural life in Persia. These were great extremes of climate and physical conditions, extremes of wealth and poverty, inequality of opportunity, and everywhere, to a greater or lesser extent, insecurity. The peasant lived for the most part in conditions of grinding poverty. His only remedy when driven to extremity was to leave the land to seek a possibly even more precarious living in the town. The large landowner, in spite of the wealth and power which he often enjoyed, also often went in fear of being despoiled of his wealth by intrigue or faction, and of being cheated by a discontented peasantry. All power continued to be arbitrary, and the gulf between the government and the governed remained for the most part unbridged. Distrust, insecurity, faction, and intrigue prevailed on all sides.



## CHAPTER II

### THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND; VILLAGE COUNCILS; KHĀLIṢEH; THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SHAH'S ESTATES; THE ABORTIVE LAND REFORM LAW OF 1960

---

A CONTINUITY of tradition, like that observed in the land system, is also to be seen in administration. In the political sphere, however, certain changes began to take place in the early nineteenth century, which were to have far-reaching results. In the early years of the century, Persia became closely affected by the Eastern question, and her foreign relations and, to a great extent, her internal affairs also became dominated by Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia. This intrusion of the great powers was first felt in the form of military pressure, but with increasing contacts through diplomacy, trade, travel, and education it spread to the intellectual sphere also. Partly in response to this intrusion, certain administrative changes were introduced during the second half of the century. They were of a superficial nature, but in effect they strengthened the central government; since they were not accompanied by any checks or controls, they extended the area in which the arbitrary power of the government was felt and increased its pressure. This, in turn, stimulated among certain groups of the population the desire for political and social change, which the intrusion of the west had already begun to foster.

The movement for reform, which eventually culminated in the constitutional revolution, was a dual movement. It was a protest, first against oppression and injustice by the shah and his government, and secondly against the subservience of Persia to foreign powers and in particular against foreign control of her economic resources in return for loans and concessions to pay for the extravagances of the court. It was a demand, not

for political or social freedom, but rather for justice, seen not in legal terms, but in terms of 'good' government. It was assumed by those who supported the movement for constitutional reform that a government on the model of the democratic governments of western Europe would control the power of the shah and prevent exploitation by foreign powers. But there was no general realization of the fact that modern administration required a change in the economic basis of the state. This was still an agricultural economy run largely on the methods of subsistence farming.

The question of land reform, which was fundamental to a change in the basis of the state, attracted little or no attention. This was, perhaps, partly because there had been no history of peasant revolts in Persia; and partly because the ruling classes in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were not alienated from the land, from which they drew their power and wealth, as they were later. The peasants were oppressed by economic and social subjection, but they and the landowners still lived in more or less the same world. The difference between them was of degree rather than kind. Similarly, the constitutionalists gave no attention to reform in the mutual relations of the various classes who lived on and drew their livelihood from the land, although, as stated in the previous chapter, the National Consultative Assembly abolished land assignments (*tezûls*) in 1907.

Two other measures were taken, affecting taxation and the methods by which the state financed its operations. The first was the abolition of the use of conversion rates and premiums (*tas'ir*) in assessing taxes. It was customary to assess the land tax in kind, but its payment was often demanded in cash; and by manipulating the conversion rates or adding a premium to the basic assessment, it was possible to raise the rate of taxation. The second was the abolition of the levy of taxes, known as *tafâut-i 'amal*, by the governors and others for the expenses of the local administration over and above the regular taxes. These measures did not materially alter the structure or personnel of the landowning classes; but they ensured greater security of tenure to landowners, prevented, in theory at least, the alienation of large areas of land from the control of the central



government, and were a necessary preliminary to the establishment of a modern tax administration. The landowner now no longer performed the functions of government because he held the land. This was an important change in theory, even though the ruling class was still predominantly formed by the landowners, who continued in practice, especially in the outlying areas, to carry on the functions of government.

In 1911 constitutional government was suspended. During the Great War of 1914-18 and in the immediately succeeding years, many parts of Persia were in a condition of chaos. The authority of the central government was disputed; and in Gilān the Jangali movement led by Mīrzā Kūchik Khān, which was active from 1915 for some five or six years, represented a revolt against the oppression of the landlords and the corruption and incompetence of the provincial administration. Dues and labour service were abolished and the crop-sharing system modified in favour of the peasant. The complaints of the peasantry were investigated by the Jangalis, control of water for irrigation was assumed, and landlords were compelled to disgorge their wealth and pay to save their estates from confiscation; and in some cases they were kidnapped and held up to ransom.<sup>1</sup> From about 1919 onwards the movement suffered increasing communist infiltration. In June 1920 a Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed in Gilān, and the peasants rallied in large numbers to the revolutionary committees which were set up. The first congress of the Persian Communist Party, held in Enzeli (Pahlavi) in June 1920, declared that its policy was *inter alia* the confiscation of the estates of large landowners and their distribution among the peasants and soldiers of the revolutionary army. In July, the increasingly proletarian and communist orientation of the movement caused Kūchik Khān to resign from the government and retire to the forest with his followers, and a new government under Iḥsānullāh took over. It was finally overthrown by the Persian central government in October 1921.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. S. Portescue, *Military Report on Tehran and Adjacent Provinces of Northwest Persia (including the Caspian Littoral)*, (Calcutta, 1922), pp. 78-9.

<sup>2</sup> See further Sepehr Zabih, *The Communist Movement in Iran*, University of California Press (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966).



Rezā Shāh, who assumed the crown in 1925, pursued a policy of modernization and westernization. Changes took place in taxation. When he assumed power, a land tax was levied at the rate of 10 per cent on the landlord's net share of the produce of the land, or his estates were assessed according to the amount fixed in the tax rolls in the hands of the financial officials known as *mustoufis*. These rolls were hopelessly out of date; in addition there were numerous irregularities in the collection of taxes and large arrears were outstanding. By a law of 10 January 1926 a uniform land tax was established throughout the country, and was to be assessed on the basis of a new cadastral survey. Irrigated and unirrigated land was taxed at 3 per cent of its produce, to be deducted from the harvest before it was divided between the landlord and the peasant. The landowner was to pay 10 per cent of his income from pastures and forests and 5 per cent from his income from mills and water used for irrigation. A tax on flocks and animals was also imposed. The new survey was begun in 1926, but never covered the whole of the country; thus the implementation of the law was to some extent frustrated. Partial surveys were subsequently made in 1934-5 and 1950.

The law of 10 January 1926 was eventually abrogated by a law dated 15 December 1934, which abolished land tax, and replaced it by an income tax and a 3 per cent due, which was to be levied in kind on agricultural produce, the produce of flocks, and stock, on entry into a town or township or on export from the country, the due being payable once only. This law remained in effect until 1948, when a land tax was reimposed in some districts on the basis of the survey begun in 1926.

From 1931 onwards, various monopolies and monopoly companies for trading in certain goods were established. Wheat became a government monopoly; tea, sugar, silk, cotton, opium, dried fruit, tobacco, and gum tragacanth were among the other goods affected. Under these monopolies some of these products were bought at fixed prices by the government or the monopoly company. The wheat monopoly was abolished in 1949; and most of the other monopolies also disappeared in due course. The sugar monopoly led to a great expansion in the acreage under sugar-beet. For the rest the establish-

ment of these monopolies, in spite of the benefit brought by the stabilization of prices, was not entirely to the advantage of the peasants, since the number of officials who had direct dealings with them was greatly increased. The growing centralization which marked the reign of Reżā Shāh did not, on the whole, benefit the population living on the land, except in the matter of security from tribal raids. This was an important consideration.

Changes also took place in the position of the landowning class during the reign of Reżā Shāh. As the central government extended its control over the outlying areas of the country, the power of the landowners tended to decrease. The deputies of the National Consultative Assembly were still drawn mainly from the landowners and from the official classes,<sup>1</sup> but towards the end of Reżā Shāh's reign there was a marked decline in the political and social status of the landowner.

With the growth of industry and the increase in governmental centralization, there was a movement from the country to the towns and from the provincial towns to the capital. This trend continued; from 1941 onwards there was, in particular, an exodus from Āzarbāyjān because of its proximity to the Soviet frontier and the uncertainty engendered during the war years by the presence of Soviet troops in the province. The increased centralization of the distribution of credit and merchandise in Tehrān during the war years also drew an increasing number of people to the capital. So far as the peasant was concerned, the drift to the towns and, in the south, to the oil-producing areas of Khūzistān and the Persian Gulf, occurred mainly because of the promise of higher wages and because in some areas, notably those bordering the central desert, agriculture did not offer an adequate living. In the case of the landowner, the promise of large and quick profits to be made in the towns, the attraction of government service, and the promise it offered of security and status, were powerful inducements. Further, both peasants and landowners sought greater security

<sup>1</sup> See Zahrā Shajī'i, *Namāyandagān-i majlis-i shūrā-yi millī dar bīst o yak doreh-i qānūnguzārī* (Tehrān, 1965), for an interesting discussion of the classes from which the deputies of the National Consultative Assembly were drawn.



and personal freedom in the anonymity of the large town, where they were less subject to governmental pressure than in the villages.

Towards the end of Reżā Shāh's reign there appears to have been in some quarters a realization that the existing system of crop-sharing needed modification. A law was passed on 18 November 1939. Its intention was not to abolish the system or to carry out a fundamental reform of tenure, but merely to modify it. The uncertainty of the international situation at that time, however, led to a decision not to implement the law, because it was thought unwise to proceed with a measure which might stir up civil disturbances at a time when Persia might find herself involved in international troubles. The regulations for the law were therefore never promulgated, and the law was not put into operation.

Meanwhile changes were taking place in the composition of the population. In particular the number of westernized intellectuals grew. Some were absorbed into the governing classes; others withdrew from active participation in a government of which they disapproved; a minority adopted leftist political views, and some joined the Communist Party. After the abdication of Reżā Shāh in 1941, these intellectuals became the main channel through which the discontent with existing conditions was expressed. They wanted a greater share in the government of the country. Their demand differed somewhat from that of the earlier constitutionalists, and was not for 'justice' but for 'freedom', seen not in terms of legal freedom, but as 'political' freedom from real, or alleged, interference, whether by foreign governments or by the Persian government.

All, or nearly all, political groups and parties and successive governments in the war and post-war years included in their political and governmental programmes some general reference to an improvement of agriculture and the conditions of those who lived on the land. But these were, on the whole, empty phrases. No hard thought was given to the achievement of these professed aims; and there was no understanding of the position and problems of the peasant.

At the end of the war, Soviet-inspired separatist movements developed in Āzarbāyjān and Kurdistān, but collapsed after a



brief period. In the former province the Democrat government under Pishavari expropriated the landlords, but failed to obtain any large measure of support from the peasants, partly because the dues formerly paid to the landlords were now demanded by the Democrat government. In Kurdistan no clear agrarian policy was formulated. After the fall of the separatist movements in Āzarbāyjān and Kurdistan, there was, broadly speaking, a reversion to the *status quo ante* in matters of land tenure and rural organization. The position of the landlords in Āzarbāyjān was, nevertheless, considerably shaken by this episode.

After the central government had regained control, some minor measures were taken in the field of agrarian and rural reform; but these were intended to silence criticism of the alleged reactionary nature of the government rather than to lay the basis of a fundamental reform. Qavām al-Saltāneh, the prime minister, in 1947 introduced a bill raising the share of the peasant under crop-sharing agreements by 15 per cent. Its provisions, however, were virtually ignored. Later, under the government of Dr. Muṣaddiq, two decrees, dated 6 and 11 October 1952 respectively, were issued under the Full Powers Act of 11 August 1952. The first laid down that 20 per cent was to be deducted from the landowner's share of the income from an agricultural estate, 10 per cent of which was to go to the peasants cultivating the land, and 10 per cent to the development and co-operative funds which were to be set up under the decree. The *gāvband* was excluded from benefiting from this 10 per cent (Art. 1, 10.). Owing to the wide range of crop-sharing agreements, the amount of the total crop represented by the 20 per cent varied. The actual increase due to the peasant was in any case small and represented about 1 to 3 per cent of the total crop. Twenty per cent was also to be deducted from the landlord's revenue from *jarībāneh*, i.e. a rent, usually in cash, for a specific area of land, rents, and dues from pastures, shops, ice-pits, caravanserais, and mills, and income from woodlands, and to be handed over to the local development and co-operative fund.<sup>1</sup> Peasant proprietors were to pay

<sup>1</sup> The inclusion of *jarībāneh* in the second category from which the peasants derived no direct benefit reduced the advantages which the decree

2 per cent of their total income in cash and kind on unirrigated crops and 4 per cent on irrigated crops into the local development and co-operative fund (Art. 3).

The arrangements for the collection and disposal of these levies were vague. If the landowner defaulted on the amount due to the development fund, court proceedings were to be instituted and priority given to the case (Art. 32). Seventy per cent of the monies accruing to the development fund was to be devoted to development and co-operative enterprises in the local village; 15 per cent was to be paid into a rural district fund and 15 per cent into a district fund (Art. 7); the district fund was to pay 15 per cent of its income into a provincial fund (Art. 12). This division of funds was likely in practice to mean that less, not more, money would be put into local development, since part of what in existing circumstances might have been put back into the land by the landowner would be taken for some 'paper' project at a higher level.

The village council was to be composed of five persons, consisting of a representative of the landowner or landowners, the village headman, and three of the village elders chosen by the peasants (Art. 17). The rural district council was to be formed by representatives of the local village councils; and the district council was to be composed of the district governor (*bakhshdār*), the heads of the local offices of agriculture, health, and justice respectively or their representatives, a representative of the Agricultural Bank, and up to five representatives of the rural district councils (Art. 23). Over these various councils there was a provincial council, composed of the governor (*farmāndār*), the heads of the local offices of agriculture, health and justice respectively, and the manager of the Agricultural Bank, and two representatives of the landowners and peasants of each district chosen by the relevant district council (Art. 24). Appointment to all the councils was for a period of two years.

---

might have conferred on the peasants in many districts. Those who drafted the decree probably had in mind conditions in the neighbourhood of Tehrān. Much valuable land round the town, growing mainly summer crops, vegetables, and fruit, was let, and for many years the landlords had maintained that the rents were low and did not reflect the rise in land values which had taken place.



The village council was to be responsible for the provision of drinking water, the building and repair of mosques, public baths, mortuaries, laundries, bridges, storerooms for crops, cheap housing, primary schools, electric power installations, the making of roads, public health, the care of orphans, the sick, disabled, and aged, the provision of loans, draught animals, and seed to needy peasants, and the encouragement of local industries (Art. 8). The rural district council was charged with the building of agricultural primary schools, clinics, dispensaries, and roads, and the provision of loans to villages for development projects (Art. 9). The district council was to be responsible for the construction of hospitals, agricultural and technical schools, central dispensaries, large bridges, the setting up of rural co-operative societies and rural fund societies, the appointment of travelling doctors, and the provision of loans to rural district councils for their development projects (Art. 10). No mention was made of the relationship of these various councils to the rural fund societies which had been set up by the the Agricultural Bank in various parts of the country (see below).

To help finance development projects the Agricultural Bank was empowered to give loans not exceeding five times the annual ordinary income of the fund for ten years at not more than 6 per cent, provided the agreement of the council of the next degree, which would act as surety for the loan, was obtained (Art. 14). Financial and technical help was also to be provided by the Seven-Year Plan Organization (Art. 15). A report dated May 1953 claimed that 27,135 village councils had been set up. It is unlikely that many of them had an effective existence. In those districts where the landlords retained their power, the councils did not function; in some districts, where the landlords were weakened, the peasants used the existence of the village council as an excuse to withhold the landlord's share of the crop.

The second decree, dated 11 October 1952, abolished the levy by the landlord of dues in the form of sheep, goats, lambs, clarified butter, and fuel, or of a poll-tax (Art. 1). Article 2 forbade the landlord 'to force the cultivators to work on his private affairs or to use the peasants' agricultural implements



or possessions except with the consent of the peasant or in return for the payment of a just price and wage'. A note to Article 2 stated that in those villages where transport of the landlord's share of the harvest from the threshing-floor to the granary was a charge on the peasant, this would continue to be a charge upon him. Complaints of alleged contravention of the law were to receive priority in the appropriate courts (Art. 4). This decree was not implemented in all parts of the country; and after the fall of Dr. Muşaddıq in 1953 dues and labour service were again levied in some districts where they had been temporarily abolished.

Neither decree was well drafted, and it is doubtful whether they represented a genuine attempt to improve the conditions of the peasants. It is more probable that their purpose was to prolong the life of the existing land system by minor concessions and to impress world opinion by reforms which at first glance appeared substantial, but which were in fact either negligible or impractical. They did nothing to give security of tenure to the peasant, which was fundamental to reform. Nor was he really given effective representation on the various councils. There was no intention of enlisting his participation by giving him responsibility or control of village affairs. The emphasis was on government control. That the intention of these decrees was not to carry out a radical reform in rural conditions is borne out by the issue in July 1953 of a third decree entitled the Social Security Law. This set up in each district a standing committee composed of the local governor, the local public prosecutor, the head of the local finance office, and the chief of the police and gendarmerie to investigate security matters and to remove differences between landowners and peasants over crop-sharing agreements. The commission was given power to arrest anyone creating disturbances of the peace or 'giving rise to anxiety'. It is possible that this decree was provoked in part by the disorders which broke out in some villages after the issue of the decrees of 6 and 11 October 1952. Nevertheless, it indicated a determination to maintain the existing land system and the pre-eminence of the landlord.

Dr. Muşaddıq fell in August 1953. The decrees issued under the Full Powers Act, unless otherwise confirmed, were abro-

gated. The decree setting up village councils, however, formed the basis of a series of new laws and decrees. The first of these was passed in 1955; it modified the original decree considerably, and made much more generous provision for the financing of village development. Article 2 stated that half the taxes and dues levied by law on cultivated land would be set aside for development. According to Article 3, if the peasant's share of the crop was less than half, the landowner or, in the case of *vagf* land the tenant or administrator (*mutavallî*), was to add 10 per cent of the net produce to the peasant's share. If the net share of the landowner was half (or more),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent only would be taken from his net share; and if in such a case there was also an intermediary between him and the peasant such as the *gâvband*,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent would also be taken from the net share of the *gâvband* and given to the peasant. A note stated that, in Kirmân, if the *qanât* watering the land was over 25 km. long and the peasant received 30 per cent or less of the crop, the seed and the cost of the upkeep of the *qanât* would be deducted from the harvest before its division between the two parties, provided that under that arrangement the peasant's share was not less than had formerly been customary. Estates which had been brought into cultivation by the creation of new *qanâts* or the repair of old *qanâts* which had fallen out of operation, or which were irrigated by water raised by power-operated pumps from wells or rivers, would be exempt for the first ten years from taxes and development dues (Art. 4). The money from taxation set aside in this way was to be paid by the ministry of finance, within a period of one month, into the development fund of the village (Art. 15). Seventy per cent of this was to be spent on development projects in the village; 15 per cent was to be handed over to the rural district council fund, 14 per cent to the district fund, and 1 per cent to the agricultural council of the province. In the case of peasant proprietors who paid no tax because their income was below the taxable minimum, 5 per cent of their net income was to be collected by the village headman to be spent on village development (Art. 6, note).

On 11 April 1956 a new law, which represented virtually a return to the decrees of Dr. Muşaddîq, was passed. Such small changes as were made in the composition of the councils had



the effect of weighing them more heavily in favour of the landowners. The village council was to be composed of five persons: a representative of the landowner or landowners, the village headman, a representative of the peasants, and two persons acceptable to the landowners and the peasants (Art. 16). The peasants were given no representation on the provincial council. Disputes over the landowner's share of the crop under a crop-sharing agreement were to be referred to the district governor (*bakhshdār*), and in his absence to the governor (*farmāndār*) (Art. 27). Requests to change the amount of the share of the crop which belonged according to local custom to the landowner were to be referred to the district council (Art. 28). A peasant, in the event of eviction by a landowner, could appeal to the district governor. If the latter failed to reconcile the two parties, he was to refer the case to the district development council. In the event of the peasant's case being upheld, if the landowner was not prepared to reinstate him, he was to pay the equivalent of three months' wages at local rates to the peasant and compensation for any tangible property (*a'yān*) which the peasant might possess in the village (Art. 33). Anyone in the village '*accused of disturbing the peace or against whom the landowner or the village headman or village council had a complaint*' (my italics) would be turned out of the village after the village council had investigated the affair (Art. 35).

By a decree dated 29 July 1956 the village, district, and provincial councils were placed under an organization for village social affairs and development, to be composed of three government servants proposed by the minister of the interior and approved by the council of ministers. They were to hold office for three years (Art. 8). A supreme council for village social affairs was to be set up under the chairmanship of the minister of the interior or his deputy to advise the organization, and was to be composed of the under-secretaries of the ministries of the interior, education, health, and roads respectively, the manager of the Plan Organization or his deputy, the manager of the organization for village social affairs and development, and three other persons well versed in village affairs, who were to be recommended by the executive committee of the organization for village social affairs and development and approved by



the minister of the interior (Art. 10). The landowner was to pay 5 per cent of his income from the produce of cultivated land, *jaribānāh*, pasture dues, trees, woodlands, gardens, orchards, rents, mills, shops, and ice-pits, etc., to the village council (Art. 12). Anyone holding tangible property (*ʿaʿyān*) in the village, the income from which was over 3,000 *ri.* (c. £14), was also to pay 5 per cent of his income from it to the village council. Persons in a village in which a 'municipal' council (*shahr-dārī*) had been set up and which levied dues were not subject to the payment of 5 per cent (Art. 13). On mechanized land 40 per cent of the produce was to be regarded as the landlord's share and 5 per cent of this was to be paid to the village council (Art. 14). Landowners who founded a new village or revived a village, the land of which had fallen out of production, were to be exempt for ten years from the payment of this 5 per cent (Art. 15). The village council was to pay 15 per cent of its revenue to the district council and 5 per cent to the organization for the reform of village social affairs and village development (Art. 20). The Agricultural Bank was empowered to give loans to the village or district council up to five times their annual income, subject to the agreement of the district council in the first case and the organization for village social affairs and village development in the second (Art. 21). The Plan Organization was also to provide financial and technical help within the limits of the Seven Year Plan (Art. 22). If the landowner, tenant, or administrator (*mutavallī*) of *vagf* land did not pay the 5 per cent due to the village council, the district governor could institute proceedings to recover it; such cases were to have precedence in the courts (Art. 23).

The different steps taken to set up village councils reflect the concern which was felt in post-war years at the over-centralization of the government, and the desire to foster local development, partly in order to arrest the influx of population into the capital and the large provincial cities. But they show no real grasp of local problems or conditions in all their variety. They neglected the question of the involvement of the peasants in the management of their own affairs, without which there was unlikely to be any major change in morale in the countryside, and which was fundamental to a reform in rural conditions.

There was to be some decentralization, but decision and control was still to rest with the landowners and local officials.

Various steps were taken in the post-war years for the development of the resources of the country and towards industrialization. A Seven Year Development Plan, to be financed by oil revenue, was inaugurated in 1949 and followed by the Second Seven Year Plan (1955-62).<sup>1</sup> The first plan was held up by the interruption of oil revenues in 1953 after the oil dispute. After its settlement, proposed expenditure under the plan was raised from 21,000 million *rs.* (\$656 million at the then rate of exchange) to 26,300 million *rs.* Under the second plan, which was budgeted at 84,000 million *rs.*, there was rapid economic growth, with a greatly increased flow of foreign aid and borrowing. During the period 1955-62, large irrigation schemes and transport projects dominated the public sector. Inflation developed, accompanied by speculation in land and property, and in 1960 a balance of payments deficit produced a crisis. Deflationary measures were taken and the economy stabilized.<sup>2</sup> Some difficulty was experienced by the development agency in pushing through projects; and productivity in industry (except oil) and agriculture remained low. Nevertheless the enormous sums flowing into the country from oil revenues and foreign aid to finance planned projects profoundly affected the country economically and socially.

In some areas industrial development provided the peasant, on a small scale, with alternative means of livelihood and so forced up agricultural wages. In those areas where industries connected with agriculture were developed, notably the sugar-beet industry, there was a marked improvement in the standard of living of the peasant. Whereas the area of land under cultivation between 1933 and 1946 appears to have changed little, there was considerable expansion in both cultivated land and production between 1946 and 1957. In 1946 there were 1,954,725 ha. (c. 4½ million acres) under wheat and 1,925,209

<sup>1</sup> A third plan was inaugurated in 1963 and was to run until 1968. Its projected outlay was scaled up in March 1963 from 140 billion *rs.* to 145 billion *rs.*, in the following March to 200 billion *rs.*, and in February 1966 to 230 billion *rs.* (c. £1,045 million).

<sup>2</sup> Difficulties over the balance of foreign payments recurred in 1964 and 1965.



tons of wheat were produced. In 1957 the figures were 3,477,010 ha. (c. 8½ million acres) and 3,615,089 tons. Similar increases took place in barley and rice. While accepting these figures with reserve—statistics in Persia are notoriously unreliable, and figures relating to the land and its produce and livestock are often little more than guesswork—new dams, barrages, and deep and semi-deep power-operated wells led to a striking increase in cultivation in a number of districts during the period ending in 1962; large tracts of land, particularly in dry farming areas, were brought into cultivation by mechanized farming. In spite of this, the estimated shortfall of wheat in 1960 was 300,000 tons.

Perhaps the most striking case of change brought about by mechanization took place in the Turkomānsarāy. This area had formerly been mainly *khālīseh*. Rezā Shāh bought four hundred of the *khālīseh* villages. These and others which he had acquired in the area passed after his abdication to his son, Muḥammad Rezā Shāh, the present ruler of Persia. By 1960 most of these had been sold, partly in large holdings and mainly to absentee landlords, many of whom were officials, and partly in peasant holdings of 10–20 ha. (25–50 acres), the payment in the latter case to be made in a number of annual instalments. A peasant with a holding of 10 ha. was able to make a good living, comparing very favourably with the income from a peasant holding on the plateau. The general tendency, however, was for the peasant holding and the holdings of the smaller landowners to be swallowed up by the large landowners, by either lease, purchase, or, not infrequently, usurpation. Some, in order to retain their land, would place it under the 'protection' of a more powerful neighbour by a lease or some other device. A tremendous increase in grain and cotton cultivation took place. In 1950, 70 tons of cotton were harvested; in 1960, 60,000 tons. Grain cultivation was entirely mechanized except along the base of the mountains, and by 1960 some 3–4,000 tractors and a thousand combines were operating in the area. Physical conditions in the Turkomānsarāy were, however, very different from conditions prevailing on the plateau. It was an exceptional case.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See further Shōkō Okazaki, *The Development of Large-scale Farming in Iran*,



During the period of the Second Seven Year Plan, the effect of the development going on in the country as a whole, although not primarily in the field of agriculture, began to be felt in rural areas also. The rate of change varied considerably. There was a marked improvement in economic conditions in many of the villages near the big towns and along the main roads; but this did not extend to the remoter districts. Standards of living rose, but so did the cost of living. Better housing, clothing, and equipment also gradually spread to the countryside. The village shop was better stocked. The number of village schools increased, though they were still far below the demand. Health conditions improved; and malaria was largely eradicated. Mechanization raised output in some districts; and introduced a wage system into the traditional village structure, since the labourers tended to receive payment in cash or kind, and not a share of the crop. One of the main factors contributing to change was the improvement in communications. The peasantry were more mobile. The radio was also an important element in the awakening of the peasants. By 1959, radios had spread throughout the country even to the remoter villages.

One of the most promising developments in the post-war years was the agricultural co-operative movement run by the Agricultural Bank (later the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank). In 1939 it was decided to establish rural fund societies in order to help peasant proprietors and tenants. Progress in the first few years was slow, and less than twenty societies were set up. The rate of progress was accelerated from 1950 onwards, and by 1958 there were seventy-seven in existence. The capital was raised in the first instance by the peasants; a substantial amount was added to it by the bank. Loans were given mainly for day to day needs. In 1958 the rural fund societies were changed into rural co-operative societies; and by 1959 some 112 societies existed. The majority were credit societies; some thirty-five were multi-purpose societies. A seminar on agricultural and co-operative credit was held in Tehrān in November 1959, several training seminars having

been held during the previous nine months in different provinces. In the following year there was an enormous increase in the number of rural co-operative societies. By July 1960 there were, on paper, 639 co-operative societies with some 290,000 members. The share capital owned by the members was about 140 million *rs.* (c. £636,000).<sup>1</sup>

Many of these societies, perhaps the majority, had little more than a nominal existence. There were, however, some notable exceptions. For example, the activities of the Sa'adatābād society near Sirjān, which was founded in 1959, by May 1960 had appreciably reduced indebtedness among its members, who were no longer at the mercy of the village shopkeepers and travelling merchants (see also below, p. 307). The Pishvā society near Varāmīn, formed originally in September–October 1956 as a rural fund society by 127 persons with a capital of 100,000 *rs.* (c. £455), in February 1960 had 397 members and 51,254,420 *rs.* (c. £232,520) capital, and had become a multi-purpose society. The main wealth of Pishvā came from fruit and vegetables which were marketed in Tehrān. In 1960 the society was in a flourishing condition and run by the peasants under the supervision of the Agricultural Bank. Some years later, however, speculation occurred and the co-operative became bankrupt.

Not all the societies were run by the peasants. In Bāft, for example, the members of the society in 1960 were mainly peasants, but the managing committee was composed of the local 'notables'. Most of the societies at this time were still in a very early stage of their development, and in few cases were the members able to run them themselves. Moreover, it was difficult to convince the peasants of their utility; even in the villages round Yazd, where the peasants had a tradition of thrift and industry, they were sceptical of the benefits of the co-operative societies. The village merchants and money-lenders opposed their formation, and were, on the whole, successful in discouraging the peasants from joining them. In these circumstances the education of the peasants was uphill work. The training of personnel was also a slow process. Nevertheless,

<sup>1</sup> See, further, *Country Seminar on Agriculture and Cooperative Credit*, November 14–26, 1959, Agricultural Bank, Tehrān, September 1960.



some good work was done, but in the absence of a reform in tenure, the co-operative movement failed to make an impact on the countryside at large.

Despite the various developments outlined above, poverty remained the lot of the majority of the peasants and indebtedness continued to be widespread. There had been some improvement in communications, but still more and better roads and transport facilities were needed. Marketing methods and standardization of produce had virtually received no attention. Facilities for the repair of machinery were inadequate. More research was needed on seed improvement, plant protection, pest control, and soil utilization. Very little, if any, attention had been paid to the integration of arable and pastoral farming. Stock-breeding had been neglected, together with the question of better feeding methods, more efficient control of animal pests and diseases, and the selection and improvement of breeds. All these were necessary if there was to be a radical improvement in rural conditions, but without a reform in tenurial conditions this was not possible.

Meanwhile changes of considerable magnitude were taking place in the social field. The village, the town, the quarter, and the craft no longer provided the security and sense of community they had formerly offered. This was also true of the tribe, but the rate of social disintegration among the tribes on the whole proceeded more slowly than in other sectors of society, although their economic and political decline was more rapid. The towns became more heterogeneous; middlemen more numerous, and speculation in land and real property more reckless. The gulf between the town and the country widened, and with the spread of western-orientated education, the cleavage between the peasant and the landowner became sharper. They now no longer lived in the same world. The government's neglect of the remoter areas of the countryside and the tribal groups, and the contempt with which the townsman looked upon the countryman, although neither were new features, bore witness to this dichotomy. The population in the outlying areas and in tribal territory ardently desired the 'new learning', which they saw as a passport to wealth and security. The failure of the government to provide them with schools and



amenities heightened their sense of deprivation. There was also growing discontent against neglect by absentee landlords. There was a sense of malaise and unrest both in the town and in the countryside; and some began to attribute this disequilibrium in society to the position of the landowning class.

To some it may well have seemed that the first step towards land reform could be most easily achieved through a distribution of *khālīseh* land to peasants. Malkam Khān (d. 1908), one of the early advocates of constitutional reform, first proposed this in an essay.<sup>1</sup> Several years later, the first National Consultative Assembly decided to sell *khālīseh* land, but this decision was dictated not so much by a wish to carry out a reform in tenure, as by a desire to increase the production of the land and thus the revenue of the state. *Khālīseh* land, as stated above (see p. 28), tended to be badly cultivated and the state derived little benefit from it. The assembly's decision was not, however, implemented on a large scale, partly owing to the suspension of constitutional government in 1911. The next step was taken by Sayyid Zīā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, who became prime minister after the coup d'état of February 1921. He announced that *khālīseh* lands would be distributed among the peasants and the relationship between landlord and peasant modified. His government survived only a few months, and the project came to nought.

During the reign of Rezā Shāh, who was associated with Sayyid Zīā in the coup d'état, much new *khālīseh* was acquired, mainly from the confiscation of the estates of rebels and tax-defaulters. From 1927 onwards, some *khālīseh* was sold in Khūzistān and elsewhere with a view to encouraging peasant proprietorship.<sup>2</sup> The distribution which took place in Sistān, beginning in 1933, failed dismally owing to the malpractices of government officials, the oppression of local landowners, and inadequate control of irrigation.<sup>3</sup>

Large areas of land were also acquired by Rezā Shāh as his personal estates. These were administered separately from *khālīseh* land. On his abdication in 1941, his personal estates,

<sup>1</sup> F. Adamiyyat, *Fikr-i Azādī* (Tehrān, 1961), p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> See *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 254 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 244 ff.

amounting to over 2,000 villages or parts of villages, were transferred by a decree dated 11 September 1941 to the state and were known as *amlāk-i vāguzārī* (the transferred estates). On 2 June 1942 a law was passed for their return to their original owners and special courts were set up to effect the transfer. By a decree of 11 July 1949, those estates which had not reverted to their original owners under the decree of 2 June 1942 and the question of the ownership of which was not *sub judice* were handed over to Reżā Shāh's son and successor, Muḥammad Reżā Shāh, the present ruler of Persia, and were constituted into a *vagf*, which was to be administered by the Pahlavī foundation for social services. They were alleged to amount to between 1,500 and 2,000 villages and various other items of real estate.

A further distribution of *khālīṣeh* took place in Khūzistān under a decree of November 1947. It was not conspicuously successful in fostering peasant proprietorship. Part of the land distributed was acquired by landowners and merchants. The question of the sale of *khālīṣeh* was again raised in 1949 when Dr. Ḥasan Arsanjāni, who was later to become minister of agriculture and to introduce the land reform of 1962 (see below, Chapter III), proposed to General Razmārā, the prime minister of the day, that *khālīṣeh* lands should be sold to the peasants. He further suggested that payment should be made in twenty annual instalments, and that co-operative societies should be established with the proceeds of their sale and part of the funds received by the Persian government under the U.S. Point IV programme for technical assistance. A four-man commission was set up to consider the matter. Meanwhile the oil crisis occurred, General Razmārā was assassinated, and the project proved abortive.

In November 1950 the Shah visited the United States. After his return he addressed the National Consultative Assembly on 10 January 1951. He pointed out the dangerous state of international relations and stated that the Persians must prepare to defend their frontiers. Steps must be taken to make the people contented and to establish social justice. Direct taxation and inheritance taxes must be levied and capital distributed more evenly. On 15 January an article was published in the newspaper *Daryā*, edited by Dr. Arsanjāni, drawing attention to the



Shah's speech and pointing out that it was nine years since Rezā Shāh had abdicated, and that during this time no positive action had been taken to modify the distribution of wealth. The people could not be expected, the article stated, to defend a country in which they had no share. It went on to urge the Shah to take the first step in ending the nine years of talk, and to give orders for the immediate distribution of the royal estates to the peasants; and thus to bring about a fundamental change in the economic life of the people. The article finally expressed the view, with an optimism which later events showed was not justified, that if the Shah took the first step others would follow him.

A second article in *Daryā* on 25 January 1951 referred to proposals which, it was alleged, were being discussed for the sale of agricultural land to the government with a view to its subsequent sale to peasants. The article put forward the view, which was later to be prominently displayed on placards in the land reform offices in 1962, that agricultural land was the right of the peasant who cultivated it (*zamīn-i xirā'atī haqq-i zāri'ast*). It stated that in an Islamic country, cultivated land (*zamīn-i mazrū'ī*), forests and mines belonged to the people and ought to be held by the government; and that the ownership of land by large landed proprietors was nothing but usurpation (*tasarruf-i 'udvānī*). The government should therefore expropriate all landlords and place the land, which belonged to the people as a whole, at the disposal of the peasants who actually cultivated it, or were prepared to do so.

On 28 January 1951 an imperial rescript or farman was issued for the sale of the royal estates to the local peasants; payment was to be made in instalments over a period of years. A special body was set up to implement this farman. Under the regulations which it drafted, the size of the holdings to be transferred was to depend on local conditions, the nature of the land, the proximity of towns, and communications; they were to provide at least a minimum subsistence, and were in no case to exceed 30 ha. (74 acres). In practice, the size of the holdings tended to be very much below this maximum, and was probably seldom more than 3-5 ha. (7-12 acres). The land was to be surveyed, mapped and divided into parcels, for which those eligible to



receive it were to draw lots. The price was to be decided by a committee which would seek expert local opinion. A remission of 20 per cent on the price fixed was to be given, and the remainder was to be paid in twenty-five equal annual instalments. Houses in the villages transferred were to be sold to the occupants at valuation less 75 per cent. Gardens were to be sold to those who cultivated them, the price being decided in the same way as the price for the rest of the land. Preference in the sale of land was to be given to the peasants or *gāvbands* actually working the land; other persons residing in the locality were also eligible to receive land, provided they gave an undertaking that they would engage in agriculture. The person to whom the land was transferred had no rights of disposal of the land or any rights over it, until all the instalments had been paid. Public buildings such as mills, storehouses, ice-pits, and public baths, the village pastures, and trees along irrigation channels were to belong to the village community, and any revenue from them was to be spent on public welfare in the village.

As stated above, the royal estates had been constituted into a *vagf*. Legal difficulties were therefore involved in the sale of the land. Technically it was inalienable, and the decision to sell was irregular. On 31 January 1951 a leader in *Daryā* urged the National Consultative Assembly to bring in a bill legalizing the sale of *vagf* and thereby to give a legal basis to the Shah's farman; and to stipulate in the bill that the proceeds from the sale of the land should be devoted to rural co-operative societies, and that the Agricultural Bank should give credit to the peasants to whom the land was transferred. *Daryā* held that the abolition, or at least the limitation, of large landed estates was the prerequisite of political reform in general, and urged the National Consultative Assembly to work for the distribution of all large estates and the abolition of what it called feudalism.

A second article of the same date declared that as long as feudalism and large land ownership continued there would be no reform. The key to the well-being of the Persian people was the break-up of the existing basis of land ownership, feudalism, and the arbitrary rule of tribal khans (*khan-khāni*). This would not only bring economic benefits, but would also solve the

political difficulties of the country. As long as the existing system of land ownership continued, free parliamentary elections were impossible: the membership of the National Consultative Assembly would consist of the tribal khans, large landowners, capitalists, and their servants; the government would be their creature, and the assembly would pass laws which would protect the feudal regime, large land ownership, and capitalism, and would be detrimental to the people. The effect of the constitutional revolution had been to abolish the despotism of the shah and to substitute for it the despotism of the large landowners and tribal khans. The article went on to give a warning that if the ruling classes did not modify the system of land ownership, they must expect a revolution.

Opposition to the Shah's decision to sell the estates of the Pahlavī *vagf* developed among the landowning classes almost immediately; and the view was canvassed that the sale of those estates required sanction by the National Consultative Assembly. Dr. Muḥammad 'Alī Mu'addil, one of the Assembly deputies, in an article in the weekly paper, *Tehrān-i Muṣavvar*, alleged that their sale and distribution was a betrayal of Islam. This, however, did not cut much ice, since Dr. Mu'addil held the office of administrator (*mutavallī*) of the Mushīr al-Saltaneh *ouqāf* in Fārs, from which office he had drawn considerable profits. He also published in the *Iḥtilā'āt* the text of a speech he had intended to deliver in the Assembly on 3 February but had been prevented from so doing because there had been no quorum. In it he attempted to stir up religious fanaticism against the Pahlavī family. On 5 February 1951 *Daryā*, in a leader, urged a holy war (*jihād*) against the large landowners and 'feudal lords', stating that until they were destroyed the exploitation of the common people and the enslavement of the peasants would continue.

On the following day a debate took place in the National Consultative Assembly. On this occasion the deputies, perhaps because they sensed that they had little support from the public, changed their tune; suggestions were made that the government should buy their estates from them. These were hardly genuine proposals, and were made in the knowledge that the government had not sufficient funds at its disposal to



buy out the landowners. Direct opposition to proposals for a limitation of land ownership was likely to alienate both internal and world opinion; and so the landowning classes turned to less direct methods of opposition. By putting forward proposals for the distribution of landed estates which were impossible to implement, they hoped to defeat the project for the distribution or limitation of landed estates.

The first distribution of land belonging to the Pahlavi estates took place on 16 March 1951 near Varāmīn. In October 1952, 402 ha. (993 acres) were distributed to 134 persons in Rūd-i Hin near Tehrān, 228 ha. (563 acres) to 36 persons in Muḥammadābād near Karaj, and 8,000 ha. (19,768 acres) in several villages near Varāmīn to 963 persons. A development bank was opened on 18 September 1952 with a capital of 15 million *rs.* (c. £68,000) provided by the Shah and Point IV. Its functions were to carry out development work in the villages which had been transferred to the peasants, to set up co-operative societies, and to collect the money due from the peasants to whom the land had been transferred.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1953, differences occurred between the court and Dr. Muṣaddiq, who had come to power in April 1951. The precise nature of these is not clear: possibly the popularity accruing to the Shah as a result of his decision to distribute his estates was unwelcome to Dr. Muṣaddiq. There were also allegations that the revenue coming to the Pahlavi foundation for social service from the *waqf* was being used for political purposes. In any case, the sale of the Pahlavi estates was suspended by Dr. Muṣaddiq's government and the properties were once more transferred to the government. They consisted at this time of some 1,277 villages wholly belonging to the *waqf*, 706 villages belonging to it in part, 1,975 pastures, and 2,381 pieces of real estate other than cultivated land or pastures. They were situated mainly in the Caspian provinces; some were in Kirmānshāhān and a few in Khurāsān. Their gross annual revenue was alleged to be some 88 million *rs.* (c. £400,000). In return for the transfer, the government under-

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the distribution of the Shah's estates in Varāmīn, see Cyrus Gharatche'daghi, *Distribution of Land in Varāmīn*, C. W. Leake Verlag (Opladen, 1967).



took to pay 60 million *rs.* (c. £272,700) per annum to the Pahlavi foundation.

In the royal rescript making the transfer back to the government, it was stated that the government would hand the lands over to the peasants on 99-year leases. On 1 June 1953 a crown lands institute was set up to administer these lands and *khālīqeh* lands. In August, however, Dr. Musaddiq fell from power and the government of General Zāhidī held that the transfer of the lands of the Pahlavi *vagf* to the government was not valid. At a press conference on 26 August 1953, the Shah stated that he would continue the distribution of his estates to the peasants.

The resumed sale by the Shah of his estates, although it proceeded slowly, aroused considerable opposition among the landlords. News of his action spread to other areas and peasants elsewhere began to say that his example ought to be followed by others. Landowners, however, showed no tendency to follow his lead. They maintained that in the country there was plenty of uncultivated land which should be distributed before private estates were broken up. Further, they alleged that the fundamental need was to increase production, and that distribution of land to the peasants would lower rather than increase production, because the peasant had not the material resources to maintain irrigation works or the incentive to increase production; in other words that he was satisfied with the bare living which he obtained by existing methods. Similar criticisms were later to be made against the land reform of 1962.

Meanwhile the tendency to blame the landowners for many or all of the social evils and malaise of the country once more began to gain strength. The land system was, indeed, profoundly unsatisfactory and the landowner was partly to blame for some of the social evils, but in 1959 and 1960 criticism of the landowners gave place to a campaign of vilification. The immediate effect of this campaign was to increase the prevailing insecurity and uncertainty and to discourage development of the land. Moreover, perhaps partly because of the attacks on the landowning class, the government concentrated on the negative aspect of land reform, namely the limitation of the size of estates, a complicated matter in a country where no cadastral survey or experienced land settlement department

existed, rather than on positive steps to improve the conditions of the peasants and to gain their confidence.

On 23 February 1960 Āyatullāh Burūjirdī, the leading religious dignitary of the day, wrote to Sayyid Ja'far Bihbahānī, one of the deputies of the National Consultative Assembly, stating that for some time there had been rumours that the size of landed estates was to be limited, and that he had informed the prime minister personally, and the Shah in writing, that such a step would be contrary to the laws of Islam. The answers from them to his communications had not been satisfactory. Meanwhile he had received many letters from different regions, asking his opinion on the subject of the limitation of the size of landed estates. At the time the Shah was absent on a visit to the United States; Āyatullāh Burūjirdī expressed his surprise that those in charge of affairs should be in a hurry to pass a bill on this subject in the absence of the Shah. Accordingly, he asked Sayyid Ja'far Bihbahānī to request the National Consultative Assembly and the Senate not to pass the bill. Sayyid Ja'far sent Āyatullāh Burūjirdī's letter to Sardār Fākhir, the speaker of the National Consultative Assembly, with a covering letter expressing his surprise that such a bill, which was contrary to the laws of Islam and the constitution, should have been drafted. Stating that Āyatullāh Burūjirdī had drawn attention, as he was in duty bound, to the conflict between this bill on the one hand and the *shari'ah* and the constitution on the other, Sayyid Ja'far Bihbahānī requested Sardār Fākhir not to allow the bill to go forward.

Nevertheless the bill was eventually passed by the Assembly on 16 March 1960 and the Senate on 17 May 1960. It was ill-conceived and badly drafted. Its main provision was to limit the amount of land which anyone could hold to 400 ha. (988 acres) of irrigated land or 800 ha. (1,976 acres) of unirrigated land. Since there had been no land measurement in Persia, the difficulties of implementing this law are obvious. Most properties were defined simply as being bordered by such and such land or property. A cadastral survey would have taken years to complete, during which time opposition to the law could have been mobilized and ways of circumventing it devised. Various categories of land were excluded from the provision of



the law. These included gardens, woodlands, and land which during the previous two years had been cultivated for one season (*doureh*) by mechanized means and with agricultural labour and, as long as it was so cultivated, charitable *sagf*, the Pahlavi estates, and *khālījeh*. Provision was also made for the landowner to transfer some of the land which he owned in excess of the permitted maximum to his heirs. No positive stop was placed on land transactions, though provision was made for fining those who, after the passing of the law, transferred to a third party land which they held in excess of the maximum laid down by the law.

The price of the land which the landowners were to sell was to be decided by a commission for land reform to be set up in the various governorates-general. The land bought from the landowners was to be paid for in ten annual instalments and transferred to the peasants cultivating the land, agricultural labourers living in the region, persons who volunteered for agricultural work, and graduates of agricultural and veterinary institutions who did not own land in excess of the maximum laid down. Payment for the land by the new holders was also to be made in ten annual instalments. The size of the holdings to be allocated was to be laid down by a supreme council for land reform which would be set up. Agricultural affairs which jointly concerned the peasants to whom a village had been transferred, such as the upkeep of *qanāts* and canals, the use of agricultural machinery, and plant and animal pest control, were to be managed by co-operative societies, but membership of these was not made obligatory upon the peasants. New regulations were to be drawn up to regulate the relations between landowners and peasants, but pending their issue the *status quo* was to be preserved.

The supreme council for land reform was to meet under the chairmanship of the prime minister, and to be composed of the ministers of justice, agriculture, interior, and finance respectively and three persons chosen by the central agricultural council. It was to prepare the regulations for the law and to supervise its execution; and in every governorate-general or governorate, a land reform commission was to be set up under the chairmanship of the governor-general, the governor or

his deputy and composed of the director-general of agriculture or a representative of the minister of agriculture and the head of the department of justice, or a judge nominated by the minister for justice, the head of the registration department of the governorate-general or province or his deputy, and three persons nominated by the central agricultural council of the governorate-general or province. To have entrusted the execution of the law to such a body would have effectively prevented its execution, since not all ministers, governors-general, and governors had the necessary knowledge to carry out land reform, or were, indeed, in favour of it. Further, at the provincial level local officials, the district governor, the head of the gendarmerie, the public prosecutor, and so on, were not infrequently the appointees, and sometimes the relatives, of the local landowner.

Burūjirdī's declaration against the law was, however, decisive. It remained a dead letter, although the Shah, in his speech opening the twentieth session of the National Consultative Assembly on 21 February 1961, stated that efforts would be made to implement it. It was in fact a sorry example of an insufficiently thought-out policy, undertaken, in all probability, in a desire to conform to the prevailing climate of world opinion. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that its purpose was to impress world opinion, rather than to remove existing grievances and to improve the conditions of those living on the land. Moreover, the failure to implement it reinforced the belief of the landowning classes and those among the governing classes who shared with them common interests, that they had little to fear from talk of land reform, and that its purpose was 'window-dressing'.

This, broadly speaking, was the immediate background to the Persian land reform which began in 1962: far-reaching plans for economic development but grave financial crises, a society in a state of social disintegration, a countryside suffering from malaise and low production, a ruling class unconvinced, and indeed unaware, of the need for fundamental land reform, and a landowning class (to which the government was closely allied) which, in spite of a propaganda campaign designed to



vilify it, was confident, because of the failure to implement the various measures so far put forward to modify its position, that land reform would not be carried out. Bills might be drafted, but no one believed they would be implemented: it was generally accepted that their sole purpose was to impress upon the world that Persia was a 'modern' and 'progressive' state.

### CHAPTER III

## THE LAND REFORM LAW OF 9 JANUARY 1962

---

ON 6 May 1961 Dr. 'Alī Amīnī became prime minister. By birth and temperament he belonged to the old bureaucracy: his grandfather was at one time first minister to the Qājār ruler, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh, his mother a daughter of Muẓaffar al-Dīn. His methods were those of the old-fashioned Persian diplomacy and politics, but to these he brought a clear mind, well-trained in western techniques. He entered government service in 1931 and spent much of his official career in the ministry of finance. He became a deputy of the National Consultative Assembly in 1948, and minister of national economy in 1950 and again under Dr. Muṣaddīq in 1951; from 1953-5 he was minister of finance, then minister of justice in 1955 and from 1956-8 ambassador in Washington.

In the latter part of 1960 and the early months of 1961, there had been a marked deterioration in internal affairs. Dissatisfaction at alleged corruption in public life was strong, but little or nothing was done to remedy real or supposed grievances. It seemed as if those who held the reins of power believed that public opinion at home could be ignored, and were concerned only to impress the western world. They appeared to think that if foreign opinion could be induced to believe that the administration was determined to carry out reform, a failure to implement it would not matter and a scapegoat could be found, if necessary. This neglect of internal opinion was underlined by the conduct of the elections in 1960 and 1961. The gratuitous promises that the elections would be free, whereas in fact interference in 1960 was more blatant than ever before and in 1961 only little less so, were an affront to the public conscience of the older generation and exacerbated the frustration of the younger.

A National Front student demonstration against the govern-



ment in February 1961 proved abortive, but after disturbances provoked by a clash between the police and a group of school teachers who had struck for higher pay the government fell. Dr. Amīnī was asked to form a new government. He had stood as an independent candidate for Tehrān in the abortive elections of 1960 and received some measure of support from the intellectuals because of his forthright attacks on the government's conduct of affairs. He was 'dissuaded' from standing in the elections of 1961. In such circumstances it was, perhaps, odd that he should have been asked to form a government. His appointment was probably not unconnected with the country's foreign relations.

Persia was subjected at the time to considerable pressure by Soviet and Soviet-inspired propaganda of an extremely hostile nature. The government had been seriously weakened; and there was thought to be grave danger of renewed activity by Communists and fellow-travellers if measures to remedy or lessen discontent were not taken. Financial reform was essential to the success of such measures, and it may well have seemed that among the politicians only Dr. Amīnī had the ability to devise and carry out effective measures for financial reform. The belief that future aid from the U.S.A. was conditional upon financial reform, which only somebody of the calibre of Dr. Amīnī could accomplish, also probably contributed to his choice as prime minister.

Dr. Amīnī's cabinet included ministers who had had links in the past with Dr. Muṣaddiq's National Front and the Tūdeh Party. His minister of agriculture was Dr. Ḥasan Arsanjānī, a dynamic man of considerable personal courage, determination, vigour, and toughness, still quite young and unknown. His family had lived in Āzarbāyjan; his father, a member of the religious classes, had supported the constitutional revolution. Dr. Arsanjānī was born in 1922. After completing his studies in law, he became an employee of the Agricultural Bank during the reign of Rezā Shāh and was entrusted with the task of preparing plans for the establishment of rural co-operatives. During this period he travelled widely in the country; his experiences convinced him that land reform was the fundamental need in Persia and a prerequisite to political reform. In due course he

left the bank; after the abdication, he practised as a lawyer and also engaged in journalism. In the elections of 1946 he was returned to the National Consultative Assembly as deputy for Lāhijān in the province of Gilān. In his election speeches he put forward proposals for land reform. His credentials were, however, rejected by the assembly and he was unable to take his seat.

Dr. Arsanjāni continued to study the question of land reform—in which he was alone among Persian politicians. By 1961 he had a wide knowledge of the Persian countryside and an understanding of the rural population, unrivalled by any other politician. He was convinced that the Persian peasant had great potentiality and was capable, if given the opportunity, of running his own affairs. He had a genuine concern for the peasant and, unlike the ruling classes in general, realized that the peasant, although he might be uneducated, had a long tradition of civilization behind him. He might live in primitive conditions but he was not a primitive person. Dr. Arsanjāni made no secret of his belief that land reform was the key to political reform. His published articles in *Daryā* (see above, pp. 50 ff) had made it clear where he stood. Nevertheless in a country where performance seldom matches promise, it was, perhaps, not entirely surprising that when he became a member of the government in 1961 his colleagues did not take his views seriously. There had, after all, been many examples of men whose zeal for reform had been rapidly tempered by the rewards of office.

The programme of the new government was in many respects not very different from that of former governments. It included, however, a declaration of its intention to limit land holdings. The National Consultative Assembly and the Senate were dissolved by decree on 9 May. Many considered the measure unconstitutional, but it was generally regarded as necessary if the government was to carry out any radical measures of reform. In the autumn there were reports in the press of progress in preparations for land reform. And on 5 October 1961, a small and carefully chosen team of officials from the ministry of agriculture was sent to carry out a land survey in the Marāgheh area, and to collect funds from the peasants for the establish-



ment of a land reform co-operative society, though this was not generally known until it was disclosed by Dr. Arsanjāni on 15 January 1962. On 11 November 1961 the Shah issued a farman to Dr. Amini ordering the government, *inter alia*, to execute if necessary in a modified form, the land reform law of 17 May 1960.

Meanwhile, Dr. Arsanjāni had been urging his cabinet colleagues to promulgate new legislation for land reform. Eventually, on 9 January 1962, Dr. Amini and a few of his ministers signed a bill amending the land reform law of 1960. This they did, not because they really believed in the need for land reform or fully understood the implications of the new law, but because they wished to silence the importunings of their colleague, supposing that the measure, once on the statute book, would be forgotten like so many other measures before it. Technically the bill was merely an emendation of the law of 17 May 1960, but in fact it was a new law. It differed from the old law in the following respects: (i) it limited holdings to one village, (ii) fixed the compensation to be given to the landowners on the basis of the taxation they had paid, (iii) allocated the land to the peasants cultivating the land without upsetting the field lay-out of the village, and (iv) made membership of a co-operative society a condition of the receipt of land.

Dr. Arsanjāni had already made preparations for the implementation of the new law and he was able in the immediately ensuing months to put these into practice in spite of the fact that the majority of his colleagues were either opposed to his policy or in virtual ignorance of it. This is to be explained partly by the nature of the Persian constitution and partly by the character of Dr. Arsanjāni, who had not only the courage of his convictions, but also the necessary knowledge and toughness to put his plans into operation. The constitution allows ministers a relatively free rein; normally the policy of a minister requires the consent of the National Consultative Assembly and the Senate, but not necessarily the approval of the whole cabinet. In this case, since both houses had been dissolved, once Dr. Arsanjāni had persuaded the prime minister to sign the bill, he was able to proceed with its implementation. The only constitutional way to prevent the land reform was for the cabinet to resign as

a whole and this they were not prepared to do: apart from anything else the land reform by this time had acquired a certain popular appeal. Both the government and the ruling classes in general paid lip-service to the principle of reform, but in their hearts they were opposed to any radical measures of land reform. For this reason the co-operation of other ministries and government offices was in some cases withheld, or at best given only grudgingly, and the funds necessary for the execution of the land reform were not at first provided regularly or promptly.

The law of 9 January 1962/19 Day 1340, together with the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963/27 Day 1341, the regulations (*d'innāmeḥ*) for the execution of these two instruments, a number of ministerial decrees, and decisions by the land reform council (set up under the law of 9 January 1962), formed the legal basis for the land reform. The law of 9 January 1962 had about it a touch of genius. It was admirably simple in its conception and so drafted as to make a rapid implementation of its provisions possible, in spite of the fact that there was no cadastral survey for the whole country, no land survey department, and no body of officials trained in land reform or kindred matters. Its aims were in the first instance political and social. It was intended first to break the political and social influence of the landowning class, and secondly, so far as Dr. Arsanjāni, its main architect, was concerned, to bring about the emergence of an independent peasantry. Dr. Arsanjāni had no intention of replacing the landowner by the government official, as some would have preferred, but was determined that the peasants should run their own affairs through co-operative societies as soon as was practicable. He also clearly recognized that land reform could not ultimately succeed, unless the standard of living of the peasant was improved, and that this could be done only if production was raised. But he believed that this could only be achieved over the country as a whole if the peasant was first given responsibility for the management of his own affairs.

The main provision of the law was to limit the amount of land which any individual could hold to one village irrespective of size (Art. 2). All villages in Persia are divided into six parts or *dāngs*. Under the law a landowner could select for his 'chosen' village (*dih-i intikhābi*), i.e. that village which he would retain,



one whole village or a number of shares in different villages, the aggregate of which was not to exceed six *dāngs*. Any land in excess of one village, whether reckoned as a whole village or in parts of different villages, was to be transferred by the landowner to the peasants or sold by the landowner to the government and by the government to the peasants cultivating it (Art. 2, note 3).

A village (*dih*, *qariēh*) was defined as a centre of population and the place of residence and work of a number of families who were engaged in agricultural operations in the village lands, and the income of the majority of whom came from agriculture, and which was by custom recognized locally as a village (Art. 1, para. X). To decide what constituted a village was not, however, always as simple as might at first sight appear. Many disputes occurred over this matter (see below, Chapter XII). The fact that several villages might be included in one registration unit (*plāk*) or in one registration area (*maḥdūdeh-i ṣabī*) was the cause of much confusion, and gave rise to many disputes between landowners and the land reform organization, and between landowners and peasants.

The land reform council made the following decisions on 19 January 1963: (i) If several centres or groups of houses, each having a separate name, were included in one main registration unit, they were to be considered as separate villages. (ii) If one village and several *mazāri*<sup>1</sup> (sing. *mazra'eh*)<sup>1</sup> were included in one registration unit, or in several, whether they had a single *nasaq* or not, i.e. whether each of the peasants cultivated pieces of land in all the *mazāri* or in one *mazra'eh* only, provided there were dwelling houses only in the village (and not in the various *mazāri*), the village and the *mazāri* were to be regarded as forming one village. (iii) If each group of peasants residing in each of the several centres worked and cultivated separate tracts of land, each centre was to be reckoned as a village. But if all the peasants in the different centres jointly cultivated all the land included under the main registration unit, it was to be regarded as one village. (iv) If

<sup>1</sup> The term *mazra'eh* covers both a hamlet and the cultivated fields belonging to it and also a group of fields without any dwelling houses, which are cultivated by peasants living in a neighbouring village.

a centre with a separate name and independent *nasaq* was covered by a subsidiary registration unit (*plāk-i far'ī*), it was to be regarded as a separate village. (v) In the case of a registration unit covering a *mazra'eh* having a separate name but without any houses, which was cultivated by peasants from another village, if this village and the *mazra'eh* belonged to the same person and the two were treated as one from the point of view of the division of the land into ploughlands and fallow practices (*dyish*), the *mazra'eh* was to be regarded as part of the village in which the peasants lived; but if the two were owned by different persons, even if the *mazra'eh*, from the point of view of the division of the land into ploughlands and fallow practices, was subject to the village in which the peasants resided, it was to be reckoned, in proportion to the part it formed of the *nasaq* of that village, as part of a separate village. (vi) An area covered by one main registration unit with a special name and several subordinate *plāks* without names, with only one group of dwelling houses, was to be regarded as one village.

Earlier at a meeting on 18 December 1962 the council had gone on record that if several villages were included in one registration unit or registration area, each one, provided it conformed to the definition of a village in Article 1, paragraph X, of the law of 9 January 1962, would be reckoned as a separate village. In the case of a village and several hamlets (*mazāri'*) being included in one registration area, whether this was covered by one registration unit or several, if the peasants cultivating the *mazāri'* lived in the main village (*qarīeh-i aslī*), irrespective of whether they each had a share in all the *mazāri'*, or each *mazra'eh* had a separate *nasaq*, the land of all the *mazāri'* together would constitute the *nasaq* of the main village. If the *mazāri'* each had a separate *nasaq*, the names of those who held parts of these *mazāri'* and the names of the *mazāri'* were to be entered separately in the registration document (*parvande-i sabtī*) for the main village. The council enjoined the exercise of special care in order to prevent landowners from including independent *mazāri'* in their 'chosen' village. If a landowner owned the whole or part of a village and also several *mazāri'* not connected with that village, they were to be declared separately.



Although the landowner was free under the law to choose which village (or which parts of separate villages) he would retain, some limitations were, in practice, placed upon his choice. On 19 September 1962, the land reform council stipulated that a landowner could not retain part only of a village which had been wholly his as part of his 'chosen' village. Villages which had been owned *in toto* by one landowner could not be broken up in this way, but were either to be sold wholly to the government or wholly retained by the landowner as his 'chosen' village. Later, however, at a meeting on 18 March 1963 the council decided that the regional organization for land reform should be given discretion to agree to the 'break-up' of such villages.

Another attempt was made later to limit the choice of the land owner; the land reform council minuted in its proceedings on 28 January 1963 that the heads of the land reform organization were to recommend landowners to sell to the government villages which had grown and in which municipalities had been set up, and to choose some other village as their 'chosen' village. At a subsequent meeting on 24 July 1963 it was, however, minuted that if landowners did not accept the above recommendation, their choice of such a village, i.e. one in which a municipality had been established, would not be prevented.

As from the date of the passing of the law, any measure taken with a view to avoiding its provisions, whether by the transfer of property, the making over of property by the transaction known as *sulh*, or the constitution of *ouqāf*, etc., was forbidden and would be considered null and void (Art. 2, note 5). Further, from the date of the passing of the law, any transfer or sale by a landowner of land held in excess of the maximum holding permitted was forbidden (Art. 4).

The question arose whether members of a landowner's family could severally hold land up to the permitted maximum. By the terms of the law, it was clear that this was legal only if their ownership of the land had been acquired before the law was passed. Article 1 of the law, which defined the terms used in the law, laid down in paragraph vii that a family (*khāniḍr*) consisted of the wife and children who were under the care and guardianship of the head of the family, and that for the purposes

of the law it (the family) would be regarded as one person. At its meeting on 18 December 1962 the land reform council decided that, in view of this definition, the wife and children under the care and guardianship of a landowner could not each hold a village in addition to the head of the family. Subsequently, after the issue of the Additional Articles (see below, Chapter IV), at a meeting on 25 August 1963 the council reversed this decision and decided that children under the care of the head of the family could also hold up to the maximum permitted by Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962. A further modification was made on 7 February 1964, when the land reform council decided that a woman, without regard to her family's position, might hold land as an independent person up to the maximum permitted. It was pointed out, however, that this decision did not annul already completed transfers of estates to peasants, because of the administrative difficulties which would be created thereby.

Certain categories of land were excluded from the provisions of the law temporarily or permanently. These exempted categories, known as *musta'niyyāt* were (i) orchards, tea plantations, and woodland, provided the *'arṣah* (the land on which they grew), the *a'yān* (the trees, etc.), and the water for their irrigation belonged to the landowner (Art. 3(i)); (ii) all land worked by mechanized means at the date of the passing of the law (9 January 1962), the labour for which was paid a wage in cash or kind, as long as it was so worked (Art. 3(ii)); (iii) land which had been held on a leasehold tenure on 5 December 1959 was not to be subject to sale to the government until the lease expired, provided that not more than five years of the lease was still to run. If more than five years remained, the lease was to be considered null and void on the expiry of five years and the property was to be subject to transfer (Art. 9). The land reform council laid down at a meeting on 19 January 1963 that any lease concluded after 5 December 1959 would be considered null and void. Thus under the land reform law there was ultimately to be no place for the middleman (see also below, p. 209).

Article 35 of the law laid down that the estates of the heirs of Ismā'il Qashqā'i (Soulat al-Douleh) would be subject to the land reform law. The reason for the special mention of these



estates, which were situated in Fārs and Isfahān, was that a law for their purchase had been passed some years earlier after armed opposition to the government by some of his descendants. The terms under which these estates were made subject to the law of 9 January 1962 were less favourable than those affecting the landowners in general. Article 1 of the law, amending the original law for their purchase, stated that all the villages, cultivated estates, pastures, water meadows (*chashmeh-sārāh*) and lands belonging to the heirs of Ismā'il Qashqā'i in the provinces of Fārs and Isfahān, including those categories of land exempted from the law of 9 January 1962 by Article 3 of that law, would be subject to the law of 9 January 1962; the provisions of the law would be put into operation with respect to these properties, except that the heirs of Ismā'il Qashqā'i would not be allowed to retain a 'chosen' village. The land reform organization was to act with regard to the transfer of the categories of land exempted from the law under Article 3 in whatever way the ministry of agriculture might direct, with the approval of the council of ministers (Art. 1(c)). Lands which had been brought into cultivation by tribesmen (*afzād-i 'ashkireh*) were to be sold to those who were personally engaged in their cultivation. If a portion of the lands within these estates was not divided permanently into ploughlands, the land reform organization was to divide the land and to distribute it to peasants provided they would reside in the locality and cultivate the land personally (Art. 3).

In the case of land constituted into a private or personal *vagf* before 5 December 1958, each of the beneficiaries was to be allowed to continue to draw revenue from up to the maximum holding permitted by the law of 9 January 1962, i.e. each beneficiary could draw revenue from up to one village. Any land in excess of this was to be sold and the proceeds invested in other property under the supervision of the department of *vagāf* (Art. 2, note 4). In the case of a private *vagf*, the duties incumbent upon the landowner under the law of 9 January 1962 were to be performed by the administrator (*mutavallī*) (Art. 2, note 6). It was clearly contrary to the intention of the land reform law that any individual should retain possession of a whole or part of a village as a personal *vagf*, as well as a village under Article 2

of the law; and the land reform council minuted in its proceedings on 9 December 1963 that the total holding of any individual in private property and personal *vagf* together was not to exceed the maximum laid down in Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962.

The transfer of the land under the law of 9 January 1962 was not to begin throughout the country at once. This was a wise decision in view of the lack of trained officials and the shortage of funds. The procedure was as follows: on the decision of the land reform council to put the law into operation in a given area, the ministry of agriculture was to announce twice, at an interval of ten days, in a local newspaper having a high circulation, or by other customary and suitable local means, that the land reform would begin in that area. Within one month of the second announcement, landowners whose property exceeded the maximum laid down in Article 2 of the law were required to declare, on special forms prepared by the ministry of agriculture, particulars of their estates, including property exempted from the law under Article 3, and to submit these forms, with copies of their ownership documents, to the authorities named by the ministry of agriculture. Failure to make the required declaration, or knowingly and deliberately to give false information, was punishable by a fine of 100,000 *rs.* (*c.* £455). In the event of a landowner failing to submit a declaration of his property, the local department of agriculture was to complete the forms in his stead (Art. 8). The abortive law of 1960 had given a period of three months to the landowner to declare his estates. The reduction of this to one month under the law of 1962 was in the interests of a speedy and effective execution of the law.

According to the regulations for the execution of Note 3 to Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962, dated 19 April 1962, in the case of land held under a joint (*mushā'*) tenure, the landowners were to take steps to delimit their land and define the government's share within five days of being given written intimation that the land reform had been declared operative in that district. If they failed to do so, the officials of the land reform organization were to prepare a map delimiting the land, and a commission composed of the local public prosecutor and the head of the land reform office or their representatives was



to draw lots for the government's share. The landowners concerned had the right of appeal to a commission composed of the local public prosecutor, the regional head of the land reform organization, and the head of the local department of agriculture.

A cabinet decree dated 1 March 1962 empowered the government also to purchase land offered to it by landowners whose estates were not subject to transfer under the provisions of Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962. Land thus acquired by the government was to be transferred to the peasants living in the village and cultivating the land in the same way as land covered by the provisions of Article 2 of the law. A similar decree had been issued on 2 November 1961 in connection with the abortive land reform law of 1960.

The price of the land to be transferred under Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962 was to be fixed by the department of agriculture in each area on the basis of the taxation paid by the landowner prior to 9 January 1962. This was to be multiplied by one of a number of coefficients laid down for each area by the ministry of agriculture, having regard to the date of assessment, the kind of agriculture practised, and the division of the crop between the landlord and the peasant under the prevailing crop-sharing agreement (Art. 10). This also was a simple principle, and although the figure arrived at was to some extent fictitious, there was a certain rough justice about it: those who had avoided the payment of taxation received a lower price, whereas those who had paid a higher rate obtained a better price for their land. On the other hand, if the landowner had paid a higher rate of tax, this adversely affected the peasant because in that case he had to pay a higher price for the land. Also, those landowners who had invested capital in the land since the last assessment were in some cases treated unfairly, since no account was taken of this in estimating the price of the land.

The landowner, after the price had been fixed for his land, had the right to appeal within a period of ten days to the local department of agriculture. Such an appeal would then be referred for investigation to a committee formed by the prime minister, the ministers of agriculture, justice and finance, and

three agricultural experts to be appointed by the council of ministers for each region. Their decision was final and was to be by a majority vote (Art. 13). The land reform council minuted in the proceedings of its meeting on 27 August 1962 that the peasants and the land reform organization respectively could also appeal to this committee if they considered the price fixed to be unfair.

After the completion of the various formalities, notification was to be issued to the landowner concerned, or his personal representative, to appear within a period of fifteen days to arrange for the transfer of his land and the drawing up of the necessary documents. If he failed to appear, the representative of the land reform organization would, within a week, having informed the district public prosecutor or his deputy, sign the document for transfer on behalf of the landowner (Art. 14). In the abortive law of 1960, the landowner was given a time limit of two months and the only penalty for failure to draw up the necessary documents or transfer his land was a fine.

The landowner was to receive the price of his land in ten annual instalments from the Agricultural Bank (Art. 11).<sup>1</sup> The number of instalments was later increased to fifteen (see below, p. 106).

In the case of property mortgaged before 5 December 1959, the government undertook to pay the mortgage when it fell due, provided the value of the property fixed under the law was sufficient to meet the mortgage. If it was not sufficient, the creditor was to claim the sum outstanding from the former owner through the normal legal channels (Art. 12). Under the abortive law of 1960, land on which there was a mortgage was exempted from the provisions of the law until the mortgage expired or was paid off.

The provisions for the transfer of the land were also of an extremely practical nature. The distribution was to be based upon the existing *nasag* of the village, i.e. the division of the village land into ploughlands or peasant holdings. In the case

<sup>1</sup> The Agricultural Bank (or the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank as it was later called) was not a bank in the ordinary sense. It was the means by which government finance was deployed in the agricultural field. Its funds came from the Central Bank and the Plan Organization, which, therefore, controlled its policy.



of the earlier distributions of *khālīsh* and the distribution of the lands belonging to the Pahlavī *vagf*, the land had been divided into plots of a given size. The law of 9 January 1962, on the other hand, ensured that the field lay-out of the village lands would not be broken up. There was, thus, little or no dislocation. This feature of the law was of great importance in preventing an initial fall in production, a concomitant of land reform in some other countries. The land which was sold by the landowners to the government was to be handed over immediately by the ministry of agriculture, at the price for which it had been bought, plus a maximum of 10 per cent, to be paid in 15 equal annual instalments to the Agricultural Bank, to the under-mentioned groups of people in the following order of precedence; and in each case the land was to go to the head of the household: (i) the peasants living in the village who cultivated the land subject to transfer; (ii) the heirs of peasants who had died within a year of the beginning of the transfer of the land in the region in which they lived; (iii) agricultural labourers (*barzigarān*), i.e. men who did not own or provide any of the 'agricultural elements' and received for the labour they provided a share of the crop from the landowner or the *gāvbānd*, who were engaged in agriculture in the village; (iv) agricultural labourers (*kārgarān-i kishāvazī*), i.e. men who did not own or provide any of the 'agricultural elements' and received a wage in cash for some specific agricultural work, who lived in the region; and (v) persons who volunteered for agricultural work (Art. 16). In effect, this meant that the land subject to transfer would, apart from exceptional cases, go to the occupying or sitting peasants; and secondly that agricultural labourers would not benefit from the land reform directly. In the early days of the reform, practice in this matter was not uniform; sometimes, if the peasant holdings were large or extra land was available, agricultural labourers were included among those to whom the land was distributed; but this was rare (see below, p. 98).

This feature of the land reform law has been criticized as discriminating between the different classes of peasants; and it is true that normally only one class of peasant benefited directly from the reform. But there were strong practical reasons for transferring the land to the occupying peasants. To have

included agricultural labourers in the distribution would have involved a change in the field lay-out of the village lands, and some degree of survey and measurement. This would have involved delay and imposed an additional burden on the officials of the land reform organization; it might also have led to conflict within the village and consequently have interfered with agricultural production. A second reason militating against transfer to the agricultural labourers was that they did not have the means to cultivate the land; and to have required the co-operative societies at the outset of the reform to provide them with draught oxen, agricultural implements, and seed would have placed an additional burden upon these societies. The essential matter was to get some land transferred quickly and effectively to some of the peasants. With this in view, those responsible for the land reform decided that the land should be transferred to the occupying peasants.

It is not easy to assess the proportion of occupying peasants in a village to agricultural labourers. In very large villages with several thousand inhabitants, the number of peasants holding a share in the village ploughlands was a small proportion of the total. But such villages were usually near urban centres and many of the population derived their livelihood from casual labour in building, industry, and on the roads, and only partly, if at all, from agricultural work. In the smaller villages, agricultural labourers were usually in a minority; and in the remoter villages sometimes only a mere handful. The picture is further confused by the fact that the peasant holding was normally worked by the head of the family with the help of some of his sons or other relations. A larger proportion of the village population therefore had an interest in the land transferred than would appear at first sight.

The only condition for the receipt of land by those otherwise eligible was that they should have been accepted as members of the co-operative society of the village (Art. 16 and note). The law did not itself make any provisions for the setting up of co-operative societies. The intention was to use already existing co-operative societies and, where necessary, to set up new ones. It was also intended that the membership of the new co-operative societies should be limited to the peasants. On 3 June



1962, the land reform council laid down that co-operative societies would be set up in those villages which were transferred, and that their membership would be confined to those who would become the owners of the land (see further Chapter XIV).

Under Article 16 of the law of 9 January 1962, persons living in a village who were not engaged in the cultivation of the soil (the *khyushnishinhā*) were virtually excluded from the categories of persons to whom the land might be transferred. The land reform council, however, in its proceedings on 31 March 1962, stated that provided an agreement had been reached between the peasants of a village and the *khyushnishinhā* to include the latter among those holding a share in the village ploughlands, it was not anticipated that there would be any difficulty over their receiving a share of the land. In such circumstances it was permissible by agreement (*bi tour-i kadkhudāmanishi*) to revise and change the *nasaq* of the village accordingly, and then to proceed to the transfer of the land. Subsequently, on 27 January 1963, the land reform council laid down that workers paid on a daily basis in land growing pistachio nut trees and having no share in the trees could not benefit from the land or the trees under the law of 9 January 1962.

Land was to be transferred to the peasants according to the existing *nasaq*, or division of the village land into ploughlands or peasant holdings, and was to be held by them jointly (*nushā'an*). The intention was that the peasant should normally continue to cultivate the same piece of land which he held at the time the transfer was made. The land reform council reaffirmed this when it laid down in its proceedings on 21 September 1964 that the land to be transferred to a peasant was to be the land which he actually cultivated, and that it was contrary to the law to transfer land cultivated by one peasant to another. Article 17, however, gave the land reform organization permission, if it saw fit, to map the village lands, divide them into individual holdings, and transfer them to the peasants; in such a case the proportion of the total village land to be transferred to each peasant was to be the same as he had held under the field layout existing at the time land reform began.

Irrigated land was to be transferred to the peasants, together

with the water rights from *qanāts* or rivers, etc., belonging to it according to local custom. In the case of *qanāts*, rivers, or canals which were jointly held, that share of the water which belonged to the land was to be handed over to the peasant. The supervision, upkeep, and repair of such water resources was to be the responsibility of the relevant co-operative society (Art. 17, note 1). Similarly, when a village was transferred to the peasants, if the latter held the *ʿjān* of agricultural or garden land, the water rights of their gardens were to be stated in the documents of transfer. In a village where some irrigated land remained in the hands of a landowner or landowners, and some had been transferred under the law of 9 January 1962 to the peasants, and in general in all land held on a joint tenure, affairs connected with the *qanāts*, deep wells, and canals irrigating the agricultural land were to be the responsibility of whoever of the owners had the majority holding. He would act on behalf of the other owners, who were to pay their share of the cost. If they failed to pay, the sum due would be collected from the produce of the land at harvest time, with the approval of the commission for the settlement of disputes which was to be set up under the law (Art. 17, note 2).

In those villages in which the land was transferred to the peasants, if the dwelling-houses and other buildings which they had in their possession, such as stables and storehouses, and the land on which they stood, belonged to the former owner of the village, they were to be transferred to the peasants, who could apply for the issue of ownership documents (Art. 31).

Article 19 forbade the fragmentation of the land transferred to the peasants below a certain minimum, which was to be laid down in each area by the ministry of agriculture. In the event of a peasant dying and his heirs being unable to agree over the administration of the holding, they had the right to sell it to another peasant, who would then be responsible for the payment of the instalments outstanding. Each peasant could purchase up to twice the minimum holding fixed for each village. The abortive law of 1960 had permitted peasants to buy up to five holdings. The definition of the minimum holding, however, proved to be a complicated matter and no regulations had been laid down by the summer of 1966.



In the event of a peasant not cultivating the land transferred to him in accordance with the programme laid down by the co-operative society, the latter had the right to expel him from the co-operative and to hand his land over to someone else (Art. 19, note 1). If the land which had been transferred was put to some use other than agricultural, the income from which exceeded its income from agriculture, the ministry of agriculture was given authority to permit its fragmentation and sale (Art. 19, note 2). If a peasant failed to pay three instalments for the land transferred to him without a valid reason, he would forfeit the land and the ministry of agriculture would transfer it to someone else (Art. 28).

Funds for the implementation of the law were to be included in the budget and placed at the disposal of the land reform organization (Art. 26). The Agricultural Bank, acting for the ministry of agriculture, was to collect from the peasants the instalments due for the land transferred to them, and with the proceeds pay the former owners. If the sum thus obtained was insufficient, the bank was to make this good with money allocated each year by the government for this purpose (Art. 27). The council of ministers issued a decree on 17 February 1962, making the Agricultural Bank responsible for the payment of the money due for the properties which the government bought under the law of 9 January 1962. This decree annulled an earlier decree of 17 September 1961, issued with a view to the implementation of the abortive law of 1960, by which the minister of finance was to issue annually, on the demand of the minister of agriculture, until such time as the programme for land distribution had been completed, treasury bonds through the Central Bank of Iran to the amount agreed upon by the Central Bank and sanctioned by the council of ministers. These bonds were to be for a period of twenty years, one-twentieth to be paid annually, with interest on the remainder at 6 per cent. The bonds and the interest on them were to be tax free. They were to be negotiable for investment in agricultural, industrial, or mining projects; and could also be used to buy shares in government factories and to repay loans from the Agricultural Bank or the Institute for Agricultural Machinery, for agricultural development, or the purchase of agricultural machinery.

The decree of 17 February 1962 was substantially the same. Interest on the unpaid portion of the sum due to the former owners of the land was also to be paid at 6 per cent. The ministry of finance was to provide the necessary sums for the settlement of the payment orders given to the former owners and allocate 2,000 million *rs.* (*c.* £9,090,909) in the 1962-3 budget for this purpose. The ministry of agriculture was not to issue authority for payment in excess of ten times this amount, whether of principle or interest, up to the end of the year, i.e. 20 March 1963. Those who held payment orders for their land could discount these at banks, with the agreement of the Agricultural Bank, for investment in productive work in the field of industry, agriculture, or mining; and the Agricultural Bank was given authority to pay these payment orders before they fell due. They could be used to pay for the purchase of shares in government factories; and were also to be accepted by ministries and government institutions in payment of claims, such as those in respect of taxes and dues, etc. All transactions connected with the registration of transfers of land taking place under the land reform law, provided the government was one of the parties concerned, were to be exempted from registration fees, and all other official documents concerning land transfers under the law were to be exempted from the payment of taxes, dues, and stamp duties. The fee of the public notary was to be paid in equal shares by the two parties to the transaction (Art. 29).

Dead lands and barren lands, whether within the limits of villages subject to transfer under the law or outside these, were also to be distributed under the law of 9 January 1962 (Art. 6). The land reform organization was given authority by a note to Article 3 to sell, for agricultural purposes or stock grazing, any land within the limits of a village subject to transfer under the law, other than land under cultivation or lying fallow, land on which buildings were erected, the *ḥarīm* of *qanāts* or canals, i.e. land immediately surrounding *qanāts* or canals, paths or roads, or pastures.

In the case of barren lands, no immediate decision was taken for their disposal. Subsequently, the land reform council laid down, on 19 January 1963, that barren lands within village limits were to be bought by the government, but that their sale



was to be deferred until later. Barren lands outside village limits, provided the village was selected by the landowner as his 'chosen' village, could, subject to the permission of the ministry of agriculture, be brought by him under cultivation. In the case of estates which had fallen out of cultivation and had no peasants, it was recommended that the owners should retain them and that they should not be bought by the government pending a decision on the future of dead and barren lands. At a meeting on 9 April 1963 the land reform council reaffirmed the decision that villages which were completely devoid of inhabitants and without any cultivation would not for the time being be bought, on the grounds that the law required the government to transfer any land it bought immediately to the occupying peasants.

Regulations for the execution of the note to Article 3 were eventually passed by the council of ministers on 6 January 1965. They empowered the ministry of agriculture to give notification in each region of the transfer of dead and barren lands as and when laid down by a commission composed of the ministers of agriculture, water and electricity, and the director general of the Plan Organization (Art. 1), and to invite applications for the development of the land. Such applications were to be examined by a local committee composed of the local head of the land reform organization, the head of the registration office and three persons appointed by the ministry of agriculture. Applications for less than 30 ha. (74 acres) and a loan of not more than 500,000 *rs.* (*c.* £2,273) if considered suitable, were to be referred to the agricultural development fund.

Applications for larger areas of land and bigger loans were to be examined and sent with recommendations to the agricultural development fund, which would then request detailed plans for the development of the area from the applicants. Such plans were to be accepted with or without emendation or rejected within six months. In deciding between several applicants for the same area, the amount of capital and facilities available and the technical and economic feasibility of the plan were to be taken into account. In the event of the plans being accepted, an undertaking was to be included in the agreement to complete the plans by a stipulated time.

The price of barren and dead lands in each region was to be fixed by the ministry of agriculture at the rate of one-twentieth of the price of the nearest village bought by the ministry of agriculture under the law of 9 January 1962. In the case of parcels of land under 30 ha. (74 acres), the final transfer by the land reform organization to the person who had developed it at the price fixed in accordance with Article 7 of the regulations was to take place when the agricultural development fund declared that the development plans had been executed, and the loan repaid. In the case of land over 30 ha. in extent, the final transfer would take place when the agricultural development fund declared that the development plans had been implemented and the land brought into a flourishing condition (*ābād shudeh*). Any portion of the land which had not been developed in accordance with the undertaking given in the stipulated period, except in the event of *force majeure*, was to be returned to the government. In the event of *force majeure*, the time limit was to be extended. Pending the fulfilment of the undertaking to develop the land, the payment of the price, or the repayment of the loan, no transactions with regard to the land, such as the conclusion of a lease or transfer by *sukh*, were to be permitted.

To supervise the execution of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 and the preparation of the necessary regulations for its execution, a council was to be formed, called the council for land reform, under the chairmanship of the minister of agriculture; it was to consist of the head of the land reform organization and four members of the ministry of agriculture, whose rank was to be at least that of director-general or general manager of a government institute (Art. 7). The decisions of this council were to be referred to an organization called the land reform organization, the head of which was to be appointed by a royal farman on the recommendation of the minister of agriculture (Art. 7, note 1). This provision was a substantial change from the law of 1960 (see above pp. 57-8).

The regulations setting up the land reform organization laid down that it was to have a head and deputy head, and to consist of the following sections: (i) statistics and information, (ii) technical services, (iii) law and registration, (iv) purchase and transfer, and (v) administration and finance. The head of



the organization was to have the status of an under-secretary of the ministry of agriculture. He was authorized to set up offices in the provinces, or to appoint other departments under the ministry of agriculture to act. Orders for the appointment and dismissal, promotion, and pay increases to the employees of the organization, subject to their not being in conflict with the civil service laws, were to be issued by the head of the land reform organization and signed by the minister of agriculture. The organization was to make use of employees of the ministry of agriculture and other government establishments. Their salary and emoluments were to be the same as those of the heads of sections and other employees of first grade institutes (*bungāhhā-yi darajeh-i yak*) attached to the ministry of agriculture. Provision was also made for the payment of special allowances and travel expenses in certain circumstances, and bonuses.

The government was to establish in each region in which the land reform law became operative 'a well equipped agricultural organization' for the provision of seed, good seedlings, well-bred livestock and the necessary facilities for credit, marketing agricultural produce, and the encouragement of modern methods of agriculture (Art. 30). In the transferred villages, agricultural operations which were common to the whole village, such as the upkeep of *qanāts* and canals, the use of agricultural machinery, and plant and animal pest control, were to be carried out through the co-operative societies (Art. 32).

The law also made provision for the regulation throughout the country of the relations between the landowner and the peasant in privately owned estates and *vaqf* land. The land reform council on 8 June 1964 specifically laid down that these provisions should also cover the relations of landlord and peasant in land where agriculture was carried on within the confines of a town. From the date of the passing of the law, any change in the field lay-out of the village was forbidden, and each peasant was regarded as holding the land (whether under cultivation or fallow) which he held on that date (Art. 20(c), note 2). This provision was included in the law because the annual periodic redistribution of peasant holdings, so far as it was designed to prevent the peasant becoming established and having an interest in the land, was rightly considered to be

detrimental to good farming practice. But it did not take sufficiently into account local practice, and the fact that in some districts redistribution was practised because the quality of the land differed materially. Consequently, the fixing of a certain date for the distribution of the land had the effect, in some districts, of giving a holding of good land to one peasant and a bad holding to another. In fact, however, this provision remained in abeyance in some districts (see below p. 132).

Similarly, from the date of the passing of the law, a peasant who was engaged in cultivating the land in a village was to be regarded as residing in that village, and no landowner had the right under any pretext whatever to turn him out of the village or off the land which he was cultivating, or to prevent him from cultivating that land (Art. 22). Article 23 laid down that if a peasant refrained from cultivating the land at his disposal, or acted contrary to his duties as laid down in the land reform law (see below), the landowner could refer the matter for investigation to the commission for the settlement of disputes (to be set up under Art. 33). If the peasant had no valid excuse for his failure to cultivate the land properly, the commission was to deprive him of it.

Agricultural operations by the landowner in land at the disposal of the peasant, or in which the latter had acquired by cultivation certain rights or of which he owned the *a'yân*, were permissible only with the agreement of the peasant and after the purchase of his rights (*kharîd-i rîsheh va a'yânî*) by the landowner, duly confirmed in an official document (Art. 22, note 1). In an estate which was delimited and remained at the disposal of the landowner, he could take whatever steps he chose to increase the income of the estate and, with the agreement of the peasants (or in the absence of their agreement, provided the commission for the settlement of disputes agreed), he would buy their rights (Art. 22, note 2). If the landowner in such an estate did not properly exploit the land at his disposal, the ministry of agriculture was authorized to buy the land from the landowner and transfer it to a peasant or peasants (Art. 22, note 3). Article 24 laid down that the respective shares of the crop going to the landowner and the peasants were to be in accordance with the customary division of the crop in each locality,



but, from the date of the passing of the law, 5 per cent on irrigated crops and 10 per cent on unirrigated crops was to be deducted from the net share of the landowner and to be added to the share of the peasant. If the land was cultivated by an agricultural labourer who did not provide any of the agricultural elements but was nevertheless paid by a share of the crop, this increase was to go to him (Art. 24, and note).

A decree for the execution of Article 24, dated 26 August 1962, laid down that if either party delayed in dividing the harvest, or the landowner refrained from paying the peasant's share, the head of the local department of agriculture and the local governor, or their representatives, were to choose three of the village elders (*mu'tamidin-i mahall*) to divide the harvest between the two parties. If the landowner or the peasant refused to take his share, it was to be kept in the village storehouse, unless it was a crop which would not keep. In the latter case it was to be sold by the three village elders with the permission of the head of the department of agriculture and the local governor, and the proceeds paid into the Agricultural Bank, to be held for the landowner or the peasant as the case might be.

Tangible agricultural property (*a'yân*), which the peasant had created, was to belong to him and he had the right to register his ownership, but new *a'yân* could be created only with the consent of the landowner (Art. 25). The land reform council on 8 June 1964 expressed the view that if such *a'yân* were created without the landowner's permission, the commission for the settlement of disputes could, on the demand of the landowner, direct them to be destroyed. This opinion was confirmed at a later meeting of the council on 22 May 1965. A note to Article 25 laid down that in villages not subject to transfer under the provisions of the law, the landowner was bound, if the majority of the peasants in the village wished to build new houses, to give them up to 500 sq. m. for the construction of a house, storehouse, and stabling. Similarly, land for the construction of a mosque, bath, and school, etc., in a position judged suitable by the local department of agriculture, was to be placed without payment at the disposal of the peasants, if they so demanded. It was incumbent upon the peasants to make such buildings according to plans to be supplied by the ministry of agriculture on such land

within one year, failing which the land would revert to the landowner (Art. 25, note).

Article 20 laid down the duties of the landowners and peasants throughout the country. Those of the former were as follows: (i) to pay the cost of (a) the repair and upkeep of *qanāts*, including cleaning (*tanqīh*), new excavations (*naḥkanī*), dredging (*lārūbī*), new excavations at the source (*idāmeḥ-i pishkār*), and all measures needed to keep *qanāts* and wells in operation, (b) water from rivers and canals, and (c) the making and repair of cement water-ducts (*nāw-i sīmān*), dams, irrigation channels, storage tanks and cisterns (*istakhr va birkeh*), etc., according to established custom; (ii) to pay the cost of irrigation by power-operated pumps in districts where this was customary, except where special agreements existed for the payment and use of power-operated pumps; and to endeavour to make use of new methods of irrigation; (iii) to provide suitable seed in areas where this was the responsibility of the landowner; and to co-operate with the peasant to change and improve seed in areas where this was the responsibility of the peasant; and (iv) to perform such other duties as might be laid down by future laws and regulations and as were established by custom in each locality.

The duties of the peasant were as follows: (i) to carry out agricultural operations according to local custom; and (ii) to provide suitable seed in areas where the provision of seed was the responsibility of the peasant. A note to Article 20(b) stated that special agreements between the landowner and the peasant in existence at the time of the passing of the law were not to be disturbed, and that the two parties could also make such agreements in the future.

Some duties were the joint responsibility of the landowners and the peasants. These were laid down as follows: (i) to care for and maintain *qanāts*, wells, water tanks, irrigation channels, and canals, and to co-operate in avoiding the wasteful use of water; (ii) to pay the cost of chemical fertilizers and pest control; (iii) to pay the dues of the village headman, the *dashbān*, the *mīrāb* and other officials according to local custom; (iv) to care for and maintain trees, gardens, and public buildings, such as schools, and water-storage tanks, etc.; and (v) to provide the officials of the ministry of agriculture with information on the



agricultural and social matters of the village, and to implement their instructions for the extension of cultivation and agricultural improvement. In the case of the provision of chemical fertilizers and the cost of pest control, if either party paid the full cost, he could deduct this from the harvest before it was divided between the two parties.

If the landowner or landowners did not carry out their duties as laid down in the law, the peasants could, as far as they were able, provided the committee for the investigation and solution of disputes issued an order, pay the cost and undertake the work themselves. In such an event only 2 per cent of the produce would belong to the landowner (Art. 21).

With the passing of the land reform law and the recognition that the peasants had certain rights enforceable by law, it was likely that disputes between the landowners and peasants would receive open expression and that the peasants, encouraged by their improved situation, would refuse to submit to impositions by the landowners. In order to lessen the danger of outbreaks of disorder in the countryside, which would hold up the implementation of the law, Article 33 laid down that differences between landowners and peasants on matters concerning agriculture were to be submitted to a special committee for the investigation and solution of agricultural disputes (*hall-i ikhtilaf*). A committee for this purpose was to be set up in every district, composed of the district governor, the head of the local department of justice (or the representative of the ministry of justice), and a representative of the ministry of agriculture. Their decisions were to be final and to be executed by the courts of justice.

This method was found to be cumbrous and the council of ministers emended the article on 15 October 1962 to read 'disputes between landowners and peasants on matters relating to agriculture shall be referred to the officials of the land reform organization. The gendarmerie shall duly execute the orders of the head of the land reform office in each area. The ministers of the interior and agriculture shall give separately the necessary courses of instruction for the execution of this order.' This was a much more practical arrangement than that made under the provisions of the abortive law of 1960. The latter had laid down

that a commission—composed of the district governor, the head of the district court, or a representative of the ministry of justice, and a representative of the ministry of agriculture or a representative of the local department of agriculture—should be set up for the settlement of disputes between landowners and peasants.

These were the main provisions of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 and the interpretations put upon them by the land reform council. The law was drawn up with a clear understanding of local conditions and was essentially pragmatic. Taking account of the limitations imposed by administrative and political conditions, it aimed at a reform which could be rapidly implemented, and would bring about a radical change in social and political and, ultimately, economic conditions. It was different from all earlier measures aimed at rural reform, whether the distributions of *khālīqeh* or the setting up of village councils. The former, although in themselves desirable, had no effect on the relationship of landlord and peasant in the country as a whole. A change in this relationship was crucial to land reform. The setting up of village councils, so far as it encouraged local government, was desirable, but the councils as set up did not really give responsibility to the peasant: control remained with the government officials and the landowners. The intention of the law of 9 January 1962 was to bring about a major change in tenurial conditions by breaking the political, social, and economic power of the landlords, and, by making membership of a co-operative society a condition to the receipt of land under the terms of the law, to give responsibility to the peasants for the running of their own affairs. No earlier measure had sought to achieve either of these aims.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE EXECUTION OF THE LAND REFORM LAW OF 9 JANUARY 1962; THE ADDITIONAL ARTICLES; THE PEASANTS' CONGRESS

---

THE land reform law having been signed on 9 January 1962, it was announced that it would be put into operation in Marāgheh in Eastern Āzarbāyjān, and on 16 January notification was given to the landowners in that area to declare their holdings. The execution of the law of 9 January 1962 came to be known subsequently as the first stage of land reform in contradistinction to the second stage, i.e. the execution of the Additional Articles passed on 17 January 1963 (see below pp. 104ff.). There were various reasons for the choice of Marāgheh as the first place in which to put the law into operation. As stated above, a small team had been collecting land statistics and canvassing for the establishment of co-operative societies there since the previous October. Natural conditions in this part of Persia were favourable to agriculture: it contained both irrigated and unirrigated land. Irrigation was mainly by river water and not by *qanāts*. Droughts and crop failures were less frequent than in Central Persia. Grain was the main crop, but cash crops were playing an increasingly important part in Eastern Āzarbāyjān. Marāgheh was one of the most fertile districts in the province and had a large export of locally-produced dried fruits and nuts. Under the former crop-sharing agreements in the Marāgheh area the share going to the landowner was not unduly high. He took one-fifth on unirrigated grain and one-third or one-fourth on irrigated crops, or sometimes only one fifth on these also.

The landowners in Eastern Āzarbāyjān had, in general, used their position to keep the peasants in a position of subjection and backwardness. Economically, however, the peasants,

although still poor, were better off in the area round Marāgheli than in many parts of Persia. They were, on the whole, good husbandmen, competent and robust, and were likely to benefit immediately from the opportunities offered by land reform. Further, the position of the landowners vis-à-vis the peasants had been severely weakened by the events which had taken place during the Democrat regime of Pishavari. For some years the payment by the peasants of the landowners' share of the crop had been irregular. A high proportion of the landowners were absentees, living outside the region. Many of them were rich and enjoyed considerable incomes from their estates, but their influence was of an economic rather than a political nature. Their opposition to the land reform was, therefore, likely to be less formidable than that of landowners in an area in which they still retained considerable political influence.

With the beginning of the execution of the land reform law, the propaganda campaign against the landlords, which had temporarily abated, was intensified. Dr. Arsanjāni himself made a number of strongly-worded speeches. It was felt by many that this propaganda was unnecessary and unfair: that it failed to discriminate between 'good' landlords and 'bad', and that it unnecessarily exacerbated the relations between landowners and peasants. There was some truth in this; but the need to weaken the landowning class, and to mobilize support for the land reform outweighed other considerations. The supporters of the movement believed that if the public could be made to see the landowner as the enemy of progress and the peasant as the oppressed party, the government, which was composed partly of members of the landowning class and was strongly allied to that class, would find it more difficult to oppose the reform openly. Above all, the intention was probably so to discredit the landowning class that it would not be able to regain its former position of influence if the government fell and was succeeded by another which wished to delay or stop land reform.

In the early stages, the reform gained some measure of support in urban areas. Even many of the smaller landowners, whose holdings were not large enough to bring them within the scope of Article 2, were in favour of the reform, without perhaps having any clear idea of its implications or the difficulties for



them which were likely to attend its implementation. Later, the great majority of the small landowners, when they found the peasants beginning to withhold from them their share of the crop (see below pp. 100-1), became lukewarm in their support, or withheld it altogether. The middle and lower ranks of the professional classes and the workers in the towns also, in general, gave uninformed support to the reform.

The intellectuals, on the other hand, were critical of the land reform, on the grounds that its execution was hasty and insufficient attention was paid to detailed planning and the increase of production. What they wanted was a 'text-book' reform, whereas the reform was essentially pragmatic and especially devised to suit Persian conditions. The extreme left was hostile to the reform and would probably have been satisfied with nothing short of collective farms, although this was not said openly. Some of the senior officials in the ministry of agriculture were also somewhat lukewarm in their approval of the land reform because they feared that it would result in a decrease in production. This, like the accusation sometimes made against the peasant that he was lazy, was based on a misunderstanding of conditions.

In the past the peasant had, in general, been unwilling, or at least reluctant, to increase production because often, under the crop-sharing agreement, a large part of such an increase would go to the landowner and also because increased prosperity might draw upon him the cupidity of government officials. To-day the peasant wants more than just enough to eat: he wants a radio, a paraffin cooking-stove, better pots and pans, crockery, education for his sons, and transport to take him to the city. These he will not be able to afford, unless he maintains or increases production. In fact, as events were to show, after land reform the general tendency was for the peasant holding to be better cultivated than before, and for production to increase.

The landowning class and the ruling classes of society in general were strongly opposed to the reform on grounds of personal interest, but they nowhere, and at no time, made any joint or concerted stand. The main criticism the large landowners made of the land reform was that their function as the providers

of credit for the peasants would not be adequately performed by other sources, and that consequently there would be difficulties over the provision of seed and the upkeep of *qanāts* and irrigation channels. This problem no doubt existed but it was not such a major problem as the landowners claimed. On the whole, the landowners had done little in the past for the peasants (though there have been honourable exceptions), and such help as they gave tended to burden the peasant with debt, which, with its attendant consequences, hindered a rise in production and development and made for increased poverty.

Except in the Marāgheh area, where the land reform was implemented with vigour and speed, there was in the early days a certain scepticism among the landowners (and for that matter among the population as a whole) concerning the intention and ability of the government to implement it. This enabled the land reform organization virtually to present the country with a *fait accompli* when the first series of title deeds was handed over to the peasants concerned by the Shah in Marāgheh on 13 March 1962. The operation of the law was then extended to Miāndūāb, Hashtrūd, Shāhīn Dīzh (Šā'in Qal'eh) and Tikāb. The two last-named districts were inhabited mainly by Kurds, and were predominantly dry-farming areas, apart from a little irrigated land round some of the villages. The crop division was mainly one-fifth to the landlord, though it was alleged that, by the time various other payments had been made, the landlord's share amounted to one-fourth. This division was not unduly unfavourable to the peasants, but they tended to be held in conditions of social and political subjection. Standards of husbandry were low, but both areas were potentially prosperous. Communications were extremely bad. This fact, together with the insecurity which had prevailed until recent times, had contributed to their backwardness.

The final distribution of title deeds to the peasants for these areas was made by the Shah in Marāgheh on 23 September 1962. In a speech on this occasion he advised landowners to sell to the government the land which they had been permitted to retain under Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962. By this time 1,047 estates, consisting of some 257,699 ha. (636,442 acres), had been bought by the government under the law and distri-



buted to 23,793 peasants. The cost of the land was 662,153,401 *rs.* (*c.* £3,009,788), of which the first instalment had been paid to the landowners. The number of landowners affected by the law, i.e. those who had held land in excess of the maximum permitted by Article 2 of the law, was 250. In addition 40 landowners had come forward to sell their land to the government under the cabinet decree of 1 March 1962. The total number of 290 included merchants, government officials, doctors, engineers, and lawyers; 206 were absentees living in Tabriz, Tehrān, and elsewhere. Only some 238 of the total number had elected to retain a 'chosen' village as permitted by the law. The remainder had sold all their landholdings to the government. The majority of the peasants had paid the first instalment on the land transferred to them. Fifty-five co-operative societies had been established with a membership of 29,523 peasants and an investment by the members of 16,853,350 *rs.* (*c.* £76,606).<sup>1</sup> If these figures are correct and represent payments actually made and monies received, they show that both the payment made to the landowners in Eastern Āzarbāyjān and the investment in the co-operative societies was, in general, higher than in areas which later became subject to the land reform.

At first there was difficulty over the provision of funds for the land reform. Money was allocated by the government for the reform, but there was considerable delay over its transfer to the Agricultural Bank, which was the agency through which payment to the landowners was to be made. The actual sum allocated for the purchase of land in 1962-3 was 450,000,000 *rs.* (i.e. rather over £2 million). The money paid to the landowners was ultimately to be made good by the money received from the peasants to whom the land was transferred.

The land reform was extended to Ramand in Qazvin on 5 May 1962. Isfārvarin, a large village near Qazvin, was bought by the government under the land reform on 11 May 1962 and transferred to the peasants on 24 May 1962; and shortly afterwards various neighbouring districts were also brought under the law. These districts round Qazvin, unlike Marāgheh, were

<sup>1</sup> Report by Eng. Khalkhālī, head of the land reform organization in Eastern Āzarbāyjān, given on the occasion of the distribution of title deeds by the Shah to peasants at Marāgheh on 23 September 1962.

poor and had the appearance of having been neglected by the landlords; and the standard of husbandry was not high.

It was announced on 5 May 1962 that the law would become operative in Lasht-i Nishā (Gilān) and on 4 August 1962 in Fūmīn, Şoumī'eh Sarā and Lāhijān. Gilān was a rich rice-growing province. Cash crops in some districts of Gilān, as in parts of Eastern Āzarbāyjān, were increasingly important. In some of the villages the peasants were fairly well-off, but in general indebtedness and the foreselling of crops were common and the standard of living low. In the villages in Gilān, however, the rate of literacy was high compared to most other provinces. In Lasht-i Nishā rice was the only crop grown, apart from a few vegetables for the peasants' own consumption. Rice was the staple food. Lamb was almost never eaten, and beef (which was cheaper) very seldom. The peasant holdings varied from rather under 2 ha. (5 acres) to 4 or 5 ha. (10-12 acres). The landowner's share came to roughly one-third; it was assessed in kind but paid in cash, and was alleged to amount to some 10,000 *rs.* (c. £45) per hectare. The cost of extra labour for harvesting and weeding, etc. was alleged to work out at about 10,000 *rs.* (c. £45) per ha. to the peasant.<sup>1</sup> In the Lāhijān area few of the peasant holdings exceeded 2 ha. (5 acres). Many were less and did not, in the circumstances then existing, afford an adequate living. The same was probably broadly true of Fūmīn.

The peasants alleged in Fūmīn that the landlords tried to prevent the opening up of the villages through the provision of schools and better communications. In one village which I visited, water was short, and a good deal of the village land was uncultivated. It was alleged that the landowner would not repair the village water tanks, nor allow tobacco, which required less water than rice, to be grown, because his share on this, under the customary crop-sharing agreement, would be less than on rice. I could not check the accuracy of these accusations; but the water tanks were certainly in a bad condition and much of the village land was uncultivated. In this area the holdings appeared to be small, mostly under 2 ha. (5 acres).

Sarband, Kazzāz, Sharrā, and various other districts in Arāk were declared land reform areas on 20 May 1962. In many of

<sup>1</sup> These figures must be treated with some reserve.



the villages of Arāk, agriculture by itself did not afford a living; carpet-weaving provided an additional source of income. One village which I visited in 1964 appeared to have no exportable surplus of grain and no cash crops whatever. The only source of cash with which tea and sugar and other commodities could be bought was manual labour on the roads or in the towns. Water was short in most areas. The standard of husbandry in the villages of Arāk was on the whole low, but an exception must be made in the case of the peasant-proprietor villages in some districts, notably Burchalū, where terracing, levelling, and manuring of the land were carried out with meticulous care. The difference between these villages and the neighbouring villages owned wholly or partially by large landowners was marked. Three villages in Arāk were bought and distributed, and title deeds given to the peasants by the Shah on 16 September 1962; seven others were in the course of being bought by the government. There were said to be 520 villages in the area comprising Sarband, Kazzāz and Sharrā and 68 landowners whose holdings were above the maximum permitted by Article 2 of the law.

The districts of Shīrvān and Chardāval in Kirmānshāhān, and Kuvār in Fārs were the next places in which the law became operative. In both cases the law was extended to the district because a local landowner had offered his land for sale to the government under the cabinet decree of 1 March 1962. The land reform began in Ardabīl and Ahar, both in Eastern Āzarbāyjān, and Kurdistān on 10 September 1962. Agriculture was not as highly developed in these areas as in Marāghēh. Stock-raising played an important part in the local economy in Ardabīl and Ahar. In these districts and in Kurdistān the peasants, although they lived in somewhat primitive conditions, were tough and resilient.

When the land reform began, many of the landowners refrained from submitting a declaration of their estates as required under Article 8 of the law of 9 January 1962; this they did in the hope, which in the early days was widespread among the landowning class, that the reform could be delayed, if not altogether avoided, and also because they wished to collect their share of the harvest before selling their villages to the government. In the Marāghēh area a number of villages were

taken over by the land reform organization and transferred to the peasants, the land reform organization acting for the land-owners in filling up the declaration forms. This was also the case in Tikāb, Fūmin, and Lāhijān.

Even though the need for a detailed land survey was avoided under the provisions of the law, a decision on which land was liable to sale and transfer under the law was not always an easy matter. If the ownership of a village was registered and held by one individual, the case was straightforward, although, as stated above (see pp. 63 ff.), disputes might arise over the definition of a village. But in some districts, registration had not been carried out; occasionally in others, although land had been registered, there were pockets which had escaped it or had been brought into cultivation after registration. For example, seven or eight villages in Šoumī'eh Sarā belonging to one of the main local land-owning families, which had not been recorded in the registration office, were discovered by the land reform officials when they began their operations. Sales and transfers after the original registration were by no means always recorded. The records of the registration offices were often in a chaotic state and for the most part provided little more than a rough guide.

In cases where the village was held by a number of people on a *mushā'* tenure, some of whom were covered by Article 2 of the law, the shares were to be delimited. This was a lengthy process because the agreement of all interested parties had to be obtained. Delimitation was therefore often postponed and a proportional share of the village only transferred to the peasants. There was, however, considerable variety of practice.

In order to avoid delay in the transfer of villages to the peasants, supplementary regulations for the execution of Article 2, note 3, dated 7 August 1962, were passed by the council of ministers. These provided for the transfer to all the peasants of the village on a joint tenure of scattered parcels of land (*amlāk-i dāngi-i parākandeh*) which had been sold to the government, in the same proportion as they held land under the existing division of the village into ploughlands, having regard to Articles 15 and 16 of the land reform law, the land to be subsequently delimited among the peasants as quickly as possible. Affairs connected with *qanāts*, deep wells, and irrigation channels in the



land transferred to the peasants in this way were to be run by the co-operative society. The latter was to propose to its members any measures which it considered necessary for agricultural improvement; if they were not prepared to pay their share, the co-operative society could, with the sanction of the commission for the solution of disputes, set up under Article 33 of the land reform law, pay the necessary expenses and recover these at harvest time.

When an announcement was made that the land reform would become operative in a given area, officials from the land reform organization were sent in small groups, or singly, to collect the relevant information and check it against the information available from the local registration office. Where the landowners submitted declarations of their holdings the officials went to those villages which were subject to transfer; but where declarations were not submitted they would go, in the first instance, to those villages most likely to be subject to transfer under the reform, i.e. those owned wholly or in part by an individual known to have other property in the neighbourhood or elsewhere.

I was present on two occasions in the summer of 1962, one in Fūmīn and one in Lāhījān, when information was being collected in this way. The village headman was asked to summon the men of the village to a meeting. This took place in the local mosque on one occasion and in the house of one of the peasants on the other. It took some time for everyone to assemble. One of the officials then addressed the villagers and explained the land reform law and the purpose of the collection of information. On both occasions this was done clearly and well; no false hopes were held out, the limitations of the law were made clear, and the peasants were urged to act only within the bounds of legality.

The next stage was for the assembled villagers to elect three village elders (*mu'tamidīn-i mahallī*) to accept responsibility for the correctness of the information given. On both occasions this was done without much delay. These men then stood by the land reform officials who worked in two teams of two men each and recorded, on forms already prepared, the extent of the holding of each peasant, the terms on which it was held,

and the family particulars of each individual. From time to time there was discussion and dispute over details, which were referred to and settled by the village elders. The two villages concerned were small, some 100 families in each, and the literacy rate fairly high. The collection of information lasted from early morning until about 9 o'clock at night, though the actual recording of statistics had begun only at midday, because of the time taken to assemble all the peasants.

In general, the collection of statistics proceeded satisfactorily. This is not to imply that no mistakes were made. It would have been surprising if there had been none. It is notoriously difficult to arrive at the truth in a Persian village. Long periods of oppression have made the peasant naturally inclined to conceal the truth. Other motives also intruded: greed sometimes prompted larger holdings to be claimed than were in fact held, while factional strife and personal quarrels led to attempts to usurp or decrease the holdings of members of other factions or personal enemies. On the other hand compassion for the poverty of peasants who had no holdings sometimes led to a man being credited with a holding which was in fact non-existent.

The second stage, if the village was in fact bought by the government, was the formation of a co-operative society, membership of which was a condition for the transfer of land under the reform. In the case of small villages, or villages in which only a small portion of the land was subject to distribution, one co-operative society served several villages. It followed from the terms of the land reform law that membership of the land reform co-operative societies was to be confined to those who held a share of the village ploughlands. Practice in this, however, was not uniform, especially where pre-land reform co-operative societies served as land reform societies. Some of these contained among their members, shepherds (*dāmdārān*), carpet weavers, and other persons living in the village but not engaged in agriculture. In some cases, but not all, when the co-operative society became a land reform society, its membership was revised and confined to the peasants who held a share in the village ploughlands.

In Varjūy, the first village to be transferred to the peasants in the Marāghch area, preparations for the formation of a co-



operative society were made in advance of the distribution of the land. The Varjūy society, when eventually set up, had some 200 members, of whom about 80 were literate. In general, however, in the early stages of land reform, unless a pre-land reform society existed in the district, the co-operative societies were set up by the land reform officials in the villages subject to transfer after the collection of statistics. Help in the establishment of these societies was given in many cases by officials of the Agricultural Bank, who often acted as their supervisors.

The formation of a co-operative society took place in very much the same way as the collection of statistics. All the peasants holding land would be assembled at the request of the officials of the land reform organization; the purposes of a co-operative society having been explained to the peasants, they would be invited to establish one, buy shares, and appoint an executive committee. The difficulties of setting up and running societies in a country where there was little experience of co-operation and in which the rate of literacy was low were enormous. Membership of a co-operative society was a prerequisite for receiving land under the land reform and rapidity of action was essential to the success of the reform—delay would have enabled its opponents to marshal their forces, which would have been fatal. These factors meant that many societies were set up hastily and their members inadequately informed of the purposes and practices of co-operative societies.

I was present at Husaynābād, a small village in Tākestān, at the appointment of the executive committee of the co-operative society there in the summer of 1962. All the peasants holding ploughlands were assembled in the house of one of their number at the request of two officials from the land reform office in Qazvin; two young men from the Agricultural Bank were also present and were to supervise the society once it had started. Some 20 persons were in due course collected, of whom only one was fully literate and one partially literate. The meeting opened with a great deal of shouting and inconclusive argument by the peasants, from which it emerged that no one was prepared to accept responsibility and all suspected the government of deceiving them in some way or other. One man actually said that they had not so far elected an executive

committee because they did not really believe that the land was going to be taken from the landowner and given to them. One peasant, an oldish man, created a disturbance by asking what had happened to the 500 *rs.* (c. £2) which he had paid into the co-operative society funds. He was eventually turned out of the meeting by one of the land reform officials, who lost patience; largely under pressure from him, the executive committee was appointed, thumb prints being put on the necessary documents by the peasants who were present. This was, perhaps, an extreme case. In general, with encouragement from the land reform officials, the peasants welcomed the establishment of the co-operative societies, and in most areas in which they were set up invested money in them, even sometimes borrowing money to do so.

The third stage was for a second and more detailed visit to be made to the village by the land reform officials to prepare for the transfer of the land to the peasants. Although the land reform law laid down the general principle that the transfer should be on the basis of the existing division of the village land into ploughlands, there was some variety in practice. The early opinion of the land reform officials was that where possible land should be given to all the peasants of the village, whether they had a share in the village ploughlands or not. In some of the villages round Marāgheh, where the village land was fairly extensive and formerly not fully cultivated, there was no great difficulty in giving land to all the peasants. In the early period there was also a tendency, if the land was fully cultivated, to cut down peasant holdings if they exceeded 3 ha. (c. 7½ acres), and to take the surplus and give it to those peasants who had no share in the village ploughlands. Practice, however, was by no means uniform, and after the early stages of the land reform, the general custom was to regard only those who had a share of the village ploughlands as entitled to receive land under the land reform, and not to limit existing peasant holdings.

In a few villages, already by the summer of 1962 the co-operative societies were selling a small range of consumer goods to their members; but most societies were still in a very rudimentary condition. The executive committees of all, or nearly all, met regularly, sometimes as often as once a week, to discuss



village affairs. These meetings and discussions had considerable value in educating the peasants and fostering a sense of community. Even in the early days of the reform the managers of the societies and chairman of the executive committees were often men of common sense and balance. The general demand of the peasants from the co-operative societies in the early period of land reform was in almost all instances for water; sometimes they also wanted improved seed; occasionally fertilizers, agricultural machinery, granaries, roads, and schools were mentioned. But the paramount need was felt to be water, and it was widely hoped that the co-operative societies would help in assuring better supplies.

Although the execution of the land reform law was accompanied in its early stages by a great deal of propaganda and provocation from both sides, there were surprisingly few disorders. The land reform officials were few in number, often young, inexperienced, and frequently over-worked. When the reform started there were only twenty. By September 1963 their number had increased to 1,184, including technical and administrative employees. In the early stages they were sometimes roughly treated by the landowners and their servants. Bitterness was found on both sides.

In the briefings they were given, the land reform officials were instructed to act strictly within the terms of the law. The peasants to whom land was transferred under the law were similarly urged by the land reform officials to maintain law and order, and warned that any irregularities or disorders would delay implementation of the reform. Further, those peasants who had not received land under the reform were urged to show patience and not to withhold the payment of the landowners' share of the crop under existing crop-sharing agreements. On 27 July 1962 at Lasht-i Nishā, when title deeds were distributed to the peasants of four villages in the district formerly belonging to Dr. 'Alī Amini, Dr. Arsanjāni made this point strongly in a speech on the land reform and its purposes. If some of the younger men in the field sometimes talked against the landlords and advised the peasants to resist their impositions and to withhold their dues, it must be remembered that there was often strong provocation.

The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, as pointed out above, did not directly touch all classes of peasants; its effects were restricted to those who actually held and cultivated a part of the village ploughlands. Further, it did not affect all of these equally. Those who cultivated land in the village which the landowner had retained as his 'chosen' village, or land owned by small landowners whose estates were not subject to transfer under Article 2 of the law, continued to cultivate the land on the old crop-sharing basis, or in return for the payment of a rent in cash or kind. Thus, the peasants of one village might have land transferred to them whereas their neighbours did not; similarly, within the confines of one village, some peasants might receive land while others did not. In those areas which were transferred to the peasants, they were pleased at the change which had taken place and looked to the future with optimism. The phrase frequently heard on their lips was 'our eyes have been opened'; and allegations that the landlords had formerly prevented or delayed their enlightenment were common.

One day in August 1962 I was passing through Malik Kandi, a large village in Āzarbāyjān with a population of some 10,000 persons. The man to whom it had belonged had omitted it from the declaration of his estates submitted to the land reform offices. There had been a major conflict between him and Dr. Arsanjāni before the village land had been transferred to the peasants. I asked a peasant who was watering his crops whether the village had been transferred and if not to whom it belonged. He replied, 'Our landowner has died!' This was, perhaps, typical of the feeling abroad in many areas that the landowner as such would shortly disappear, if he had not already done so. This feeling was encouraged by notices such as 'the land belongs to the person who cultivates it' which were prominently displayed in the land reform offices.

By the summer of 1962, the peasants in many areas, especially in Āzarbāyjān, were withholding the payment of the landowner's share of the crop from land which had not yet been transferred or was not subject to transfer. Some of the large landowners, if their share of the crop was withheld, turned to the local governor and gendarmerie for help in collecting their dues. The small landowner, on the other hand, had little



opportunity for redress. There were in many parts of the country considerable numbers of small people who had put their savings into land to supplement their income by an often tiny (but to them important) sum; and it seemed likely that this class would be, if not dispossessed, at least depressed into a lower rank of society. Many of the former large landowners in Āzarbāyjān who had retained one village also felt that their position was becoming intolerable; they would have been ready to sell their land had they felt certain that the government would pay them for it.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that landowners were unwilling to invest money in the development of the land or even in the maintenance of existing irrigation works. Some difficulty was also experienced in this respect in land which was not subject to transfer under Article 2 of the law. The problem was not the inability of the peasants to manage the irrigation system in the land transferred to them, but the crisis of confidence and the unwillingness of landowners to provide credit in the land which they retained in their possession. Further, in some villages retained by the landowners either as their 'chosen' village, or in districts in which the land reform had not yet become operative, or which were not subject to transfer under the law of 9 January 1962, notably in the Qazvin area and Isfahān, it was alleged that increased extortion was practised by the landowners. Its purpose was to force the peasants to leave the land (since the landowners were forbidden by law to turn them out) so that the landowners could mechanize it and, by claiming that this had been done before land reform started, place their land outside the scope of the law. The success of such attempts depended largely on the quality of the local officials and the degree to which they supported or opposed the land reform (see also below Chapter XII).

A land reform official was killed near Fīrūzābād in Fārs in November 1962. The circumstances of his death are not entirely clear, but the opportunity was seized to make him a martyr, to declare martial law in Fārs, and to push on vigorously with the land reform in that province. Dr. Arsanjāni attacked the 'feudal barons' of Fārs, and attributed responsibility for the murder to the Qashqā'i khans. On 27 November he declared that tribal

society was an anachronism, and that 'nomadism' in Fārs would be brought to an end.

Fārs was in fact an extremely difficult area from the point of view of land reform. Much of the province was tribal territory. A long-standing antagonism existed between the tribes and the government. Many of the tribal leaders owned some agricultural land. Outside the tribal areas, social and political influence still derived from the land probably to a greater extent than elsewhere; and the landowners tended to live more exclusively from the land than in many other areas. Consequently their opposition to the land reform was more bitter than elsewhere. Society was on the whole patriarchal. Politically and socially the province was backward. The landowners, in general, took little interest in their properties, apart from the collection of their dues. The lot of the peasants was often one of grinding poverty and subservience to the landowners. They were therefore less ready than the peasants in Āzarbāyjān and Gilān, and even Kurdistān, to benefit immediately from land reform. Further, 1962 was the third year in which both the harvest and grazing had been bad over most of the province, a fact which had exacerbated the existing poverty. (See further below pp. 149 ff.)

On 8 January 1963, a national congress of peasants was opened in Tehrān. Some 4,700 peasants from different parts of the country, drawn mainly from the co-operative societies, took part. How far the congress was genuinely representative of the co-operative societies and the peasants is a matter for speculation. Those participating were no doubt carefully chosen and sent to Tehrān under official supervision, but in the absence of evidence to the contrary there is no reason to doubt that it was broadly representative of the peasants. The participants elected their own managing committee and the congress was run in an orderly and efficient manner, no small achievement for the first congress of its kind.

The leading part was played by Dr. Arsanjānī. It was both his triumph and, perhaps, his downfall, since his immense popularity and influence with the peasants was clear for all to see. The educative aspect of the congress was very considerable. Peasants from the different areas of the country were brought



into contact with each other for the first time in its history. They were no longer isolated, and experienced a sense of unity and strength. During the course of the congress Dr. Arsanjāni was reported as saying: 'After the holding of this congress, the town community (*jāme'eh-i shahrnīshān*) will no longer be able to consider itself the embodiment (*mazhar*) of the Persian people and will have to recognize officially this great force constituted by the peasants.'

In the summer of 1966 I met a number of peasants who had attended this congress. Some from Kurdistan still remembered it as the great landmark in the change in their conditions. Others, such as the manager of the Shīrkhān co-operative society in Dinavar, said that he and others like him at first had not believed what the representatives from Marāgheh had told them about the transfer of land.

The Shah addressed the congress on 9 January. In his speech he emphasized the importance of the role of the co-operative societies in the land reform, and stressed the unity of the peasants and the workers. He then announced that a six-point referendum would be held for (i) the abolition of the landlord-peasant regime, (ii) the nationalization of forests, (iii) the sale of shares in government factories to landowners as compensation for their lands, (iv) profit-sharing for workers in the factories (but this was not to include the national oil company, or government concerns such as the tobacco monopoly),<sup>1</sup> (v) reform of the electoral law, and (vi) the creation of a literacy corps (*sipāh-i dāndsh*). The intention behind the referendum was probably not so much to ascertain public opinion as to obtain an expression of public support for the government, and thereby take the wind out of the sails of supporters of the National Front, who were still extremely vocal in their opposition to the government.

On 15 January, Dr. Arsanjāni promised reforms in the *khardehmālik* villages, i.e. the villages owned by small landowners; presumably he intended to remove some of the anomalies between the 'chosen' villages and those not subject to transfer under the law of 9 January 1962 on the one hand and villages which had been transferred on the other, and to lessen the

<sup>1</sup> A decree for profit-sharing in factories was issued on 7 January 1963.

inequality in the status of the peasants in the two types of village. This, however, increased the opposition of the small landowners to the land reform, which had developed as more and more peasants withheld from them their share of the crop. This opposition now became more vocal. The possibility of the small landowners uniting with the large landowners, whose dissatisfaction had been mounting towards the close of 1962 as it became clear that the land reform was to be implemented throughout the country, was not to be taken lightly in existing circumstances. On 2 February, Dr. Arsanjāni promised support to the small landowners. This was perhaps the first 'crack' in the land reform: the promises of 15 January and 2 February were incompatible.

Meanwhile, on 17 January 1963 the Additional Articles to the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 were issued. They comprised five articles, and made some attempt to lessen the dichotomy which was developing between the peasant in the villages which had been transferred on the one hand and the peasants in the 'chosen' villages and the villages owned by small landowners on the other. The implementation of the Additional Articles, which did not, in fact, begin until February 1965, was known as the second stage of the land reform, as distinct from the first stage. Article 1 of the Additional Articles laid down the procedure to be adopted in those villages which were not subject to purchase by the government under Article 2 of the law of 9 January 1962. The landowner, or landowners, of an estate were given three choices, (a) to rent the land to the occupying peasants for a cash rent based on the average annual income of the preceding three years, excluding dues (*avāriz*), for thirty years; (b) to sell the land to the occupying peasants by mutual agreement; or (c) to divide the irrigated and unirrigated land between himself or themselves and the peasants in the same proportion as the crop was divided between the two parties under the existing crop-sharing agreement. Water rights which belonged to the land according to local custom were to be transferred to the peasants with the land. If (c) were chosen, the joint expenses of the village were to be paid by the various parties according to the proportion of the land which they each held (note 1). The peasant was to pay two-fifths of the price of



the land reckoned at the highest rate for the region in ten annual equal instalments (note 2). The Agricultural Bank was to give long-term loans to landowners for the development of the share of the land that they retained under (c) (note 3).

Within the confines of a village subject to Article 1 of the Additional Articles, land which was run as mechanized land from the date of the passing of the original land reform law by the National Assembly and the Senate, i.e. 16 May 1960, was exempt from the provisions of the law, provided it did not exceed 500 ha. (1,235 acres) (note 4). The inclusion of this provision with regard to mechanized land was probably actuated by the fear that if mechanized land was transferred to peasants production would fall, because they would not have the means to continue its cultivation by mechanized means. Later there was a tendency to question the interpretation of what constituted mechanized land, and the land reform council in paragraph 2 of the proceedings of its meeting on 24 May 1965 expressed the view that legal sanction (*mujavaz-i qānūnī*) would be required for the exemption of land mechanized after the date of the passing of the land reform law.

Note 6 to Article 1 laid down that in the case of rice-growing land, landowners could retain up to 30 ha. (74 acres), and must act with regard to this land in one of three the ways laid down in Article 1. Any land surplus to 30 ha. was to be transferred to the peasants at a price to be fixed on the basis of the last tax demand before December 1961–January 1962, multiplied by a coefficient to be fixed by the land reform organization.

Article 2 of the Additional Articles concerned an extremely thorny matter, namely charitable *ouqāf*. Provisions relating to private or personal *ouqāf* had been included in the law of 9 January 1962. Any change in the status of charitable *ouqāf* was likely to be opposed by the religious classes, partly on grounds of personal interest, since many benefited from these *ouqāf* as administrators, but mainly because they were jealous of any encroachment on the provisions of the *sharī'a* by the temporal government. Opposition on religious grounds was, moreover, likely to be used by the landowning class in general to delay or prevent land reform. For these reasons the law of 9 January 1962 had not attempted to interfere with land constituted into a

charitable *vaqf*. Whether encouraged by the success of the peasants' congress and because of a growing feeling of strength and confidence, or for some other reason, it was decided that the time was ripe to bring charitable *vaqāf* also within the scope of the land reform law. Accordingly Article 2 of the Additional Articles laid down that charitable *vaqāf* were to be let to the occupying peasants for a cash rent for 99 years, the rent to be reviewed every five years. The article also laid down that personal *vaqāf*, having regard to the provision of the civil code providing for 'exchange for the better'<sup>1</sup> would be bought by the government and divided among the peasants, the proceeds from the sale to be devoted by the administrator to the purchase of other property.

Landowners were given a period of one month in which to select one of the three possibilities open to them after notification by the local land reform office that the second stage would be put into operation (Art. 3).

Article 4 of the Additional Articles extended the period for the payment of compensation to the landowners laid down in Article 10 of the law of 9 January 1962 from ten years to fifteen. This provision was due in part at least, to the financial difficulties experienced by the land reform organization and the failure, or inability, of the government to make available sufficient funds for it to fulfil its obligations. A note to Article 4 stated that all estates bought by the government up to this date would be subject to this article, but that an exception would be made in the case of bills (*qubūz*) which had already been negotiated. This concession was later withdrawn by paragraph 1 of the proceedings of the land reform council on 15 June 1964, which stated that Article 4 was to apply to all persons equally, whether they had negotiated bills or not. The increase in the number of annual instalments by which the landowner was to be paid for his land from ten to fifteen under Article 4 of the Additional Articles further added to the discontent of the landowners and led to a number of disputes. For example, in Ardabil in 1964, although most of the landowners had received from the government the first instalment due to them, some had not collected

<sup>1</sup> *Taba'īl bi aḥsan*. The civil code permits the sale of *vaqāf* only if the value is enhanced by the sale.



their money, because they claimed that the government should pay them in ten instalments and not in fifteen. Subsequently the decision to make the provision retroactive was modified. Article 44 of the Regulations for the Additional Articles, dated 25 July 1964, stated that in the case of land bought by the government before the approval of the Additional Articles, provided that bills had been given to the landowner prior to that date and were still in his hands, payment would be made over ten years.

There was considerable delay over the final issue of the regulations for the implementation of the Additional Articles. The council of ministers at its meeting on 7 February 1963 issued draft regulations consisting of thirty-nine articles. They were loosely drafted, and in some respects went beyond the normal functions of regulations and laid down new principles. They gave wide powers to the land reform organization. As originally drafted, their main provision was to make new limitations on the way in which a landowner might act in the land he retained.<sup>1</sup> The final form in which they appeared on

<sup>1</sup> Article 1 permitted a landowner, in an area of land not exceeding a maximum for each part of the country laid down in an annex to the regulations, either (i) to buy the peasants out according to Article 22 of the law of 9 January 1962 and cultivate the land by paid labour, or (ii) to continue to work the land as before provided the peasants gave their written consent to the land reform organization. The permitted maximum for the different districts laid down in the annex to the regulations varied and was as follows:

Tehrān, Karaj, Ray	100 ha. (247 acres)
Elsewhere in the Tehrān <i>shahristān</i>	120 ha. (296·5 acres)
Gilān and all rice-growing areas	30 ha. (74 acres)
Māzandarān (except Gurgān and Gurghad)	50 ha. (123·5 acres)
Gurgān and Gurghad	70 ha. (172·9 acres)
Khūzistān	200 ha. (494 acres)
Isfahān (round the city)	50 ha. (123·5 acres)
Elsewhere in Isfahān	120 ha. (296·5 acres)
Kirmān	200 ha. (494 acres)
Sistān and Balūchistān	150 ha. (370·6 acres)
Elsewhere	150 ha. (370·6 acres)

Article 2 stated that landowners who held more than the maximum laid down in the annex to the regulations were to act, in the land surplus to that maximum, in accordance with method (a), (b), or (c) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles. Article 11 laid down that if the landowner and peasants could not agree over the price of the land, the decision of the land reform

25 July 1964, after ratification by the National Consultative Assembly and the Senate, was very different from the first draft (see below Chapter IX).

On 22 January 1963 Mr. Asadullāh 'Alam, who had succeeded Dr. Amīnī as prime minister on 19 July 1962, had announced to one of the leading members of the religious classes, Āyatullāh Bihbahānī, the government's intention to make arrangements for *vaqf* land to be let on long-term leases to peasants. On the same day, after a number of the religious classes had gone to Āyatullāh Bihbahānī's house, apparently to protest against the inclusion of *vaqf* land in the land reform law, the Tehrān bazaar was closed—the traditional way for the general populace to express opposition to the government. On the following day, 23 January, Dr. Arsanjānī held a press conference, at which he mentioned that demonstrations had been organized by the landowners against the land reform in Sāūj Bulāgh, Varāmīn, Ray, and Shahriār (all in the neighbourhood of Tehrān), and that counter-demonstrations had been made by the peasants.

Four days later, on 26 January, the casting of votes for the referendum began. It had been declared that both men and women could vote. Opposition to this procedure had developed, and eventually it was decided that women should be allowed

---

organization would be final. Article 16 authorized the land reform organization to place dead lands and barren lands which had been transferred to it at the disposal of individuals or companies for development by mechanized agriculture. It also laid down that new projects for mechanized agriculture anywhere in the country required the prior agreement and sanction of the land reform organization. In the case of land which had not been registered or whose owner was unknown, the land reform organization was to dispose of the land in accordance with the law, the proceeds of the sale to be held in the registration department or the ministry of justice (Article 31). Article 26 laid down that only those peasants who had lived for at least three years in the village and engaged in agriculture were eligible to benefit from the provisions of the land reform.

Article 27 stated that peasants who had signed documents for the transfer of their agricultural rights to others, and persons who, according to the judgement of the land reform organization, obstructed the carrying out of agricultural work, would not benefit from the land reform.

Article 37 authorized land transactions, provided the person to whom the land was transferred did not hold more land than the maximum permitted in Article 1 of the regulations, and such transactions were not intended to avoid the provisions of the land reform.



to put their votes in separate ballot boxes but that they would not be counted.<sup>1</sup> This, on the face of it, was a defeat for the cause of women's suffrage, but, in fact, a victory had been won: when elections to the National Consultative Assembly took place on 17 September 1963 women were accorded the vote virtually without any opposition. The referendum received overwhelming support. No one had doubted that this would be the case, but how genuine the support given to the six points was, it is difficult to judge. It is not unlikely that a considerable number of the urban middle classes who voted were carried away by enthusiasm and a feeling that they were taking part in a movement to create a 'new' Persia. Later the Shah referred to the referendum as the beginning of the 'White Revolution'.

Although the government had silenced criticism by the referendum, opposition was not at an end. By February there were signs that opponents of the land reform were attempting to make use of the dissatisfaction of the religious classes on other grounds as well as the question of *ouqāf*, and to connect the issue of women's suffrage with the land reform. On 2 February, Dr. Arsanjāni addressed a meeting of about a thousand women, representing various women's organizations and clubs, and stated, to the acclamation of those present, that the slavery of women would be abolished, just as the slavery of the peasants had been terminated; women would no longer live as slaves.

The popularity of Dr. Arsanjāni among the peasants and his determination to carry on with land reform had by this time caused alarm in high places and the time was judged ripe for a change. The fact that various groups who were opposed to the government for different reasons had joined forces had possibly also increased the government's own reservations about land reform. Considerable pressure was accordingly put upon Dr. Arsanjāni to slow down its tempo. On 19 February 1963 the cabinet was reconstructed; and on 10 March 1963 Dr. Arsanjāni resigned and was succeeded by General Rīāhi. The reason given for Dr. Arsanjāni's resignation was a difference of opinion

<sup>1</sup> In November 1962, a decree for the election of provincial councils which implicitly accorded the right to vote to women had sparked off anti-government demonstrations led by the religious classes, and the decree had been withdrawn.

over economic affairs between him and the government. This was a face-saving device. The fundamental reason was the decision of the government to slow down the land reform.

Assessed against the background of the situation prevailing in Persia before the commencement of land reform in January 1962, the results achieved by March 1963 were already considerable. In the political field, the power of the landowners had been virtually broken. There were, it is true, to be further attempts at overthrowing the reform, but these were to fail. The problem of providing security had not yet been solved. But the provision of security from the use of arbitrary power, whether by private individuals or government officials, was a problem which ran through society as a whole, and could not be solved in isolation in one sector of the life of the country. In the social field the element of subjection in the relations between landlord and peasant had been destroyed in the districts where the land reform had been carried out and elsewhere greatly lessened. There was also evidence of an increasing sense of unity and confidence among the peasants. The gulf between the urban and rural population was still wide, but there were signs in some quarters of the beginnings of a mutual understanding and respect.

In the economic field the achievements were not so marked. The foundations had been laid for the emergence of a self-reliant and independent peasantry, but this could not be achieved without a rise in living standards. The problem of increased productivity had still to be tackled on a large scale. In Āgarbāyjān and Gilān there had been an increase in productivity in the areas which had been transferred to the peasants; in general the standard of cultivation had improved, and in some cases the area cultivated by the peasants had increased. But in many parts of the country methods were still very primitive and the marketable surplus was extremely small. Further, in the rural districts in general there was an urgent need for the provision of credit. In many cases the peasants, when the land was transferred to them under the land reform, were burdened with previous debts. Private credit had largely dried up since land reform began; the co-operative societies had done



something to replace this, but their financial resources were minute compared to the credit needs of agriculture as a whole. Further, they could not make loans to peasants working land which had not been transferred under the land reform; and these peasants were in many areas having difficulty in obtaining credit from sources which had previously provided it.

Many problems were still outstanding, including the difficult question of the minimum size of holdings and mechanization. Water was a crying need in many areas and in the field of irrigation there was need for new legislation; soil conservation and erosion were problems demanding attention; an agricultural wage policy was needed; a study of marketing techniques, and more technical training and education were urgently required; and fundamental to the success of the land reform was the provision of political security and administrative reform in the country as a whole. The situation was thus a complex one. The circumstances of the past meant that land reform in the first instance had to be a political and social movement. By March 1963 marked success had been achieved in these two fields.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SUPPRESSION OF OPPOSITION AND THE EXTENSION OF THE REFORM TO THE WHOLE COUNTRY

---

MEANWHILE, discontent prevailed among the religious classes and others. Land reform was not the only cause. The fundamental issue was a feeling, justified or not, that the use of arbitrary power by the government had exceeded all reasonable bounds. The opponents of the land reform made use of the discontent roused by this feeling for their own ends. On 21 March, there were demonstrations against the government in Tabriz, and on 22 March in Qumm. On the latter occasion, government forces forcibly entered the main *madrasa* in Qumm and thereby greatly offended religious opinion. A *mujtahid*, named Khomeyni, a man of reputed honesty and progressive ideas, became the leader of the movement of revolt. After outspoken attacks on the Shah (not, however, on grounds of land reform) he was arrested on 4 June 1963. This provoked demonstrations and disturbances in Tehrān and the provinces on the following day. They were ruthlessly suppressed.

The government at first claimed, not very convincingly, that President Nasser had inspired the disturbances. Later they were alleged to have been provoked by opposition to the land reform and women's suffrage. This was an over-simplification, though it is no doubt true that elements hostile to the land reform fanned the flames and played a part in the disturbances. The severity with which they were put down did much to convince the public that opposition to the government on any ground was not a practicable possibility. Thereafter the land reform met with little violent opposition, though intrigues against it continued, and many of the religious classes continued to have reservations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To some extent their opposition was overcome by recourse to the principle *bi zarar va lā ziār*, which enables *maṣlaḥa*, the public good, to take precedence over other considerations.



Troubles also broke out in the tribal areas in the south in the spring of 1963. These, too, were attributed to, and closely connected with, opposition to the land reform. Government forces suffered a defeat at Tang-i Tā Murādī in the Kūhgīlūyeh at the hands of Mamassanī and Boir Ahmadi tribesmen. In the subsequent operations the rebels were defeated, one of their leaders killed and others captured. By June 1963 the rebellion was over and arms were being collected from these tribes. Six of the captured leaders were executed on 5 October 1964. Operations were also mounted against the Qashqā'ī in March because some of the tribal khans had taken to the hills in opposition to the government. At least one remained an outlaw and was not finally caught until 1966.

Although it is probably true that the implementation of the land reform provoked these disturbances, it would be an oversimplification, as in the case of the disturbances in Tehrān, to see the rebellion only in terms of opposition to the land reform. The fundamental issue was the extension of government control to the tribal areas. In the past the tribes had repeatedly opposed attempts by the central government to assert control. During the reign of Reżā Shāh their resistance had been temporarily overcome. Several of the leaders were exiled from their tribal territories, and attempts, largely abortive, were made to settle the tribesmen. After the abdication of Reza Shāh in 1941, the tribal leaders in Fārs regained some of their former influence. After many vicissitudes, from about 1954 the central government began to make its power increasingly felt in the tribal areas.

By 1963 the ever-widening area of government intervention was felt by the tribal khans to be a threat to their personal power and influence. Land reform was, perhaps, seen by them as the crucial step in this process. They realized that its success would not only deprive them of a source of income, but would also lead the tribesmen to question their authority, just as it had led the peasants to question, and to cease to accept, the authority of the landowners. With the defeat of the Mamassanī and the Boir Ahmadi, the land reform was put into operation in the areas in which they lived. Progress in the Mamassanī was rapid; in the Kūhgīlūyeh it was slower and much less satisfactory (see below Chapter VII).

The government now took steps to consolidate its position and attempted to allay some of the opposition which had been aroused by its alleged arbitrary conduct of affairs. In the summer of 1963, a decision was taken to hold a congress of 'The movement of free men and women of Persia'. This congress, composed of peasants, workers, women, intellectuals and others, was duly convened on 27 August in Tehrān under the auspices of the mayor of Tehrān. It was different from the congress of January 1963. Elections for the National Consultative Assembly were about to be held. The purpose of the congress was to select candidates who would support the six-point programme of the referendum of January 1963. The members sent to the congress from the provinces were carefully selected and came to the capital under government auspices; it was widely believed that the list of candidates, which was in due course put forward and approved by the congress, had been prepared in advance.

Although the congress was 'sponsored', its educative value was considerable. On this occasion the peasants found themselves, again for the first time, in an assembly in which they were treated as having an equal voice with other groups. This, too, was a step forward in the building up of their self-confidence. There was, for example, a marked change in the attitude of the peasants on the occasion of Peasants' Day (which was instituted in 1963 as an annual event) celebrated at Qazvin on 23 September 1963, compared with their attitude at Marāgheh a year earlier when the Shah distributed title deeds to peasants to whom land had been transferred. The increased assurance and ease of those present at Qazvin were noticeable. At Marāgheh the peasants participating had come only from Āzarbāyjān; at Qazvin they came from all over the country.

Elections for the National Consultative Assembly took place on 17 September. The candidates put forward by the congress of free men and woman were duly elected, but the poll was considerably lower than on the occasion of the referendum. Among those elected, there were some twenty officials of the land reform organization and the ministry of agriculture, who on election resigned their appointments. Their election to the assembly was regarded by the public as a mark of the govern-



ment's intention to continue the implementation of the land reform law. But the expectations entertained by some of these officials, who had agreed to stand for election in the hope that they would, if elected, form a 'land reform lobby' in the new assembly and be able to hasten the progress of land reform, were not fulfilled. The new assembly had little or no influence on the course of events, and the experience of deputies who had formerly worked in the land reform organization, and whose experience it sorely needed, was largely wasted.

By September 1963, the land reform had already been extended to virtually the whole of the country, with the exception of districts which had not been registered and estates whose title was disputed. Many of the frontier areas had not yet been registered. Registration was begun in Arashārān, for example, in the summer of 1964. Many of the titles were disputed and the task was by no means straightforward. A number of districts in Balūchistān had not been registered and difficulties over registration held up land reform in Sīstān. Part of the province of Kirmānshāhān, including much of Īlām, and some frontier districts in Kurdistān, including Marīvān, had still not been registered in 1966. Most of the Kūhgīlūyeh had not been registered by 1966. In the summer or autumn of that year a special commission was set up for the registration of properties in tribal areas. Many of the titles in these areas were disputed, and it was an extremely complicated matter to disentangle the various claims. Another matter which occasionally held up the transfer of land to the peasants in remote areas was the fact that some of the peasants did not hold identification cards.<sup>1</sup>

Disputed titles by reason of usurpation or arising from debt were common. In many cases these also held up the implementation of the land reform. For example, some of the land in the Rūdsar district of Gilān, which had been acquired by Reżā Shāh, was taken back by the khans into their effective possession after the abdication, without their obtaining a legal title to it. Its purchase by the government under the land reform was therefore still held up in 1964, because no one held a legal

<sup>1</sup> All Persian subjects must by law be in possession of an identification or registration card.

title to it from whom it could be bought. Disputed titles by reason of inheritance were also common. Sometimes the dispute concerned the heirs of a property and it was not clear with whom the government was to negotiate for purchase; in other cases there were disputes between the heirs and the land reform organization concerning the amount of the estate which was subject to purchase. If the owner had died after land reform had begun, or if his estate had not been wound up before it began, disputes of this nature were likely to occur. Cases arose in which the heirs alleged that the land, by virtue of its fragmentation under the laws of inheritance into a number of holdings below the maximum limit permitted by the land reform law, was not subject to the land reform; while the land reform officials maintained that the estate was to be treated as it would have been had the deceased owner survived.

By September 1963, according to figures published by the land reform organization, 8,042 villages had been bought *in toto* or in part by the government from their owners and transferred to 271,026 peasants; and 2,088 co-operative societies with a membership of 243,302 persons, and a capital of 250,720,747 *rs.* (c. £1,139,639) had been established. There were probably more than 54,000 villages in the country.<sup>1</sup> The proportion of villages directly affected by the first stage of the land reform was thus relatively small. Two conclusions are to be drawn from this: first, that the propaganda campaign carried on against the large landowners before the beginning of the land reform exaggerated the extent of their holdings; secondly, that some of the landowners succeeded in ante-dating the transfer of their estates to relatives; in this and other ways, as for example by registering a group of villages as one village, they avoided the provisions for the sale of land laid down in the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Further, in the case of the majority of the villages directly affected by the first stage of land reform, only part of the village was sold to the government and transferred to the peasants. One of the reasons for this was that in

<sup>1</sup> Estimates of the total number of villages varied considerably. Engineer Ahol Ghassem Dehbod in a paper entitled 'Land Ownership and Use Conditions in Iran', read at a Rural Development Symposium organized by CENOT in Tehran in September 1963, put the figure at 49,000.



some parts of the country large land ownership was not consolidated. Partly as the result of inheritance and partly through purchase, large landowners often held portions of villages, their total holdings in terms of *dāngs* amounting to the equivalent of several villages.

Some sales of villages to the government were made under the decree of 1 March 1962, which permitted the government to buy land offered by landowners whose holdings were not above the maximum permitted under the law of 9 January 1962. Article 14 of the regulations for the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963, dated 25 July 1964, prolonged the concessions offered by the decree of 1 March 1962. Article 14 stated that landowners who offered their land for sale to the government under the decree between 22 November 1963 and 22 November 1964 would receive 95 per cent of the value of the land at the time of the transfer, if it did not exceed 500,000 *rs.* (c. £2,273), and the remainder in fourteen annual instalments with 6 per cent interest, or up to 500,000 *rs.* in cash, if the value of the land exceeded 500,000 *rs.*, and the remainder in fourteen equal annual instalments with 6 per cent interest. To those who offered their land for sale after 22 November 1964, these concessions were to be made not in cash but in the form of shares in government factories.

The land reform council, at its meeting on 25 November 1964, considered various articles in the land reform law concerning the bringing of waste land into cultivation and the intent of the law that the land which was cultivated by each peasant should be transferred to him; it decided that there was no legal objection to the acceptance of offers made by landowners to sell their cultivated land to the government under the decree of 1 March 1962, while keeping in their possession a certain amount of waste land (*bāyir*). But it considered that a condition of acceptance should be that persons who volunteered to sell on these terms should reckon the price of waste lands at the same rate as that of unirrigated (*dāym*) land. At its meeting on 16 January 1965, it decided that there was similarly no objection to the sale of private *ouqāf* by the *mutavallī* under the same decree, provided the peasants were prepared to buy the land.

In some districts, especially those where the tax rate paid to

the landowners was relatively high and the price offered by the government for the land, therefore, not unfavourable to the landowners, as for example in Ardabil, Arāk, and Hamadān, a considerable number of persons took advantage of these concessions. In Iṣfahān, on the other hand, the tax rate was very low and few landowners came forward to sell their land. In Ardabil, by August 1964 some 560 persons had offered their land for sale to the government under this decree. In Arāk, 180 had come forward, and 110 estates had been bought by the same date, though payment had not then been made. In Hamadān, over 1,000 properties in about 150 villages had similarly been offered to the government. There were two other major reasons for this development: first the peasants were withholding the landowner's share and many landowners were experiencing difficulty in collecting it; and secondly, a good many of the landowners were in debt and in need of money. The land reform organization was also short of money in 1964, and this held up the purchase of the estates of landowners who came forward to sell under the decree of 1 March 1962.

In addition to the villages owned by large landowners in excess of the maximum holdings permitted under the law of 9 January 1962 and villages bought by the government under the decree of 1 March 1962, a number of *khālīqeh* villages were transferred to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform. The following figures give a rough idea of the number of villages bought and transferred as the reform proceeded.

In Qazvīn some four hundred villages were affected by the first stage of the land reform, but in only a few cases was the whole of the village concerned. In Ardabil, of a total of 406 villages, 15 were bought *in toto* and 65 in part; and 8 villages were sold to the government under Article 14 of the regulations for the Additional Articles. In Arasbārān, up to March 1964, 62 villages had been bought *in toto* by the government and 154 in part, out of 1,432 villages, of which 1,009 were inhabited, the remainder being either abandoned or cultivated by peasants living in the neighbouring villages. In Marand out of some 140 villages, parts of 70 villages had been bought by the government by the summer of 1964. In the Rīzā'iyyeh-Miāndūāb-Mākū area, 704 villages out of some 3,000 were covered by the first stage of



the land reform. By the summer of 1964, 598 villages or parts of villages had been transferred to the peasants; 297 villages, including 146 *khālīṣeh* villages in Margivar, Targivar and elsewhere, were transferred *in toto*. In Rīzā'īyyeh only 43 villages were affected, whereas in Mākū 230 out of 490 villages were subject to transfer, of which some 200 had been bought by the government by the summer of 1964. The purchase of the remainder was held up by disputed titles. In Mahābād the number covered by the first stage of the reform was much smaller. By the summer of 1964, out of some 750 villages 10 had been transferred to the peasants *in toto* and 34 in part. A further 12 were covered by the first stage of the land reform, but their purchase and transfer were held up by disputed titles.

In Arāk at the same date out of 702 villages 69 had been bought *in toto* and 277 in part; and in Hamadān out of 660 villages 42 had been bought *in toto* by the government and some 200 in part. In Kirmān there were some 1,500 villages. Most of them were small and some, because of lack of water, had no cultivation, their inhabitants working in the towns or neighbouring villages. Some 500 villages were affected by the first stage of the land reform. By 1964 only 12 of these had been purchased *in toto* by the government. In the province of Iṣfahān there were 3,738 villages. By the summer of 1964, 30 of these had been bought *in toto* by the government and 293 in part. Nine of these purchases were made under the decree of 1 March 1962. Almost all the 400 villages of the Mamassanī in Fārs were subject in some degree to sale under the first stage of the land reform. Very few, if any, villages were owned *in toto* by one individual, but several of the large landowners owned shares in many of them. In Bīhbabān 88 villages were purchased by the government under the first stage; of these 74 were bought *in toto*. In Khūzistān a thousand or so *khālīṣeh* villages or parts of villages, mainly in Sūsangīrd, Khurramshahr, Dizfūl, Shūshtar, Rām Hurmuz, and Bīhbabān were transferred to the peasants. In Balūchistān and Sīstān very few villages were affected by the first stage of the land reform. By 1964, 5 *khālīṣeh* villages near Khāsh had been transferred to the peasants. Some small *khālīṣeh* villages in Bampūr were also transferred, and one small village near Irānshahr. In Jahrum in Fārs 6 villages were bought *in*

*toto* by the government and parts of 15 other villages. Another was given to the government. In Turbat-i Haydari some 18 villages were bought *in toto* by the government and many more were purchased in part.

The position on 17 February 1966 is given in the table opposite.

It will be seen from this table that the largest number of villages to be bought in any province were in Eastern Āzarbāyjān and Kirmānshāhān. After these came Gilān, Tehrān, Khurāsān, Western Āzarbāyjān, and Fārs. As for villages bought in part, Fārs heads the list, followed by Kirmānshāhān and Eastern Āzarbāyjān, Khurāsān, Tehrān, and Hamadān.

By 19 February 1966, considerable numbers of whole villages and parts of villages remained still to be bought by the government and transferred to the peasants. These were mainly villages whose title was disputed, in some cases among the heirs of the late owner, or properties which had not been registered. The largest number of whole villages still outstanding at that date was in Tehrān, Kirmānshāhān, and Gilān; as for parts of villages, the largest number was in Kirmānshāhān, Fārs, and Hamadān. The greatest number of peasants to benefit from the first stage was in Eastern Āzarbāyjān, followed by Kirmānshāhān, Māzandarān, Tehrān, Gilān, and Fārs.

Figures are also given for the amount paid by peasants on account of the first instalment due for the land transferred to them. It is difficult to evaluate these figures, because in many areas payment had not been demanded by 19 February 1966. Further, the figures given for the cost of the properties bought by the government are ambiguous: it is not clear whether they represent the total price or the cost to the government up to 19 February 1966, which would include some estates bought outright and some for which only one instalment had been paid; nor is it clear whether the money was actually paid. It is not possible therefore to gain from these figures any clear indication of the value of the peasant holdings or the estates bought, although the figures suggest that the amounts paid varied very considerably from province to province (which is to be expected, since the amount of taxes paid, on which the price depended, differed very much). The payments listed under the first instal-



## FIRST STAGE (UP TO 17 FEBRUARY 1966)

Area	Villages bought		Villages distributed		Villages outstanding		Payment of first instalment in rials	The cost of properties bought (by the government)	Number of peasant families receiving land
	5 dāngs	Less than 5 dāngs	6 dāngs	Less than 6 dāngs	6 dāngs	Less than 6 dāngs			
E. Āgarbāyjān	559	1,196	528	1,000	25	136	587,360,830-90	1,677,997,208-70	87,827
Kirmānshāh	571	1,216	449	605	122	611	51,964,658	221,145,669	39,638
Māzandarān	61	583	54	374	11	209	52,828,072	402,813,593	37,746
Tehrān	192	877	55	748	137	129	30,860,400-50	710,969,919-10	35,832
Gīlān	286	543	199	902	87	241	234,802,110-05	620,727,230-70	28,398
Fārs	165	1,200	127	774	38	445	28,473,606-65	344,349,630-85	26,699
Hamadān	107	565	85	243	22	322	462,172,035-80	908,792,848-90	23,125
Khūzistān	221	344	206	318	15	26	24,671,720-60	124,953,150-80	21,096
Kordestān	122	375	89	196	33	179	51,755,311-30	231,647,917-40	21,039
W. Āgarbāyjān	166	330	166	323	—	7	133,675,620-40	324,055,890	18,236
Isfahān	31	321	31	321	—	—	33,711,301-80	141,228,832	16,643
Luristān	62	428	61	414	1	14	67,519,581-45	167,704,793-75	19,163
Khūzistān	180	1,041	170	1,029	10	12	77,014,374-70	388,350,971-95	12,391
Kirmān	85	345	57	190	28	155	29,687,767-40	163,391,758-70	5,897
Bushire	37	46	37	29	—	17	2,660,151	31,812,969	3,515
Bandar 'Abbās	5	13	5	13	—	—	585,576-20	7,636,594	218
Semrān	8	37	8	37	—	—	1,282,054-70	19,046,089-90	80
Gurgān	—	6	—	6	—	—	734,754-80	4,372,605	65
Zahidān	1	2	1	2	—	—	92,656	1,389,730	35
Māhābād	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Villages distributed in Khūzistān	—	610	—	610	—	—	—	—	40,160
Villages distributed in Balūchistān and Sīrān	26	—	26	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	2,883	10,036	2,354	7,534	529	2,504	1,871,902,605-25	6,402,407,417-75	431,743

Source: Report issued by the land reform organization for its operations in 1965-6 (with adjustments).

ment bear the following broad proportions to the sums paid (or to be paid) by the government to the landowners: Hamadān, 50·8 per cent; Western Āzarbāyjān, 41; Luristān, 40; Gilān, 38; Eastern Āzarbāyjān, 35; Isfahān, 24; Kirmānshāhān, 23·5; Kurdistān, 22; Khūzistān and Khurāsān, 20; Kirmān and Gurgān, 18; Māzandarān, 13; Bushire, Bandar 'Abbās, and Fārs, 8; Simnān and Zāhidān, 7; and Tehrān, 4 per cent. The total payment by the peasants on account of the first instalment amounts to some 28·8 per cent of the sum paid (or to be paid) by the government.

With the extension of the land reform to the whole of the country, the shortage of trained staff in the land reform organization and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation (set up in 1963) became acute. Many officials were on temporary transfer from other departments of the ministry of agriculture, notably the extension department (*farvāj-i kishāvarzī*), the veterinary service, and the pest control department, and the Agricultural Bank. Some of the younger men were sent to Israel for short courses on land reform and co-operation. Later, short courses for the training of new recruits were organized at the National University (*dānishgāh-i millī*) in Tehrān. A number of training seminars were also held by the land reform organization.

Many of the officials working in the land reform had a sense of engagement in, and even dedication to, a common task. This sense, amounting almost to an *esprit de corps*, represented something quite new in Persian administration. In the early days of the reform the number of employees in the land reform organization was very small. By September 1963, as stated above (see p. 99), there had been a considerable increase. Thereafter the number remained fairly stable. For the year February/March 1965 to February/March 1966, the total number of employees rose to 1,578, of whom 481 were drivers, telephone operators, and office servants. Considerable numbers of men from the literacy corps (*sipāh-i dānish*) and a smaller number from the extension corps (*sipāh-i farvāj va ābādānī*) were also seconded to the land reform organization from about 1964 onwards.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The literacy corps was established after the referendum of 1963 (see above p. 103). Holders of secondary school diplomas and university gradu-



As numbers grew, the sense of dedication became less general, and the organization began to show some of the less admirable features of other government departments. In addition to the almost inevitable mistakes made because of the speed with which the land reform was put into operation, there were also cases of deliberate error. That these should have occurred in view of the standards and traditions of Persian administration as a whole, is not remarkable: but it is remarkable there should not have been more. In the early days of the reform there were, in fact, few such cases.

In general, the land reform officials were competent; they were ready to take decisions and to accept responsibility, a somewhat rare quality among Persian officials. Some, it is true, were dissatisfied at being seconded and wished to return to the work for which they had been trained. On the whole, however, they did not allow this feeling to interfere with their work. In the first stage of the land reform they generally succeeded in winning the confidence of the peasants. The apparent pleasure with which they and the co-operative officials were greeted in many villages was striking. Most of the officials in the land reform organization and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation were young. In view of the traditional respect accorded to age, it was inevitable that some should allege that the land reform and co-operative officials were young and inexperienced, and therefore incompetent. This criticism was mainly voiced by those hostile to the reform. I never heard it from the peasants. In the early stages of the reform the land reform officials worked under very heavy pressure. They were often, as for example in Ardabil and Ahar, in charge of extensive districts with very poor communications. They lived sometimes in conditions of physical hardship, and in the execution of their duties met with hostility and obstruction from various quarters.

---

ates when called up for military service were drafted into a literacy corps, the members of which were sent to start schools in villages where none existed. The experiment was so successful that later a health corps (*siyāh-i bihdārht*) and an agricultural extension corps, into which graduates in medicine and agriculture respectively were drafted for their military service, were also set up.

Co-operation between the land reform officials and officials of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation was close. The younger men especially shared a sense of dedicated engagement to a common task. Co-operation between the land reform organization and other government departments on the other hand was not always satisfactory, and varied very considerably in different parts of the country. It would probably be fair to say that, on the whole, the provincial administration took its cue from the governor-general: if the latter was a 'land reformer' by conviction, the difficulties of the land reform officials were considerably lessened. In general, lack of co-operation, amounting at times to obstruction, was more marked in the south and south-east than in the north and north-west. In many places I had the impression in 1964 that government offices, if not actually hostile to land reform, were giving it little support. There was, in fact, a marked contrast between the north-west and south-east in this respect. In some cases it was claimed that local governors were trying to exert pressure in favour of the landowners; and local officials were often alleged to be the nominees or relatives of the local khans and landowners and to be hindering the land reform. The local department of justice was sometimes regarded with suspicion (whether rightly or wrongly it is hard to assess). The gendarmerie, whose co-operation was crucial, were sometimes distrusted by the peasants, who felt that they could not get justice. It should also be mentioned that the landowners, probably with less justification, complained that the local officials were against them.

It would be true to say that the first stage of the land reform was put into operation in the different provinces with varying degrees of vigour, and that its success depended very largely on the personal qualities and convictions not only of the land reform officials but also of the governors-general and local officials. Some of the officials of the land reform organization were first-rate, knew their districts, thoroughly understood local problems, and succeeded in establishing a relationship of trust with the peasants.

The reception of the land reform by the peasants and the landowners varied in different parts of the country. The opposition of the latter was, perhaps, strongest in those areas where



their only source of income was the land, and most effective when they lived in the area in which they owned land. In such cases, notably in Iṣfahān and Kirmānshāhān, they were able to retain to some extent their former influence and impede the land reform. In some places there was active opposition, incitement of the peasants, and intrigue; and sometimes violence towards the peasants and the land reform and co-operative officials, though on the whole this was surprisingly rare. In other cases opposition was more passive, the landowners refusing to sign or accept documents for the sale of their properties. In Arashārān in the summer of 1964 many of the landowners had still not signed the documents for the sale and transfer of their lands or collected the money due to them because they maintained that the transfer was illegal. In August 1964 I saw a pile of documents in the land reform office in Ahar waiting to be signed and collected. In Bihbahān also some of the landowners refused to sign the documents for the sale of their land covered by the first stage of the land reform, and so the money due to them was paid into the registration offices.

Many absentee landowners with other sources of income, once it was clear that the land reform was to be put into operation, were not unwilling to sell their land to the government and free themselves from the trouble and difficulty of collecting their dues from a reluctant peasantry. If the landowner was able to retain good land suitable for mechanization or to bring into cultivation new land by mechanized means, the effect of the land reform upon him was not wholly unfavourable. In Bijār, for example, the landowners lived mainly from the land, levying heavy dues in addition to a share of the crop. When threatened with the loss of these by land reform, they turned their attention to bringing new land under the plough.

On the other hand, those landlords who had no other source of income but the land and who did not, or could not, bring new land under the plough, suffered a sudden loss of income as a result of the land reform and tended to be correspondingly bitter towards it. This was the case in Fārs where criticism of the land reform by the landowners was particularly virulent. They claimed that the land reform officials had deliberately incited the peasants against them and that tribal leaders and others had

been seized for their alleged opposition to the reform. They also alleged that the peasants were incompetent, lazy, and stupid (which may be true but is not my experience), and that production had declined in Fārs after land reform. In general there appeared to be no realization among the landowners of Fārs that the peasants might have a claim, not to say a right, to independence. They looked back to the days when power was in the hands of the landowners and tribal khans, and the peasants had no freedom of action and could be forced to work for their masters.

In the Kūhgīlūyeh also, where society was still largely tribal and partly semi-nomadic, the khans who survived the troubles of 1963 were very bitter on the subject of land reform, both because of their loss of revenue and also because they resented the way in which relatively junior officials now tended to order them about. In the old days when the khans were powerful, government officials were often forced to defer to them in the tribal areas. Now, although the khans had been deprived of their influence and much of their wealth, government officials on their much more frequent visits to the tribal areas, still lived on the khans. This seemed unjust, but on the other hand, if they had ignored the khans, this would have resulted in an even greater loss of 'face' for the khans.

One complaint made against the land reform law by some of the khans was that the exemption of mechanized land from its provisions was of no benefit to landowners in such areas as the Kūhgīlūyeh, where mechanization had not been possible because there had formerly been no roads along which to bring tractors. They alleged that they were at a disadvantage compared with landowners elsewhere, while, because of the tribal nature of society and their family responsibilities, their need for money or land was probably greater. There is some substance in this complaint, but it is clearly not one which the land reform could take into account. The situation in the Kūhgīlūyeh was unsatisfactory in many ways, but this was due less to land reform than to the inevitable dislocation which arises when a society begins to move from tribal to settled conditions.

The ability of the peasants to benefit from the reform was affected primarily by two factors: the extent of their poverty,



and the degree of their subjection to the landlords. In the rural areas the standards of literacy and agricultural competence depended closely on these two factors, and in turn materially affected the readiness of the peasants to benefit from the reform. In Gilān, for example, there was a tradition of 'separatist' movements of a semi-political and semi-social nature, which made the peasants ready to seize new opportunities. Further, the rate of literacy among the peasants in Gilān was higher than in many other provinces, and they were better informed. In the villages of Ardabil, *tūdeh* party activities had at one time been strong and contact with Russia close. As a result of this, the peasants were more aware of the outside world than in many other districts and less amenable to pressure by the landlords or others. But the success of the land reform and the co-operative movement did not always bear a direct relationship to the standard of literacy.

But perhaps more important immediately than the rate of literacy or contact with the outside world was the difference in the independence of character and robustness of the peasants in various parts of the country. In some districts in 1964 there was still fear of the landowners and suspicion of the government's intentions, which made the peasants somewhat hesitant to welcome the reform. Elsewhere, as in some of the Kurdish areas of Western Āzarbāyjān and Kurdistān, although the standard of literacy was low and economic conditions bad, a certain independence of character, toughness, and native shrewdness enabled the peasants to benefit from it. In the Armenian villages of Rīzā'iyyeh it was welcomed by the peasants, who were said to be on the whole more prosperous and to have a higher rate of literacy and a stronger sense of co-operation than those in the neighbouring Muslim villages. In some districts of Arāk and Hamadān the regime of the khans, which had lasted until recent years had, on the whole, been rough and brutal; it had not been tempered, like the regime of the khans in tribal territory, by the need to obtain some measure of consent from the tribe; it had therefore led to subjection, degradation, and poverty among the peasants, and made them less able to benefit quickly from the reform.

In many districts in the west, the nature of society, which

although not nomadic or semi-nomadic, was nevertheless largely tribal, made land reform more difficult than in the non-tribal areas. The peasants, because of the dominant influence of the khans, were often poorer and more backward in both material means and educational facilities. On the other hand, their sense of unity as a group, and hence their readiness to co-operate, tended to be greater than among the settled village population. I was told in 1966 by a co-operative society supervisor who had worked in Hamadān and Kirmānshāhān, that the peasants in the latter district were materially and educationally more backward than in the former, but were more ready to work together. In a district such as Saqqiz, however, where the landowners tended to be tribal khans and the peasants villagers rather than tribesmen, or at any rate not the tribal followers of the landowning khans, the degree of backwardness and 'submission' seemed greater. This was probably due partly to the fact that in such districts the peasants had been subjected to considerable oppression from the landowners, who, while continuing to exercise the powers of the tribal khans, were not subject to the restraints imposed by tribal custom since they no longer lived under tribal conditions; and it is also probable that the impositions of government officials in such districts were formerly heavy, since the 'protection' exercised by the khans in them was much weaker than in the tribal areas, if, indeed, it existed at all.

In the west, the condition of the peasants, on the whole, was formerly one of poverty and insecurity of tenure, which discouraged them from making efforts to improve their lot. The degree of independence shown by them since land reform varied considerably. In some districts there was still in 1966 a tendency to submit to continued oppression by the landowners. This was coupled with a distrust of the government's willingness to right their grievances. In Bilivār this tendency was noticeable, whereas in Kullīā'i, a neighbouring district where the oppression and extortion of the local khans before land reform had been very great, the peasants, I was told, had refused to submit to their influence since the reform. I had the impression in 1966 that the peasants in Sanjāhī, even after land reform, had little confidence in themselves or the reform, and no idea of how to put their case



when there was injustice; and that they still felt themselves to be oppressed.

Poverty and insecurity were also the lot of the peasants in Khūzistān before land reform. In Bihbahān, where the peasants had formerly been under heavy pressure from the landowners, there was a reaction after land reform started. When a considerable number of peasants received land under the first stage, others had their expectations raised, and not only withheld the landowners' share of the crop, but were alleged to show a general disregard for law and order. There was probably some truth in this allegation, but there was also a good deal of provocation from the landowners. The Bihbahān area was rent by faction in the past, and the landowners continued after land reform began to fan the flames in the hope of impeding it.

The remoteness or otherwise of a district was also a factor in the progress of the land reform. In general, the peasants in villages near the big towns were better able to resist attempts by the landowners to coerce them; but there were exceptions to this, both in the ability of the landlords to exert influence near the towns, and in the peasants' assertion of independence in remote areas.

The existence of faction in many areas, which had been deliberately fostered throughout the centuries by both landowners and government officials, was also an important factor adversely affecting the progress of land reform. In areas where the landowners succeeded in retaining some of their influence, there were continued attempts to stir up and even to create faction in the villages. In addition to Bihbahān, this was noticeable in 1964 in Arāk, Hamadān, Rūdsar, and Mahābād. There was a case in the summer of 1964 in a village near Arāk where two factions were incited against each other and induced to cut down the village trees: a fantastic situation, but one paralleled in the Marāgheli area in the early days of the reform. In Qabānkandī near Mahābād also there were allegations in 1964 that the peasants were being incited by the landowners' agents.

The purpose of the landowners in stirring up faction was probably to break the land reform: on the one hand to convince the government that the peasants were unruly and rebellious, and that the preservation of security in the rural areas had been

due to the landowners; and on the other to persuade the peasants that the co-operative societies could not help them. Faction, however, was not always instigated from outside: the peasants themselves were sometimes quarrelsome and factious. In Isfarvarin, the first village to be transferred to the peasants in the Qazvīn area, some of the peasants admitted in 1964 that conditions were not satisfactory because of faction. Such allegations and complaints of internal village faction, however, were the exception.

Lastly, climatic conditions influenced the progress of the land reform through their effect on the economic condition of the peasant. In 1962 the harvest was on the whole good; this helped the land reform to get off to a good start in Āzarhāyjān and Gilān. 1964, on the other hand, was an extremely bad year. Water was short almost everywhere. The grain harvest was bad and pasture poor. Further, the fruit crop in many areas was ruined by a spell of intense cold in the winter of 1963-4. The citrus trees in many districts in Kirmān and the neighbourhood were badly damaged. In the Miānkūh district of Yazd, fruit and walnut trees were killed by the cold; and the Pusht-i Kūh district was virtually emptied of able-bodied men, who were forced to emigrate in search of work. Much damage was also suffered in other areas. Similarly in 1965 in many parts of Khurāsān and Fārs there was a partial, and in the dry-farming areas a total, failure of the grain crop. In 1966 on the other hand the grain harvest was extremely good in the west, except in the *garmsir* of Kirmānshāhān. In many parts of the country, however, notably Isfahān, Nayshāpūr, Yazd, and Kirmān, partly as a result of a succession of dry years, and probably partly because of a lowering of the water-table through the extraction of water by means of deep and semi-deep power-operated wells, the flow of water in *qanāts*, which was vital to agricultural prosperity in these areas, materially decreased and in some cases dried up. This clearly affected the ability of the peasants to benefit from land reform (see below Chapter XIII).



## CHAPTER VI

### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST STAGE: VARIATIONS IN PRACTICE: KHURĀSĀN

---

THE date of the completion of the first stage of the land reform varied in different parts of the country. The second stage, like the first, was put into operation gradually. As the first stage was completed in different districts, the second stage was declared operative, resulting in an overlap of the two stages in the country as a whole. It is, therefore, difficult to separate the effects of the first stage from the second, particularly in villages subject in part to one stage and in part to the other. What follows in this and the next two chapters is an attempt to assess broadly the implementation of the first stage.

If a village was bought *in toto* by the government and transferred to the peasants, the situation was fairly clear. The effect of the reform in a village of which only a small part was transferred was obviously less, and the likelihood of obstruction greater. The law laid down that the land was to be transferred to the occupying or sitting peasants; and that each peasant was to have the piece of land that he was cultivating at the time when the reform became operative in the village. The intention was that the general field lay-out of the village should not be disturbed. The difference in existing agricultural practices led to some variation, but on the whole there was very little dislocation. Occasionally, by agreement among the peasants, there was redistribution of the village land, but this was the exception. One such case was at Nizāmābād near Jahrum. The village, consisting of 105 ha. (259 acres) watered by a *qanāt*, was bought by the government for 54,000 *ri.* (c. £245), a price below its real value. It was transferred to the peasants, who subsequently redivided the land among themselves by lot. Similarly, one and a half *dāngs* of Ḥasanābād-i Tulkamīn in Shūl in Fārs were transferred to thirty-five peasants, who then divided the land among

themselves in equal lots of about 3 ha. (c. 7 acres), half of which lay fallow in alternate years (see also below pp. 152 ff).

The annual or periodic redistribution of peasant holdings, which was a common practice in some parts of the country, was abolished under the provisions of the law of 9 January 1962. In some villages, however, the practice appears to have continued. In Fārs, one of the provinces in which annual redistribution was formerly fairly widespread, in some of the villages subject wholly or partially to transfer, the peasants were still reallocating the land annually in 1965. A case in point was Futūhābād in Kūrbāl, which was bought by the government and transferred to the peasants. Part of the land was irrigated, part unirrigated. The former was transferred to thirty-two peasants in equal shares, and the latter to nineteen peasants, whose holdings varied in size; in either case the land was transferred on a *mushā'* tenure.

In some villages in Khurāsān the organization of the village land into *ṣaḥrās*, i.e. the arrangement by which a number of ploughlands were grouped together and worked as a unit, was changed after its transfer to the peasants. For example, in Nīlābād near Turbat-i Jām the village land was formerly divided into twelve *ṣaḥrās*, each consisting of four ploughlands and worked by ninety-four peasants. After transfer, the *ṣaḥrās* were subdivided into twenty-four, each consisting of two ploughlands. The peasants said they preferred working in smaller groups so that, to quote their own words 'it was not necessary for the strong to carry the weak'. In a number of villages, particularly in Khurāsān and in the west, the number of ploughlands into which the village land was divided was increased after land reform. This was due in most cases to an increase in the area under cultivation; and sometimes to the peasants' desire to work in smaller individual units. In the Qazvīn area, the practice of grouping several ploughlands together for agricultural purposes, which had been current in some villages, apparently tended to die out, but this tendency pre-dated land reform.<sup>1</sup>

It was originally intended (as stated above) that, when a

<sup>1</sup> See further Engineer Mossane, 'A pilot study and evaluation in Ghazvin Plain villages' in *Seminar on Evaluation of Directed Social Changes*, ed. N. Afshar Naderi (Tehrān, 1966), pp. 101 ff.



share of a *mushā'* village was sold to the government, it should be delimited prior to its transfer to the peasants (see above p. 94). In practice delimitation was delayed in most districts and somewhat complicated tenurial arrangements resulted. The structure of the village, its ploughlands and their working by the individual peasants was not in such cases disturbed; all the peasants of the village who worked ploughlands (i.e. all those who were *jāfīb nasag*) became the owners (or more strictly were in process of becoming the owners) of a part of the village land, and had a crop-sharing agreement (or tenancy) with regard to part or all of the rest.

Suppose, for example, a village was held in equal proportions on a *mushā'* tenure by three landowners, one of whom was bound under the provisions of the law of 9 January 1962 to sell his surplus land to the government. The government would buy one-third of the village and transfer it to the peasants, two-thirds still being held by the other two landowners. If the prevailing crop-sharing agreement was two-thirds to the peasants and one-third to the landowners, the former would, after transfer, receive two-thirds of the crop on two-thirds of the village land and the whole of it on one-third. In other words they would now receive seven-ninths of the total crop instead of two-thirds, and the two remaining landowners two-ninths instead of one-third for division among themselves. Such arrangements, however, were temporary, pending the declaration of the second stage when further modifications took place, according to which method of settlement the landowners chose. The tenurial situation in some cases became even more complicated.

The normal practice was transfer on a *mushā'* tenure to all the peasants of the village who held a share in the village ploughlands. There were, however, exceptions to this. If the land of a village partially subject to sale to the government had been delimited and was not held by the landowners on a *mushā'* tenure, it was sometimes transferred, not to all the peasants holding ploughlands in the village, but to those peasants actually holding the land subject to transfer. For example in Khākibeg, a village in the Sanandaj area, 3 *dāngs* and 4 *shā'ies*, consisting of 20 ploughlands, were transferred under the first stage to the peasants actually working these ploughlands. The remainder of

the village was settled under the second stage by tenancies concluded with the peasants working the land subject to the second stage. There was some discontent among them at the difference in treatment. The more usual practice in such cases was for all the peasants cultivating the village ploughlands to share in both the transfer under the first stage and the settlement under the second stage.

It sometimes happened that part of a village was worked by the peasants on a *mushā'* tenure and part was delimited by custom among those peasants actually cultivating that part. If only the delimited part was bought by the government and transferred on a *mushā'* tenure to all the peasants in the village holding ploughlands, those peasants who cultivated the transferred land might find themselves cultivating, or drawing revenue from, less land than before. There was some dissatisfaction in the Kūhpāyeh-i Darakhtūngān district of Kirmān in 1964 over instances of this kind. For example in Sar Tāhūneh 12 *habbehs* (out of 96 *habbehs*) were bought by the government and transferred on a *mushā'* tenure to the three peasants who cultivated the village land. Formerly one of these had worked the 12 *habbehs*. After transfer he retained only four of these, the remainder having been transferred to the other two peasants. Although somewhat discontented at this, he nevertheless admitted that he was better off than when he had cultivated the whole 12 *habbehs* as a crop-sharing peasant. Strictly, in this case, he should have shared equally with the other two peasants in the remaining 84 *habbehs*. Irregularities or variations of this kind in the transfer of villages occurred from time to time.

The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 did not deal with the thorny problem of the consolidation of holdings. On the contrary, it laid down that the peasant should cultivate that piece of land he occupied at the time when the land law became operative in his area. The purpose of this, as stated above, was to prevent a disintegration of the traditional field lay-out of the village lands, which would have impeded the success of the land reform. Unless the individual holding had been registered by area—and such cases were rare—there was no legal obstacle to the consolidation of holdings. But, in existing circumstances, there were compelling reasons why the peasant holding should



consist of various parcels of land situated in different parts of the village. The quality of the land varied, as did the availability of water. The land reform officials, therefore, wisely took the view that there should be no attempt at this stage to enforce the consolidation of holdings. In a few villages the peasants began voluntarily to exchange their plots in order to consolidate their holdings. One such instance was in Gāzarān in the Sharrā district of Arāk. But this was an exceptional case, made possible because the quality of the various parcels of land was broadly the same.

There was considerable variation in the different parts of the country in both the amounts which the peasants paid for their land and the collection of the instalments from them. In the former case the difference was due to the method by which the cost was reckoned (see above p. 71). In almost all cases it was said to be less than the amount formerly paid under the crop-sharing agreement to the landowner. In some areas, notably in Kirmānshāhān and Kurdistān, the peasants still did not know in the summer of 1966 what they would have to pay for the land. In some villages in these provinces where the amount was known, it was said that the annual instalment was, or would be, less than the payment made by the peasants to the landowners in a good year under the former crop-sharing agreements, but more than they had paid in a bad year. In the Mamassani in Fārs, no demand for payment had been made by the summer of 1965.

The failure to collect the instalments due from the peasants in many parts of the country was due to a shortage of officials. The Agricultural Bank, which in the early years of the reform was responsible for the collection of the money due from the peasants had no officials available for this work when the reform was extended to cover the whole country; and there was much delay in both drawing up and issuing the necessary documents, and in collecting the money due. In 1966, responsibility for the collection of the money was transferred to the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. Where payment was actually demanded from the peasants there was not, on the whole, much delay over payment, except where there had been a total or partial failure of the harvest. In Nayshāpūr, for example, in 1965, as a result of three consecutive bad years, many of the

peasants had fallen behind in the payment of the instalments. In Futūhābād near Kūrbāl, the demand for the payment of the first two instalments due in 1963 and 1964 was deferred because of bad harvests. One instalment was to be paid in 1965. In many districts of Khūzistān the instalments due from the land had not been collected by 1966. This was mainly because officials were not available to collect the money. In some cases, however, the failure to collect the money was due to the incitement of the peasants by the landowners. Hoping to delay the land reform, they urged the peasants not to accept documents for the land, on the grounds that they would burden themselves with debt if they did.

In a number of instances the peasants bought the land outright, as in Niār near Ardabil. Another case was Chāh Marvārid near Qutbābād in Jahrum, which was given by the owner to the government and transferred in 1963 to thirty-nine peasants and five market-gardeners (*bāghdārān*). It consisted of 18½ ha. (45.7 acres) of irrigated land and 93 ha. (229.8 acres) of unirrigated land; there were also 200 ha. (494 acres) of waste land, which was handed over to the co-operative society. The cost of the land was reckoned at 46,000 *ri.* (c. £209), an extremely low figure. The money, which in ordinary circumstances would have been paid to the owner, was put by the government into the co-operative society set up to serve Chāh Marvārid and a neighbouring village. The instalments due from the peasants for their land varied from 19 to 191 *ri.* (1s. 7d.—17s. 4d.). Some of the peasants bought the land outright. When I visited the village in 1965, there was a great shortage of water, and it was hoped to sink a semi-deep well with government help. In Ḥasanābād in the Dastgirdān district of Ṭabas, which was bought at a low price because of the low rate of tax paid, the seven peasants to whom the land was transferred paid all fifteen instalments for the land in the first year.

With few exceptions, the peasants to whom land had been transferred in those districts of Āzarbāyjān, Kurdistān, Qazvin, Gilān, and Arāk which I visited in 1964 said their condition had improved, even though that year the harvest was bad. There were exceptions. At Kānrūd near Āstārā, for example, the peasants had not received loans from the co-operative society. In



1962 the river had flooded and changed its course; and in 1963 part of the village fields and some of the houses had also been destroyed by floods. Great fear of further floods prevailed in the summer of 1964. The building of an adequate flood break or breaks seemed beyond the capability of the villagers, who, as far as I could ascertain, had no reserves. They alleged that the local authorities were not prepared to help them in this task. But even in this village, where the people were anxious, troubled by the fear of floods, and oppressed by debt, all said they were better off than before land reform. They spoke badly of their former landlords and alleged that they extorted the last penny from the peasants under various pretexts.

At Āk near Qazvīn, the peasants said they were now 'free'. Both there and in Narjeh, also near Qazvīn, they looked healthy and happy; and in 1964 there was a general air of well-being which compared favourably with conditions in 1962 just after land reform had begun. At Niār near Ardabil, considerable building activity was going on in the village when I visited it in the summer of 1964. When I asked a peasant what he was building, his face lit up immediately and, with a broad smile, he said, 'We now own the land, and so we are building ourselves houses.'

The extent to which the building of larger and better houses was in progress in different parts of the country in villages which had been transferred wholly or in part to the peasants, was striking, particularly in Khurāsān and Kurdistān (see also below Chapter VIII). Before land reform, there had been a great reluctance on the part of the landowners to allow the peasants to build. They probably wished to prevent the establishment of any kind of occupation right and desired to keep the peasants in subjection. Time and again I was told by peasants who were building new houses for themselves that if they had dared to do this before land reform they would have been turned out of the village.

There was an improvement in standards of cultivation leading to increased production per acre in many of the villages wholly or partially transferred to the peasants. Ploughing was in some cases more frequent; and weeding was carried out with greater care, whereas in some of the villages not subject to land reform it was often neglected altogether. Similarly, terracing was

more carefully carried out, and fertilizers were being increasingly used. In some villages more land had been brought under cultivation. But this was not possible everywhere. In many irrigated districts there was little scope for an increase in the area under cultivation, because there was no additional water supply.

In the summer of 1965 I visited a considerable number of villages in Khurāsān which had been bought by the government wholly or in part, and transferred to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform. Much of the province was formerly owned by large landowners. Small landowners also played an important part, especially in areas bordering the central desert; but there was little genuine peasant proprietorship. A great deal of the land in the province was constituted into *vaqf* for the shrine of the Imām Rīzā in Mashhad, and was therefore not subject to the first stage of the land reform. There were also a number of properties, the ownership of which was disputed or unknown. For this reason by the summer of 1965 they had not been bought by the government or settled by the land reform organization. There was a case of this kind in Ṭabas. The former owner, in order to avoid taxation and death duties, had not registered his properties, apart from an initial notification to the registration office. He subsequently died, and the initial notification was minuted to the effect that the property had been transferred to his sons. They also refrained from registering their ownership. The result was that when land reform began these properties could not be bought, because it was not clear to whom they legally belonged. Under Article 24 of the regulations for the Additional Articles, it was laid down that such properties were to be registered by the land reform organization in the name of the person who made the original notification; and if the government then bought the land, the money was to be deposited at the registration office pending a decision over the title (see below Chapter IX).

Both in Khurāsān and Fārs, which province I visited later in the summer of 1965, it was noticeable that in most of the villages transferred to the peasants under the first stage or settled under the second, and at which I arrived in the daytime, the men were out working in the fields. In villages in which disputes



were going on between the peasants and the landowners, or which had not yet been settled under the second stage, numbers of peasants tended to be hanging about the village streets. In almost all the villages transferred under the law of 9 January 1962 which I visited in Khurāsān (and they were a considerable number), the peasants said they were better off, and that indebtedness had been greatly reduced. The amount which they paid by way of instalments for the land transferred to them was in all cases said to be less than the share of the crop or the rent they had formerly paid to the landowner.

At Kavardch, a village near Mashhad, the peasants were rather inarticulate, but clearly pleased with land reform and their co-operative society. They said they were economically much better off, their indebtedness had been reduced and, best of all, they said, they were now their own masters. One old woman with whom I spoke was both convincing and rather touching. She said she was a widow and had no family, land, or possessions, but that conditions were incomparably better: no longer did the landowner prevent the villagers from doing this or that or make them perform forced labour. The *khiyushniskinhā* (i.e. the inhabitants of the village who were not engaged directly in the cultivation of the soil) also said conditions were much better. A new school had been built by the villagers, who were also making themselves new houses. The existing houses were built on the *qal'eh* pattern (i.e. the houses were in a walled enclosure); the rooms were dark and small, and the people lived at close quarters with their animals. When the new houses were finished, it was planned to use the old ones as stabling for the village flocks. A silage pit was being built for the village by the department of agriculture. The co-operative society gave advances to its members, and distributed seed and pesticides. A number of the peasants had clubbed together and bought a tractor.

At Ismā'ilābād in Turbat-i Jām, which had formerly belonged to a Mashhad merchant, there had been considerable development. The village consisted of some 150 families, of whom some 50 held ploughlands. The main crops were cotton and wheat. Before land reform, there had been twenty-five ploughlands; after the reform new land was brought into cultivation and ten ploughlands were added to the original twenty-five.

The number of peasants working them, however, remained the same. This material increase in the area of land under cultivation had been made possible because the peasants had worked on the *qanāt* and increased the flow of water. The land had been permanently divided among the peasants since land reform. The co-operative society, which had been in operation some three years, seemed to work well. On the morning of my arrival in Ismā'ilābād, an agreement had been concluded by the executive committee of the society to let the cotton stubble to graziers for 60,000 *rs.* (i.e. £270). The agreement had been signed by all the members of the society, and not only by the executive committee, so that all the members would know what their executive committee was doing. The instalments due from the peasants for their land had been paid in 1963 and 1964, and they were confident that they would be able to pay the instalment due in 1965.

Another village near Turbat-i Jām, Sa'dābād, was an outstanding case of successful transfer under the land reform. This village, in contrast to Ismā'ilābād, had probably been in fairly good condition when land reform began. It was divided among some 80 peasants out of a total of about 150 who lived in the village. The population was a mixed one of Taymūris, Barbarīs, Nayshāpūris and others, partly Sunnī and partly Shī'ī. They appeared to work well together, and to intermarry. In spite of the bad harvest in 1965, there was a great sense of well-being in the village, confidence in the future, and pride in what had been achieved since land reform. Much of the village was being rebuilt; and the peasants were moving out of their old houses into new and relatively spacious houses with courtyards, stables, and storehouses. They had built a school, a Husayniyyah (i.e. a place to hold religious festivals, etc.), and premises for the co-operative society. Work had been done and was in progress on the *qanāt*. Money to carry out these various projects had been borrowed at 4-10 per cent from a local merchant.

Buzhgān was another village near Turbat-i Jām subject to purchase under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. It had formerly belonged to one of the largest landowners of Khurāsān. There had been a delay over its sale to the government because of some dispute over the title, and it had not been



transferred to the peasants until 1964. Of the 640 inhabitants, 70 received land. Work had been done on the *qanāt* since land reform. The number of ploughlands had been increased, but land in Buzhgān, unlike many neighbouring villages, was short relative to water. Some houses and a school had been built since land reform. The village was of the *qal'eh* type, and was clean and well-kept. The peasants seemed satisfied with the reform. They said that they were free, could work as they pleased, and build houses for themselves. One of them, describing their new-found freedom, said, 'The chains have been taken off our feet.'

Nitābād, a neighbouring village which had been owned by a daughter of the owner of Buzhgān, had also been transferred to the peasants. In contradistinction to Buzhgān, there was an abundance of land but a shortage of water. The former owner had sunk a well in the neighbourhood and was cultivating waste land (*bāyir*) with its water. Since the land had been transferred to them, the peasants stated, they had spent some 400,000 rs. (c. £1,800) on the village *qanāt* and increased its flow from 12 *juft ab* (the local unit of water) to 50. This had used up all their resources, and they had not paid the instalment due for the land in 1964. They were hoping to pay this in 1965 after the cotton crop had been harvested. Some of them were still indebted to the former owner and others. All those I met said, that conditions, in spite of the bad harvest, had greatly improved since the land had been transferred to them. There was a general sense of freedom; one of the peasants describing this said, 'We now work with light hearts.' A great deal of building was going on; good houses were being put up and the peasants planned, when these were furnished, to use the *qal'eh* which they shared with their animals as stables.

In Nayshāpūr, prosperity depended very closely upon the *qanāts* (see also below Chapter XIII). Rahmatābād was bought by the government and transferred to 36 peasants, who also held land in the neighbouring village of Yūsufābād. Each village was watered by a *qanāt*. Work had been carried out on these since land reform, and the peasants had been involved in heavy expenses in 1965, because the Yūsufābād *qanāt* had been damaged by flooding. The co-operative society at Rahmatābād

served a number of neighbouring villages as well. It had 70 members. The peasants of Raḥmatābād said that conditions had improved since land reform and that their standard of living had risen. Formerly they had paid to the landowners under the crop-sharing agreement three-fifths of all crops except cotton, of which they paid half. Whereas land was formerly cultivated every other year, it was now cultivated every year with fertilizers, and ploughed twice instead of once as before. The peasants alleged that they now worked harder and more thoroughly. They still owed money to the former landowner. They had paid one instalment for the land which had been transferred to them, but the second instalment, due in 1965, had not yet been paid because of the heavy expenses they had incurred in repairing the damage done by the flooding of the Yūsufābād *qanāt*.

‘Aliak and Shāhīn Oulīā, two villages in Zāveh, one of the districts of Turbat-i Ḥaydarī, were both examples of the improvement in the conditions of the peasants brought about by land reform. In the former, one-quarter of the village land had been bought by the government and 91 peasants had received land. In both villages the crops, irrigated and unirrigated, had formerly been equally divided between the peasants and the landowners, who were Balūch *sardārs*. There were also some peasants in Shāhīn Oulīā who cultivated only unirrigated land outside the *ṣaḥrās* and kept nine-tenths of the crops; their livelihood was uncertain because total or partial failure of unirrigated crops was frequent. The local landowners were alleged to have been extortionate and oppressive prior to the reform. Labour service had formerly been exacted in both villages, together with dues of various kinds, including bride money. The manager of the co-operative society, for example, said that when he had married he had to pay the landowner a large sum in bride-money (although his bride was no relation of the landowner). The peasants said they were now incomparably better off than before land reform. In both villages they paid the instalments for the land as they had fallen due, and in some cases in advance. Formerly there was no motor transport to the village. Now there were daily buses to and from Turbat-i Ḥaydarī.

I was much impressed with the change of conditions which had taken place in these two villages since land reform. It was



alleged that, as a result of an increase in the area of land under cultivation and the repayment by the peasants of their debts, the individual income of the peasant family had risen from some 10,000 *rs.* to about 150,000 *rs.*, i.e. from about £45 to over £680. Up to 1964, the peasants had been paying off their debts. They alleged that in 1965 they had borrowed only from the co-operative society, which had been established in the winter of 1962 in Shāhin Oulā, and served 'Aliak and several other villages. It had 175 members, including peasants cultivating unirrigated land outside the *yahrās* and shepherds (*maldārān*).

Conditions on the edge of the central desert in Ṭabas vary very considerably from most other districts in Khurāsān. Only a few small properties there were bought by the government under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. The peasants in the villages which I visited in 1965 seemed happy and satisfied with land reform, although they admitted that in most cases they were not yet very much better off economically. At Turayghnān, a small village near Ṭabas, half of which was transferred to the peasants, the remainder being a private *vagf* and let under the second stage on a thirty years' tenancy, the peasants said they were not yet better off economically, but that 'socially' their conditions had improved. They alleged that they worked harder; they seemed to take a pride in their work, and gave the impression of being a sensible and responsible community. The purchase price of the land had been low because of the low rate of tax. The rent for the half of the village which was held on a tenancy was 100,000 *rs.* (c. £455) per annum, whereas the annual instalment for the other half was only half that figure. The whole village had formerly been rented by a middleman for 120,000 *rs.* (c. £545) per annum.

From this and the preceding chapters, it will be seen that the first stage of the land reform, in spite of opposition and varied and difficult physical and tenorial conditions, in the first three years achieved in the north a considerable degree of success measured in social, political and economic terms. Its effects in the first two fields were marked and in the last not by any means negligible. In the following two chapters I shall examine its operation in the south and the west, where the picture is somewhat less favourable.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST STAGE: THE SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST

---

THERE is, as stated in Chapter I, a great contrast physically between the north and the south. Within what are conventionally called the southern provinces there is also considerable variety. In the north-west of the region there is the rich, fertile, and intensively cultivated valley of the Zāyandeh-rūd in Iṣfahān, and in the south-east the inhospitable desert or semi-desert districts of Balūchistān; the cool and rugged mountain country of the Bakhtīārī and the upland districts of Fārs on the one hand and the hot lowlands of the Persian Gulf on the other; and the large flourishing villages of Iṣfahān and the tiny settlements in Kirmān and Balūchistān.

Tenurial conditions also varied. Much of the province of Kirmān was owned by large land-owners. In Iṣfahān there was much large land ownership. Many of the villages were formerly owned by the descendants of Zill al-Sultān, the Bakhtīārī khans, the religious leaders, and merchants. There was also some genuine peasant proprietorship. Most of the large holdings had been sold, broken up by the vicissitudes of political events, or fragmented by inheritance before the land reform began. Nevertheless, the weight of the landowning class was still heavy, even though by 1962 not many landowners held several villages. In Yazd, land was mainly owned by small local landowners; there was also some peasant proprietorship. In Fārs, large land ownership was widespread. The tribal khans were in many cases also landowners. This was true of many areas in Khūzistān also, though not infrequently the khans had already been bought out by merchants and others prior to land reform, or dispossessed during the reign of Rezā Shah, and their land converted into *khālīqeh*. The Arab shaykhs in parts of Khūzistān enjoyed a special position by virtue of their status as shaykhs.



In the past Khūzistān suffered from neglect at the hands of the government, between whose officials (civil and military) and the population there was much mutual misunderstanding, not to say hatred and distrust. In recent years, particularly after Persia's relations with Egypt worsened, efforts have been made by the Persian government to improve conditions in the frontier areas bordering Iraq. The Arabs of Sūsangird and Mihrān in Ilām have benefited by this, since the government has attempted to provide some public services and to raise the quality of its officials. Nevertheless, in spite of improvements, there was still, in Arab areas, a failure of communication; the attitude of government officials towards the Arabs was all too often one of contempt and dislike, while on the Arab side suspicion and distrust continued.

Standards of cultivation differed widely. The peasants of Yazd and Isfahān, in general, compared favourably with those of Fārs and Khūzistān. In Yazd, peasant proprietorship had been long established and there is a tradition of thrift, industry, and agricultural skill. This was also true of Isfahān where there were a number of old established peasant proprietor villages; and in some areas in the province the peasantry was tough. Both in Yazd and Isfahān, in the district immediately surrounding the town, it was not uncommon for agriculture to be combined with whole or part-time employment in the factories. In Yazd this was often because neither offered an adequate living by itself, and in Isfahān it was probably caused mainly by the fragmentation of holdings. In some districts of Kirmān the 'subjection' of the peasantry was almost more marked than anywhere else in Persia, and the habit of submission was deeply ingrained. I asked one peasant in a village in the Kūhpāyeh-i Darakhtingān district of Kirmān, which had been transferred to the peasants under the first stage, to whom the co-operative society belonged. He replied, 'To the government,' and added, 'formerly we obeyed the landowners; now we shall obey whoever issues orders to us.'

Balūchistān, which I visited in 1964, was, as stated above, barely affected by the first stage of land reform. In the five villages transferred to the peasants near Khāsh there was a marked improvement in morale and in two, Haydarābād and

Baytābād, there had been considerable agricultural development since the transfer of land, and in Asadābād some building had taken place. These villages, however, were not typical of the province: they were cultivated, like many of the villages round Khāsh, by Yazdī immigrants. The land was well-cultivated and the housing on the pattern of a central Persian village.

In Kirmān the amount of land bought by the government was not large; by September 1964 it had been transferred to a small number of peasants. The following examples are fairly typical of the area round Kirmān, where the land unit is the *habbeh*, each village consisting of 96 *habbehs*. Sixteen *habbehs* of Husaynābād near Kirmān were transferred to four peasants (*sar za'ims*), who with some eight or ten labourers cultivated the land of the village; 18 *habbehs* in Rustamābād in the same neighbourhood were transferred to fourteen peasants, and 12 *habbehs* to nine peasants in the neighbouring village of Karīmābād. In the Kūhpāych-i Darakhtingān district 18 villages, two *in toto*, and the remainder in part, were transferred to the peasants; all were tiny. One of the two transferred *in toto*, Dihkāfī, had only three peasants, and most of the others each had less than ten peasants. The amount of land transferred was seldom enough to provide an adequate living. There were also difficulties over water. Many of those who had received land also worked in neighbouring villages.

One of the reasons for the limited operation of the first stage of the land reform in Kirmān was the fact that grain crops played an unimportant role in most parts of the province. Many of the villages had little arable land and consisted mainly of orchards and gardens, which were exempt from purchase by the government under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. In many of the villages in which the arable land was transferred to the peasants, there was a reallocation of water in favour of the gardens and orchards which were retained by the land-owners (see below pp. 286 ff.); this largely vitiated the benefits of land reform as far as the peasants were concerned. On the whole, however, the peasants in the Kirmān area expressed satisfaction with the land reform, although this was sometimes qualified. The reason for their satisfaction was that they were



'free' and no longer at the beck and call of the landowner. Formerly, they alleged, they were never left in peace, but were always being required by the landowners to do some job or other for them. They also alleged that the landowners kept them in debt in order to have a hold over them.

When I visited Kirmān in 1964, land reform had clearly not proceeded as successfully as, for example, in Āzarbāyjān. This can be partly attributed to differences in physical and agricultural conditions, and in the character of the peasantry of the two regions; but in addition there was, almost certainly, considerable sabotage of the land reform by the large landowners in Kirmān, possibly with the connivance of officials, both in the local land reform office and in other departments. This seems partly to have taken the form of ante-dating land transfers in order to avoid the provisions of the law of 9 January 1962. In Kirmān, as opposed to Āzarbāyjān, there was little direct clashing between landowners and peasants over the execution of the law. In Āzarbāyjān the peasants in general resisted if the landowners attempted to withhold their rights; in Kirmān they showed little inclination to stand out, perhaps because they feared they would not receive support from the authorities.

In Isfahān, as in Kirmān, there was probably also some avoidance of the provisions of the land reform law by various measures, including ante-dating the transfer or sale of land. The peasants to whom land had been transferred under the land reform were, on the whole, satisfied with the reform, but many of them in 1964 seemed to feel that, as long as the landowners continued to exist as a class, they themselves would not be left alone to get on with their own affairs. In some of the villages which had been transferred wholly or in part to the peasants, a marked increase in production was claimed.

In the summer of 1964 in Jalālābād, on the borders of Mārbīn and Linjān, a village consisting of 72 *ḥabbehs*, of which 39 *ḥabbehs* had been transferred to the peasants, it was said that production had risen in the village as a whole, and so by mutual agreement the rent for the part which had not been transferred had been raised from 450 *rs.* (c. £2) per *ḥabbeh* to 3,000 *rs.* (c. £14). Jalālābād, although watered by the river, was situated at a considerable distance from it. In the years immediately pre-

ceding land reform, the irrigation channels had not been kept clean. Poverty had prevailed, and many of the people had emigrated. Since land reform the members of the co-operative society had kept the channels clean; and the people had started to come back to the village. The average holding was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ha. (c. 6 acres), from which the net income in a good year was said to be about 20,000 *rs.* (c. £91). The main crops were wheat, barley, cotton seed, and sugar beet. Ploughing was done by tractor, for which 600 *rs.* (c. £2,14s.) per hectare was charged. The fore-selling of crops, which had formerly been prevalent, had completely stopped by 1964.

The manager of the co-operative society seemed competent. He was convinced that the great need was to increase production. The members of the society had made a local road and were building a school. They hoped that their society would eventually become a multi-purpose society. They claimed that its progress was due to their unity. The landowner, they alleged, had formerly created two factions in the village, but after land reform these had disappeared. Some of the other local societies were split by faction.

At Husaynābād, a neighbouring village, one-third of which had been transferred to fifty-five peasants, it was said that there had been an increase in production since land reform and that some of the peasants who had earlier left the village (while retaining their interest in the village land) were returning in 1964 (see also p. 283). In Sūdīrjān in Linjān, of which  $3\frac{1}{2}$  *ḥabbehs* out of 72 had been transferred to 327 peasants in 1963, production was also alleged to have risen. The *qunāts* had been cleaned after land reform for the first time in twenty years. The holdings in Sūdīrjān were 2-16 *jaribs* (1 *jarīb* = 1,000 sq. metres or 1,196 sq. yards), i.e. about  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre to 4 acres. If adequate water was available, it was said that 10 *jaribs* (c.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres) would provide a good living. Rents had formerly been 15,000 *rs.* (c. £68) per *jarīb*, but since land reform they had been reduced to 10,000 *rs.* (c. £45). This, it was said, was not because of a decrease in production, but because the landowner was now no longer able to do as he pleased.

There was a marked difference in the Isfahān area between the land reform villages and those which had not been bought



by the government and transferred to the peasants. In the latter the peasants alleged that their conditions were worse than before the reform because the landowners were now no longer prepared to invest in the land and were allowing the *qanāts* to decay.

The degree to which the peasants benefited from the reform in Fārs varied considerably. Almost everywhere, they said that they worked harder after the land was transferred to them. Progress was, however, more chequered than in the north, partly because of opposition from the landowners, and partly because the peasants were more backward and less ready for land reform.

As mentioned above, there was virulent criticism by the Fārs landowners of the operation of the land reform. This was largely due to their resentment at their loss of prestige consequent upon land reform; but at the same time, in its early stages, the officials of the land reform organization in Fārs acted, or are alleged to have acted, in a rather high-handed manner. In Firūzābād, the Mamassanī, and Kāzīrūn, the first stage was put into operation with great vigour and speed. This may indeed have been the only way to ensure its implementation, but the speed with which it was put into effect no doubt led to a considerable number of errors. It was alleged in 1965 that there had been some 600 cases of wrong, or illegal, decisions in the province as a whole.

Another reason for the bitterness of the landowners in Fārs was that many of them had not been able to benefit from the concession by which landowners were permitted to transfer a village to their wives and children (see above p. 68). The first stage of the land reform had already been completed in a number of districts in Fārs before its introduction. Clearly it could not be made retroactive: land once transferred to the peasants could not then be taken away from them unless their confidence in the land reform was to be shattered. The landowners, however, perhaps naturally, did not all view the matter in this light.

In the Mamassanī the question of tenure was extremely complicated.<sup>1</sup> Land reform was put into operation after the

<sup>1</sup> In the nineteenth century the Mamassanī was apparently owned by small landowners, who paid no land tax as such, but merely a poll-tax. About

tribal troubles in 1963 and the seizure of some of the Rustamī and Kayānī khans. In most of the villages a part was bought by the government and transferred to the peasants. Once the often oppressive and extortionate influence of the landowners and the khans was removed, the area began to prosper. When I first visited the Mamassanī in 1950 it was in a bad state of decay, largely owing to a long series of disputes over the title of the land. In 1965 it had changed almost out of recognition. The village houses, which had formerly been made mainly of reed matting, were now made of brick. The morale of the peasants had also undergone a change. But this was not due to land reform alone: the government had built a road through the area, sunk some power-operated wells, and was building, in 1965, a sugar factory; it had also built a new village, called Twenty-fifth Shahrīvar, outside Nūrābād to accommodate 34 tribal families.

The peasants in general said that their condition had greatly improved since land reform: they were free, they said, and no longer subject to all kinds of extortion as they had been formerly. But there were complaints that no one was prepared to listen to their grievances. I asked a man in the village of Sharaf how the

---

the turn of the century, a Shabānkāreh *sayyid* extended his influence over the Mamassanī and was helped in this by a merchant named Bushihri, with whom he shared his profits from this operation. In due course the Shabānkāreh *sayyid* disappeared from the scene. Power over the area was then disputed between Bushihri and the Kayānī and Rustamī khans. Fahlān, one of the main villages, inhabited mainly by *sayyids*, was excluded from the direct control of either party but paid to the khans as a kind of tax (*māhāt*) one-half of the summer (*jayf*) crops and one-quarter of the winter (*shatīl*) crops. In due course Fahlān became the *ayāl* of Nāṣir al-Mulk, who later transferred it to Ibrāhīm Qavām. Strictly this transfer was illegal, since the holder of a *ayāl* had no right to dispose of his *ayāl*. Amīr Humāyūn Bushihri subsequently bought Fahlān from Qavām. One of the local inhabitants, Sayyid Abṭāhī, disputed Bushihri's right to Fahlān on the grounds that Qavām could not sell it, since he had not obtained possession of it by a valid sale. In 1992-3 the courts gave a judgement in Sayyid Abṭāhī's favour, and Bushihri was turned out of the Mamassanī. After the abdication of Reṣā Shāh he sought to regain his influence there, and a long series of disputes ensued between Bushihri and the Rustamī khans over the title of the land. At some time, perhaps in order to protect the properties from confiscation, Bushihri constituted one and a half *dāngs* of all the villages he held in the Mamassanī into a private or family *saḡf*. These were still administered as such by the government in 1965, and tenancies were being concluded with the peasants under the land reform.



peasants had been affected by land reform. He answered, 'We were dead. Now we are alive.'

It was noticeable that the effect of land reform had spread in the Mamassanī to areas not directly subject to the first stage. Thus, in Bavvān, where the inhabitants derive their living mainly from flocks and gardens, and which was barely subject to the first stage of land reform, the peasants said in 1965 that they were better off because they were free; there was now security, and the khans no longer made demands upon them.

The village of Yārch between Jahrum and Simakān was an example of successful land reform in spite of efforts by the owner to obstruct it. The village consisted of 72 shares. Sixty-two belonged to a former head of the Jahrum municipal council, and 10 shares were *vagf*, of which the former owner was also the *mutasallī* or administrator. The village, apart from the *vagf*, was bought by the government under the law of 9 January 1962 and transferred to some fifty peasants. The owner disputed the right of the government to purchase it. He claimed that Yārch and the neighbouring village of Mālīān, of which he also owned 62 shares as well as being the administrator of the remaining 10 shares which were *vagf*, were registered as one unit (*plāk*); therefore his holding did not exceed the permitted maximum. The land reform office rejected this argument and bought the land in Yārch. The former owner continued to hold Mālīān and to administer 10 shares of both villages as administrator.

When statistics were drawn up for the transfer of the land, it appears that an error was made in the document, which, instead of stating 'the land of Yārch with its *chashmeh-sār* (i.e. land having springs)' had been bought by the government, read 'the land with its spring (*chashmeh*)'. The peasants alleged that as a result of this mistake they had been deprived of some of their water. There were other disputes over water, and over some land which the former owner claimed was garden land and therefore exempt from purchase and transfer, whereas the peasants claimed that it was land sown by them with wheat and rice. They had erected a wall round it to keep out wild pigs, which wage much destruction in the area. This had led the landowner to claim that it was a walled garden belonging to him.

In spite of these difficulties and disputes, which were still going on at the time when I visited the village in the summer of 1965, the peasants said that their conditions had greatly improved since land reform. They cultivated the land better, had built new houses, and bought new draught animals; and some of them had bought carpets, radios, and new clothes. Production had increased threefold, they alleged, and they seemed to have a tremendous feeling that it was their duty to increase production in return for the land which had been transferred to them. Some of the peasants were still indebted to the former owner and other persons from pre-land reform days. A few said that the 1965 harvest was promised to the former landowner in payment of their debts; and one or two were discontented about this. The land seemed well cultivated. Fertilizers, obtained through the co-operative society, were used.

The peasants redistributed the land among themselves annually. This is technically contrary to the practice laid down by the land reform; but they said they preferred to do this. They alleged that they were a united community, that all cultivated the land to the best of their ability, and that there was no question of one man putting more into the land than another and therefore wishing to keep it permanently. The amount which individuals cultivated, however, varied; some held one *fard* (the local unit) and some two. The co-operative society gave loans to the members and sold fertilizers; the members hoped that it would be able in future to sell cloth, oil, and paraffin also. They had paid three instalments for their land. They seemed a vigorous, confident, and united community; and I was much impressed by their keenness to increase production.

The cases of Hasanābād-i-Tulkamīn in Shīl and Gashak in Marvdasht illustrate some of the difficulties encountered by land reform in Fārs. The former is an example of self-help by the peasants in the face of great opposition. Under the law of 9 January 1962, 1½ *dāngs* of the village were transferred to 35 peasants; and in the neighbouring villages of Shamsābād and Shāhdasht (both of which were small), 2 *dāngs* and 3 *dāngs* respectively were transferred to the peasants. A co-operative society was set up to serve the peasants of the three villages. In Hasanābād the land had been delimited and the transfer



of land was made, not to all the peasants cultivating the village land, but only to those cultivating the part transferred. The remaining four and a half *dāngs* were worked after 1962 by other peasants under tenancies concluded with the landowners.

When the second stage of the land reform began, the landowners selected method (a) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles, i.e. tenancy. The peasants wanted method (c), i.e. division of the land according to the proportion in which the crop was divided under the crop-sharing agreement, which in this case would have been two-thirds to the owner. Disputes were going on in the summer of 1965 between the two parties as to which method should be selected. In Shamsābād tenancies for one *dāng* were concluded with the peasants to whom two *dāngs* of the land had been transferred under the first stage, and the remaining three *dāngs* were cultivated by other peasants. In Shāhdasht the three *dāngs* not transferred under the first stage were held on a tenancy agreement by a man who had installed a motor pump for irrigation purposes and worked the land by mechanized means.

The co-operative society, which had 140 members in 1965, was then a flourishing concern. It had given loans to its members three times, and sold fertilizers, oil, and paraffin. There was a shortage of water in the area; and the Hasanābād *qanāt* had dried up. Members of the co-operative society had sunk fourteen wells, payment for which had been completed by 1965. The water from these was used to cultivate *daym* land (i.e. land belonging to the village other than that watered in rotation by the water resources of the village). Water to irrigate this land had formerly been rented by the peasants from elsewhere. Some peasants who had not received land under the land reform were also said to have sunk wells.

The executive committee of the co-operative society said that they had met with great opposition from the landowners. They alleged that the landowners had protested against their activities, because of the example they were setting for other villages, and had invited their co-operation against the government. After the members of the co-operative society had refused to countenance such action, they alleged—and this was confirmed by various sources outside the village—that the land-

owners had instigated two tribal leaders to send tribesmen to plunder their flocks. Between the beginning of land reform and 1965, these had been raided three times; only once had they been able, with government help, to recover part of their losses. The third occasion was in September or October 1964, when some 1,800 head of sheep and goats had been carried off, the brother of the manager of the co-operative society killed, and several persons wounded. The peasants affirmed that the gendarmerie were in league with the landowners and that they (the peasants) could not get a hearing. The manager finally went to Tehrān to seek redress, but was merely referred back to Shīrāz. He and the other members of the co-operative society were not unnaturally very sore about this state of affairs and said their primary need was for security.

Gashak was owned by three men, one of whom had also owned part of Hasanābād-i Tulkamīn. Rather less than two *dāngs* of the village were bought by the government under the law of 9 January 1962 and transferred to 44 peasants out of 104 who lived in the village. Ja'farābād and Farvandeḥ, two hamlets belonging to Gashak, had also been partially divided: 5 *dāngs* of the former had gone to 84 peasants and 2 *dāngs* of the latter to 28 peasants. Some of these also held land in Gashak. There had been disputes among the peasants over the distribution of the land. In the summer of 1965 it was alleged that seed was being withheld from 52 peasants who cultivated land still held by the landowners as well as some land which had been transferred to them in Ja'farābād. The peasants of Gashak were profoundly discontented at the time of my visit to the village in 1965, and said they wished there had been no land reform. They had complained to the land reform office in Shīrāz. As a result it seems that the gendarmerie had been ordered to look into the case, but it was alleged that after investigation they had merely referred the matter back to Shīrāz and nothing further had happened.

It was a rather complicated story and difficult to get to the bottom of it, but the evidence given to me seemed to show prevarication, if not some degree of oppression and injustice, by the various owners. The peasants thought the object of the latter was to force them to leave the land. Those who had



received land under the law of 9 January 1962 were working that land and had paid the first instalment for it. They were not happy, but said they had to work because the next instalment would be demanded of them. Those peasants who had not received any land and those who were held up for seed were very discontented. I had the impression that the village headman was under the influence of the landowners and did not support the peasants.

In Khūzistān the picture presented by land reform when I visited the province in 1966 was a varied one. Dizfūl was a special case owing to the existence of the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority, which managed the distribution of irrigation water from the Muḥammad Reṣā Pahlavi dam on the River Diz and power from the hydro-electric station completed in March 1963. Two villages were bought *in toto* under the first stage and forty-nine partially affected. One of these was Dihbar, of which about one-fifth was bought under the first stage. Before land reform the peasants had paid a fixed rent to the owner, not a share of the crop. Labour service had been exacted but was not heavy. Three instalments had been paid for the land transferred. The amount of each was less than the former annual rent. The remainder of the village was to be settled by tenancy under the second stage, but no agreement had been reached over the rent. This had been fixed by the land reform office, but the peasants had refused to accept the stipulated figure on the grounds that it was too high. The matter was still under consideration in July 1966. The village consisted of 24 ploughlands (mostly consisting of 14 ha. or 34·5 acres) comprising in all 370 hectares (914 acres), half of which was left fallow each year. Forty-eight peasants held land. A variety of crops was grown, including sesame. The peasants alleged that production had gone up since land reform, because they were now free from the impositions formerly made upon them by the landowner. 'Freedom', they said, 'is good for us.' Before land reform there had been much fore-selling of crops, but this had now decreased. There had been some building whereas before land reform, because of insecurity, the peasants had not been prepared to make new houses for themselves.

The co-operative society at Dihbar served five villages. It

had built its own premises and had a shop or store. It had given loans, which were said to have been more than the advances formerly made by the landowner for rice cultivation. The society however had stopped giving loans because of the operations of the Water and Electricity Authority; and instead fertilizers, provided by the co-operative federation of Dizfūl, were given through the authority to the peasants. I was told in 1966 that the co-operative societies and the authority had reached agreement that the former should again give loans to the peasants for special forms of cultivation.

The peasants at Dihbar were dissatisfied with the authority, as apparently were all the fifty or so villages in the area in which it was running irrigation and supervising agriculture. In matters of cultivation it allowed no freedom to the peasants, who complained that their expenses had increased more than the productivity of the land; they paid the authority water dues and were forced to pay them also for ploughing and discing by tractor and were forbidden to use oxen. They were, they said, freed from the abuses which they had suffered from the landowner but they were still not 'free'. Further, they compared the Water and Electricity Authority unfavourably with the co-operative society, on the grounds that the accounts of the latter were open and clear while those of the authority were not. One peasant said rather bitterly, 'Might is right.'

The *khālīqeh* land around Ahvāz also formed something of an exception. Much of this had been handed over to individuals on condition that it was brought under cultivation by pumps or other means. If this was done within five years, possession was then given to the man who brought the land under cultivation. In some cases a title was conferred; but in others no title was acquired, although the land had been brought under cultivation. Those who installed pumps and set up a pump unit, known locally as a *ma'assiseh*, had annual agreements with the peasants who cultivated the land. By these the peasants gave one-third of the produce to the pump-owner. It is alleged that when land reform started, the pump-owners persuaded the peasants that land reform was not in their interests, telling them that they would have to pay the government for the land and also continue to pay one-third of the crop to the pump-owner. The



peasants accordingly said they were satisfied with existing conditions and did not want land reform. Subsequently the government decided that the pump-owners should take only one-fourth of the crop. It is doubtful whether this decision was operative in all cases in 1966. The situation of the pump units round Ahvāz seemed at that time to be somewhat confused.

In many of the villages in which a pump unit had been installed, the peasants appeared to be poor and ignorant of their rights under land reform. Standards of cultivation in many cases were low. Ahvāz-i Qadīm, which had been transferred to 27 Arabs in 1965, was an example of this. It was a fairly new settlement. The land had formerly been *khālīsh*, and had been acquired by the owner of the pump unit. He took one-third of the grain and half of the rice crop. The peasants alleged that water was scarce, because after land reform began, the pump-owner ceased to clean the channels. They also alleged that they had no security, although they had received documents (*qubūz*) for the transfer of the land. They were therefore thinking of leaving the area because they were unable to make a living. There seemed to be a complete lack of communication and no proper supervision by the land reform office or the *khālīsh* department, although this settlement was on the outskirts of Ahvāz.

Most of Shu'aybiyyeh was also *khālīsh*. Nigāz-i Buzurg, a large village on the outskirts of the area, was inhabited by Bakhtiāris, who had been settled some thirty years ago. I had the impression that they still looked with nostalgia to their semi-nomadic life, though they did not actually say so. The land was transferred to the peasants in the first stage of land reform under the special arrangements made for *khālīsh* land. The *khālīsh* administration measured the land into 100 ploughlands each of 20 ha. (49 acres) which they distributed to 100 peasants. Under this plan some peasants lost land which they had formerly cultivated and were therefore dissatisfied; and some thirty-two families said they had received no land. Under the special arrangements for the transfer of *khālīsh*, no instalments were to be paid for the first five years; after this two annual instalments, amounting in all to 2,600 rs. (c. £12), were to be paid. This was an extremely low price. The former tax (*mindl*) had been 32 *manns* (1 *mann* = 7½ kg.) wheat per ploughland per

annum. The peasants said that they were now better off because they were free. They also said they were rather better off than the surrounding dry-farming villages because they had become 'free' earlier and formerly paid less by way of tax to the *khālīsh* department. Fore-selling had been common and the peasants said they had formerly been indebted. They alleged that they were now free of debt, although a series of bad years had impoverished them. There was a little new building in the village.

A co-operative society was established in 1961 but had been active only since 1965 when a new manager was elected. It served four villages, Zaydān-i Nigāz, Safār-i Nigāz, Sichīn-Nigāz, and Nigāz-i Buzurg. It had 219 members. The executive committee were all from Nigāz-i Buzurg. A loan had been given once and was in the course of being repaid. The society had an agency for the sale of oil. Various members of the society had joined together in four or five different groups and each had bought a tractor. They charged 140 *rs.* (c. 13s.) per hectare for ploughing to other members, and rather more, about 200 *rs.* (18s.), to persons living in other villages.

Sūsangird was also formerly mainly *khālīsh*. The change in conditions since my last visit, which had been in 1960, was marked. Living conditions and the material prosperity of the peasants had greatly improved and the authority of the shaykhs and their exactions had considerably decreased. The transfer of land under the first stage began in February–March 1964 and by the summer of 1966 all except eight large villages had been transferred. These were to be settled under the second stage by division. When I visited the area in the summer of 1966, instalments had not yet been collected for the land transferred under the first stage, but were to be collected later in the year.

The situation in Sūsangird was complicated by the fact that the Arab shaykhs, or tribal headmen, formerly levied dues (*mināl*) in their capacity as tribal leaders. Under the land reform they had each been given some 10–100 ha. (24.7–247 acres) of uncultivated (*bāyir*) land according to their status. This land was in the reed beds (*nayzār*) along the bed (*khur*) of River Karkheh and would be watered from the Karkheh by pumps; when cleared, it would grow rice. Agreements had been signed with the shaykhs by which the land, if they made it



productive within five years, would be transferred to them in full ownership without payment.

The peasants were making new buildings and moving out of their reed huts into more permanent dwellings. The great achievement of land reform in this area was the freedom which it had given the peasants from subjection to the shaykhs, who had formerly moved them about from one piece of land to another. There had been a great increase in cultivation, partly because land was no longer being left fallow. Formerly grain had been the only crop. Now some summer crops were grown, also alfalfa, the cultivation of which was beginning in 1965-6.

In Malik Oulā, where the peasants had been moved about by the shaykhs before land reform, the average holding was about 5 ha. (12 acres) in 1966; it was said to be rather too small to afford a good living. Some peasants, however, had 10 ha. (24.7 acres), but others as little as 1-3 ha. (c. 2½-7½ acres). Instalments for the land were to be paid in 1966. It was said that fore-selling had lessened since land reform, and that the area under cultivation had been increased. It was claimed that the land was better cultivated and that production was up. Some summer crops and vegetables, the cultivation of which had been rare before land reform, were grown. There was also some new building in the village. At the time of my visit in 1966, the co-operative society, established in 1965, had given one loan and sold improved seed to members.

Some of the villages of Sūsangird were still split by tribal faction. An example of this was Abū Humayzeh, a large village near the town of Sūsangird in which 490 persons had received land. Unlike some of the other villages I visited in the district, the peasants seemed discontented. The land had been formerly *khālīseh*. No demand for the payment of instalments for the land had been made by the summer of 1966, but the government was to demand a payment later that year. The holdings varied in size. Some of the peasants complained that the amount of land held by them was too small to afford a living. The price per hectare would be 2,000 *rs.* (c. £9) to be paid over 15 years. This would be much less than the amount formerly paid as tax (*mināl*) to the *khālīseh* administration. Water was short. It was provided by eight pumps, which were privately owned, three

by the local shaykh; and there were disputes between the peasants and the pump owners over water. It was hoped that the pumps would be bought and run by the co-operative society.

Because of tribal faction, it had been necessary to set up three societies to serve the area. The Upper Abū Humayzeh society was established in 1964 and had 115 members. The Lower Abū Humayzeh society was set up in 1965. The former had given three loans, two of which had been repaid; the third had not fallen due when I visited the village in 1966. It had also sold some seed grain. The peasants had been indebted when the society was started and were still indebted in 1966. Fore-selling had formerly been common, but had decreased somewhat after land reform. The peasants said the co-operative society had made a great difference to them economically and in helping them to be 'free'. Formerly they had been entirely at the mercy of the shaykhs and had had no contact with government departments which, they alleged, had not been prepared to give them a hearing.

Part of Abū Chilāj (Shāhābād), a Banī Ṭuruf village, formerly *khālīṣh*, was transferred to the peasants during the reign of Reẓā Shāh. The remainder was transferred under the land reform. The holdings varied from 8 or 10 ha. (19·7 or 24·7 acres) to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  or 2 ha. (c. 4 or 5 acres). There was also some land irrigated by a pump, which was run by a company. Since land reform there had been a great improvement in the standard of cultivation, because the peasants had security and the land they cultivated remained permanently in their hands instead of being redistributed as before. In 1966 the people, because of their new-found security and freedom, were moving out of huts made of reed-matting into permanent housing. A co-operative society was set up in 1964. It was alleged that there was consultation among the members of the society and that faction, which had prevailed formerly, had disappeared. Loans had been given and were used for agricultural purposes. The society had an agency for the sale of paraffin. Some of the peasants, who had lost their crops because of floods in 1966, were, however, asking for a delay in the repayment of their loans to the society. It was said that fore-selling had stopped since land reform. A school was started in 1965. I was favourably im-



pressed by this society and conditions in the village, which although not very advanced by ordinary standards, seemed to me to be an enormous improvement on anything that had existed in the area before land reform.

In Kharābeh (Farahābād), which is not a Banī Ṭuruf village, the position appeared to be still somewhat unsettled. Part of the village had been distributed to the peasants in the reign of Rezā Shāh, and 250 title deeds, mainly for plots of 1 ha. (2.4 acres) had been granted. Subsequently there had been much transfer of ownership. After land reform there was some re-organization of the holdings. Many of the peasants in this district had come to Persia from Iraq during the reign of Rezā Shāh; others had come just before land reform because of rumours that there would be a distribution of land. There were difficulties over water, and it was alleged that water which had formerly belonged to the village had been diverted elsewhere and that rice could no longer be grown. It was also alleged that the shaykhs still exercised, or tried to exercise, their former prerogatives. They had not been given land, but they were to receive waste (*bāyir*) land, like the shaykhs of the Banī Ṭuruf. In spite of their difficulties, the peasants said that their conditions since land reform had improved; they were building permanent houses and said they had now a fatherland and title-deeds to their land (*ḥalā waṭan dārīm va qabāleh dārīm*).

There had been a striking change in conditions in Shūshtar since my last visit there in 1950. From what I heard, it seemed that this change took place mainly after land reform began. One-fifth of Shāh Najaf, a dry-farming village near Shūshtar inhabited by Bakhtiārīs, was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. One instalment for the land had been paid by the peasants in 1966. The amount was less than the former share they had paid to the landowner under the crop-sharing agreement. This had been at the rate of 100 *man* (1 *man* = 7½ kg.) wheat and 1,250 *rs.* (c. £5. 14s.) per ploughland. Dues had also been paid in chickens, curds (*māst*), and clarified butter, and 10 *rs.* (c. 11d.) per sheep or goat; labour service had been exacted. The remaining four-fifths of the village land was settled by tenancy. The land reform office had fixed the rent at 1,300 *rs.* (c. £5. 18s.) per ploughland. The area under cultivation

had greatly increased since land reform. In 1966, however, the crops had failed.

The peasants also cultivated some land near the river belonging to a neighbouring landowner. 120 shares of this were transferred to them under the first stage, and the remaining 40 were settled by tenancy under the second stage. This land was held by the peasants on a *mushā'* tenure. They had borrowed money from the co-operative society and installed a pump to irrigate the land. They used fertilizer, which they had not done before land reform. They said that since land reform production had increased. The co-operative society at Shāh Najaf, which served three villages, had 73 members. Before land reform the peasants had borrowed from town merchants; and fore-selling had been common. The peasants stated that this had now stopped and that they were no longer indebted except to the co-operative society. Two loans had been given. The first had been repaid. The second had not fallen due when I visited the village in the summer of 1966.

There seemed to have been considerable development in 'Aqilī also since my last visit in 1950. 'Aqilī formerly belonged mainly to the Bakhtiārī khans and was largely settled by Bakhtiārī peasants. Even before land reform it was something of an exception in Khūzistān; economic conditions and security of tenure were better than in many other villages in the province. Communications had greatly improved since land reform. There was much new building in the villages and the growth in the self-confidence of the peasants was noticeable.

Istādagi, Vaysi, and Bunch Haydar, three villages transferred *in toto* to the peasants under the first stage, were served by a co-operative society, which was set up in the year 1963 and had 71 members. The village ploughlands were of roughly equal size, each consisting of several strips. Formerly the ploughlands had been redistributed every few years. Under the crop-sharing agreement, the landowners' share had varied for different crops and was said to have amounted to about 4,000 rs. (c. £18) per ploughland in cash and kind. Since land reform, the area under cultivation had been extended. Before land reform the peasants had had some gardens of which they had owned the *a'yān*. Now they were planting new gardens and



trees. They claimed that their standard of cultivation had improved and that they had gained a wider outlook. They thought the radio had played an important part in bringing this about; they had been encouraged to stand up to the landowners by statements over the radio assuring them that the government was behind them. Their economic condition was, they said, much improved. Their houses were better furnished and their food better. There was also some new building in these villages.

In Kā'idān and Māndanī, which were also transferred *in toto* to the peasants under the first stage, there had been a great increase in the cultivation of summer crops since land reform. The peasants in these two villages said that faction had greatly decreased in the villages of 'Aqilī which had been transferred to the peasants under the land reform; now the land was theirs, they said, they had no need to squabble among themselves.

There appeared to have been a marked improvement also in the general well-being of the peasants in some of the Bihbahān villages which had been transferred under the first stage of the land reform. This district was a difficult one in which to implement land reform. It had been rent for years by faction and disputed tenures, and the problem of indebtedness was probably worse than in any other district in Persia. Faction and indebtedness also prevailed in the villages of Rām Hurmuz. It was extremely difficult to get at the truth in these two districts. Very bad relations had prevailed formerly between the peasants and the landlords, and dissimulation was normal. In some of the villages of Rām Hurmuz, it appeared that the peasant holdings were often too small to afford a good living.

About half of Lower Khayrābād near Bihbahān, which I visited in the summer of 1966, was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The first instalment for the price of the land had been paid. Settlement under the second stage had not yet been completed in 1966 because the ownership of the land was disputed. Some of the peasants alleged that nearly all the land was in the hands of the village headman and had, in fact, not been transferred to them. Some 40 *bāzyārān* (i.e. agricultural labourers) declared that they had cultivated 30-40 ploughlands before land reform and that the former headman

had not transferred these to them, as he should have done under the land reform. They added that when statistics were collected there had been dishonesty; but they had been frightened to assert their rights and had, in any case, not known (or believed) that land reform would work, and so had been reluctant to come forward. But if they were really agricultural labourers, strictly speaking, they had no right to receive land.

Formerly the landowners had taken one-fifth of all crops. The land was divided every year by lot, except for land near the river which grew summer crops. Fore-selling was common. The peasants borrowed from chandlers (*baqqālkhā*) in Bihbahān, with whom also they made agreements for the sale of their tomato crop. There had been a series of bad years, and in 1963-4 the village was partially destroyed by floods. The peasants said they were now much indebted. A co-operative society was set up in 1963 and had 70 members. The peasants hoped that the society, which they said was theirs, would be able to free them from indebtedness to the Bihbahāni merchants. It was extremely difficult to disentangle the situation in this village; the peasants themselves admitted they were rent by faction. In spite of their complaints, they nevertheless allowed, when I spoke to them alone, that for the last two years they had been much better off because they were free; and that they no longer performed labour service. There was a teacher of domestic science (*murawij-i khānehdārī*) in the village, with whose work they seemed delighted.

Conditions in Tilehkūh, Silāvak and Badali, small hamlets or villages near Bihbahān, had improved somewhat since land reform. Tilehkūh was wholly distributed under the first stage; in the case of the other two hamlets, three *dāngs* were distributed under the first stage and three *dāngs* settled by tenancy under the second. There were nine ploughlands in Tilehkūh, watered partly from a channel linked with the River Mārūn from the village of Kurdistān and partly by springs. The peasants said they were free and no longer bothered by a large landowner; but economically their condition had not improved much. They alleged that when statistics had been collected under land reform there had been some dishonesty. Three ploughlands in the village were held by a Bihbahāni merchant and money-



lender, to whom the peasants were indebted. They declared that although he was originally only a *gābband* (who would not therefore have normally been given land under land reform), he had been given land by the land reform officials when they collected statistics for the first stage. Instalments for the land were being paid.

Badali had 21 ploughlands, which had been divided into three groups of seven ploughlands; after land reform began, the land was permanently allocated. The peasants said they had taken this step so that they could cultivate the land better. The land had formerly been only partly irrigated. Neither village had a co-operative society. About the end of 1965, or beginning of 1966, a loan had been obtained from the Agricultural Bank and a pump installed to give water to Badali and Silāvāk. It was managed by three of the elders (*mu'tamidīn*) of the village. Melons and vegetables had been sown, and some water given to a wheat crop. The peasants, while still obviously fairly poor, said they were much better off than before land reform: the land was now partly theirs and they had security. The share of the crops formerly taken by the landowners was one-fifth of winter and one-fourth of summer crops. Instalments for the land were being paid. The peasants said they were still indebted to merchants and saw little prospect, in existing circumstances, of paying off their debts.<sup>1</sup>

In Bihbahān the peasants before land reform were under heavy pressure from the landowners. When a considerable number of peasants received land under the first stage of the land reform, others had their expectations raised, and withheld the landowners' share of the crop; it was alleged in 1966 that the peasants were still acting in a rather unruly way. There was probably some truth in this allegation, but there had also been,

<sup>1</sup> Husaynābād-i Āqā, another small village in the neighbourhood, which belonged to several small owners, was not covered by the first stage of the land reform. As in Badali and Tilebkūh, a pump had been installed by a loan from the Agricultural Bank. The share of the crop taken by the landowner was also one-fifth of winter crops and one-fourth of summer. The people had been extremely poor and heavily indebted to Bihbahānī merchants, and before the pump was installed were considering emigrating. The pump was bought by the village as a whole and managed by three of the village elders. It had greatly improved the peasants' conditions. Much of their crops, however, still went in payment of their debts.

and probably still was, a good deal of provocation by the landowners. The Bihbahān district, however, has always been rent by faction, and some of the landowners were continuing to encourage this in the hope of impeding land reform.

The Kūhgilūyeh, as mentioned above, forms a rather special case. A number of villages were distributed in Chirām under the first stage. Poverty was still widespread. But there had been a series of bad years before and after land reform which would account for this, at least in part. There seemed to be considerable dissatisfaction with land reform both on the part of the peasants and the landowners. Some peasants I met alleged that land reform had not benefited them and that no one cared what happened to them (*kāh kas be hāl-i mā nist*).

Shīrāzī, a small village near Tilgird (Tuligird), was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The cost of the annual instalment due for the land worked out at about 280 *rs.* (c. £1. 5s.). Two instalments had been paid. Most of the peasants to whom land had been transferred held about half a ploughland, which was mainly irrigated. The peasants alleged that there had been a slight increase in the area under cultivation and a marked increase in production per acre. They said, however, that they could not use fertilizers because they were too poor to buy them. Flocks were kept in small numbers and grazed locally. There was some carpet weaving in the village. A co-operative society serving Shīrāzī and several neighbouring villages was established in 1964. It had 126 members. Loans had been given twice; one had been repaid and the second had not fallen due at the time of my visit. There had been some difficulty in obtaining the repayment of the first loan from four or five members who were in debt due to the succession of bad years. There had been considerable improvement in the village buildings since my last visit to the village in 1960. There was an agricultural extension office in Tilgird.

From the above account it will be realized that the difficulties to be overcome by land reform in the south, from the point of view of both the nature of the country and social conditions, were considerably more formidable than in the north, and possibilities of economic advance more limited. Progress



has been much slower and more uneven. But in many of the areas under consideration marked changes have taken place. In a number of cases the position of the peasants has improved and they have shown themselves capable of benefiting from the opportunities which have presented themselves.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST STAGE: THE WEST

---

THE west is primarily a grain growing area with a great deal of dry-farming. In the district between Sanandaj and Divân Darreh, Dasht-i Ūbātū, Tikāb, and Bijār there has been a great increase in the area under grain since land reform began. The newly cultivated area has mainly been brought into mechanized cultivation by large landowners, but peasants in these areas have also taken part in this activity. At one time grain was almost the only crop grown in some districts. In recent years there has been a greater diversification of crops. Sugar beet is grown under contract to the sugar factories, and since land reform there has been a great increase in the cultivation by the peasants of vegetable crops, and, in some areas of Kurdistan, of alfalfa crops. In a good year the yield on grain is high; but partial or total crop failures as a result of lack of rainfall are not uncommon. Flocks play an important part in the economy of much of the region. In many parts of Kirmānshāhān, Kurdistan, Tikāb, and Ilām there were outbreaks of foot and mouth disease (*tabaqa, shalaga*) in 1966, with heavy losses in some districts. The disease is probably endemic.

Communications have improved recently, but are still inadequate in some districts. The new road from Shāhābād to Ahvāz has opened up a considerable area of country. A great deal of road building has taken place in Kurdistan and was still going on in 1966. Some of the mountain villages in the Marivān area, however, still have no roads. Tikāb is virtually cut off for several months of the year, when rain and snow make the tracks across the hills impassable. Administratively Tikāb comes under Rizā'iyyeh but the co-operatives were being run from Sanandaj in 1966. Tikāb will, therefore, be considered in this chapter.

Large land ownership was formerly very widely spread in Tikāb, much of Kurdistan, and Kirmānshāhān. In the latter province a good deal of land changed hands during the past



twenty years or so. Landed estates in the Sanandaj area tended to be very large. Large landed proprietorship was also the dominant tenure in Saqqiz, but the size of the estates was rather smaller than in Sanandaj. In Kirmānshāhān, in addition to a number of very large landed proprietors, there were also several smaller and less influential landowners. In Marīvān and Ouramān there were many small landed proprietors living in the villages.

In Kurdistān and Kirmānshāhān the peasants were chiefly Kurds. This was also the case in most of Tikāb, although the landowners there were not mainly Kurds. In Ilām the population was mixed: the majority were Lurs except in Mihrān, where they were Arabs. There were also some Kurdish villages. In Mihrān in many areas the people still lived in tents rather than in permanent housing. Society in much of Kurdistān, parts of Kirmānshāhān, and Ilām was tribal, but not necessarily nomadic. This, as stated above, made land reform more difficult in some respects, but easier in others.

The proportion of the crop taken by the landowner under the crop-sharing agreement, which regulated the relations between the landowner and the peasants, was not as high in most parts of Kirmānshāhān and Kurdistān as in many other provinces, but the proportion actually taken was alleged by the peasants to have been rather higher than would appear from the nominal figure. Further, a considerable number of dues were levied; the incidence of labour service was heavy, and continued to be exacted in many areas even after it had been officially abolished during the rule of Dr. Muṣaddiq. Labour service, apart from its economic effects, emphasized the element of 'subjection' in the relation between the peasant and the landowner.

The condition of the peasants, on the whole, was formerly one of poverty, and they suffered great insecurity of tenure, which, as stated above, discouraged them from making efforts to improve their lot. Even after land reform there was still in some districts of Kirmānshāhān lack of confidence in the reform and confusion as to its aims. On the other hand the co-operative societies were almost everywhere well received and were felt to fulfil a need. The degree of literacy varied in different parts of the west. In Bijār and Bīlīvār it was low and was an obstacle to sustained progress.

Kurdistān, like Khūzistān, was in the past neglected by the government, and relations between the Kurds and government officials were often bad. As in Khūzistān—and for the same reason—conditions are now much better. In the frontier areas of Kurdistān, there has been a marked improvement in material conditions and in relations with the government. In 1956, when I last visited Marīvān, many of the peasants appeared to be poor and many of the children under-nourished. The atmosphere was one of sullen discontent towards the government and the landowners; and the peasants were subject to much tyranny by the khans and *begs* and by the gendarmerie. The spirit in the villages which I visited in 1966 was very different from that prevailing in 1956.

The first stage of the land reform began fairly early in Kirmānshāhān, but after a not unsatisfactory start it slowed up. In the summer of 1966 there were still several hundred disputed cases to be settled. A commission was to be sent in the autumn of that year to investigate the unsatisfactory state of land reform in the province. As a result of the delays over transfer and settlement, there was some discontent among the peasants and distrust of the intentions of the government over land reform. In many of the villages which had been transferred to the peasants under the first stage, there had been a delay—possibly deliberate—in the drawing up of documents for the transfer; consequently the Agricultural Bank had not yet demanded the payment of instalments on the land from the peasants. This was a highly unsatisfactory state of affairs because, apart from the uncertainty it engendered—and was probably intended to engender—a demand would probably be made at some time in the future for the simultaneous payment of two or three instalments; the peasants might then be unable to meet it or, not having paid for a number of years, might be unwilling to pay.

In many of the villages of Kirmānshāhān it was difficult to disentangle the tenure of the village. One source of confusion was that even if the landowner had legally transferred the title of some of his property to his heirs before land reform began, the local people still regarded the whole property as belonging to the original owner and referred to it as such. So far as the latter continued to draw the revenue from the property this was not



wholly unreasonable. To the casual observer there might thus appear to be irregularities, when this was not, in fact, always the case.

Complicated tenures were common. One such was Sarāb Nilūfar, a village on the edge of the Sanjābi country. The owner of half the village had died after land reform began. One and a half *dāngs* of his land had been transferred to the peasants, and the rest had passed by inheritance to his daughters. The remainder of the village was a private *vagf*. The land transferred to the peasants consisted of 70 *kharvārs* of good land, which, however, had no water and needed two pumps to raise water from the river to irrigate it, and half of a parcel of land near the village, together with the water which irrigated it, the other half being *vagf* land. This land was growing summer crops in 1966. Formerly the peasants had grown only grain. They said that the cultivation of summer crops, which had begun after land reform, had made a great difference to them economically.

Under the crop-sharing agreement, the peasants had paid one third of the crops to the landowner, and one *mann* of clarified butter and two chickens per ploughland; labour service was also exacted. One-third was still being paid on the one and a half *dāngs* which had passed to the former owner's daughters; and as far as I could understand in 1966 one-third was also being demanded from the one and a half *dāngs* transferred under the first stage to the peasants, even though payment of the instalments due on the land had been demanded in 1965 (but not paid because it had been a bad year). One-third was also paid by the peasants on the *vagf* land which they cultivated. There were disputes with a neighbouring landowner over the water rights of a large pond or lake on the outskirts of the village, of which he had partially usurped possession before the purchase of the village by the late owner.

A co-operative society was established in the village in 1963, and also served a neighbouring village. It had 52 members. Loans had been given twice. The first had been repaid, but the second had not yet fallen due when I visited the village. A loan had been given by the Agricultural Bank to the peasants prior to the establishment of the co-operative society, and was still outstanding. Apart from this and the loan to the co-operative

society, it was alleged that there was no other indebtedness. 1964 and 1965 had been bad years and in 1966 there was damage to the harvest from hail. There had also been losses to livestock from disease. The peasants seemed troubled and overcast; but all, except one man, who said they were worse off, insisted that their conditions had improved since land reform. They were clearly not happy, but I had the impression that their satisfaction at being 'free' was genuine—even though this 'freedom' seemed to be somewhat limited. One man compared his 'freedom' to the condition of someone who had a *mann* of gold in his house.

Small portions of some of the Gūrān villages were transferred to the peasants under the first stage. Two such were Gourājūb-i Bābā Karam and Zayd 'Alī, four *dāngs* of each of which were transferred. These and a number of other small villages were served by a co-operative society situated in the village of Gourājūb-i Murād Beg, which had 72 members. The main crops grown were grain, tobacco, and pulses. Flocks were kept, but in small numbers. Under the crop-sharing agreement, the landowners had formerly taken one-third of irrigated crops and one-fifth of unirrigated crops; this was still taken in the summer of 1966 in that portion of the villages which had not been transferred. Dues of various kinds had also formerly been levied, and the peasants alleged that they, their wives, and children had been at the beck and call of the landowners, for whom, they alleged, they had had to work for some four months in the year. Since land reform, fertilizers and pesticides were being used, and in some of the villages the area under gardens had increased. The co-operative society had given members loans twice; the first had been repaid in full. The second had not fallen due when I visited the village in 1966. The society had an agency for the sale of oil. The members seemed well satisfied with their society. When I asked to whom it belonged, they replied that it belonged to the people. One man, who said it belonged to the government, was shouted down by the others. It was said that formerly the fore-selling of crops had been very common, and that loans had been obtained locally and from the landowners at very high rates of interest.

In Gourājūb-i Murād Beg there was a school with six classes



and 150 pupils. It was said that girls had begun to go to school since land reform and now attended freely. There was no mosque or public bath in the village, but the members of the co-operative society hoped to build both eventually. Roads were being built by communal effort.

In a group of five villages centred on Naṣrābād-i Sayyid Aḥmad off the Kirmānshāh-Qaṣr-i Shīrīn road, not far from Qaṣr-i Shīrīn, the picture was similar. These villages had formerly belonged to one of the largest landowners in the Kirmānshāh province. Five *dāngs* and one-eighteenth were transferred to the peasants. According to the crop-sharing agreement, the peasants had formerly paid one-fourth of unirrigated and one-third of irrigated crops to the owner. It was alleged that he took in fact almost half of the crops. In addition a due known as *zābīlāneh* was levied and labour service exacted. Ploughing and sowing were done by tractors, which were hired at the cost of 600 rs. (£2 14s.) per hectare for both operations. Grain crops were unirrigated. There was some summer cropping, vegetables, and fruit. Fertilizers, which had not been used before land reform, were now used; and the peasants said they worked harder.

The co-operative society which served these villages was situated in Naṣrābād-i Sayyid Aḥmad. It had 125 members, including two women. There appeared to be no clash of interests between the different villages which formed the society. Loans had been given twice; the first one had been repaid; the second had not fallen due when I visited the village in 1966. It was alleged that there had been indebtedness in the villages when land reform began, but that the peasants had paid off their debts by 1966. It was said that whereas there had only been one radio in the five villages before land reform, there were now several, and the peasants' houses were better furnished. They had built premises for the co-operative society, which had an agency for the sale of paraffin. Formerly neither boys nor girls went to school. Now there was a school with six classes. The literacy rate was low among the adult population, but all the members of the executive committee of the society were literate.

The neighbouring village of Naṣrābād-i Sarāb was the landowner's 'chosen' village. The peasants there, in reply to a question from me, said that they would like to be 'free' like peasants

on land which had been subject to transfer under the first stage of land reform, but that now they were nevertheless better off because they suffered much less tyranny. The peasants of another village in the neighbourhood, Jigarlū Āqā Birār, said that their conditions had improved out of all recognition after land was transferred to them, although the former owner of the village still attempted to exercise influence in it. There had been some building in the village since the reform. The co-operative society seemed to function well.

Portions of some eleven villages, all served by the Pul-i Māhīt co-operative society (on the Kirind side of Pul-i Zuhāb), were transferred to the peasants under the first stage. These villages had also been owned mainly by one of the large landowning families of Kirmānshāhān, and had been subject to the first stage of the land reform in varying degrees:  $4\frac{1}{2}$  *dāngs* in Pul-i Māhīt, 5 in Rīzehvand, 'Alī Akbar, and Chālkeh, 2 in Ā'ineh,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in Mahakī and Mahakī Mahramāt, 3 in Rīzālīk, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in Mahakī Amīn, Kūkū, Barzehlek, and Panj Sūtūn. Formerly the landowners' share of irrigated and unirrigated crops under the crop-sharing agreement was one-fourth; but it was alleged that in fact over a half was taken on various pretexts. Dues on clarified butter and hens were also levied and labour service exacted. Until recently grain had been the only crop grown. Some cotton and other summer crops and vegetables were now cultivated. Fertilizers had been used only since land reform.

The co-operative society had 243 members, including a few women. It held an agency for the sale of oil. It was hoped by the members that it would undertake marketing and the provision of seed and tractors, etc. The chairman of the executive committee was also the village headman. There had been no building in the village, except for a house which the headman was building for himself, but it was alleged that, in general, the peasants' houses were better furnished than formerly. There had been a school up to the third class before land reform. After land reform three more classes were added. Classes for adults were held in winter.

Shirkhān and the two neighbouring villages of Bālājūb and Zibājūb in Dīnavar were another example of the successful operation of land reform and also illustrated some of the difficul-



ties encountered. Bālājūb-i Shīrkhān had belonged to two men. Half was bought by the government from one of the owners under the cabinet decree of 1 March 1962. The other half was not subject to the first stage of land reform.<sup>1</sup> Formerly the landowners took one-third of all crops including straw, and four hens, one *mann-i shāh* of clarified butter, one sheep per ploughland, and labour service. The headman was exempted from these payments. A new headman had been brought in from another village, allegedly to stir up trouble in the village because after land reform began the old headman had prevented the landowner from mechanizing some of his land. There was no school in the village; it was alleged that the new headman opposed the opening of a school and the establishment of a doctor there. The village council had piped the village water supply about 1962. There were a few flocks. Formerly a pasture due was paid to the landowners; now nothing was paid for the right to use the pastures but a due of about 10 *rs.* (c. 11d.) per sheep and goat and 30 *rs.* (c. 25. 9d.) per cow was levied by the government when animals were slaughtered. There was some carpet weaving in the village.

The peasants seemed well pleased with land reform. They said they were now free, and were planting trees and gardens and using fertilizers (which they had not done before). In the first years of land reform, the landowners were alleged to have destroyed plantations planted by the villagers. In 1963 the manager of the co-operative society had made a garden, about an acre in extent, in which he grew vines and vegetables. For the first two years he had not paid much attention to it, because he had not known if he would be allowed to keep it. In 1966, the third year, his confidence in the land reform having increased, he had cultivated the garden with care; and when I saw it, it looked in good condition. There were several other small gardens, one at least made on land which was formerly waste. It was claimed that the land was now being better cultivated.

<sup>1</sup> Under the second stage the owner selected division. Accordingly, the land was surveyed and divided, two-thirds going to the peasants, the remaining one-third being cultivated by him with paid labour. There was little difference in the quality of the land, and agreement was reached on its reallocation between the two parties, the landowner getting land further away from the village but more suitable for working by tractor.

Huge mounds of stone, which had been removed from the fields since land reform, were to be seen on the edge of the peasants' land.

The manager of the co-operative society said that although he was only thirty-one years old he had moved five times (in all cases in the Dinavar district) because of the tyranny of the landowners; he had been some seven years in Bālājūb-i Shirkhān. He said the price of the land sold to the peasants under the land reform law was very low, and that he would be able to pay the total price for the land transferred to him in one year. Before land reform his income had been 30 *kharvārs* of grain. Now, with his share in half the village transferred under the first stage and his share in two-thirds of the other half settled under the second stage, his income was 50 *kharvārs* of grain with some sugar beet and vegetables in addition. I spent some time talking to the peasants (men, women, and children), who seemed satisfied and happy. On seeing a girl doing some raffia work, I asked what she was making. A woman answered that it was a cover to put over food and said, 'We've become khans: we now eat rice!'

In Diār in Sanjābī, conditions did not appear to be very satisfactory. But I was told that in some of the other villages in the area which had been wholly transferred to the peasants under the first stage conditions were better. This village had formerly belonged to one of the main landowning families of Kirmānshāhān and was later acquired by two individuals, one a local merchant and the other a Bakhtiārī, whose family had moved from Isfahān to Kirmānshāh about a hundred years ago. Half the village was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The other half was settled by tenancy under the second stage. The village consisted of twenty ploughlands, and some twenty peasants had received land. Some of the peasants held two or three ploughlands and had small gardens, but most of the holdings were too small to support a family. The share of the landowner under the former crop-sharing agreement was one-third of all crops, irrigated and unirrigated. Two chickens and two loads of straw were taken per ploughland and labour service also exacted.

A co-operative society was set up in 1965, serving Diār and two other villages. It had 103 members. A loan had been given



once to the members. Its repayment had not fallen due at the time of my visit in the summer of 1966. The society also sold fertilizers. The manager was the village headman, who appeared to have acquired much of the best land in the village and to have mechanized it. The peasants were, I think, discontented, and seemed to feel that there was no authority to whom they could take their complaints and from whom they could get a fair hearing. The standard of cultivation in the village was low and the crops dirty, which is usually a sign of a discontented village. I had the impression (though I may be wrong) that the headman now exploited the village, and that the former landlords continued here, and possibly elsewhere in the Sanjābi country, to exercise influence through the headmen and to draw revenue from their former lands.

This distrust and lack of confidence in the execution and aims of the land reform were to be seen among the peasants in some other districts of Kirmānshāhān also. In Razīn in Bīlīvār one *dāng* was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The other five *dāngs* were to be settled by division under the second stage, two-fifths to go to the owner and three-fifths to the peasants. The settlement had not been completed by the summer of 1966 because of disputes over the division of the land between the two parties. It was alleged that the late owner of the land had mechanized the best land in the village some 12 or 15 years ago. He had died after land reform began and the five *dāngs* which he had retained under the first stage had been divided among his heirs. The village land, consisting of 45 ploughlands, was partly irrigated and partly unirrigated. Lots were cast annually for the water. On six days out of every nine it went to the peasants and on three to the mechanized land held by the landowners. The main crops were wheat and barley, marrows grown for seed, lentils, and an oil seed called *gāvdānch*. The peasants said that there had been no increase in cultivation or productivity since land reform, but that they were better off because they no longer paid dues or performed labour service. There were some 2,000 head of sheep and goats in the village, which were run as seven joint flocks. The individual peasants had customary rights to certain mountain pastures; and no pasture dues were paid. A co-operative society was set up in 1965. It had 43 members, and

had made one loan to them. Formerly the landowner gave the peasants advances.

The peasants appeared to be uncertain over the position of this village. The late landowner's share under the crop-sharing agreement had been two-fifths. After one *dāng* of the village was transferred under the first stage of the land reform, his share on the remaining five *dāngs* was raised to one-third. This was contrary to the land reform law, but the peasants admitted they had not complained to the land reform office. When I asked them why, they said that it was no use because no one listened to them. They had apparently been instructed by the local land reform office to pay the new landowners' share of the crop in 1966 as under the former crop-sharing agreement. Other irregularities were alleged by the peasants.

Upper Surnī, Upper and Lower Sulṭān Qulī, Bahrāmābād and Hānkar and three *dāngs* of Gurūrān, six other villages in Bīlīvār, were also transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The peasants had documents for the transfer of the land except in the case of Gurūrān, but no payment had been demanded from them. The landowner formerly took two-fifths of the crops and 4½ kg. clarified butter and some chickens per ploughland, and exacted labour service at irregular intervals. The six villages were served by one co-operative society, which had 111 members. The peasants said that there had been no increase in the area of cultivation since land reform, but possibly a very slight increase in production. They alleged that they took more care over the cultivation of the land. Before land reform it had been redistributed by the landowner at intervals. The peasants said conditions were much better because the land was now theirs. There had been much new building and repair to old buildings since land reform.

Many of the villages of Bijār were partly transferred to the peasants under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. The main crop in most of the villages was unirrigated grain, of which the landowner formerly took one-fifth. Carpet weaving and the keeping of flocks in many places played an important part in the local economy. This was the case in Chashmeh Sangīn, 54 out of 96 *shā'irs* of which were transferred to the peasants under the first stage. Relations with the landowner appeared to have been



fairly good. He had formerly provided the peasants with advances. In some of the neighbouring villages, however, it was not customary for the landowners to give advances. There was much new building in Chashmeh Sangīn. In 1966 the peasants compared their situation favourably to villages settled under the second stage, in which they alleged there was much oppression and many disputes.

The land of Chashmeh Sangīn was mainly unirrigated grain land, suitable for cultivation by tractor; and there was in this village, as in many others in Bijār, difficulty over the supply of tractors. Any major increase in land under cultivation involved their use. Few of the peasants had sufficient reserves to enable them to buy tractors, nor were the co-operative societies in 1966 able to advance funds for this. Consequently in many cases the peasants were forced to conclude agreements with the former landowners for the use of their tractors. The latter, who also usually gave the seed, received half the crop in return for ploughing and sowing, such agreements being known as *nīmeh-kār* agreements; in some cases the owner of the tractor took two-thirds of the crop.

Tāzehābād, also in Bijār, was transferred to the peasants under the first stage with notably favourable results. This also was a district in which only wheat and barley were grown before land reform. The peasants had no supplementary source of income except some carpet weaving and a few flocks. Stock raising, however, did not play an important part in the village economy. In 1966 the rate of barrenness in the village flocks was high owing to lack of pasture in the preceding year. The owner had formerly taken one-fifth of the crops,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  *manns* of clarified butter, 50 *rs.* (c. 4s. 7d.) *mālīāt*, and a due called *kamāneh*, amounting to 20 *manns* grain per ploughland, 1 chicken per household, and 1 shearling (*shīshak*) per village. There was no labour service. Fore-selling was common before land reform. When the land was transferred, the landowner retained some mechanized land and two ploughlands, the peasants of which had left the village before land reform, and which had not been filled up. As in Chashmeh Sangīn the peasants had *nīmehkār* agreements with the former owner for ploughing.

Three instalments for the land had been paid; the amount of

each instalment was less than the share formerly paid to the landowner. There had been an increase in cultivation since land reform; and the peasants said they now had security, which they had not had before, and so cultivated the land better. Formerly, it was alleged, faction had been stirred up in the village by the landowner.

A co-operative society was set up in 1963. It had some 115 members and served also two other villages, Qarāpālchūq and İdehlū. In 1965 the loans made to members of the Tāzehābād society were put in a common fund, with which two 15-h.p. Lister pumps had been bought. Water was raised from the river (the bed of which in the village area is below the level of the land) and some 45 ha. (111 acres) of waste (*bāyır*) land were brought into cultivation. It was divided into 9 *jūqs*, each containing three ploughlands, and worked by 27 peasants from Tāzehābād; working costs, including expenditure on the pump, were divided among them, under the supervision of the manager of the co-operative society, who was also the headman of the village.<sup>1</sup> It was hoped to start a similar scheme in İdehlū in 1967. It was comparatively rare for all the peasants in the village to join together in this way for a joint enterprise. The manager was the only literate member of the co-operative society. There had been a mixed school to the fifth class in Tāzehābād for five or six years; but only a few girls attended it.

Land reform in Kurdistan suffered an early setback owing to alleged corruption among the land reform officials, a number of whom were removed from the province in 1963. After that considerable progress was made. The number of estates outstanding under the first stage in February 1966 was proportionately more than in Kirmānshāhān, but the landowners appeared to have lost their influence to a greater extent than in the latter province; the general impression was one of greater wellbeing among the peasants, and satisfaction on their part with the progress of land reform.

It was, however, difficult to ascertain to what extent docu-

<sup>1</sup> The scheme was in fact to fail. The manager muddled the accounts and eventually in 1967 defaulted. He claimed that some of the members had failed to pay their share of the expenses. This was a case of overburdening a society not yet ready to undertake projects requiring managerial competence. As a result the members lost their confidence in the society.



ments had been distributed to the peasants to whom land had been transferred in Kurdistān under the first stage. They were stated by the land reform office to have been distributed, but observation in the field in the summer of 1966 did not entirely bear this out. Whereas there had been a general reluctance on the part of the peasants in Kirmānshāhān to accept documents under the first stage, this had not been the case in Kurdistān, except for a temporary refusal by the peasants of four or five villages. The attitude of the peasants in the two provinces differed, because in Kurdistān the first stage had affected mainly large landowners who, through the influence they exercised, had paid a low rate of taxation, while in Kirmānshāhān the first stage had included a number of smaller and less influential landowners, who had paid a higher rate of taxation. The price of the land under the first stage to the peasants in Kurdistān was, therefore, low. In Kirmānshāhān there was more variation; when the peasants in one village saw their fellows in a neighbouring district were paying relatively less for their land, they refused or were reluctant to accept documents.

The peasants in the villages which I visited in Kurdistān in the summer of 1966 seemed well pleased with land reform, as, for example, in Mūchish, situated between Kāmyārān and Qurveh. This and three neighbouring villages had formerly belonged to two of the large landowning families of Kurdistān. Part of three of the villages had been transferred to the peasants under the first stage, and the remainder sold to them under the second stage. Formerly the owners took one-fifth of irrigated and unirrigated crops; and many dues. The fourth village was the owners' 'chosen' village and was to be settled by tenancy under the second stage. No instalments had been demanded for the land by the summer of 1966 and there was then no definite information about the price the peasants would have to pay. Some, nevertheless, thought that they might have to borrow to pay. There had been some increase in the area under cultivation since land reform, and, it was alleged, in productivity per acre. Tractors were not yet much used. The peasants said they now ploughed more often and more carefully, and watered the land better. A good deal of building was going on in the village.

The peasants seemed delighted with the change in their

conditions. They said, 'We were formerly the slaves (*bardeh*) of the landowner: now we are free and we have experienced in the last two or three years things which our fathers never even imagined.' A co-operative society was set up in 1962 by the officials of the land reform organization and the Agricultural Bank. It served the four villages and had some 230 members. Loans had been given three times and twice repaid; the third had not fallen due when I visited the village in the summer of 1966. The members seemed to have a definite feeling of loyalty towards the co-operative society. There were a few *khunishish-inkā* in Mūchish, and some agricultural and manual labourers, numbering about thirty-two in all. They said their conditions also had improved because there was more work for them to do and they were able to buy the goods (paraffin and sugar) which the co-operative society sold.

Hasanābād, near Sanandaj, was transferred to the peasants under the first stage, some two hundred families receiving land. Apparently some three or four years before the land reform had begun the peasants, to quote their own words, had started to wake up; the landowner had tried to mechanize the land when the reform began (or shortly before), but they had prevented him from doing so. There had, it seems, been some difficulty over the title to the land, and documents for the transfer had been given to the peasants only about February 1966. No payment had been demanded from the peasants by the summer of that year. They were keen to obtain full ownership of the land, and declared that they were ready to pay the instalments due, if these were demanded.

There was said to have been a great increase in the area cultivated since land reform, so much so that pasture had become short. Part of the village land, however, had been taken by the government to make an airfield, and there was some discontent over this. It was also alleged that there had been an increase in productivity per acre. There had been a great improvement in the village in housing conditions and cleanliness since land reform. This was probably largely due to the presence in the village of a domestic science teacher (*muravij-i khānehdārī*). There was a school up to the sixth class in the village. Girls, however, did not (in 1966) attend in any numbers



because there was no woman teacher. The peasants said that they wanted some village industry started, to give them occupation in periods when agriculture was slack.

Interest rates were said to have been high and indebtedness common before land reform. There had been a pre-land reform co-operative society in the village, with members from three other villages also, but it had not been effective. After land reform the society was reorganized. Loans had been given three times; two had been repaid by all except two members; repayment of the third had not fallen due when I visited the village in the summer of 1966. The peasants alleged they were now free of debt except to the co-operative society. Fertilizers, which had not been used before, were sold by the society, as were pesticides, sugar, and cloth. Premises were being built by the members for the society. Three or four members had joined together to buy a tractor. Considerable progress had been made in Ḥasanābād, but the situation was not altogether satisfactory. Faction still existed, perhaps stirred up, in part, by the headman, who had held office since before land reform; and the members of the society did not work together.<sup>1</sup>

Qār, near Sanandaj, a village which had belonged to one of the largest landowning families of Kurdistan, was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The owner had retained the gardens and some land which he worked by mechanized means. It was alleged that about 1956 or 1958 he had taken the best land from the peasants for mechanization. The land was mainly unirrigated, and the peasants formerly paid one-fifth of unirrigated and half of irrigated crops to the owner, with two-thirds of the produce of fruit trees. The peasants had some irrigated land, but apparently the *qanāt* which watered it was owned jointly by them and the landowner. No work had been done on it for four or five years (i.e. since before land reform started), and it was drying up. The peasants had some flocks, but these did not play an important part in the village economy. Dues (*sar jufti*) and bride money (*sūrāneh*) were formerly levied and heavy labour service exacted. Three instalments had been paid for the land. The amount of the instalments varied from 500 *rs.* (c. £2) to 3,000 *rs.* (c. £14) according to the area held.

<sup>1</sup> By 1968 there had been a great improvement in this society.

This was said, in a good year, to be less than the share formerly paid to the landowner.

A co-operative society was set up in 1963. The manager, whose family, like a number of other families, had been five or six generations in the village, had held office since the beginning of land reform. He was also chairman of the village council, which served five villages. The co-operative society had 42 members. Its capital had increased since its foundation. It sold paraffin and cloth but not fertilizers, since most of the land was unirrigated. The former headman had been on the executive committee of the co-operative society but had made trouble; and so he had not been re-elected in 1965. The society bought and its members read the *Dihqān* newspaper and the *Tā'āvun-i Irān*, the paper started by the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation in 1966. The manager was optimistic with regard to the future of the society. Formerly, there had been fore-selling of crops and indebtedness. In 1966 the only indebtedness of the peasants was said to be to the co-operative society. A considerable amount of new building and repair to old buildings had been carried out in the village. The peasants alleged that if they had tried to undertake new building before land reform they would have been turned out of the village. A school was being built in 1966, paid for by the 2 per cent collected by the village council and a small grant from the department of education. The existing school was run by a member of the literacy corps. Classes for adults were held in winter.

In some villages of Kurdistan, as in Kirmānshāhān, there appeared in 1966 still to have been irregularities in the collection by the former landowners of a share of the crop from land which had been transferred to the peasants under the first stage of land reform. Thus at Kilāneh, a small village near Sanandaj, one *dāng* of which was bought by the government under the first stage, it was alleged that the former owner had collected a share of the crop in 1965. The amount taken by him under the former crop-sharing agreement was one-fifth of irrigated and unirrigated crops. The village land was short and mainly occupied by gardens. It was said that it had been divided into six ploughlands in the time of Nādir Shāh (reg. 1736-47), and later fragmented into thirty. Since land reform it was alleged that



there had been some increase in the area under cultivation and in productivity per acre.

A co-operative society was established in 1963 and served another village, Zindān, as well. It had 185 members. It sold fertilizers and had an agency for the sale of paraffin; and in 1965 had sold seed grain. The chairman of the executive committee in 1966 was a cheerful and fine-looking old man with a large white beard, said to be ninety years old, who had been the oldest member at the peasants' congress held in Tehrān in January 1963. There was a great deal of new building in the village when I visited it in the summer of 1966; and the mosque, a clean and spacious building, had been newly painted. Formerly, there had been no radios in the village. In 1966 there were said to be eighty.

Disputed tenure held up settlement in some of the villages of Kurdistan. In Īsīābād (Īsābād) and Tāziābād, off the Sanandaj-Marivān road, eleven out of ninety-six *sha'irs* of the village land were sold to the government under the first stage and transferred to the peasants. In Īsīābād there had formerly been 10 ploughlands; these had been sub-divided into 45. The total population was about 700 persons, of whom 115 had received (or would receive) land. Thirty-eight *sha'irs* of the remaining land were private *vaqf* and 47 *sha'irs* charitable *vaqf*. The *mutavallī*, or administrator, had formerly owned the other eleven *sha'irs*. The peasants, however, maintained that nine *sha'irs* of the private *vaqf* ought to have been transferred to them under the first stage. The dispute was holding up the settlement of the land under the second stage.

It was further alleged in Tāziābād in 1966 that the *vaqf* revenue was not being given to the village as laid down in the *vaqf-nāmah*, and that the former owner had collected and sold the gum tragacanth from the village pastures, whereas it should have been sold by the co-operative society. The land reform office was looking into this complaint in the summer of 1966. One-fifth of irrigated and unirrigated crops had formerly been taken by the landowner and was still being levied on the *vaqf* land, less 5 per cent on irrigated land and 10 per cent on unirrigated land as laid down in Article 24 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Dues and labour service had also been

levied formerly. The peasants had some flocks and customary rights to mountain pasturage.

A co-operative society serving Īsiābād and Tāziābād was set up in 1963. Loans had been given twice; the first one had been repaid, but the second had not yet fallen due when I visited the village in the summer of 1966. Formerly the fore-selling of crops was common; and when land reform began the peasants were indebted, but they said in 1966 that they had paid off their debts. The co-operative society had an agency for the sale of paraffin. Fertilizer had been sold once; and the members were well satisfied with the improvement in the tobacco crop which had resulted from its use. Before land reform there had been no summer cropping. Although the land had not yet been settled under the second stage and only a small proportion had been transferred under the first stage, the peasants said that they were much better off, but it was still difficult to obtain a good livelihood. Conditions, according to them, had formerly been deplorable: 'We were not human beings (*ādām nabūdīm*),' they said. They had no security and had been forced to spend much of their time defending the landowner from marauders. The village seemed to be free of faction. There were a number of new houses. The peasants said that before land reform it had been impossible for them to build new houses, because the landowner would not allow them to do so. A member of the extension corps was stationed in Īsiābād and had done some spraying of crops. The peasants were highly satisfied with this. There was a member of the literacy corps in a neighbouring village; and both boys and girls attended the school.

In Zhāvehirūd a number of villages were transferred to the peasants under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Among them were Burīdar and Māzībun, situated in rough mountain country, difficult of access and without roads. The main crop grown was tobacco; some grain and fruit were also grown. Burīdar was a large well-kept village. The former owner had taken one-fifth of all crops, irrigated and unirrigated, and dues in money and kind, including clarified butter, kids, and hens, and the incidence of labour service had been heavy. In Māzībun each family had paid the landowner annually two hens, one kid, and one load of charcoal, delivered in Sanandaj.



The landowner's agent also levied two *manns* per *kharman* and 200 *rs.* (c. 18s.) from the village as a whole whenever he came there (usually once a year) by way of *manzil mubārikeh*. Bride money (*sūrāneh*) was also paid in both villages. During the Muşaddiq period there had been some alleviation in the matter of the levy of dues; after Dr. Muşaddiq's fall they were again levied until 1962, since when they had ceased.

No documents for the transfer of the land had been given to the peasants in Buridar by the summer of 1966, but it was said that they had been drawn up and were ready for distribution. Formerly the share of the crop and the dues paid by a peasant in cash and kind came to some 2,000 *rs.* (c. £9), whereas the annual instalment would be 1,100 *rs.* (c. £5). Before land reform there had been seven ploughlands in Buridar. These, it was stated, had been increased to a hundred, and much additional land was now sown.

The co-operative society had 149 members. When it was first established, some of the peasants had refrained from joining it because they doubted its integrity, but these doubts had been rapidly removed. Loans had been given twice. The society also sold cloth, oil, and paraffin. The peasants seemed well satisfied with it. They said that until land reform they had laboured under oppression (*tā hālā zīr-i zulm būdim*).

The Māzibun co-operative society was founded in 1964 and had fifty-two members. Loans had been given twice. Prior to the setting up of the society, money had been borrowed from the local shopkeeper, who had, in turn, borrowed from merchants. Paraffin was sold by the society to the people of Māzibun and the surrounding villages. Some of the peasants had paid one, and some two, instalments for their land. The instalment due from the manager of the co-operative society came to 800 *rs.* (c. £4) per annum, whereas formerly he had paid the landowner some 3,000 *rs.* (c. £14) in cash and kind as his share of the crop and various dues. Some of the peasants in Māzibun said they had occupied their land for generations; others said they had been moved about by the landowner's agent. The manager, who seemed an intelligent person, wrote up part of the books and kept them neatly. There was a school to the sixth class in both Buridar and Māzibun. I was

considerably impressed by those members of the Buridar and Māzibun co-operatives societies whom I met. Although they lived in a remote region, they appeared to have a good idea of the purposes of co-operative societies.

A large number of villages in Tikāb were transferred to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform. Fairly typical of these villages were Lower and Upper Ahmadābād. The main crop was grain. There were a few small gardens and small plantations of trees, which, as in several other villages, had been sold by the landowner to the peasants. Formerly the landowner's share of the crop had been one-fifth, he had also levied one chicken per family, one *hamadāni manā* of clarified butter, and some straw, commuted to 200 *rs.* (c. 18s.), and 100 *rs.* (c. 9s.) *mālīāt* (tax) per ploughland, and labour service at the rate of 5 men (*naḡars*) per family for several days per annum, sometimes commuted to money. No instalments for the land had been paid by the summer of 1966. It was said that the Agricultural Bank had no officials available for the collection of the money.

A co-operative society was set up in 1963 to serve the two villages. Loans had been given twice; the first was repaid, but the second had not fallen due when I visited the village in the summer of 1966. Prior to land reform the peasants had not received, they alleged, advances from the landowner, but had borrowed from other sources and obtained goods largely by barter. Since land reform, there had been an increase in the area under cultivation and an increase in productivity per acre, due to better cultivation and the use of manure. There had been some new building and repairs to old buildings in both villages, which appeared to be well-built and well-kept. The peasants alleged that the landowner had not allowed them to build new houses before land reform; also that their holdings were frequently changed by him or his agent, and that the latter stirred up faction among them. Now, they alleged, they were united. There was a school with about 100 pupils, all boys, which had been running for some six years.

In general, despite uncertainties and, perhaps, in some cases a lack of vigour on the part of officials in pushing on with land reform, by the summer of 1966 there had been a marked improvement in social and economic conditions in those villages



in Kirmānshāhān and Kurdistān in which the first stage of the land reform had been implemented. The sense of freedom of the peasants in these villages was noticeable, and offered a great contrast to the morale of the peasants in the area in pre-land reform times. The almost invariable comment they made was, 'We are free.' This sense of freedom, moreover, expressed itself in an increase in the area of cultivation where land was available, in better cultivation of existing land, and in the building of better housing and the repair of existing housing. There had also been a marked decrease in the fore-selling of crops, and in some cases a cessation of this practice altogether, and a decline in indebtedness. One of the main reasons given by the peasants for the improvement in their conditions was the abolition of dues, (*'avāriz, rusūmāt*), and labour service. These had been especially onerous in the west and had constituted an economic burden. They also contained an element of 'subjection', which was socially and politically degrading. Their disappearance was regarded by the peasants everywhere as a great relief.

The extent to which this was felt was illustrated by the case of Hasanābād, near Ravānsar, a village of 53 ploughlands worked by 46 families. As in many neighbouring villages, flocks played an important part in the local economy, each family having 100 to 150 head of sheep, or sheep and goats. The main crops were grain, peas, sugar beet, lentils, and the oil-seed, *gāvdāneh*. Part of Hasanābād, like many of the villages in this part of Persia, was worked before land reform by the landowner himself with free labour provided by the peasants, such land being known as *khālīqeh*. On the remainder of the village land, the landowner received one third of the crops under the crop-sharing agreement. One-third of the village land was subject to transfer to the peasants under the first stage. The transfer was, however, held up, because the owner claimed that the land was part of his *intikhabī* land, i.e. part of the land which he retained to make up his 'chosen' village.

Under the second stage the landowner originally selected division for the remaining two-thirds of the village land. A difference arose between the two parties concerning the division of the land: the landowner wished to consolidate his share of the land (as the law provides), but the peasants alleged that he was

trying to take the best land. As a result the settlement was held up; and in the summer of 1966 the peasants were still apparently paying the landowner's share of the crop on the whole village, with the exception of one-fifth of the former *khālīseh*, which the landowner was cultivating himself by mechanized means with paid labour; the remaining four-fifths of the *khālīseh* had been taken over by the peasants, and they were paying on it a share of the crop to the landowner as in the rest of the village. They did not, however, as before, pay dues of clarified butter or chickens etc., or perform labour service.

They said that, although they still paid the landowner's share of the crop, they were now much better off. Their houses were better furnished; they had carpets and radios, and some forty of their children went to the school run by the literacy corps. They stated (with some exaggeration but evident satisfaction), 'We were peasants. Now we run our own affairs (*az rā'īyyatī shudīm āgā*).'<sup>1</sup> A co-operative society was set up in 1964 and served three other villages. By 1966 its capital had increased by about 40 per cent. Formerly the peasants had obtained loans from local sources at very high rates of interest, amounting sometimes, they alleged, to 100 per cent. In the summer of 1966, they said they had no debts except to the co-operative society.

In Ilām the situation was complicated by the fact that some of the villages which were formerly owned by Reżā Shāh had been settled by the Pahlavī foundation while others were transferred under the land reform. In the former case, the land was divided into plots of equal size and distributed by lot among the peasants, the field lay-out of the village being thus broken up. This was the case in Charmilleh Ayyān, Chardāval, Zangvān, Āsmānābād, and Sar Āsmānābād. These villages were formerly part of Reżā Shāh's estates, having before that belonged, in part, to the Vālī of Pusht-i Kūh and, in part, to one of the large landowners of the Kirmānshāh province. The land had in all cases been divided by lot. At least some of the peasants were dissatisfied, and said that the distribution made by the land reform department, which did not break up the field lay-out of the village, was much better.

Sarāb Ayyān, which also formerly belonged to Reżā Shāh,



consisted of 19 ploughlands, and was transferred under the land reform to some 150 families. They each paid 1,500-2,000 *rs.* (c. £7-9) per annum for the land. Formerly they had paid to the administration of the crown estates one-third of irrigated crops and one-fourth of unirrigated crops; on the share remaining to them, 6 per cent was levied by way of *zābitāneh* and 2 per cent as a due for the village headman; labour service, which was usually exacted per ploughland, was heavy. The peasants alleged that the administrators of the crown estates had formerly exercised much oppression. They were now much better off. They took greater trouble over the cultivation of their land because it was their own; and some, using animal manure, now took two crops annually off irrigated land. There had been a great deal of stone-clearing from the fields since land reform, and some gardens had been made. Most of their land, however, was unirrigated. Land was short; but there had been an increase in the area cultivated, because some pasture land had been sown. There had been difficulty with the forestry administration over this.

A co-operative society was formed in 1964 and had 169 members. Formerly the peasants had borrowed money from Kirmānshāh or locally. They were still indebted, but less so than formerly. The co-operative society had an agency for the sale of paraffin. Sugar also was sold and negotiations were going on for the sale of cloth. Roads in the village had been made by the local people under the supervision of the co-operative society. There had also been a great deal of building in Sarāb Ayvān and neighbouring villages since land reform. Formerly there had been no security in the area from raiders. For this reason stables were built as part of the houses. This was now being changed.

In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to show something of the operation of the first stage of the land reform in different parts of the country. My visits did not cover all districts; but the villages selected probably represent a cross section of the country. The number of villages directly affected by the first stage of the land reform was only a small proportion of the total number in the country, but the impact of the reform

was felt beyond the limits of these villages, especially when it had been put into effect with vigour.

Its results in the first instance were to be seen in the social and political sphere. In the north and in many parts of the west and south, society was profoundly affected. The peasants in these areas gained a new confidence and assurance. They felt that they could stand up to those who had formerly extorted from them, and that they were no longer faced with the alternative of submission or flight. The change in their morale compared with pre-land reform days was striking. There were still many problems to be solved, still opposition to the land reform by landowners and others, and, in some areas, a lack of confidence on the part of the peasants in the intentions of the government. Further, the majority of the peasants in the country as a whole had not received land under the reform. Discontent among these and envy of their fellows who had received land was not, in the first instance, as widespread as might have been expected. This was partly because they had been encouraged to believe that the second stage of the reform would settle all their difficulties.

Broadly speaking, the improvement in conditions was greatest in those areas where a considerable proportion of the land was bought by the government and transferred to the peasants. In such cases the degree of pressure under which both the peasants and the officials of the land reform organization and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation were living and working was less. But everywhere an improvement to a greater or lesser extent was to be seen. The amount paid by the peasants as the annual instalment on the land transferred to them was in almost all cases less than their former payment to the landowner under the crop-sharing agreement. This was reflected in a reduction in indebtedness and a decrease in fore-selling. The land transferred was better cultivated and fertilizers were beginning to be used. In many of the land reform villages there was an improvement in housing conditions also. By 1964 there was a noticeable rise in the general standard of living of the peasants in the north. They had, on the whole, better food, better clothes, and more household goods, such as lamps, than formerly. It is probably true that this rise had been



taking place gradually over the previous four or five years, and therefore its beginning antedates the land reform. But it was particularly marked in the improved diet of the peasants in the villages where the land reform had been operative. In the west, in particular, there was also a marked increase in school attendance since land reform. Over the country as a whole, the work of the literacy corps was responsible for the remarkable rise in the number of schools in rural areas, but it was the existence of land reform which made their work possible.

On the economic side the effects of the first stage are more difficult to assess. On the one hand, after land reform began there was a reluctance both to invest in land and to keep up existing properties. This was to be seen among both large and small landowners. For example, in Sirjān, which was predominantly an area of small landowners, there had been considerable agricultural development, mainly by small men, through the sinking of wells in the years immediately preceding land reform. This movement was at least temporarily arrested by the land reform, because of the uncertainty over the future position of small landowners. Similarly in Yazd, where local land ownership and the development of the land was, in the very unfavourable physical circumstances which existed there, in part an act of *pietas*, rather than a strictly economic enterprise, uncertainty as to the future was discouraging landowners from keeping up their property.

On the other hand, as the result of land reform, in many of the more fertile parts of the country there was an increase in mechanization and much new land in dry-farming areas was brought under the plough. Further, in the districts transferred to the peasants there was in many cases an increase in production due to better standards of cultivation. These tendencies, however, can only be fully assessed over a longer period of time than has so far elapsed since the land reform began.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE SECOND STAGE: THE REGULATIONS FOR THE ADDITIONAL ARTICLES

---

THE Additional Articles of 17 January 1963, unlike the first stage of the land reform, were not put into operation immediately. Considerable delay ensued over the drawing up of the regulations for their execution. Doubt and uncertainty as to the good faith of the government spread. This was especially the case among those peasants to whom transfers of land had not been made under the first stage. In spite of the provisions of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, they had little security of tenure. Some of the large landowners, moreover, had not given up hope of overthrowing the reform, and were continuing, and in some cases increasing, their intrigues against it. The small landowners, in general, were also becoming apprehensive lest their position should become untenable. Many of them were members of the professional classes, shopkeepers, and minor government officials, who had inherited small properties or bought them as an insurance against retirement and old age. They were considerably perturbed lest a later stage of land reform should deprive them of their land. On the other hand, the peasantry in general were by 1964 eagerly awaiting the second stage. This was especially the case in the north, where their expectations were higher than in the south, because of the relatively more successful implementation of the first stage there.

There were thus many reasons for the government to press on with the next stage. Nevertheless, the draft regulations for the execution of the Additional Articles were not submitted to the National Consultative Assembly until 18 May 1964. They were finally passed in a considerably amended form on 25 July 1964. They consisted of forty-seven articles and were in some respects virtually a new law. Landowners were given a choice of five possible courses, instead of three as laid down in Article 1 of the



Additional Articles. These were tenancy, sale to the peasants, division of the land between the landowner or landowners and the peasants in the same proportion as the division of the crop under the existing crop-sharing agreement, the formation of 'an agricultural unit' by the landowner or landowners and the peasants to run the property, and the purchase by the landowner of the peasants' rights.

In the regulations for the Additional Articles as originally drafted, the amount of land a landowner might hold was defined in terms of hectares, and varied in different parts of the country. This would in some cases have limited the holding of a landholder to less than one village; it would also have enabled some to hold more than one village, provided the total area did not exceed the maximum stipulated in hectares. In Kirmān, in particular, there were a large number of small villages or hamlets (*kalāteh*) worked by one or two peasant families which were registered as independent villages. It was felt that in such cases there was some injustice in limiting the owner to one village when the area involved was very small. The regulations, as finally passed, did not define the amount of land which a landowner might hold in terms of hectares, and therefore enable the owners of small villages to retain more than one; in practice a modification was sometimes made in the case of small hamlets and landowners, if they had not already sold their property in excess of one village, were allowed to retain more than one hamlet even if, in terms of *dāngi*, their holdings exceeded one village. But if the hamlet had already been bought by the government under the land reform law on the grounds that it formed a separate village, the transaction was not revoked. There were several such cases in Fārs, and these roused considerable bitterness among the erstwhile owners. The table laying down the maximum area which a landowner might hold was made to refer in the final draft of the regulations only to Article 45, which concerned the purchase by the landowner of the peasants' rights (*haqq-i risheh*) (see below) and to the maximum area in which the landowner might buy the peasants out; the maximum areas were also slightly modified.

Article 19 of the regulations for the Additional Articles made further stipulations with regard to mechanized land in favour

of the landowners. It laid down that a maximum of 500 ha. (1,235 acres) of land worked by mechanized means belonging to a landowner in a village would be exempt from the provisions of Article 1 of the Additional Articles. Anything in excess of 500 ha. would, so long as it was worked by mechanized means and provided the landowner had personally, with his own capital or in some other way, mechanized the land, be subject to the provisions for the development of uncultivated lands, and would remain in his ownership. This in effect meant that as long as the landowner observed good farming practice there was no limit to the amount of mechanized land he could retain in his possession. Article 20 defined mechanized land as land which was worked by agricultural labourers and the ploughing of which was done by mechanical means.

This definition led to abuse of the spirit and intention of the land reform law. In the absence of vigilance by the land reform officials, it enabled unscrupulous landowners to place their land outside the operation of the land reform by ploughing it once by tractor, and declaring the peasants to be agricultural labourers.

The peasant to whom land might be transferred was more narrowly defined by the regulations for the Additional Articles. The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 defined a peasant (*zān'*) as 'a person who is not the owner of the land but who, possessing or providing one or several of the agricultural elements (i.e. land, water, draught animals, seed, or labour), personally, or with the help of his family, cultivates the land belonging to the landowner and gives a proportion of the produce in cash or kind to the landowner' (Art. 1 (ii)). Article 32 of the regulations for the Additional Articles excluded from the occupying peasants anyone engaged in the cultivation of summer crops (*ṣayfīkār*) under a special agreement. During the first stage there had been some difficulty over the status of peasants cultivating summer crops in districts such as Rizā'iyyeh, where it was normal practice for the peasants holding ploughlands to let other peasants cultivate summer crops, especially melons, in a portion of their land. These latter had no permanent rights to the land; they concluded annual agreements with the peasants holding ploughlands.



Even after the drafting of the regulations, there were still certain anomalies concerning the status of the peasant, and considerable variety in practice. In addition to the peasants who cultivated a ploughland (or some other local unit) and formerly had a crop-sharing agreement or tenancy with the landowner, there were also in some villages peasants who cultivated only unirrigated (*daymī*) land. These were known as *daymīkārān*, and were not normally, under the land reform, regarded as occupying peasants (*zārī'in-i dākhil-i nasag*). Their position, like that of the agricultural labourer, was not, therefore, directly affected by land reform, and in some of the villages I visited the *daymīkārān* were discontented. This was the case, for example, at Nizāmābād near Jahrum, which had been bought by the government under the first stage and transferred to twelve peasants. A number of *daymīkārān* who lived in the village were excluded from the transaction. In 'Aliak and Shāhūn Oulā in Zāveh (Turbat-i Haydari), on the other hand, the *daymīkārān* were included among those to whom land was transferred (see above p. 142).

There was also some doubt over the status of peasants who worked on land watered by means of power-operated pumps (*tulumbekārān*). This applied particularly to Fārs. In cases where the *tulumbekārān* formed a special group in the village, as distinct from the peasants who cultivated ploughlands or other local units, there was a variety of practice over the transfer of the land; sometimes there was discontent over the division of the land and disputes arose between the two types of peasant.

Another category of peasant was the *bāghdār*, a kind of market-gardener or peasant engaged in fruit cultivation. Such peasants were found particularly in the date and citrus-growing areas of Fārs. For example, it was formerly the custom in Jahrum for landowners to let a piece of ground to someone to make a garden. The tenant would provide all the expenses for bringing the garden into cultivation, but the kind of fruit to be grown and the number of trees would be specified by the landowner. When the garden came into production, it would be divided between the two parties. In the half remaining in the ownership of the landowner, the latter would provide all the expenses of cultivation but the tenant would continue to cultivate it; the other half

would be transferred in full ownership to the tenant. In Khafr on the borders of Kirmān, however, when the garden came into production, the produce was divided between the two parties but there was no transfer of ownership. In Jahrum the *bāghdārān* were normally included with the occupying peasants among those receiving land under the land reform.

The first method of settlement permitted to the landowner under the second stage of the land reform was a tenancy agreement, method (a), as laid down in Article 1 of the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963. If the landowner chose this, he had the option of concluding tenancy agreements with each of the occupying peasants, with or without the guarantee of a third person, or with the co-operative society, provided such existed and the peasants had appointed it to act for them. If the agreement was concluded with the co-operative society, it was to deduct 2 per cent of the rent as its remuneration. The land reform organization was to draw up the conditions of the tenancy, and prepare draft tenancy agreements and powers of attorney (Art. 1 note 2 of the regulations). The rent was to be fixed in cash, but might, by mutual agreement, be converted wholly or partly into kind (Art. 2 of the regulations).

If the village, or part of it, was held by the peasants on a *mushā'*, or joint, tenure, the tenancy was to be concluded with all the peasants of the village jointly, the share of each being in proportion to the land which he worked (*bi nisbat-i nasaq-i zira'ati*).<sup>1</sup> The effect of this was that each peasant would receive a document stating his tenancy was for a certain proportion of the village land (say one share out of so many shares), but not for a definite piece of land.

The rent was to be based on the average net income due to the landowner for the years 1961-2, 1962-3, and 1963-4, and was to be agreed between the peasants and the landowner. If they failed to agree, the land reform organization was to decide what the average should be. In those areas in which a crop-sharing arrangement prevailed—and they were the majority

<sup>1</sup> See Instructions (*qasidat al-'amal*) issued to the land reform officials for the execution of the Additional Articles, G(i), in *Rāhnāmā-yi ma'mūrān-i iplāhāt-i arzī* (Guide for the Officials of the Land Reform Organization), March 1965.



of cases—the landowner would, therefore, receive in effect the equivalent of his average annual income under the crop-sharing agreement for the years 1961-2 to 1963-4, paid in cash as a fixed rent. If the land had been under cultivation for only one or two years, the rent was to be the equivalent of the landowner's net income for one year or the average for two years (Article 4 of the regulations). Under this arrangement, the peasant's liability was known and this was to his advantage. In a bad year, or in a series of bad years, however, the obligation to pay a fixed rent was to his detriment; and some people thought that in such cases the peasant might find it difficult, if not impossible, to pay, and that for this reason some form of crop-sharing agreement might have to be adopted again.

Article 5 of the regulations for the Additional Articles laid down that if a peasant failed to pay the rent within three months of its falling due, the tenancy could, at the request of the landowner or landowners, with the cognizance of the land reform organization, be abrogated and the land let to someone else. Clearly, some means of coercion were needed to enforce the payment of rent, but this provision was likely in a bad year to open the way to widespread dispossessions, unless the land reform organization refused to countenance such action. The difficulty of paying a cash rent in a bad year is a real one for the peasant.

In the event of the death of a tenant, his legal heirs were permitted to hold the tenancy for the period still to run. Thus, although the holding would not be fragmented, it could, for a period, be jointly held. Should the legal heirs not wish to cultivate the land personally, the tenancy was to be abrogated, and the land let to someone else for the remainder of the period (Art. 6 of the regulations).

Article 7 of the regulations permitted tenants, with the agreement of the landowners and the cognizance of the land reform organization, to install in land subject to a tenancy agreement 'necessary agricultural installations' with a view to increasing production. If the two parties failed to agree over the introduction of such installations, the land reform organization, having regard to the rights and interests of the two parties, was to decide what action should be taken.

If, during the period of the tenancy agreement, the two parties agreed to adopt method (b), i.e. sale, as laid down in Article 1 of the Additional Articles, or method (c), i.e. the division of the land in the same proportion as the crop was shared under the crop-sharing agreement, the tenancy agreement was to lapse on the signing of the documents for method (b) or (c) (Art. 3 of the regulations). This provision was included presumably because it was held that method (b) or (c) might be more favourable to the peasant. In practice there were sometimes attempts to change the method selected, when this was not tenancy.

I came across several cases in Turbat-i Haydari of land-owners and/or peasants who, after having chosen, or agreed to, one form wished to change to another. In one case, at least, the decision of the local land reform office was that a choice once made was final. This seems a reasonable decision on practical grounds. The second stage involved much field-work, and the drawing up of documents took much time; *each* peasant received a document setting out the terms of his tenancy or the share of the village which was transferred to him. In many areas the officials of the land reform organization were over-burdened with work. If the option to change from one method to another had been given, not only would their labour have been increased, but opportunity would have been given to the land-owners to delay the reform indefinitely.

Charitable *vaqāf* were to be settled under the second stage by tenancies. Agreements were to be concluded only with those peasants who were members of a co-operative society. The documents were to be signed by the *mutavallī* (supervisor) on the one hand and the society, acting on behalf of each of the occupying peasants, or each of the occupying peasants under the guarantee of a third person, on the other. The tenancies were to be for 99 years, and the rent was to be reviewed every five years. The society was to be responsible for the collection of the rent from the peasants and its payment to the administrator of the *vaqf* (the *mutavallī* or the *mutasaddī*), and would deduct 2 per cent of the rent as its fee for this service. The terms of the tenancy were to be drawn up by a committee composed of the administrator of the *vaqf*, the head of the local land reform



office, and the head of the local *ouqāf* department, or their representatives. Land situated in *vaqf* property which was waste (*arāzi-yi bāyir*) or had no peasants would, at the discretion of the land reform organization, be placed at the disposal of the administrator of the *vaqf* for development (Art. 8 of the regulations).

Private or family *vaqf* were, according to Article 2 of the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963, to be sold to the occupying peasants, but if they were not prepared to buy the land, tenancies were to be concluded according to method (a) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles, and implemented in accordance with the regulations for tenancies concluded for private property (Art. 9 of the regulations).

Sale by the landowner to the peasants was the second method of settlement, method (b), permitted by Article 1 of the Additional Articles. If the landowner selected this method, he was permitted to sell his cultivated land to the occupying peasants with their agreement. The price was to be decided by agreement between the two parties. Documents for the sale of the land were to be drawn up after the land reform organization had investigated the case, and satisfied itself that the peasants to whom the land was to be transferred were really the occupying peasants (Art. 10 of the regulations). The object of this provision was to prevent the land reform law being circumvented by the landowner selling the land to persons other than the occupying peasants.

The Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, using funds specially allocated for this purpose of not less than 1,000 million *rs.* (c. £4½ million), annually would, on demand, give to the peasants a loan of up to one-third of the value of the property bought by them at 3 per cent, but would pay this sum directly to the landowner or landowners selling the land. The peasants were to repay such loans over fifteen years, in ten equal instalments starting from the sixth year. Conditions for the payment of the remaining two-thirds were to be agreed between the landowner or landowners and the peasants (Notes 1 and 2 to Art. 10 of the regulations). The land, or part of it in proportion to the amount of the debt outstanding, was to be security for the debt of the peasants to the bank and the landowner or landowners (Art. 12 of the regulations).

If the landowner or landowners, having selected method (b) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles, could not come to an agreement with the peasants within one month, they were to select, within a further period of one month, method (a) or method (c) and inform the land reform department accordingly.

Landowners wishing to receive factory shares for the whole or part of their land, as envisaged in Article 6 of the Law for the Sale of Shares in Government Factories, could hand over the promissory notes for the instalments due to them which they had received from the peasants to the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank in exchange for shares in factories (Art. 13 of the regulations).

The third method of settlement permitted under Article 1 of the Additional Articles, method (c), was for the land to be divided between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was shared between them under the existing crop-sharing agreement. If the landowner of a whole village, or those landowners who held the major portion of the land, wished to adopt this method, but agreement could not be reached between them and the peasants concerning the division of the land, they were to submit their proposals to the land reform organization; this would then divide the land and its water rights between the two parties, with due regard to local conditions, in such a way that the land of each would, as far as possible, be consolidated. The cost of the delimitation of the land was to be borne by the two parties in proportion to their respective shares. The land allocated to each of the peasants under the new division would be on the same basis and in the same proportion as his holding under the former division of the land into ploughlands (*nasaqbandi*) (Art. 15 of the regulations).

The peasants were to pay two-fifths of the price of the land reckoned at the highest local coefficient. One-third of this sum was to be paid by the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank and recovered by the bank from the peasants (as laid down in Notes 1 and 2 to Art. 10 of the regulations); the remainder was to be paid in ten equal annual instalments by the peasants to the landowner or landowners. Article 13 of the



regulations (i.e. relating to the payment of the landowners in shares in government factories) was also to apply to those landowners who selected method (c) (Art. 16 of the regulations).

From F(i), (ii), and (iii) of the instructions in the *Guide for the Officials of the Land Reform Organization*, issued in 1965, the intention seems to have been that the price was to be reckoned as two-fifths of the total property before division rather than two-fifths of the land which was actually transferred to the peasants, but the text in all cases could be read either way. I think the reason for the fixing of this figure, which at first sight appears arbitrary, was that it was originally intended that the peasants should receive three-fifths of the land under this method and the landowner two-fifths, the land and water only being reckoned as belonging to the landowner, and the other three elements, seed, draught animals, and labour as being provided by the peasant. The decision that the peasants should be required to pay only two-fifths of the value of the property was thus intended to favour them, though some compensation was to be given to the landowner by reckoning the price at the highest local coefficient. This method of settlement has not, in fact, been operated in this way. The amount of land transferred to the peasants has been directly in proportion to the share of the crop which they received under the former crop-sharing agreement, and in some cases has been only one-fifth. Where the cost of the land to the peasants was very small, the payment was to be made in some cases in two instalments, one at the end of five years and the other at the end of fifteen (or by some other mutually agreed arrangement). A great variety of practice prevailed in the method of payment.

Article 33 of the regulations laid down that in villages in which method (c) was put into operation, the landowners must allow the peasants to share in the water rotation and in the ownership of the water resources of the village. The administration of these resources was to be the responsibility of the majority of the landowners, or the co-operative society, or, in villages where an agricultural unit had been set up (see below), its managing committee. The administrative expenses were to be shared by all in proportion to their ownership. In the event of anyone withholding payment of his share of the expenses, the

other partners, with the cognizance of the land reform organization, were to pay the necessary expenses and recover the share of defaulters from the harvest, with the addition of 1 per cent per month as a penalty, which would be put to the development funds of the village or the funds for the general expenses of the village.

In villages the agricultural land of which was watered by power-operated deep or semi-deep wells, or the irrigation of which was carried on by motor pumps or other means of power, the water resources were excluded from division; the water for irrigated lands allocated to the peasants was to be provided according to the arrangement prevailing at the date of the approval of the regulations, and a just price was to be paid for it. This was to be fixed on the basis of custom or by mutual agreement, or, in the event of a failure of the two parties to agree, by the land reform organization (Art. 35 of the regulations).

Article 17 of the regulations for the Additional Articles introduced another method, not foreseen in the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 or the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963, namely the formation of an agricultural unit (*vāhid-i sahāmi-i zird'ati*). According to this article, if the majority of the peasants and landowners of a village agreed, the village was to be run for agricultural purposes as an agricultural unit by a managing committee composed of three persons, one representing the peasants, one the landowner or landowners, and the third being chosen by mutual agreement by the two parties. In the event of a failure to agree on the third member, he was to be appointed by the ministry of agriculture. The share of each member of this unit, whether peasant or landowner, was to be in proportion to his share of the total income, having regard to the ownership of the different agricultural elements in accordance with local custom (Note 1 to Art. 17 of the regulations). The Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, with a view to strengthening these units, was to provide them with the necessary facilities and sufficient credit; and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation was to give the necessary guidance for the formation and administration of such units (Note 2 of Art. 17 of the regulations).



When the regulations for the Additional Articles were drawn up, there was a difference of opinion among officials over the proposal to set up 'agricultural units'. Some would, I think, have liked this to have been the only method open to landowners under the second stage. Most of the land reform officials, however, were opposed to it on the grounds that it would perpetuate the old system under another name. Considerable doubt existed at the time in their minds as to how this method of settlement would operate. The only immediate advantage it appeared to offer to the peasant was that it gave him security of tenure: once recognized as a member of such a unit, he could presumably not be evicted without due cause.

Regulations for 'agricultural units' were finally issued on 11 August 1965. These stated that if the majority of the peasants (reckoned on the basis of the amount of land cultivated) and the majority of the landowners (reckoned on the basis of the land owned) in a village agreed to divide the produce of the village land as laid down in Article 17 of the regulations for the Additional Articles, they were to submit a written agreement to the land reform organization (Arts. 1 and 2). The land reform organization would then collect the necessary statistics and decide what share of the produce should go to the various parties on the basis of the provision of the agricultural elements according to local custom (Art. 4 of the regulations). If the two parties failed to set up an agricultural unit within two months, the land reform organization would summon the landowners and peasants to appear on a given date for the election of the managing committee. If the majority of either the landowners or the peasants who had signed the agreement failed to appear, the agreement to set up an agricultural unit would be regarded as null and void, and the landowner or landowners would be required to select within one month one of the other methods of settlement (Art. 5 of the regulations).

An agricultural unit was to be known by the name of the village or hamlet (*maẓra'ah*) in which it was situated and would have legal personality. The managing committee was to act for the shareholders in the collection of produce and revenue and the payment of the various expenses of the village, and was to pay the revenue to the shareholders in accordance with local

custom (Art. 6 of the regulations). The managing committee were required to adopt good farming practice in running the village. The peasants were to work the land which was held by them personally or by members of their family. If they failed to do so, the managing committee could take the land away from them with due regard for Article 33 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Such land would then be placed at the disposal of persons who had precedence for the receipt of land under Article 16 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 (Art. 7 and note) (see above p. 73). The managing committee was to hold office for three years. Their decisions were to be by majority vote. They were to receive a commission (*haqq al-zahmeh*) of not more than 3 per cent of the total revenue of the village, with the agreement of the majority of peasants and landowners as given at the time of the appointment of the managing committee. After three years a new committee was to be elected; those who had formerly held office were eligible for re-election (Art. 8). The members of the managing committee were in the execution of their duties to act as 'trustees' (*dar hukm-i amîn*).

The fifth method of settlement permitted under the regulations had not been envisaged in the Additional Articles. According to Notes 1 and 2 of Article 22 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, the landowner was permitted to buy the rights (*haqq-i riskeh*) of the peasants with their agreement, or, failing their agreement, with the agreement of the committee for the solution of disputes, set up under Article 33 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Oral instructions were, however, given to the land reform officials not to allow the sale by the peasants of their rights. Article 45 of the regulations for the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963 permitted landowners, provided the area of cultivated land held by them did not exceed a maximum laid down in the article, to buy, by agreement, the rights of the peasants in accordance with Notes 1 and 2 of Article 22 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, and personally to cultivate the land or to work it in one or other of the ways laid down by the law. The maximum laid down in Article 45 for the various regions was as follows:

Rice land in Gilân and Mâzandarân: 20 ha. (49 acres).



Land in the environs (*haumeḥ*) of Tehrān, Varāmīn, Damāvand, Ray, Shimīrān, and Karaj: 30 ha. (74 acres).

Land in the environs of the provincial capitals, except Kirmān, Sanandaj, and Zāhidān: 50 ha. (123.5 acres).

Land in the governorates (*shāhristāns*) of Gurgān, Gūmḥād, the Mughān steppe, and land other than rice land in Gilān and Māzandarān: 40 ha. (98.8 acres).

Land in Khūzistān, Balūchistān and Sīstān: 150 ha. (370.6 acres).

Land in any other region: 100 ha. (247 acres).

If the land owned by a landowner exceeded the amount stipulated above, he could act as laid down in this article with regard to land up to the maximum allowed, but in land in excess of this maximum he was to act in accordance with method (a) or (b) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles, i.e. he had to conclude tenancies with the peasants or sell the land to them.

In cases of dispute between the landowners and the peasants with reference to this article, the decision of the land reform organization was to be final. Until measurement had been carried out, the areas defined by this article in terms of hectares were to be reckoned in terms of seed or local units, such as the ploughland, the conversion being attested by the local department of agriculture and agreed to by the land reform organization (Note 1 to Art. 45). A second note stated that landowners could only benefit from the provisions of Article 45 provided the amount of land which they worked by mechanized means did not exceed the permitted maximum laid down in this article. Many of the land reform officials strongly disapproved of this method of settlement as being contrary to the spirit and intention of the land reform.

In the case of the first method of settlement laid down by Article 1 of the regulations for the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963, namely tenancy, the choice lay entirely with the landowner. If he chose sale, or the division of the land between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was divided under the existing crop-sharing agreement, the agreement of the peasant was necessary. This was also the case if the landowner wished to set up an agricultural unit or to purchase the

peasants' rights. The land reform officials were not supposed to influence the choice of the landowner or the agreement of the peasants. When a decision was reached between the two parties, the land reform officials were first to satisfy themselves that the agreement had been freely arrived at, and then to draw up the agreement, which was to be signed by the two parties in the presence of the land reform officials. In practice the latter often intervened to bring the two parties together, and to induce them to accept a compromise.

Article 18 of the regulations laid down that the government was to issue notices according to Article 3 of the Additional Articles of 17 January 1963, instructing the landowners to select one or other of the methods open to them within three months of the issue of the regulations. The landowners were to notify the land reform department of their choice within one month.

In the case of villages held on a *mushāʿ* tenure (i.e. if the village was owned by more than one landowner and their several shares were not delimited in terms of area), somewhat complicated arrangements often arose. G(2) of the instructions for the execution of the Additional Articles in the *Guide* for land reform officials stated that if the landowners who held a village on a *mushāʿ* tenure chose different methods for the settlement of their shares, except in the case of method (c) (i.e. division of the land between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was divided under the existing crop-sharing agreement), tenancies and agreements for sale were to be concluded with all the peasants of the village jointly. The effect of this was that a peasant might hold a tenancy for a share of the village concluded under the second stage and the ownership of another share transferred under the first stage, both reckoned as a proportion of the whole and not delimited in terms of area. G(3) of the instructions stated that in villages held on a *mushāʿ* tenure, if the shares of the landowners were delimited among the peasants by local custom (*mafrūz al-rāʿiyyat*), though not so registered, the tenancies and agreements for sale might be concluded between each landowner and the peasants who worked on that portion of the land which was regarded by local custom as his (instead of with all the peasants of the village). G(4) laid down that in villages held on a *mushāʿ* tenure, in which the shares of the owners were de-



limited by local custom, the choice of different methods by the landowners could be put into practice only if all the landowners and all the peasants gave their agreement.

If the landowners refused to select one of the methods open to them and did not submit declarations of their lands, or refused to sign the necessary papers, the land reform organization, with the approval of the regional council for land reform, would publish a notice twice at an interval of ten days in one of the local newspapers and one of the national papers, or by other customary and appropriate local means; and after the lapse of one month from the date of the publication of the second notice, would act on behalf of the recalcitrant landowner, and sign the relevant documents on his behalf (Art. 37 of the regulations). According to the instructions issued to the land reform officials for the execution of the Additional Articles, they were to select in such cases either method (a) or (c) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles, except in the case of rice land, when method (a) was to be selected, and conclude the necessary arrangements. According to B(6) of the instructions issued to the land reform officials, in the case of villages held on a *mushā'* tenure, their choice of the method of settlement was to be subject to the views of those holding the major portion of the land and due attention was to be given to local conditions. Failing agreement, consideration was to be given to the views of the majority of the peasants.

Article 9 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 laid down that all tenancy agreements would lapse on 5 December 1964. Under the land reform, there was no place for intermediaries and middlemen who rented the land and sub-let it to peasants on a crop-sharing, or tenancy, agreement. Such tenancies were widespread before land reform, especially in *waqf* property. Their disappearance was all to the good; the middleman often exploited the peasantry. Under the Additional Articles and the regulations for their implementation, the only form of tenancy recognized was that between the peasants on the one hand and the landowners or administrators of *waqf* on the other. Article 29 of the regulations for the Additional Articles stated that any legal contracts, such as tenancies, life interests (*umra*), usufruct for life (*ruqbā*), or rights of residence (*suknā*), which prevented the implementation of the land reform, were considered as

abrogated on the drawing up of the documents for the implementation of the provisions laid down in Articles 1 and 2 of the Additional Articles. Any sums accruing under such contracts were to be deposited with the registration department or the department of justice, and to be paid to the rightful recipient on the agreement of the parties concerned or after the issue of a decree by the relevant legal authority.

If privately owned estates or *suqāf* covered by Articles 1 and 2 of the Additional Articles were rented at the date of the approval of these articles, the lessees and/or lessors could, after the approval of the regulations for the Additional Articles abrogate the tenancy as from the autumn of 1964. In such an event any registration or other deed, cheque, promissory note, or suchlike for the rent of the land, which had reference to the unexpired periods of the lease, would be invalid (Art. 30 of the regulations).

Article 24 laid down that the land reform organization, with the cognizance of the local public prosecutor, would act on behalf of the landowner with regard to the land reform in land which had not been registered or the owner of which was not known. Any monies from such land would be paid into the registration department or the department of justice, to be held until a definite decision had been made regarding the ownership of the property. Similarly, if the landowner or landowners did not take steps to complete their title deeds or demand the issue of a decree establishing their claims as legal heirs to a property, the land reform department would act for them (Note 1 to Art. 24 of the regulations).

If the ownership of irrigated land and gardens was in different hands from the ownership of the water, the division and use of the water was to be in accordance with the practice current at the date of the approval of the regulations for the Additional Articles, i.e. 25 July 1964. If the owners of the water did not so act, the land reform organization was to lay down the method by which the water would be used, having regard to customary practice. The owners of the water were to receive water dues in accordance with local custom (Art. 34 of the regulations). The price of the local unit of water from each source of water was to be laid down at the beginning of each agricultural year, with the



agreement of the two parties. If they failed to reach agreement, the land reform department was to act in this matter (Note 1 to Art. 34 of the regulations). If the owners of the water resources refused to keep them up, clean them out, or dredge them, the ministry of agriculture was to act in whatever way it saw fit and recover the cost from the sums received as water dues (Note 2 to Art. 34 of the regulations).

If the government took steps to set up development organizations in any region with a view to providing water resources and irrigation networks or other matters concerning agricultural development (*umūr-i 'umrānī*), it would be the duty of the landowners and peasants to accept and implement the plans of the relevant organization with regard to irrigation networks, the division of land into plots (*qif'ehbandī*) and other technical matters (Art. 36 of the regulations).

All public places situated within the limits of a village subject to transfer under land reform would, on the decision of the land reform organization, be handed over gratis to the possession of the co-operative society for the benefit of the people of the village. The co-operative society was to be responsible for the upkeep and supervision of such places. Regulations would be drawn up for the use of pastures within the limits of the village, and would be put into operation after they had been approved by the council of ministers (Art. 25 of the regulations).

Houses occupied by the peasants were to be left in their possession and handed over to them together with the cultivated land transferred to them (Art. 26 of the regulations). Gardens, plantations (whether of fruit trees, other kinds of trees, or date palms), citrus orchards, tea and henna plantations, etc., and also planted gardens (*bāghāt-i ghārsī*) situated within the limits of the village, the *a'yānī* of which were jointly owned by the landowner and peasant, could, provided the peasants agreed, be bought by the landowner or sold to the peasants; or the share of each party with its water (*haqqābeh*) could be delimited (*maf-rūz*) (Art. 27 of the regulations). The *'arṣeh* of gardens and plantations situated within the limits of a village, the *a'yānī* of which belonged entirely to the peasants, and similarly the *'arṣeh* of other *a'yānī* belonging to them, with the exception of their dwelling houses, was, with the agreement of the landowner and the

peasants, to be valued, and sold to the peasants with the right to use the water belonging to them, according to local custom. In the event of the two parties failing to agree, the decision of the land reform organization was to be final (Art. 28 of the regulations). Persons who lived outside the village in which the gardens were situated and had bought the rights of the peasants could not benefit from Articles 27 and 28 of the regulations.

Estates which had fallen out of production or were barren (*bâyirah*) were to be left at the disposal of their owners, who were to undertake to bring them into production personally or in some other suitable way within a period of five years. If within this period the landowner or landowners did not act in accordance with their undertaking, the land would be taken away from them, placed gratis at the disposal of the government, and would become subject to the provisions for the development of barren lands (Art. 40 of the regulations). By Article 41 of the regulations, the ministry of agriculture was permitted to hand over gratis to the relevant ministries, government organizations, or municipalities barren lands in villages which had been or would be transferred to the government under the provisions of the land reform, to be used by charitable foundations or industrial organizations, or for public health, educational or agricultural purposes, or physical recreation. Cultivated land and gardens situated within the limits of towns were not subject to the provisions of the land reform, and claims and disputes relating to them were to be referred to the relevant courts (Art. 43 of the regulations).

According to Article 23 of the regulations, landowners who had chosen one or other of the ways laid down in the regulations for the disposal of their surplus property were to have priority in the exploitation of uncultivated or dead lands in the village, under regulations which were to be drawn up by the ministry of agriculture for the handing over of such lands. The Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank would, by the provision of loans to such landowners, make means available for their development.

Exemption was granted from the payment of any kind of registration fee, dues (*avârîz*), taxes (*mâlîât*) or stamp duty for



transactions concerning transfers, leases, powers of attorney, or the delimitation of land, etc., carried out under the regulations for the Additional Articles (Art. 31 of the regulations).

Article 37 of the regulations for the Additional Articles laid down that in the event of a landowner failing to choose one of the methods of settlement open to him, to submit the necessary declarations, or to sign the necessary documents, the land reform organization, with the approval of the land reform council of the relevant region, would announce its intention of acting for him twice at an interval of ten days in a local newspaper and a national newspaper, or by other means customary and appropriate to the district. One month after the publication of the second notice the land reform organization would act on behalf of the recalcitrant landowner. Similarly, with regard to the other provisions of the regulations, if the landowners and peasants failed to agree, the land reform office of the relevant district would act for them.

In the event of the landowner or peasants refusing to sign documents for tenancies (if the landowner had chosen that method), the land reform officials were directed, in B(5) of the instructions for the execution of the Additional Articles issued to them, to act in accordance with Article 37. They were to sign the documents on behalf of those refusing to do so, and to inform the two parties accordingly. According to item C(7) of these instructions, if the two parties failed to agree on the amount of rent, or if one of them, after due notification, failed to appear at the land reform office to complete the settlement, the local land reform officials were to fix the rent according to Article 4 of the regulations. Their decision was to be final.

Provision was made in Article 38 for the rectification of mistakes in the registration of documents. If the land reform council decided that a mistake had been made, it could pass a resolution for its correction, cancellation, or abrogation. Its decision was to be binding upon the registration offices. If such a decision conflicted with some other right, action could be taken at the demand of the injured person, in accordance with Article 1 of the Law relating to Wrongful Registrations and Disputed Documents, approved in 1954. Article 38 did not cover the wrongful registration of land or rights over it provoked by

the land reform but made outside its immediate implementation (see p. 262).

By Article 39 of the regulations for the Additional Articles, any transaction (*mu'āmilah*) with regard to landed estates (*amlāk sa raqabāt*), of which the owners were legally possessed under the provisions of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, was valid provided it had taken place before 18 May 1964, the date of the submission of the draft of the regulations for the Additional Articles to the National Consultative Assembly. Any definitive transaction after that date, until such time as the government announced that the Additional Articles would become operative in any given region would be valid only if it concerned one estate and was made with one person. Thereafter, every kind of transaction would be permitted. A note to Article 39 stated that lands which had been constituted by law into a special case (*mustaḥsiyyāt-i qānūnī*) were not covered by Article 39 of the regulations.

Disputes between landowners and peasants on agricultural affairs were referred, as they had been under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, to the officials of the land reform organization (Art. 42). In the event of their decision being disputed, an appeal could be submitted within twenty days from the date of their decision to the land reform office of the governorate-general (*ustān*) or governorate (*shahristān*) for investigation by a committee of three persons, drawn from the officials of the ministry of agriculture, to be set up to hear such appeals. Their decision was to be final.

These were the main provisions of the second stage of the land reform. Contrary to the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, the objectives of which were clear and whose provisions could be effectively and rapidly implemented, the second stage was ambiguous in its aims. The first stage was favourable to the peasant as against the landowner, and the propaganda and publicity accompanying it was uncompromisingly pro-peasant and anti-landlord. This was not the case with the second stage. When the Additional Articles were drafted, it was intended to regulate the relations between the peasants and the landowners, and in particular to improve the lot of those peasants who culti-



vated the land in villages not subject to purchase by the government under the first stage. A secondary object was to protect the position of the small landowners whose condition had deteriorated under land reform, because the peasants were in many cases withholding from them their share of the crop and who, unlike the large landowners, lacked the influence necessary to obtain redress or the power to coerce the peasants.

The Additional Articles were not well thought out or carefully drafted, and, unless they were intended to be a temporary stage, could hardly fail to weaken the spirit of the original reform. The peasants probably did not fully realize their implications. In many cases they had assumed, until the issue of the regulations for the Additional Articles, that they would, in due course, receive the land which they worked, a view in which they were encouraged by slogans such as 'the land belongs to that person who cultivates it', which were to be seen prominently displayed in the land reform offices. As the efforts of those who aimed at the creation of an independent self-reliant peasantry, were attended by an increasing measure of success, those holding the reins of power began to realize that the emergence of an independent peasantry might constitute a new factor in the political situation and threaten their own power. This induced further caution in government circles towards the aims of land reform, and is reflected in the regulations for the Additional Articles. These, as shown above, went considerably beyond the Additional Articles themselves and were an attempt to weaken the radical nature of the land reform and to slow down the tempo of change.

## CHAPTER X

### THE EXECUTION OF THE SECOND STAGE: TENANCIES

---

THE second stage of the land reform began in February 1965 in Western Āzarbāyjān and was extended to the rest of the country by the end of the autumn. Procedure was more complicated than under the first stage, and the number of villages affected was much greater. The burden of work placed upon the land reform officials was correspondingly heavy. The collection of statistics was, as it had been in the first stage, the preliminary step in a settlement, and the procedure was much the same. On one occasion I accompanied one of the teams sent to collect statistics in Sabzavār, where the second stage began in August 1965. It was a difficult district to settle. It had hardly been touched by the first stage except in Juvayn. Holdings had been much fragmented, and there were a great many small landowners. There was also a good deal of *raqf* land. The peasants were poor, and many of them were forced to supplement their earnings from the land by working in the neighbouring towns or by seasonal work in the cotton fields of Gurgān. The settlement was undertaken by small teams who went out into the villages, assembled those concerned, and got them to select on the spot the method of settlement. This was not entirely satisfactory, since many of the peasants were illiterate, and did not wholly trust the officials who presented them with documents upon which to put their thumb-marks, even when these were read to them by the village elders.

One of the villages to which I went was Goud Āsiā, near Sabzavār. This village contained some 150 small landowners. There had been considerable fragmentation by inheritance; some of the land was *raqf*, though it transpired that some of this had been usurped, registered in the names of individuals, and mortgages taken out on it. When the men of the village had assembled (they had been given previous warning of the date of



the arrival of the team), they were addressed by the head of the team. He gave them an extremely clear and competent explanation of the terms and purposes of the land reform (though they must clearly have already been familiar with this). The team, which had obtained what statistics were available from the local registration office, then proceeded to collect from the assembled villagers, landowners, peasants, and others details of the individual holdings; when the landowners (or those of them who were present) selected method (a) of Article 1 of the Additional Articles, they drew up tenancy agreements. The team, which included a member of the literacy corps, like several of those which I saw at work in Färs, seemed efficient and fair.

There was a great deal more office work under the second stage than during the first. The number of documents which had to be drawn up was enormous. As a result, the officials of the land reform organization did not, in general, get out into the country as much as they had done in the early days of land reform, although there were notable exceptions. It was, perhaps, almost inevitable that as the reform progressed its administration should become more complicated, and that officials should tend to sit in the land reform office, waiting for the peasants to come in rather than going out to them. In those areas in which the peasants were well-informed and confident, it did not, perhaps, matter much; but in areas in which there was distrust between the peasants and the government or a lack of communication, this tendency had unfortunate results and destroyed the new-found confidence of the peasants. Some officials did not know their districts; and it was, perhaps, not wholly fortuitous that in some districts in which the head of the local office knew the country well, land reform progressed satisfactorily and vice versa.

In the various land reform offices which I visited in 1966 there was no longer the sense of urgency which had been a striking feature in 1962 and 1964. Nor, in general, were the offices thronged with peasants demanding redress or guidance as they had been in the earlier period, and this was not because they had no problems. In Kirmānshāh, it is true, there were a good many peasants hanging about outside the office, but they seemed to have little hope that they would get a hearing.

Many of the local offices appeared to be efficiently run, but in at least one instance I felt that the neat and impressive statistics produced did not necessarily, or even mainly, correspond with the facts on the ground. Much of the time of the officials was still taken up, as in the first stage, with the investigation of complaints (see Chapter XII). In some cases, as during the first stage, there was haste and, occasionally, lack of care in the collection of statistics.

In one respect the task of the land reform officials was, indeed, more difficult in the second stage than in the first. During the first stage, the land reform had been uncompromisingly 'pro-peasant', and the land reform officials were therefore regarded, in general, by the peasants as their 'friends'; under the second stage, the peasants did not receive land as their fellows had under the first stage, and so there was a change in their attitude towards the land reform officials, and a tendency to regard them as 'enemies' rather than 'friends'. This was not the fault of the officials, who were bound to execute the law as it was. Under the Additional Articles and the regulations for their execution, the advantages were no longer wholly with the peasants. In these circumstances, relations between them and the land reform organization deteriorated, and they tended to look more and more to the officials of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation as their only real friends.

The following table issued by the land reform organization shows the number of villages settled under the second stage of the land reform in different parts of the country up to 17 February 1966. It also shows the date upon which the second stage was begun in the various provinces. It was not, however, declared operative over the whole province at once, but implemented piecemeal as the first stage was completed in the various districts and officials became available for carrying out the second stage. According to these figures, the second stage had been completed by February 1966 in Gilān and Māzandarān. The largest number of villages and hamlets still unsettled at that date was in the provinces of Kirmān (21 per cent), Luristān (46 per cent), Western Āzarbāyjān (38 per cent), and Fārs (30 per cent).

The last three columns of the table are also derived from figures



## SECOND STAGE (UP TO 17 FEBRUARY 1966). NUMBER OF VILLAGES SETTLED

Date of commencement	No. subject to second stage		No. completed by 17.2.66		No. outstanding		No. of estates affected	No. of persons affected	Average No. of persons affected per estate
	employers	households	villages	households	villages	households			
Gilan	2,896	—	2,896	—	—	—	32,585	220,458	6
Tehrān	4,889	2,006	4,542	—	347	253	11,319	114,156	10
E. Āghabāyān	2,602	294	3,215	281	417	13	16,860	162,660	9
Mazandāran	2,214	134	2,214	134	—	—	10,217	141,044	13
Isfahān	2,904	2,871	3,373	2,823	556	40	36,347	100,933	3
Khūzestān	8,250	5,141	7,702	4,053	549	188	17,525	97,903	5.5
Fārs	2,705	2,576	972	943	789	820	11,664	88,976	10
Khūzistān	1,604	329	1,262	303	412	—	10,220	90,527	5
Hamedān	1,102	205	977	288	205	—	6,209	58,052	9
Kurdistān	1,524	57	1,201	35	233	22	1,306	42,744	33
Luristān	2,026	912	936	312	1,088	—	9,099	41,313	4.5
W. Āghabāyān	2,606	153	1,768	108	1,018	27	6,172	35,396	5.7
Kirmānshāh	1,495	5	1,854	5	172	5	1,976	37,545	27
Kermān	9,394	244	7,332	244	2,060	—	21,571	26,151	1
Sirān	465	327	331	263	94	59	343	1,062	3
Bandar 'Abbās	677	5	650	5	7	—	75	705	9
Bushire	481	—	127	—	362	—	8	540	42
Sistan and Baluchistan	1,379	305	1,674	495	11	—	101	214	2
Gurgān	691	100	195	56	496	64	Figures	are not complete	
TOTAL	52,553	15,166	49,513	19,213	8,732	1,499	189,670 (excluding Gurgān)	1,298,249 (excluding Gurgān)	

Source: Report issued by the land reform organization for its operations in the year 1965-6 (with adjustments).

issued by the land reform organization though not given precisely in this form. The first of these has been added to show the number of different estates affected. That their number exceeds the number of villages and hamlets is to be explained by the fact that many villages were owned by two or more landowners not on a *mushā'* tenure. The different parts of such villages were not necessarily settled by the same method. The second and third of these columns have been added to give an idea of the size of the transactions. Leaving aside Bushire and Bandar 'Abbās, where the number of estates involved is very small, the figures giving the average number of peasants per estate suggest that the largest estates were in Kurdistān and Kirmānshāhan, Tehrān, Māzandarān, Eastern Āzarbāyjān, and Fārs, and the smallest in Kirmān, Sīstān and Balūchistān, Iṣfahān and Simnān. The inclusion of Iṣfahān in the latter group is surprising, because many of the villages of Iṣfahān are large. The explanation is probably to be found in the fact that for the most part the estates concerned constituted a portion of a village and not the whole, or even the major part, of it.

In addition to the villages set out in the table above, 4,656 villages were listed as having wholly fallen out of cultivation (*qurā-yi bāyirah*). The number of landowners who personally worked their land (by mechanized means or otherwise) was put at 582,804, the highest numbers being in Khurāsān (179,387), Iṣfahān (129,295), Tehrān (46,907), and Sīstān and Balūchistān (34,929); the lowest were in Hamadān (364), with none in Bushire. These figures, however, probably cover a wide range of ownership and agricultural method, ranging from the landowner who cultivated a large proportion of a village by mechanized means, notably in some of the villages of Iṣfahān, to peasant owners who cultivated holdings too small to afford a living and supplemented their livelihood by seasonal work in other areas or as agricultural labourers on neighbouring land, as in many of the villages of Khurāsān.

The following table, also issued by the land reform organization, shows how estates were settled under the second stage in the different provinces. In many cases the land involved in a given settlement was only a small fraction of the village. The size of the villages also varied, from those inhabited by one or



# SECOND STAGE (UP TO 17 FEBRUARY 1956), METHOD OF SETTLEMENT

Area	Cultivable supply		Perpetual supply		Taxation		Sale by agreement		Article 27		Division according to the crop status		Article 41		No. of villages actually settled	No. of villages actually settled
	Peasants	No. of months	Peasants	No. of months	No. of estate	No. of estate	No. of estate	No. of purchase	No. of purchase	holding power	No. of estate	growing land	No. of purchase	holding their right		
Gilan	490	2,651	4	354	31,025	413,959	1,351	8,552	0,850	25,700	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tehrān	503	10,000	125	2,700	16,217	61,001	470	3,450	7,400	7,400	400	2,000	—	—	—	—
E. Azerbaijan	84	4,450	0	1,700	11,636	155,101	180	1,110	3,950	7,400	810	7,500	—	—	—	—
Mazandaran	698	12,700	0	304	16,081	127,417	150	570	1,400	7,400	30	500	—	—	—	—
Isfahan	1,650	7,504	145	703	31,020	19,500	44	2,244	4,850	500	2,015	15,000	—	—	—	—
Khorāsān	4,583	21,325	501	1,450	1,016	30,500	60	1,114	8,450	65,710	165	500	—	—	—	—
Fars	574	9,500	45	300	2,050	30,510	50	1,100	1,800	10,510	441	10,100	—	—	—	—
Kermān	495	2,813	4	400	16,317	106,025	50	984	208	6	554	8,500	—	—	—	—
Hamadān	107	6,500	25	1,500	4,054	33,751	50	3,500	450	1,850	504	13,812	—	—	—	—
Kurdīstān	37	1,437	5	700	3,016	30,455	10	3,500	450	6,814	8	500	—	—	—	—
Lurīstān	33	604	35	300	15,100	30,500	104	500	60	1,750	108	1,200	—	—	—	—
W. Azerbaijan	45	5,500	66	500	4,000	27,022	40	500	904	1,100	100	700	—	—	—	—
Kermānshāh	4	107	12	400	1,110	31,575	4	1,500	—	—	130	3,500	—	—	—	—
Kermān	764	3,500	154	345	750	2,301	7	—	8,400	8,400	120	1,350	—	—	—	—
Semnān	193	525	40	210	136	571	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bahār, Alldā	—	—	—	—	17	184	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bahār	—	—	—	—	0	500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shahr and	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kolchīstān	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gurgān	46	2,752	81	9,000	—	25,700	48	774	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	10,207	91,800	973	19,500	120,640	300,578	9,400	25,877	31,200	112,677	5,440	101,849	15,014	15,875	1,405	858

\* These figures do not include those landowners who worked part of a village by mechanized means.

\* Presumably the sale of the remainder of the project to the peasants had not been completed.

\* When I was in Kirmānshāh in the summer of 1956 several villages were claimed by their owners as mechanized, even if the cases were still being disputed, but some villages, I think, had been recognized as mechanized by the land reform office.

\* These appear to have been peasants working mechanized land which was outside the land reform.

Source: Report issued by the land reform organization for its operations in 1955-6 (with adjustments).

two peasant families to those with several hundred peasants cultivating the land. For the country as a whole, tenancies accounted for 129,648 cases, excluding charitable *ouqāf* and private or family *ouqāf* which numbered 10,227 and 973 respectively. Article 17, the agricultural unit, rated second with 21,959 cases, followed by Article 45 (the purchase by the landowner of the peasants' rights) with 15,024. Division of the land between the landowner and the peasant in the same proportion as the crop was shared under the crop-sharing agreement ranked fourth with only 9,440 cases, and sale to the peasants fifth with 2,405. In all provinces tenancies accounted for the largest number of cases except in Fārs, Kirmān, and Khurāsān. In Fārs division of the land between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was shared under the crop-sharing agreement constituted the most numerous category. In Kirmān, Article 45, i.e. purchase of the peasants' rights by the landowner, accounted for the largest number, followed by Article 17, i.e. the formation of an 'agricultural unit'. The estates in Kirmān appear to have been small: under Article 45 the number of estates concerned was 11,687 but the number of peasants only 8,605; similarly, the number of estates settled under Article 17 was 8,088 and the number of peasants concerned was 9,999. In Khurāsān 8,539 estates involving 63,745 peasants were settled under Article 17, and 2,090 estates involving 4,729 peasants were sold under Article 45. The figures in the latter case also suggest that many of the estates were small.

The second stage did not in fact do much to lessen the gap between the peasants to whom land was transferred under the first stage and those who had not received land. Under the first stage there had been surprisingly little envy and discontent between the two groups, perhaps because the peasants who had not received land under the first stage assumed that their turn would come under the second. As it became clear to the peasants that they were not going to get land in the same way as their fellows had under the first stage, envy and discontent grew. Even more widely resented than the discrepancy between the treatment of the two groups was the difference in reckoning the price to be paid by the peasant for the land under the first stage and the rent for a tenancy agreement under the second stage;



so was the way in which the price for the sale of the land was fixed, if settlement by division was selected under the second stage. Whereas under the first stage the price was based upon the amount of tax paid by the landowner and was usually rather less than the real value of the land, under the second stage the price was fixed by agreement between the landowner and the peasants, an arrangement unlikely to be as favourable to the peasants as the method laid down under the first stage. Similarly, by fixing the rent under a tenancy agreement at the average net income of the landowner for the years 1961-2, 1962-3, and 1963-4 no concession was made to the peasant.

It sometimes happened, if a village was partially transferred under the first stage and the remainder settled by tenancy under the second stage, that the amount demanded as the annual instalment of the price for the land transferred was less than the amount paid by way of rent for the rest of the land. For example, in Khākibeg near Sanandaj, rather more than half of which was transferred to the peasants and the remainder settled by a tenancy agreement, it was said that the amount due as the annual instalment for the price of the land transferred (which had not, however, actually been demanded in the summer of 1966 when I visited the village) would be about half what was formerly paid under the crop-sharing agreement to the landowner, whereas it was thought that the rent would be higher than the share paid under the crop-sharing agreement. Formerly the landowner had taken one-fifth of all crops and a due of 150 r.  
(c. 14s.) per ploughland. Labour service was also levied and 2 per cent taken on the four-fifths of the crop as the peasants' contribution to public works carried out by the village council.

On the other hand, the smaller the landowner's share under the crop-sharing agreement, i.e. the more lenient his treatment of the peasants, the lower his rent under a tenancy agreement. In those districts in which the landowners' income had come largely from the levy of dues, the abolition of these after land reform immediately improved the situation of the peasants and the need for a change in tenure was less urgently felt.

In Khūzistān a great effort was made to get the second stage finished by the summer of 1966; and an attempt was made to push through agreements for tenancies in the spring and summer

of that year. Statistics were collected in some cases very rapidly, and their accuracy is open to doubt. For example, between 5 May and 16 July, 539 villages in the Boir Ahmadī were alleged to have been settled and 16,350 persons given tenancies. This, however, was largely a paper operation. The title to the land was in many cases still disputed in the summer of 1966, and the land not yet registered. In such cases the procedure was for the rent to be paid by the peasants into the registration offices, where it was held pending a decision over the title. In practice a great deal of uncertainty seemed to prevail, and the peasants of many of the villages I visited in 1966 said they had not yet got tenancies. It was alleged that the rents fixed in Chirām and elsewhere in the Kūhgīlūyeh were absurdly small. This was also said to be the case in the Bāvi country.

On the whole, the land reform officials did their best to ensure that the rent fixed was equitable. In Khurāsān, which I visited in the late summer and autumn of 1965, the peasants concerned were, in general, satisfied with the rents fixed. At Ābrūd, a large village near Turbat-i Haydarī, three shares out of twenty-one were transferred under the first stage; tenancies were concluded for most of the remainder under the second stage; a few shares were held by peasant proprietors. Those who had received tenancies said their condition had been greatly improved and that they now worked harder. The amount of land they each held was fairly large, and consisted of unirrigated as well as irrigated land. They alleged that production had gone up since land reform. A co-operative society was set up under the first stage and had 41 members. The number increased under the second stage to 150, among whom were included the peasant proprietors, shepherds and others owning livestock (*māldārān*), and carpetweavers (including women). It was a flourishing co-operative; it provided credit and sold oil and paraffin, pesticides, fertilizers, and seed. Its capital had been increased from 40,000 *rs.* to 120,000 *rs.*, i.e. from about £182 to about £545. I was impressed by the apparent efficiency of this society and the brisk attitude and outlook of the peasants. There had been an agricultural extension officer in the village for two years. He had ten villages under him. He was a keen young man and seemed to have done a good job.



In Jahrum tenancy agreements were for the most part chosen under the second stage. When I visited the area in the autumn of 1965, the settlements in many cases had only recently been made, or had not been completed, and there was then still some dislocation and uncertainty as to the future.

Satisfaction on the whole was expressed in 1966 in those villages for which tenancies had been concluded in Kirmānshāh. One such was Bīār, a village on the Kirmānshāh-Sanandaj road, which, after some prevarication, had been selected by the owner as his 'chosen' village. Formerly the landowner had taken one-third of the crop under the crop-sharing agreement; under the tenancy agreement he received 4,600 *rs.* (2, £21) per ploughland per annum. The peasants said that they were satisfied with the agreement. They were free to sow what they pleased. Formerly they had sown only grain; now they grew sugar-beet also; and whereas before they had used only animal manure, they now used chemical fertilizers as well. The area sown had been increased; tractors were hired from neighbours, and production per acre was alleged to have gone up. The reason the peasants gave for this was that the produce was now wholly theirs, and the incentive to increase production was therefore greater. Labour service had been very heavy before land reform. A co-operative society served Bīār and three other villages. It was set up in 1964 and had 106 members. Loans had been given three times and repaid twice; the third loan had not fallen due when I visited the village in 1966. There was said to be no indebtedness except to the co-operative society.

The tenancy agreements concluded in Bīlīvār in the province of Kirmānshāh were said in some cases to be favourable to the peasants. Kamshūr, a village of 41 ploughlands, was settled by tenancy. The documents had been drawn up about a month before my visit to the village in July 1966, and it was too soon, therefore, to assess the effect of the agreement. There were some 67 families in the village, of whom 8 were *kharushīshāhā*. There was some carpet weaving there, and a few flocks were kept. It was owned by several landowners, who had delimited their shares shortly before land reform, retaining the ownership of some gardens. Some peasants also had gardens. Formerly the

owners had received three-eighths of the crop from irrigated and unirrigated land. Prior to the year 1940-1, five chickens, one load of clover, two loads of straw, 75 kg. (c. 165 lb.) wheat by way of *nānāneh* (a kind of entertainment due for the owner), and 30 kg. (c. 66 lb.) barley by way of *dānāneh* (a due levied to feed the owner's horses, etc.), and 10-20 days' labour service per ploughland, which was sometimes commuted into cash, and a due called *khānehvārī*, consisting of 100 *manns* (c. 635 lb.) of grain per family, were also taken. Formerly the peasants had been moved about from one ploughland to another. The land for which tenancies had been concluded was watered by a *qanāt* and five springs. It was alleged that the *qanāt* had had no work done on it for about fifty years. Responsibility for its upkeep was now with the co-operative society which was set up some seven months before my visit. It also served a neighbouring village, Hirtikch. It had given one loan, and had an agency for the sale of paraffin. Formerly advances were given by the landowners, and repaid at harvest time with high rates of interest. New advances were required almost immediately after the harvest.

Sumāq (Varmazān), consisting of the 130 families, of whom 30 were *khawshishīnā*, was another Bīlīvār village in which tenancy was selected under the second stage. It was alleged that faction had formerly been stirred up in the village by the owner. Some 100 peasants worked the village ploughlands, which numbered about 43. The amount of land under cultivation was small. It was said that the owner wanted to fix the annual rent at 7,000 *rs.* (c. £32) per ploughland, but that the peasants were not prepared to accept this unless he handed over to them the trees on the land. If he continued to take one-third of the revenue from the trees, they were not willing to pay more than 5,000 *rs.* (c. £23) per ploughland. Agreement had not been reached when I visited the village in July 1966, and no documents had been drawn up. Formerly three-eighths of the crop went to the landowner, and one-third of the produce of trees and gardens. Land reform had not yet made much difference economically to the people of Sumāq, and there was still a good deal of indebtedness. When a co-operative society was set up in the winter of 1965-6, some of the peasants had been too poor to join. There were 59 members, including two women who



held land jointly with their husbands. It was hoped that the remainder of the peasants holding land would join shortly. The fact that the rent for the land had not yet been fixed had created uncertainty. Nevertheless, the peasants said that they were better off and were clearing stones from their fields, improving the local road, and building a pond (*istakhr*) for irrigation purposes; they also intended to clean the *qanāt*. The landowner had not done this in the past, and so they had done it themselves at irregular intervals. Some twenty new houses had been built in the village since land reform. The co-operative society was to get an agency for the sale of oil.

Some of the Marīvān villages were settled by tenancy agreements. Qal'ehcheh and Qal'ehgāh, both owned by small owners, several of whom lived in the village, were settled in this way. Formerly one-seventh of all crops, the most important of which were tobacco and grain, had been taken by the landowner under the crop-sharing agreement.

A number of villages round Saqqiz were also settled by tenancy agreements. Among them was Sarāb. The owner formerly took one-fifth of the crops; he also levied a due in hens and exacted labour service, both of which were sometimes commuted into cash. There were some eighty ploughlands in the village. Forty-six families held land as crop-sharing peasants. There were some 80 families of *khushnashinhā*, who were mostly shepherds (*dāmdārān*), or in a few cases peasants who cultivated vegetables in small plots of land (*sabzikārān*). No documents had been distributed to the peasants when I visited the village in the summer of 1966. A co-operative society had been set up at the end of 1965. It had some 160 members and served four other small villages, Ahmadābād, Quchaq, Mandil, and Bisar. Tenancy agreements had been made for the first of these, which belonged to a brother of the owner of Sarāb; the other villages were owned by small landowners, and no agreements had been reached by the summer of 1966, but the land reform office was said to be engaged in their preparation. Fore-selling had formerly been common. Before the co-operative society was set up, the peasants had received loans from the Agricultural Bank for about four years. There had been two bad years and the loans had not been repaid, but it was hoped to repay them in 1966.

Irānshahr, another Saqqiz village, was also settled by tenancy. It consisted of 45 ploughlands of varying size. Some were consolidated, but the majority consisted of strips, though the irrigated and unirrigated parts of the individual ploughlands were mainly consolidated. The owner had refused to accept the rent due from the peasants in 1965, and which they had apparently been prepared to pay. There was consequently some disquiet among the peasants in 1966, because it was thought that two years' rent would have to be paid that year. The fact that they had not reported the matter to the land reform office indicated either a lack of confidence in the land reform organization or ignorance and 'submissiveness'. Before land reform began, but not after this date, the landowner had taken, in addition to one-fifth of all crops, a levy in clarified butter, lambs, chickens (six per household), 3,000 *rs.* (i.e. £14) per ploughland, heavy labour service and dues such as *sūrāneh* (a payment for permission to marry), *jarīneh* (a payment for the settlement of disputes), and *ṣannābāneh* (a due on the area of land held). The rent fixed was said to be less than one-fifth of the crops and the dues and levies together, but possibly more than the one-fifth alone.

The peasants said that conditions had much improved since land reform. The area under cultivation had increased; the land was cultivated partly by tractors which were hired from outside the village. The peasants said that they had had no security formerly. Some 80 per cent of them had, however, lived in the village for several generations. There had been two or three bad years recently when the rains had failed, and there had been fairly heavy losses in flocks in 1966 from foot and mouth disease (*tabaqa*). Losses from infestation by field-mice were also said to be considerable. The peasants alleged that since the co-operative society had been formed in 1964 their economic conditions had improved. It served two other villages and had 113 members. The manager and one member of the executive committee of the society were literate. I had the impression that the people were not very advanced in co-operation. Loans had been received twice and repaid once; the second loan had not fallen due when I visited the village. Before the formation of the co-operative society, loans were obtained from the Agri-



cultural Bank and other sources. There had been indebtedness when land reform started and some still existed. Some new building had been carried out in Irānshahr since land reform.

A number of villages were settled in Tikāb by tenancy. Three *dāngs* of Qarāqiyyeh near Tikāb belonged to a member of the most important landowning family in the district. He had selected this course. The other three *dāngs* of the village were *vāqf* for the *Shīr o Khurshid-i Surkh* (the Persian Red Cross). The village land consisted of sixty-eight ploughlands of varying size, held by some forty persons. The ploughlands were not consolidated, because the quality of the land varied and consisted of strips of land in different parts of the village. Formerly the ploughlands were redistributed every two or three years. Grain was the only crop. Flocks provided an important source of revenue, and there was also some carpet weaving. The village was settled in 1965, and the rent for the landowner's property fixed at 4,900 *rs.* (c. £22) per ploughland and for the *vāqf* property at 5,100 *rs.* (c. £23) per ploughland. Formerly the owner took one-fifth of the crop and various dues, including three chickens per ploughland; he also levied *jarimeh* (a payment for the settlement of disputes), and *saltāneh* (i.e. a due paid by an unmarried man, or *salt*, who lived in the village but worked elsewhere). The peasants said that the rent fixed under the second stage of land reform was favourable to them and that they were now better off. Formerly fore-selling had been common. In 1965, a loan from the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank had been obtained and repaid. A co-operative society was started early in 1966 and gave its first loan in that year. The executive committee met about once a week. The society had an agency for paraffin and wanted to extend this to oil. It also wished to sell consumer goods such as cloth, tea, and sugar, etc.; the members wanted it to buy a tractor. The village economy seemed to be run a good deal on barter, clarified butter, for example, being exchanged for tea and sugar. The owner lived in the village and had a tractor and some land which he cultivated by mechanized means. He also ploughed and sowed some of the peasants' land, the seed being given equally by the two parties, and the produce being equally divided between them. It was said that there had been an

increase in the area under cultivation since land reform; there had also been some new building.

In some of the villages in Khūzistān tenancy was the method of settlement preferred, while in others it was division. That some of the peasants preferred tenancy was apparently due to a lack of confidence in their ability to manage their own affairs, and a fear of accepting ultimate responsibility for the land. But this was not the case in those villages where the peasants were more robust (see below). Khusrouābād near Dizfūl was settled by tenancy. The rent was fixed at 10,000 *rs.* (c. £45) per ploughland, half to be paid after the grain harvest and half after the rice harvest. Water dues were paid to the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority. Formerly the peasants had paid half the rice crop to the landowner (who had been responsible for all the expenses of cultivation) and 120 *manns* (2,116 lb., 1 *mann* = 8 kg.) of wheat and 25 *manns* (441 lb.) of barley on their grain land, and various dues (*'awāriḡ*). The peasants were insistent that tenancy was better for them than division, which was the method of settlement preferred in the neighbouring village of Shamsābād. They said that under a tenancy agreement they were 'free' and not subject to interference by the owner and could do what they pleased with their land.

Although the peasants of Khusrouābād claimed that they were better off since tenancies had been concluded, they had some reservations. Roads, water, and electricity were, they said better, but their expenses were higher because, instead of cultivating the land themselves, they were forced to pay the Water and Electricity Authority to plough for them. They said that they were dissatisfied (although they seemed fairly cheerful), and complained that they were not free to cultivate what they wanted but forced to follow the instructions of the Water and Electricity Authority. One old man said that land reform was all words. They (the peasants) were still 'slaves' (*'abd*), and had merely exchanged masters, the officials of the Water and Electricity Authority having taken the place of the former landowners. The peasants belonged to a co-operative society situated in Rahīm. Fore-selling was still practised, and there was indebtedness to local tradesmen and others. Some repairs had been made to the housing since land reform. A measure of the



improvement of the conditions of the peasants was, perhaps, the fact that four people from the village went on the pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*) in 1965.

Kūtiān, another village in the same area, was also settled by tenancy. Statistics were collected during the first stage of land reform, but it was in the end decided that the village was not subject to this stage. Between the first stage and the second, the landowners sold 110 ha. of their land to the Water and Electricity Authority, which land the Authority worked itself. The peasants were dissatisfied at losing this land. Moreover, they had been unable to agree over the rent with the landowners, and so the land reform office had fixed this, basing the rent on the original field lay-out of the village before the sale of the 110 ha. The peasants alleged that the rent was too high in view of the land which they had lost; but they had nevertheless signed the tenancy agreement. They had 67 ploughlands each of about 9 ha. (c. 22 acres). It seems that when statistics were collected during the first stage of land reform, they had exaggerated their holdings. This was, perhaps, the root of the trouble. It seemed to me a case for investigation, and when I asked the peasants in the summer of 1966 why they did not refer to the land reform office, one peasant alleged that no one listened to their complaints.

There were also allegations that the Water and Electricity Authority did not irrigate their rice fields properly. The basis for this complaint appeared to concern the rate of flow of water on the land, which, because the Authority had levelled the land, was less than it had been formerly (or appeared to the peasants to be less). They said that their rent, together with the water dues they had to pay to the Water and Electricity Authority, was more than the share which they had formerly paid to the landowners (when they had paid no water dues). They said they had been forced to fore-sell their crops in order to pay the part of the rent which fell due at the grain harvest. They were, however, better off, so they said, because they were 'free' and this was more important than money. They said they would have preferred division to tenancy.

Umayrah (divided into North and South 'Umayrah), a village near Ahvāz, was settled by tenancy under the second

stage. North 'Umayrah was apparently first settled by division, but this was subsequently changed by mutual agreement to tenancy. It was alleged that the peasants, as in Khusrouābād near Dizfūl, preferred tenancy because they were reluctant to accept full responsibility for the land. The village had some 300 ha. (741 acres) of land, of which about half was mechanized and therefore exempted from land reform. There were 31 peasants who had tenancies. The holdings were apparently still redistributed every year by lot. The land was sown every other year with grain. The peasants had equal holdings for grain, but the amount of land they sowed with summer crops varied. Formerly one-third of winter and one-half of summer crops had been paid to the landowners. The village land had originally been unirrigated; a power-operated pump had been installed about thirty years ago. Formerly the peasants had had no security of tenure. They said they had improved their houses since land reform because of their new security and increased income. They also worked harder. Land reform, they said, was greatly to the benefit of the peasants, but the improvement in their own conditions had first begun some ten years ago when the pump and the village had been bought by a new owner. This man still owned the village and was well spoken of by the peasants. They said there had been no fore-selling even before land reform. A school and a mosque had been built in the village, I think, since land reform. One man from the village had been to the Tehrān Congress of Free Men and Women in August 1963. Conditions in 'Umayrah seemed to be much better than in a number of other *ma'assūāt* which I visited in the Ahvāz area. My impression was that the peasants in 'Umayrah were, on the whole, satisfied with land reform.

In Bihbahān, the owners of all the 59 villages settled under the second stage by the summer of 1966 had chosen tenancies. In thirteen the rent was fixed by mutual agreement between the two parties. In the others, because of a failure to agree, the land reform office had acted. Kurdistān, a large village with a population of about 1,000 people, was one of these. The people were Tayyibī and the tribal headman, whose office was hereditary, held the position of village headman also. The village land was divided into 210 ploughlands, known locally as *khīsh*. Each



ploughland consisted of strips in different parts of the village. The peasants were organized into cultivating units called *buñjāls*, each consisting of 30 ploughlands. Lots were drawn annually between the *buñjāls* for the land, because the water from the River Mārūn, which was used for irrigation, was not enough for rice to be cultivated in all the village land. Part of the land was held jointly by the peasants and part of it was delimited between them. When I visited the village in 1966, some of the peasants said they were considering a permanent allocation of the whole of the land. The headman held 15 ploughlands. The *mirāb* (the official in charge of the water distribution) received a share of the harvest; and his ploughland was free from the duty of providing labour for the cleaning of irrigation channels, an obligation imposed upon the holders of ploughlands, and performed jointly by public summons. Formerly the village had been rented from the owner by a middleman, who, the peasants alleged, had refused to allow them to practise fallow. They now left the land fallow with advantage. The lessee formerly took one-fifth of winter and one-fourth of summer crops.

The landowner and the peasants had been unable to agree upon the rent under land reform; so the land reform office had fixed the rent at about 3,000 *ri.* (c. £14) per ploughland for the land held jointly and at varying sums for the delimited (*ikhtijāsī*) holdings. It had, however, not yet been paid when I visited the village. A number of the peasants had apparently abandoned their land because of poverty and debt; some were said to have gone to Kuwait. Indebtedness to merchants and others in Bihbahān, as in other villages in the neighbourhood, was heavy. Loans from the co-operative society were said by some peasants to be used to pay other creditors and not for agricultural purposes. The peasants said they were too poor to buy fertilizers; one man only had used some for the first time in 1966. The *ā'yān* of the gardens, which grew vegetables and palm trees, belonged to the peasants. There was some discontent on the part of the peasants that they only had tenancies and that the land was not theirs. There was a little new building in the village. By the summer of 1966, land reform had not made much impact on the village of Kurdistān, economically or otherwise;

but this was partly due to the existence of faction and intrigue, typical of the Bihbahān district; also great poverty and lack of amenities had prevailed in Kurdistan before land reform.<sup>1</sup>

*Vaqf* properties account for a considerable number of the villages settled by tenancies. In addition to the large and valuable properties belonging to the shrine of the Imām Rizā, mainly in Khurāsān, there is a very considerable number of *vaqf* properties, some large but many very small, in different parts of the country. According to figures compiled from the records of the *vaqāf* department, there were 38,519 agricultural properties, 418 date groves, 524 pastures, and 7,609 *qanāts* and other sources of water which were *vaqf*. But this was not a complete record, since there were *vaqf* properties in remote areas which had not been registered as such. Some *vaqāf* also had been usurped and converted into private property. The income from *vaqf* properties, which included also real estate such as shops, baths, and caravanserais, consisting of 15,881 items, amounted in the year 1960-1 to 275,458,362 *rs.* (c. £1,252,083).<sup>2</sup> These figures, however, excluded those *vaqāf* of which the reigning shah was the *mutavallī*, because they did not come under the direct administration of the *vaqāf* department. Among these were the *vaqāf* of the shrine of the Imām Rizā.

Tenancy agreements had been concluded for the properties belonging to the shrine of the Imām Rizā in Khurāsān by the summer of 1965. At the time of my visit in that year most of the agreements had been newly concluded. In general, the peasants seemed satisfied with the tenancies. There was, however, dissatisfaction in Khurāsān and elsewhere among the middlemen, who were no longer permitted to lease *vaqf* properties, and some intrigue by them against the land reform.

In Fārs there are a number of *vaqf* properties. Tenancies had not been concluded for all of these at the time of my visit in 1965. At Kūshk-i Qāzī, near Fasā, which is wholly *vaqf*, disputes were going on over the succession to the office of administrator and the *vaqāf* department was administering the *vaqf*.

<sup>1</sup> I visited Kurdistan in 1949. The peasants were then very poor, the landlords appeared to have no sense of responsibility towards them, and the land was badly cultivated.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. 'Alī Akbar Shībābī, *Tārīkhchek-i vaqf dar Islām* (Tehrān, 1964-5), p. 14.



temporarily. Tenancies had been concluded with some 36 peasants. They stated that conditions had become better after land reform began, and that the improvement had continued now that they had tenancy agreements and were their own masters.

*Vaqf* property is not an important category of land in the west. Chuqāgulān, a small *vaqf* village near Kirmānshāh, was formerly rented; the lessee took one-quarter of the crops from the peasants. The rent under the tenancy agreement made under the second stage of the land reform was 5,000 *rs.* (c. £23) per ploughland. The peasants in 1966 thought that this would be less than the former share of the crop which they had paid; and in any case, they said, they would be better off, because they would no longer be subject to the various forms of extortion which the lessee had formerly practised against them. The village had some 200 ha. (c. 494 acres) of land, mainly un-irrigated, divided into 25 ploughlands. Water was short. The holdings of the peasants were unequal in size. Those who held more than one ploughland employed casual labour on a cash basis at busy seasons. The keeping of dairy cows in the village was fairly common; the milk was sold in Kirmānshāh.

The co-operative society, which served the village of Shāfir-ābād as well, had about 50 members. The chairman of the executive committee had formerly been an office worker, who had bought the rights of some peasant about two years before and proceeded to cultivate this land himself. He also kept chickens—some 600 or so—and bees. Formerly advances and loans were obtained only against the payment of heavy rates of interest, sometimes as much as 60 per cent. Prior to 1966 there had been three bad years, and most of the peasants were heavily in debt to the bazaar and to the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank; they hoped to repay some of their debts that year. In spite of other indebtedness, they had been punctilious in the repayment of their loans to the co-operative society. The fore-selling of crops was still common.

Tenancies had still not been concluded for two *vaqf* properties in Sanjābī, Mir 'Azīzī Jadīd and Mir 'Azīzī Qadīm, when I visited them in the summer of 1966. These were two small villages inhabited by the Kulkul tribe, a small tribe of about

150 families living in the neighbourhood of Mīr 'Azīzī and Qasr-i Shīrīn. They had formerly held pastures in Zuhāb, of which they had been deprived during the reign of Rezā Shāh; after land reform their right to these pastures had been recognized, and registered in the land reform office. The land of the two villages was divided into 30 ploughlands. Although some peasants held more than one ploughland, the majority of the holdings were very small, and did not provide a living. Most of the peasants gained their livelihood mainly from flocks. Unirrigated grain was the chief crop. Ploughing and discing was done by tractors, which were hired in 1966 at the rate of 500 rs. (c. £2) per hectare (2.4 acres). There was a little irrigated cultivation, and disputes were going on in 1966 with a neighbouring village over water. No fertilizers except animal manure were used. A few gardens had been planted about 1964. The headman had a largish plantation of trees, which he had planted with the agreement of the *ouqāf* department about 1951. One-third of its produce went to the *ouqāf* department. It was exempted from the settlement under the second stage.

The reason for the delay in the conclusion of tenancies was the peasants' objection that the proposed rent, which was to be different for irrigated and unirrigated land, was too high. Formerly the land had been rented for a term of three or five years. The peasants alleged that they had had no security of tenure, and had been forced to pay a variety of dues as well as a share of the crop.

A co-operative society was established before land reform, in 1960. It was the first society to be set up in Sanjābī, but contrary to many other areas in Kirmānshāhān, little progress had been made in understanding the co-operative movement and its purposes. The only activity of the society had been the giving of loans. There had been on occasion difficulty over repayment, and in one year loans were withheld on this account. Loans had formerly been obtained from Kirmānshāh at high rates of interest. It was said that rates had gradually declined during the last thirty years or so. After a succession of three bad years, in 1966 indebtedness to corn chandlers and others was common. A school was established about 1959 or 1960 and had six classes in 1966. It was alleged that most of the children in the



village went to school, but that classes for adults were not well attended.

Manṣūriyyeh, close to Bihbahān, was also *vagf*, one *dāng* charitable *vagf* and five *dāngs* private *vagf*. Tenancies had been concluded for the former for 99 years and for the latter for 30 years. The gardens of the village, half the palm groves, and all the vineyards were to be sold to the peasants, the administrator of the charitable *vagf* having agreed to this under the principle of *tabdil be aḥsan* (i.e. exchange for the better, the only grounds on which *vagf* land may be sold), but the transaction had not been concluded when I visited the village in 1966. Formerly the share of the crop paid by the peasants had been one-fifth of grain and rice, half of the produce of date palms and one-fifth of vineyards; the amount due was, however, usually decided by estimation.

The peasants alleged that they had been subjected to much oppression. They said, for example, that before land reform, the administrator and the lessees would not allow them to practise fallow, because, when the share of the crop was decided by estimation, the greater the area under cultivation the more they were able to claim. Since land reform the peasants had practised fallow; they had less land under cultivation, but they cultivated this better, and they said that their production was higher (unless affected by pest). Irrigation was by two *qanāts*, on which, the peasants alleged, the administrator had done no work for some ten years, and river water, distributed by the local water company in return for water dues.

In general, the peasants of Manṣūriyyeh appeared to be very pleased with land reform. They said that their conditions under the tenancy agreement had immeasurably improved. They alleged that they had been kept in a state of ignorance by the beneficiaries before land reform. They also declared that the administrator still tried to exercise an undue influence in the village. A co-operative society was set up in 1965 with a capital of 148,250 *rs.* (c. £674) and 240 members. Loans amounting to 73,000 *rs.* (c. £332) were given in the first year. The peasants had been indebted when the society was started and still were at the time of my visit. The capital of the society had increased to 211,750 *rs.* (c. £960) by 1966. 22,000 *rs.* (£100) had been

put into a special fund by the members for the building of premises. The manager was the village headman, who had succeeded his maternal grandfather as headman in the year 1956-7 when he had been aged only nineteen. There appeared to be a marked change for the better in conditions in the village and in the morale of the people since land reform had begun.

In Yazd there are a large number of small *ouqāf*.<sup>1</sup> In some 650 cases the administrator cultivated the land himself, i.e. he was a working peasant. This shows how small many of these *ouqāf* were. Up to 11 September 1965 tenancies had been drawn up for 9,757 peasants in *vagf* land in Yazd, but the documents had not been signed because the necessary co-operative societies had not by then been set up. In view of the small number of peasants concerned in the various *ouqāf*, there were difficulties in starting societies unless their membership was to be thrown open to other peasants. This seemed the obvious answer, but in 1965 it was said that the co-operative societies could not be thrown open to the peasants in general because of a shortage of supervisors.

Āyask, a small village some twelve miles from Firdous, was an outstanding example of what enlightened administration and local leadership can achieve. In a way Āyask was not a typical village, but it was marked out from other villages by something indefinably yet unmistakably Persian, though characteristic of the small and remote country town or village, and not of the large urban centre. Āyask was partly *vagf* land. Before land reform this was rented. The lessee had a crop-sharing agreement with the peasants, under which according to local custom they received one-fifth of the produce. He raised this (to the annoyance of the local landowners in the village, who were mainly small men) first to one-quarter, then one-third, and finally a half; and alleged that he drew, even so, a relatively larger income from the land than the other landowners in the village, who continued to take four-fifths. This may well be true: I have known other cases where a decrease

<sup>1</sup> See, further, 'Abd al-Vahhāb Ṭarāz, 'Kisābcheh-i mouqūfāt-i Yazd', ed. Iraj Alishār, in *Farhang-i Irān Zamin*, vol. x (1962-3). This was composed in 1257/1841-2 and gives a detailed list of the *ouqāf* of Yazd.



voluntarily made by the landowner in his proportion of the crop has been made good by increased production or greater honesty in the division of the crop on the threshing-floor. The lessee also gave the peasants (before land reform) land to build houses on.

A local *ākhund* or *mullā*, who was also the *mudarris* of the religious school or *madrasa* in Firdous, emerged as the village leader, and began a campaign for self-help against poverty, which he considered to be the root of evil. Unemployment and poverty were, in his view, unclean, not the outward things of ritual impurity. He was a forceful and energetic character, single-minded in his devotion to Āyask and the abolition of poverty. He had learnt to drive a tractor, and worked on the land (in spite of the remonstrances of his fellows); and made some of the students (*talabeh*) in the *madrasa* do the same. He then began to rebuild the village, which as a result was laid out on a modern plan with well-built spacious houses in wide streets, all of which were named. There was a flourishing boys' school but no girls' school. Paradoxically, girls were considered to be better employed in weaving carpets than in learning lessons at school. Wages in 1965, though still low, were high for a country district in Khurāsān. Carpet weavers earned some 80 *rs.* (c. 7s. 3d.) a day; and casual labour in the fields was paid at some 60 *rs.* (c. 5s. 5d.) a day. The village was watered by a *qanāt* and two power-operated wells. The peasants had formed a company themselves before land reform in order to obtain the necessary capital to sink the wells.

Under the second stage of land reform tenancies were concluded with the peasants in *vagf* land at, it was said, a rather lower rent than that which they had formerly paid. A co-operative society had not been set up when I visited the village, but a promise had been made that one would be set up that autumn. The villagers obviously had a great pride in their village. I have never seen in a Persian village such a smiling, cheerful, confident group of people as those of Āyask.

Under the land reform, as stated above, there is no place for the middleman. There was, however, before reform a type of tenant who was virtually a working peasant. Such men were probably found mainly round the eastern and southern borders

of the central desert. To deprive such tenants of the possibility of taking part in agricultural development was to involve them in genuine hardship. But it was probably impossible to frame the land reform law in such a way that all cases would be covered and injustice avoided. I met one case of severe hardship of this kind in Firdous. The man in question owned a small garden and a small piece of land, and rented another small piece of land, which he worked partly with paid labour and partly with crop-sharing peasants, three or four persons in all. He directed affairs and was constantly supervising the ploughing and sowing of the land, and other agricultural work. Although in effect a working farmer, under the land reform he could not rent land in this way. This was obviously a different case from the absentee tenant, who merely drew revenue from the land and put nothing back, or the tenant who was, in effect, the owner's bailiff or agent, and who sometimes reappeared in the land reform villages in another form.

Settlement by tenancy, as stated above, accounted for the greatest number of villages affected by the second stage. In many areas, although this form of settlement had been chosen, no rents had been collected by the summer of 1966, or, in some cases, even fixed. In many of those villages in which tenancy agreements had been made, an improvement in the condition of the peasants, was to be seen; not economically—it was too soon for the economic effect of the changed relationship to be felt, but in the new sense of freedom which the peasants felt with regard to the management of their own affairs. Just as a similar feeling had led those peasants who had received land under the first stage to cultivate it better, so too in villages in which tenancies or other methods of settlement had been concluded under the second stage, there was often an improvement in standards of cultivation. Further, by the conclusion of tenancy agreements for *vaqf* property, one of the most difficult problems facing the land reform was settled without open dispute.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE EXECUTION OF THE SECOND STAGE: SALE, DIVISION, THE AGRICULTURAL UNIT, AND PURCHASE OF THE PEASANTS' RIGHTS

---

THE second method of settlement permitted under the Additional Articles and their regulations, namely sale by the landowner to the peasants, was the most favourable to the peasants. It was also the form of settlement least frequently adopted, partly, perhaps, because many of those who would have adopted this method had, in fact, already offered their land for sale to the government under the cabinet decree of 1 March 1962 (see above p. 71). The main task of the land reform organization in this form of settlement was to ensure that the land was transferred to the occupying peasants. I came across some cases in Färs in which it was alleged that peasants who were not occupying peasants had received land and that occupying peasants had been wrongfully excluded.

The circumstances of the sale of land under the second stage were different from those which had prevailed under the first stage. Under the second stage, the initiative was with the landowner and the peasants, not with the land reform officials. Under the first stage after, and sometimes before, the landowner had declared his holdings, the land reform officials went out to the villages and collected statistics, and transferred the land to the peasants. Under the second stage the landowner came to the local land reform office with the real or alleged agreement of the peasants, and after an investigation of the case by the land reform officials documents were drawn up. Occasionally the landowner endeavoured to sell the land to peasants who were not entitled to it with the purpose of continuing himself to draw revenue from it, or merely, out of spite, to prevent the former crop-sharing peasants from buying the land. Such cases, however, were the exception, not the general rule.

Many of the landowners in Khisht near Kāzirūn selected sale under the second stage. They were mainly absentees and not, as in some of the neighbouring districts, local khans. The land was good, growing rice and date-palms. The condition of the peasants was better than in many parts of Fārs, and in some cases they were able to buy the land outright.

Salavātābād, a mountain village near Sanandaj, was owned by some seventy small landowners. They selected sale under the second stage, a somewhat unusual choice in the case of a village owned by a large number of small owners. Owing to registration difficulties, no steps had been taken to implement the decision when I visited the village in the summer of 1966. The co-operative society had an agency for the sale of paraffin. It also sold cloth, fertilizers, pesticides, seed grain, and grain. The peasants claimed that the area under cultivation, the number of gardens, and productivity per acre had increased since land reform. Before, the village land had been in a state of decay. New buildings were going up in the summer of 1966, including a school and a public bath; and repairs to old buildings were being carried out. The village water supply was being piped. The growth in prosperity had been retarded in 1966, when a flood had destroyed the village gardens. The members of the co-operative society thought that they would be unable that year, because of the flood damage, to repay the loan they had received in 1965-6.

The third method of settlement, division of the land between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was shared under the prevailing crop-sharing agreement, was fairly widely selected in Fārs. The main reason for this was probably that the existing crop-sharing agreements were, on the whole, unfavourable to the peasant, who in many cases received only one-fourth or one-fifth of the crop. In such cases this method of settlement was not in the interests of the peasant. The amount of land he received was often insufficient to provide him with a living, and in order to survive he was forced to continue to work under a tenancy agreement on the land retained by the landowner, or find other work. If relations between the two parties were good, such agreements were usually concluded. I visited several villages in Khurāsān where this had been done. In that prov-



ince, even where relations were not particularly good, it seemed to be generally assumed that this would be the normal practice. Where relations between the landowner and the peasants were bad or embittered, as was the case in some parts of Fārs, the landowners had brought in, or were preparing in 1965 to bring in, outsiders to cultivate the land remaining in their possession. This was likely to lead to strife and impoverishment.

If, on the other hand, the amount of land available for cultivation was extensive, the peasant, even if his share under the crop-sharing agreement had been only a small proportion of the total, was able to improve his lot by bringing new land into cultivation; and if the land was rich land on the outskirts of a town, he could sometimes benefit by better and more intensive cultivation. A serious problem raised by this method of settlement in some parts of the plateau was the fact that the landowner, in order to cultivate the land he retained more intensively, might sink a deep or semi-deep well (perfectly legally) in his land, which might dry up the *qanāt* or *qanāts* which watered the land kept by the peasants. This is a real danger in some districts. If steps are not taken to solve this problem, land reform, originally intended to better the lot of the peasant, may, in fact, in such cases considerably worsen it (see below Chapter XIII).

Jimābād, a large village near Mashhad, which formerly belonged to one of the largest landowners of Khurāsān, was settled by division. It was good land, and the peasants seemed relatively well-to-do and well satisfied with the settlement. Salāmi, near Khwāf, was settled by division shortly before I went there in October 1965. There, on the other hand, the peasants expressed great dissatisfaction with the settlement, and alleged that they could not make a living from the land which had been transferred to them. Their share of the crop had been one-third, and so they had received one-third of the village land. Their individual holdings were in the neighbourhood of 7 ha. (17 acres) but water was short, and it was said that not more than 1 ha. (2.4 acres) would be under cultivation in any one year. The cost to be paid by each peasant was 19,070 *rs.* (c. £87). The Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank had given them each a loan of 6,357 *rs.* (c. £29); the money had been paid by the bank to the landowner and would

be recovered from the peasants through the co-operative society over fifteen years with 3 per cent interest. The remainder was to be paid over ten years, i.e. some 1,270 *rs.* (c. £5. 16s.) per annum, by each peasant to the landowner.<sup>1</sup>

The owner of Salāmī, who had owned wholly or partially several villages in Khwāf, eight of which had been sold to the government under the first stage, had formerly done a great deal of work on the *qanāts*, employing some 50 *muqannīs* (i.e. men skilled in the digging and repair of *qanāts*). After land reform he had ceased this work. The peasants of Salāmī said they were prepared to do the manual work needed for the cleaning of the *qanāts*, but that they had not the money necessary to pay for the *muqannīs*. Prior to land reform the owner was alleged to have had some 700 peasants in his various villages. In 1965 he employed only 40 agricultural labourers and some seasonal labour.

Hājjiābād, a village near Shāpūr in Fārs, was settled by division about a fortnight before I visited it in the second half of October 1965. Under the former crop-sharing agreement, three-fifths of the crops had belonged to the peasants on un-irrigated land and half on irrigated land. Some 38 peasants received land. They did not, when I was there, know if the landowner would give them tenancies in that part of the village which he had retained; and they were in a state of considerable uncertainty because, they said, they could not live on the amount of land which had been transferred to them. They had wanted a tenancy agreement for the whole of the village, but the landowner had not been prepared to agree to this. They were dissatisfied, and alleged that they would be worse off under the new arrangement, although they grudgingly admitted that conditions had improved since land reform, and that they were not subject to oppression and impositions as they had been formerly.

In Dārāb, where many villages had been settled by division,

<sup>1</sup> Salāmī was not a typical village. The owner first rented it and then bought it about 1935 from the late Qavām al-Saltānch. At that time it had been in a ruined condition; and the new owner spent a great deal of money on the village bringing it back to prosperity. The houses were well built and the streets well planned. There was a spacious school building, a clinic, a public bath, and a large water-storage tank was under construction when I visited the village in the early autumn of 1965.



the peasants were on the whole reasonably contented (see also below). At Birīzkārī, two-thirds of which had been transferred to 44 peasants under the first stage and the remaining one-third settled by division, they said in October 1965 that they were better off. All had obtained loans from the co-operative society, and repaid them. The land was watered by a *qanāt* (on which the peasants had been working) and power-operated wells. Some new motor-pumps had been installed since land reform by a number of peasants, who had joined together for the purpose. Fore-selling, formerly prevalent, had been lessened and indebtedness greatly decreased.

Conditions were less satisfactory in some neighbouring villages, such as Upper and Lower Dihklūr, which were mainly owned by small landowners, some of whom had chosen division. The settlement had not been implemented at the time of my visit in October 1965, but it seemed that the holdings were going to be extremely small—too small indeed to be economic. The village land had already, before land reform, been much fragmented by inheritance. The co-operative society, a pre-land reform society, seemed to have very little activity. The executive committee alleged that the members did not understand the purposes of co-operation. The literacy rate in the village was stated to be very low, and educational and health facilities totally inadequate.

Fayzābād on the Kurbāl River was another village settled by division between 68 peasants, who were divided into 7 groups (*harāṭeh*), each of which worked together as a team. Under the former crop division they had received half the crop and they said they had been given under the settlement 8,000 *manṣūr* of land (i.e. land taking about 467 cwt. of seed). This was divided annually among the seven groups. The peasants alleged that their conditions since land reform were better, for they were no longer subject to pressure from the landowners. They said they were working much harder on the land which had been transferred to them, and would not have time to work for the landlord on that part of the land which he had retained. Each peasant had, so they said, about 5 ha. (c. 12 acres), situated partly in Fayzābād and partly in a neighbouring hamlet, Hārīsābād. The main crops were wheat and rice. In addition to

the occupying peasants, there were some 16 men who worked *daym* land, irrigating it with water raised by motor pumps which they had installed themselves. They also had received land under the second stage. The price of the land was probably relatively low. There had, since land reform, been several outbreaks of disorder in the village, and in 1964 a man had been killed. It was not easy to elucidate the facts, but it seemed that there had been some provocation by the ex-landowner, who had encouraged faction there.

Kouraki, a village adjacent to Fayzābād, had also been settled by division some three weeks before I visited it in the autumn of 1965. Under the former crop-sharing agreement, two-thirds of the crop belonged to the owner and one-third to the peasants. The village was divided among 30 peasants and 40 pump-owners (*tulwābehkārān*), who had installed motor-pumps in *daym* (unirrigated) land and paid one-tenth of the produce to the landowner. Under the settlement, the peasants and the pump-owners received one-third of the land. All were discontented, and said they were, or would be, worse off than formerly because they had not enough land. They also alleged that the landowner had obtained the best land when the division was made. One of the peasants said conditions were no better than they had been under Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (reg. 1848-96). I asked the peasants why they did not go to Shirāz and complain. They replied that they were frightened to do this lest they should be beaten up or penalized in other ways by the landowner. Their fear seemed real.

Ziār in the Barā'ān district of Iṣfahān was settled by division, two-thirds of the land going to the former owner. By the summer of 1966, there had been a marked improvement in the condition of the peasants and a considerable increase in cultivation. Groups of peasants had joined together to buy motor-pumps and sink wells. In Ziār some seven or eight wells, and in the district as a whole twenty-two or twenty-three wells, had been sunk and pumps installed. Water in Barā'ān is near the surface and the sinking of shallow wells does not interfere with the flow of the *qanāts*, as does the sinking of deep or semi-deep wells in other districts higher up the river, as for example in Burkhwār (see below p. 289).



In many of the villages of Kirmānshāhān the peasants expressed the view that settlement by division was preferable to tenancies, because they would be able to cultivate the land transferred to them without interference. In many cases settlement was still held up in the summer of 1966. One such case was Kūzgarān in Sanjābī. Two landowners had severally retained land amounting to two *dāngs* in all, as part of their *intikhābī* villages. Settlement under the second stage was to be by either tenancy or division. If the latter were selected, three-quarters of the other four *dāngs* would go to the peasants. Dues in chickens, straw, and clarified butter, and labour service had been levied before land reform, including the period of Dr. Muṣṣadiq's government. The landowners were to retain some mechanized land under the second stage.

There was some disagreement over the matter of settlement. The headman said it was to be by division, but some of the peasants said they wanted tenancies. The majority thought that their income after division would be greater than before, because once the land was theirs they would work harder. There were said to be a good many disputes between the landowners and the peasants in Kūzgarān, with faults on both sides. Although the peasants seemed pleased at land reform, they appeared in the summer of 1966 to have no confidence in the intentions of the government. It was alleged that production had gone up a little since land reform, but no extra land was available to increase the area under cultivation. There had been a good deal of new building. The peasants said that formerly they would not have dared to build new houses.

Flocks played a major part in the economy of the village; and the fattening of livestock was important. In spring the flocks went to mountain pastures and in winter to the *garmīr*. Pasture dues had formerly been levied, in some cases by the landowners and in others by the *khālīṣeh* administration. Nothing was being paid in 1966, and it was said that pasture rights had been registered jointly (*mushā'an*) in the names of the peasants in the land reform office.

The co-operative society, which also served another village, Bābān-i Sanjābī, was a pre-land reform society set up in 1960. It had some 60 members. Although some women wanted to

join, and also some shepherds (*dāmdārān*), they were not accepted as members. Formerly advances had been obtained from the landowners at a high rate of interest. Loans were also obtained locally. In 1966 it was said that there was no indebtedness except to the co-operative society. The capital of the society which was originally 40,000 *rs.* (c. £182) had been increased to about 70,000 *rs.* (c. £318). It had an agency for the sale of oil; and had bought and resold seed grain to the peasants in 1965. There were two tractors in the village; the charge for ploughing and discing was 500 *rs.* (c. £2) per hectare (2.4 acres). The co-operative society wanted to invest in tractors. The manager was the tribal headman of the village (a hereditary office but not passing necessarily by primogeniture), who was a man apparently of considerable substance. He had a large family, and his eldest son had gone to the U.S.A.

Marzahānī in Bilivār was settled by division under the second stage. Two-fifths went to the owners, which they were running in 1966 by mechanized means, and three-fifths to the peasants. Formerly the village had been equally divided between two landowners, but one of these had forfeited his land in the year 1965-6 in lieu of a debt to a third person. The peasants and landowners had agreed on the division of the land. The former had divided the land which fell to them into 92 equal ploughlands, and drawn lots for them. If a man had formerly held two ploughlands, he was given two adjacent ploughlands under the reallocation. Each ploughland had nine separate strips in different parts of the village, and under the new distribution the peasants held the same proportion of the divided land as they had held of the total land before land reform. Some 90 persons held land. The peasants said they cultivated their land better since land reform. The use of fertilizers was only just beginning. The village was watered by two *qanāts*; these were cleaned, and the expenses divided between the peasants and the landowners.

A co-operative society had been started and had about 102 members. Seven or eight of the members were women, who were carpet weavers; three of them were widows, who also held land. The society also served Tamlah, a small neighbouring village. Advances were formerly given by the landowners; repayment in some cases was still outstanding. The society had



given one loan to its members. The crops in 1966 had been damaged by hail, and the peasants stated that as a result they would not be able to repay the loan when it fell due later that year.

Shamsābād near Dizfūl was settled by division. Under the former crop-sharing agreement the landowner had taken one-sixth of the grain crop and half of the rice. Under the settlement, by mutual agreement, the peasants had been given two-thirds of the land and the owner one-third. The two areas were both consolidated. The former landowner had no gardens and plantations or other land excepted from settlement. There were some gardens in the village owned by people living in Dizfūl. The peasants' houses had been their own before land reform. Labour service had formerly been levied for irrigation works. As from 1966, 750 *rs.* (c. £3. 10s.) per hectare (2.4 acres) was to be given to the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority as a water due.

The peasants said in the summer of 1966 that their condition was much better because the land was their own. They worked much harder and used chemical fertilizers. Loans had formerly been obtained at high rates of interest from the owner, pedlars, and others; but now the co-operative society gave them loans. Fore-selling had stopped, and indebtedness greatly decreased. Most of the peasants had gardens for which they had leases. They intended, the land having become theirs, to plant more gardens. The peasants in Shamsābād were said to be highly skilled in grafting fruit trees. They had a project for planting trees as a joint venture under the co-operative society. They had received an advance in 1966 from the army for the purchase of pulses. The peasants in Shamsābād were clearly very pleased with their society, and hoped that it would start marketing. Two of them, whom I asked severally and independently what they thought of the society, said it was 'beautiful' (*qashang*).

The village was not situated in the area entirely run by the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority, but the Authority had agreements with the landowners for ploughing and the provision of fertilizers; and was said to be prepared to make similar agreements with the peasants to whom land had been transferred under the settlement. I was not clear whether such agreements had in fact been made in 1966. The standard of literacy

in the village seemed to be higher than in some of the neighbouring villages. There had been a 'private' school (*maktab*) there for several years and there was in 1966 a school up to the fourth class. The people wanted the school to be expanded and to have higher classes. There were a good many *kharushnishūhā* in the village, many of whom worked in the gardens. It was alleged that their conditions had improved in recent years because wages had risen.

The fourth method of settlement, the formation of an agricultural unit as laid down in Article 17 of the regulations for the Additional Articles, accounted for a large number of cases only in the provinces of Khurāsān and Kirmān, and to a lesser extent Tehrān. It was selected mainly in the regions bordering the central desert. The reason for the choice of this method in these districts was that the peasants were poor and could not provide the capital necessary to exploit the land—the landowners had normally provided both seed and draught animals. Further, the expenses on the *qanāts* were high. It was alleged in some cases, however, that the method was selected because the relations between the landowners and peasants were good, and no change was desired by the latter. Article 17 was chosen in a number of villages near Nayshāpūr and Sabzavār. One of these was Khusroujird, a large village owned mainly by small landowners near Sabzavār, with a pre-land reform co-operative society of some 200 members. There were some 190 small owners, many of whom lived and worked in the village, and some 50 peasants who had held land under a crop-sharing agreement prior to land reform. They had provided only the labour, and their share of the crop had been one-fifth. The land reform office had recognized them as peasants (and not agricultural labourers), in spite of the objections of some of the landowners. The peasants maintained, probably with justification, that land reform had not increased their incomes, but admitted that it had given them security of tenure. In a village so densely populated redistribution of land could not make much difference. The problems were different from those of the village owned by a large absentee landowner. Pressure on the land was heavy and the holdings were mainly small. A transfer of ownership was not likely to benefit the village as a whole. In



such cases the agricultural unit was probably the best method of settlement, pending the development of other sources of employment which would draw people off the land.

The choice of settlement by Article 17 in some of the villages of Nayshāpūr was due to the poverty of the peasants and the breakdown of the irrigation system. Many of the *qanāts* had been going dry during the previous few years, and many of the land-owners had invested in power-operated deep wells. In view of this the peasants were, quite naturally, not prepared to buy the land from the owners or to agree to settlement by division, since if the *qanāts* continued to dry up the land would be no use to them. One peasant, a member of the executive committee of the Nayshāpūr federation, to whom I talked in 1965, alleged that one of the reasons for the choice of settlement by Article 17 in the villages concerned was that these had been partially owned by small men living in the village. Had any other method of settlement been chosen, they and their families would have been deprived of their livelihood and occupation. The choice of Article 17 enabled them to continue to earn a living in the village. This may sound a strange argument coming from a peasant, but I think there was probably some truth in it. A detailed examination of the cases in which settlement under Article 17 has been chosen is likely to show that the poverty of the peasants was the most important factor influencing their choice.

There were a number of cases in Kurdistān in which Article 17 was chosen.<sup>1</sup> One of these was Rizāb, a mountain village in Marīvān, owned by seven small owners. The main crops were tobacco and maize. The choice of Article 17 seemed, in their case, to be reasonable. A co-operative society was set up in the winter of 1965-6 and served two other villages. It had 108 members and it was expected that another hundred or so would join it. It had an agency for the sale of paraffin. The members seemed lively and intelligent. Before the co-operative society was started, the peasants had twice received loans from the Agricultural Bank; prior to that they had obtained loans at very high rates of interest from merchants and others; and were

<sup>1</sup> Article 17 was, in fact, seldom put into operation in Kurdistān, other forms of settlement being substituted for it.

often not able to repay them at the end of the year. Some of the members, indeed, said they were still indebted; but there was no fore-selling of crops, which had formerly been common. There was a school up to the sixth class; it had been founded some thirty-six years ago; and most of the peasants were literate. Rizāb had been the centre of the district (*bakhsh*) until about 1960 when there was a change, allegedly because of a dispute between the district governor (*bakhshdār*) and the landlord of his house over the rent.

Nigil, a large village at the conjunction of three valleys on the edge of Zhāveh-rūd and Marīvān, also chose Article 17 under the second stage. The village belonged to some seventeen or eighteen very small owners, most of whom lived in the village and worked the land themselves. When I visited the village in the summer of 1966, the peasants said they had agreed to settlement under Article 17, because this method had been chosen in the surrounding villages, but they had not really known how the settlement would work. They alleged that they now regretted the choice. The transaction had not, however, been registered at the time of my visit.<sup>1</sup> The co-operative society had been set up a week before this. It had 91 members including the small landowners; and had an agency for the sale of oil. Under the settlement, the peasants now gave to the landowners only one-fifth of their crops and produce, which consisted mainly of tobacco, vegetables, walnuts, and some grain. Until 1965 the peasants had paid dues and performed labour service also. Some flocks were kept, but not in large numbers. Rugs (*jāfims*) were woven in the village.

The peasants were pleased with the change in conditions since land reform had started, but declared that the landowners were not. They alleged that the area cultivated and productivity per acre had increased greatly. Some of them, using animal manure, now took two crops off the land annually. If their statement was true, and I have no reason to doubt it, this is an example of the way in which land reform advantageously affected areas even before they were settled under the second stage. It was said that the fore-selling of crops was still common. There was a school to the fourth class in the village. A member

<sup>1</sup> Tenancy was subsequently substituted for Article 17.



of the extension corps and a member of the health corps were also stationed there.

The owners of Bidch, a village situated in the Shahrizā district on the borders of the Kūhgīlūyeh, selected tenancy under the second stage. The peasants alleged that the rent fixed was too high and would ruin them. A settlement had not been reached when I visited the village in the late summer of 1966. The peasants said that they wanted settlement by Article 17. Their reasons were logical: before land reform the main exactions of the landowners had been in the form of dues. Since these had been abolished, they would be quite well off if they only paid the share of the crop which had formerly been taken under the crop-sharing agreement.

The co-operative society in Bīdeh was a pre-land reform society. It served several villages. The manager was the headman, whose father and grandfather before him had also held this office. He seemed quite well-informed on co-operative affairs. He said the loans which the society gave were a great help to the people, who formerly had had to borrow from merchants and others because the landowners did not give them advances. There was still some indebtedness among members, which was partly the result of a series of bad years. The society had an agency for the sale of oil, which was much appreciated by the villagers.

The fifth method of settlement permitted by the regulations for the Additional Articles, the purchase of the peasants' rights by the landowner, is the most controversial of the five methods. Provision should clearly be made for the peasants to sell out if they so wish, but the inclusion of this method of settlement in the regulations in some cases encouraged the unscrupulous landowner to try to force the peasants on his land to sell their rights. Some method by which the peasants sold their rights to the co-operative society (if it existed) rather than to the landowners would have been preferable. In some districts, notably Turbat-i Haydarī, the sale by the peasants of their rights in October 1965 was fairly widespread. The reason for this was mainly poverty. The harvest in 1965 was bad. Unirrigated grain had failed completely in some districts. Many of the peasants were hard pressed for seed and for means of livelihood. They were

strongly tempted, even at the cost of losing their right to remain on the land, to obtain some cash in return for the sale of their rights in order to alleviate their lot temporarily. Some of the landowners were holding out promises of continued employment to the peasants after they had sold their rights; others were withholding seed, and sometimes water, in the hope of forcing them to sell their rights. It is also probably true to say that some of the peasants who were selling their rights in Turbat-i Haydari in 1965 would already have left the land if they had not hoped to receive land under the second stage of the land reform, as others had received it under the first stage. When this hope proved false, they began to leave.

I happened to call at the land reform office in Turbat-i Haydari one morning when a small landowner from a village near the town came in. He worked his land with one peasant who, he alleged, wished to sell his rights. The head of the land reform office said this could not be done because the two parties had already agreed to set up an agricultural unit according to Article 17 of the regulations for the Additional Articles. The man went away and later brought back the peasant, who was then interviewed alone. He said he wished to sell his rights and leave the district, because his income from the land was only 40 *manns* (252 lb.) of grain, on which he could not possibly live. The head of the land reform office urged him not to sell, pointing out that if he did, he would have no security of tenure and could be turned out whenever the landowner wished. The peasant insisted that he wished to sell, and when asked what he wanted for his rights, said he did not want anything. The landowner was then summoned. The head of the land reform office, in spite of what the peasant had said, told the landowner he must pay the peasant something for his rights. A sum was eventually fixed (I think 10,000 *rs.*, *c.* £45), and both went away apparently satisfied with the transaction.

There was some sale of their rights by peasants in the Sahzavār area. In 1965 I met one peasant in the village of Dilqand, who said that he had sold out to the landowner because the latter had treated him well, and that he was now working for him as an agricultural labourer. Another landowner in the same village, however, had tried to buy out his



peasants; when they had refused to sell their rights, he had stopped their water supply.

There have probably been many such attempts by the landowners to force the peasants to sell their rights under pressure or against promises of continued employment. In general, the land reform officials discouraged and tried to prevent such sales under pressure of this kind. In some districts of Fārs, notably Dārāb, it was alleged that there were cases of collusion between some of the land reform officials and the landowners to force the peasants to sell their rights. By the summer of 1965 there had been some 5,000 sales. Apparently the peasants were given to understand that they had no alternative to the sale of their rights, and the landowners had induced them to sell by promises of future employment. When this extensive sale of rights was reported to Shīrāz and the matter investigated, the head of the local land reform office was removed. The sales were stopped; and the majority of landowners were induced to accept settlement by division. In those cases in which the sale by the peasants of their rights had not yet been registered, the sale was annulled; but where the sale had been registered, it was alleged that nothing could be done to revoke it. In October 1965 I visited some villages in Dārāb, the peasants of which said they had refused to sell their rights, although they had been pressed to do so. I also met some landowners from Shishbulūk, Qunqārī, Bavānāt and elsewhere, who complained bitterly that the land reform officials were preventing them from buying out their peasants, and one landowner alleged that those who tried to do so were threatened with exile.

There were many local differences in the implementation of the second stage of the land reform, as there were under the first stage. These were due partly to the extent to which the landowners had retained or lost their influence and the readiness or otherwise of the peasants to benefit from the reform. Apart from tenancies, the choice of which was entirely with the landowners, unfavourable physical conditions and poverty were important factors influencing the method of settlement adopted. It is difficult wholly to dissociate the effects of the second stage from the first: in many villages, before settlement under the

second stage, changes in social conditions had already begun to take place; the abolition of dues, which became effective almost everywhere from the beginning of land reform, and the decline in the extortion formerly practised by some landowners, had had a favourable effect on the condition of the peasants and released a new energy. Clearly, however, the second stage of the land reform represented a weakening of the spirit of the reform as originally conceived, and to that extent betrayed the hopes of the peasants. Since its aims were ambivalent, it gave rise in many areas to uncertainty and doubt as to the intentions of the government. But in spite of this, and in spite of the abuses which undoubtedly took place, and which were made possible by the provisions for the sale of the peasants' rights and mechanization respectively in the regulations for the Additional Articles, the second stage was not by any means wholly retrogressive, as some of its critics maintain.

It is true that under the second stage the peasants did not receive the ownership of the land except in a minority of cases, and that the terms under which they received it were less favourable to them than under the first stage. But they were given security of tenure and their conditions, in general, were improved, although the degree of improvement was not as great as it had been among those to whom land was transferred under the first stage. There was naturally some discontent among the peasants at this, but there were also numerous cases in which their satisfaction at the settlement under the second stage was genuine, and the improvement in their conditions real. This is not to deny the many problems which still exist, nor to declare that either the conception or the execution of the second stage was not open to criticism. But it can be fairly claimed that, although the land reform slowed up under the second stage, it did not by any means come to a standstill. In particular, the work of the co-operative societies continued, and the standard of understanding and independence among their members rose (see below Chapter XVI). This was no small achievement.



## CHAPTER XII

# THE INVESTIGATION AND SOLUTION OF DISPUTES

---

A GREAT deal of the time of the officials of the land reform organization, under both the first stage and the second, was taken up with the investigation of disputes. This was the case in all districts, whether the land was transferred to the peasants under the first stage or not. In Kirmānshāh in 1966 it was said that 60 per cent of the land reform officials' time was taken up with the investigation of disputes. Under both stages a large proportion of the disputes concerned water rights (see Chapter XIII). Many concerned the position and status of the peasants, whether they were occupying peasants, or agricultural labourers. If a landowner could establish that the peasants were agricultural labourers, provided he ploughed the land by tractor, he could claim that the land was mechanized and worked by paid labour and therefore outside the land reform. Disputes also arose over the payment of the landowner's share of the crop, and the ownership of buildings occupied by the peasants and trees in gardens, orchards, and plantations.

In the early years of land reform there was, at least in the north, a sense of urgency and pressure in the land reform offices. They were crowded with peasants and landowners coming in with complaints to be investigated. These related to alleged oppression by the landowners, the withholding of water from the peasants' land, the refusal to pay the landowner's share of the harvest under crop-sharing agreements which had not yet been abrogated, problems connected with the sale and transfer of the land, and all manner of disputes, complaints, and queries.

Some of the disputes arose from genuine mistakes, many of which were due to the haste with which the land reform was put into execution in the early days. Others were due to deliberate falsification by the landowners, or peasants, or both, and some arose from a difference of interpretation of what constituted a

village. The records of the registration offices were sometimes in a chaotic condition, and were usually only of a rudimentary nature. Many villages were split by faction. Dissimulation, induced by centuries of oppression and insecurity, was practised by all. In such circumstances, it was not surprising that mistakes were sometimes made over titles, the boundaries between villages, and the delimitation of holdings within a village.

The custom of registering an area as one unit (*plāk*), although possibly comprising several villages, as mentioned above (see p. 65), was a frequent cause of disputes between landowners and the land reform organization. There was a case of this nature in Qarā Bulāgh in Fārs, which had not been settled by the autumn of 1965, when I visited the area. The land in question comprised some 1,000 ha. (2,471 acres) and was registered as one unit (*plāk*). It was irrigated by water raised by motor-pumps, round which settlements had grown up. The landowners had tenancy agreements with the pump-owners, who numbered some 700 persons in 1965 and who, for their part, had crop-sharing agreements with some 300 peasants. The landowners claimed that the area formed one village, while the local land reform office maintained that there were several villages, some or all of which were, therefore, subject to sale under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962.

The case of Pihirābād near Marāgheh was an example of the kind of mistake which happened in the early days of the reform because of the speed with which the land reform officials acted, and were bound to act if the land reform was to become operative. Statistics were collected, and the land was then transferred to the peasants. A co-operative was set up, and the first instalment for the land collected from the peasants. All this was done before the purchase of the land had been legally completed. At a later date the landowner decided to keep Pihirābād as his 'chosen' village. The land reform office was engaged in straightening the matter out in the summer of 1964.

The question of the 'chosen' village, which the landowner was permitted to retain under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, was also a frequent source of trouble. There were numerous cases of landowners who selected one village and later changed or attempted to change it for another. In this way



they endeavoured, sometimes with success, to collect the harvest, or a share of it, from more than one village. Such a practice was irregular, and could succeed only if there was connivance by the local land reform officials and the gendarmerie, and a degree of submissiveness on the part of the peasants. There were apparently several cases in Kirmānshāhān in 1966, in which the landowner, by changing his 'chosen' village, had retained in his effective possession more than one, and drawn revenue from both the original 'chosen' village and the village later substituted for it.

The peasants, however, were not everywhere prepared to acquiesce in such practices. In Hikmatābād near Kirmānshāh, the former landowners were alleged to have tried to collect the revenue from it in 1965 on the pretext that they had declared it to be their 'chosen' village in place of another selected earlier. The peasants had resisted this attempt, and refused to pay the share of the crop demanded by the former landowners. On the other hand, in some of the villages in Ravānsar, the peasants were apparently still paying the landowner's share on the pretext of these being 'chosen' villages, although not originally so declared.

The refusal to select a 'chosen' village was one of the methods adopted by landowners to delay the land reform. This was the case in some districts in Kirmānshāhān and Bihbahān, where the completion of the first stage was still held up on this account in the summer of 1966. This too, could only have been done with the connivance of the land reform officials, since the law gave them power to designate the 'chosen' village if the landowner refused to act.

The law permitted the landowner to retain, in lieu of one village, a portion of land in a number of villages, provided the aggregate did not exceed six *dāngs*, i.e. the equivalent of one village. In Kirmānshāhān it appears to have been the deliberate policy of various landowners not to select a single village for retention, but rather to keep parts of different villages, with the object of retaining their influence over a wider area. In Kurdistan, on the other hand, the land reform officials in 1966 were discouraging such action, and making the landowners select one village as their 'chosen' village. In general, and certainly in

those areas where the landowners had succeeded in retaining a measure of influence and the peasants were less independent, it would seem preferable for the landowner to retain one village rather than parcels of land in a number of them.

It was not only the landowners who sometimes sought to conceal the true extent of their estates. There were also cases of deliberate falsification by the peasants. In the early stages especially, the land reform officials were overworked and under great pressure from those hostile to the land reform. In the absence of accurate records, they had no alternative but to rely on the figures and information given by the village elders (*mu'tamidin-i mahall*). These, for a variety of reasons, were not always accurate.

In some villages, notably in Khūzistān, the peasants were dissatisfied with the village elders; they alleged that the latter had shown favouritism and worked off old scores when statistics were collected; and also that the names of peasants who were temporarily absent from the village on military service, or for some other reason, had been omitted from the lists of those normally cultivating the village land. It is common in the poorer parts of Persia, especially in the south, for the peasants to leave their villages for several months of the year to engage in casual labour in some other district, and in the semi-nomadic areas for some of the peasants to go from the *garmsīr* (the warm lowlands) to the *sardsīr* (the cool uplands) and vice versa at certain times of the year. Hence, when statistics were collected, it sometimes happened that some of those holding land were absent for one reason or another, and that their names were omitted from the lists.

The converse was less frequent; but occasionally the elders of a village would credit a landless peasant with land. They apparently did this out of compassion, in the hope that as a result of the inclusion of his name he would be given land. Arising from such action, instalments for payment for land were sometimes demanded from someone wrongly credited with a share of the village land. In some villages the peasants exaggerated their holdings in the belief that they would, as a result, obtain more land. This occurred in Khūzistān (see above p. 231).

Some of the land reform officials who were young and inexperienced tended to assume that, because they were 'freeing' the



peasants from the exactions of the landowners, the peasants would tell them the truth. When later it transpired, as it sometimes did, that the peasants had lied, some of the officials tended to be irritated and unsympathetic towards them in the difficulties which then arose. But, in the prevailing circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the peasants should have attempted to get more land than they actually held, or that they should sometimes have misled the land reform officials as they collected statistics prior to the transfer of a village, or part of it, to the peasants. In general, however, the collection of statistics went forward with surprisingly little difficulty in the north, partly, perhaps, because the peasants were more enlightened and independent than in some districts in the south, and there was also less faction. In the Kūhgīlūyeh, on the other hand, it was alleged by the peasants and others that the statistics collected bore little or no relation to the facts. Although it was desirable, in order to check the accuracy of the information given, that there should be someone with local knowledge among the officials sent to collect statistics, this was not always possible. It was especially necessary in districts such as the Kūhgīlūyeh where distrust of the government prevailed, or where faction was rife.

Another frequent cause of disputes and discontent on the part of the peasants was the alleged abuse by the landowners of Article 3(ii) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, which exempted mechanized land from sale to the government, provided it was worked by agricultural labour and not under a crop-sharing agreement, and was mechanized at the date when the law was passed. In the early days of the reform landowners frequently attempted to declare their land to be mechanized, when in fact it had not been so at the date of the passing of the law. The situation was further aggravated under the Additional Articles which, as mentioned above, exempted mechanized land held in a village by a landowner up to 500 ha. (c. 1,235 acres) from the provisions of the second stage (Art. 1(c) 4 n). The regulations for the Additional Articles stated that cultivated land would be considered mechanized if it was ploughed by tractor and the labour employed received a wage in cash or kind (Art. 20).

There were frequent complaints in some areas, notably

Kirmānshāhān, that much of the best land in the villages subject to sale to the government under the first stage and to settlement under the second was declared to be mechanized when in fact it was not, and that the land reform officials had connived at such declarations. It was also alleged that in Arāk the landowners had in many cases taken the best land of the village away from the peasants and begun to cultivate it by means of tractors. Similar cases were alleged in Isfahān and elsewhere.

According to Article 22 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, landowners were forbidden to turn peasants off the land. But there was great difficulty in ensuring that the spirit of such a prohibition was observed. A number of attempts to frustrate the law were prevented, but there were some occurrences of eviction and of the usurpation of land on the pretext of mechanization. There were also many allegations by the peasants that landowners had registered in their own names *ʿajān* which belonged to the peasants, i.e. orchards, plantations, or gardens planted by peasants, or houses and other buildings erected by them on land belonging to the landowners. In some cases this no doubt happened. In Gilān it was alleged that there had been much usurpation of peasants' rights by landowners in this way. The difficulty in rectifying this, if registration had actually taken place, was considerable. Once registration had been completed, the matter was removed from the competence of the land reform officials.

On the other hand there were also cases of usurpation by the peasants. As mentioned above, after land reform began, the peasants in many places withheld payment of the share of the crop due to the landowner. In Ardabil, where the peasants are a toughish lot, disputes between them and the owners, or erst-while owners, over the payment of a share of the crop were going on in a number of villages in 1964. In Kalkhwurān, a village near the town with several thousand inhabitants, of whom 3,000 were peasants and their families, the landlords' share of the crop was withheld after land reform started, on the grounds that they had, from the beginning, usurped the land. The village had apparently become *khālīqeh* during the reign of Rezā Shāh and was subsequently sold. The peasants disputed



the legality of its conversion into *khālīqeh*, and claimed that they had ownership documents proving their title to the land. The land reform organization in Tehrān investigated the case, decided against the peasants, and gave a ruling that they should pay the landlords' share. The peasants refused to accept this, and engaged a lawyer to fight their case. In 1963 the harvest was burnt. Some alleged that the peasants had burnt it to avoid paying the landlords' share; others alleged that the landlords' agent burnt it to provide a pretext for accusing the peasants of disturbing the peace.<sup>1</sup>

In Arasbārān in 1964 many of the peasants, who were rather rough and uncouth, were refusing to pay the landlords' share. When the land reform officials remonstrated with them, they merely answered 'The Shāh says that the land is ours and that we should not pay the landowners' share', and refused to listen to anything to the contrary. Similar cases occurred elsewhere. More rarely, the peasants committed usurpation against the co-operative societies. One such case occurred in 1964 in Quruq, a village near Marāgheh. The Quruq co-operative society had let the local pasture to the Marāgheh co-operative federation but the local peasants prevented the federation from taking possession of it.

The small landowner often suffered considerable hardship and difficulty if the peasants withheld his share of the crop. I came across such a case in Abū Sa'īdī near Nayshāpūr in September 1965. Some five shares of the village had been bought by the government under the decree of 1 March 1962, and transferred to the peasants; some four shares were a private *vaqf* and the remaining three owned by a small landowner. The latter was an oldish man, whose only income was from this land. The peasants were withholding from him his share of the crop. He had been reduced to a position of financial hardship, and had come to Nayshāpūr to seek redress. There were in this village also disputes between the peasants over the way in which the land should be divided among them.

<sup>1</sup> The case was eventually settled after some four years during which the peasants made many journeys to Tehrān. They were induced by the land reform organization to come to a settlement with the landowners, by which they bought the land at a cost of 110,000 rs. (£500) per *du'ār*. They seemed satisfied at the outcome when I visited the village again in 1968.

The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 and the regulations for the Additional Articles laid down that differences between landowners and peasants on matters concerning agriculture should be settled by the officials of the land reform organization (see above pp. 81 and 214). In such cases the land reform officials were instructed to seek conciliation between the parties to a dispute. In a section on disputes between the peasants and the landowners in the *Guide for the Officials of the Land Reform Organization*, issued in March 1965, there is a paragraph which reads as follows: 'The official charged with the solution of a dispute must realize that the two parties to the dispute will have to live together after he has left the district. Accordingly, apart from certain cases, where it is unavoidable, if he solves the dispute by the exercise of force or pressure, even if the regulations and the law permit this, he will not only fail to improve the relations between the two parties, but he will himself have been the cause of the creation of new and more severe disputes. The defeated party in a spirit of revenge, will always seek more favourable circumstances for making good his earlier defeat. Accordingly, every official charged with the solution of disputes must exert his utmost efforts to lead the two parties to respect ethical principles, and to bring them together in a friendly atmosphere to solve their difficulties. The official charged with the solution of disputes must be the instrument of peace and conciliation, and not merely one who executes the letter of the law rigidly' (p. 90).

So far as I was able to observe the practice of the land reform officials (and I was present on a number of occasions in 1965 and 1966 when disputes were being examined), my impression was that they sought conciliation. Some of them, indeed, showed an astonishing skill and patience in the solution of disputes. When I was in Mashhad in September 1965, the offices of the department of agriculture, in which the land reform offices were also situated, were crowded with peasants who had come to seek a solution to their various difficulties. On one occasion, at which I was present, the director-general of agriculture for the province of Khurāsān, who was also head of the provincial land reform office, assembled seventy to a hundred of them in the hall to hear their pleas. Most of these concerned the relations of



the peasants with the landowners under the second stage, such as allegations that the water had not been fairly divided, that the best land had been taken by the landowners, or that they had not been given seed by the landowners. Directions for the settlement of some of the cases were given immediately; in others the director-general deputed an official to go to the village in question to investigate and settle the dispute on the spot. Only a few of the pleas were rejected as invalid. When the director-general considered the plaintiffs were attempting a 'try-on', as he did in two cases, he was uncompromising in his rejection of their complaints. It was an impressive performance, and the peasants clearly had great confidence in him. Later, on several occasions, I accompanied the official deputed to investigate the dispute, and watched the case being settled. One of the officials, who was particularly skilled in work of this kind, was an oldish man, a *sayyid*, who belonged by birth and temperament to the religious classes. The peasants of the Mashhad area were said to be ready to accept his mediation for this reason.

On one occasion I was present when a dispute in the village of Khayrābād between Mashhad and Turbat-i Jām, for which tenancies had been concluded, was being discussed. The village was jointly owned, and managed by one of the joint owners on behalf of the others. This man held a position of influence in the province. The director-general came to investigate the case in person, partly, perhaps, because the manager might have been able to over-awe a lesser official; indeed, he was alleged to have done so when the tenancy agreements, which were apparently unfavourable to the peasants, were drawn up. The dispute had arisen over land which the manager of the property had taken, or was attempting to take, from the peasants; he was to cultivate it with water from a well which he had sunk, but which was not yet in operation. The peasants alleged that the land he had taken (or was preventing them by threats from cultivating) had been cultivated by them for years. The manager claimed that it was uncultivated (*bāyir*) land. It had, however, obviously been under cultivation the previous year, and had been watered by the village *qandī*. The director-general spent nearly two hours at the well attempting to thrash the matter out. The manager of the property refused to come in person to Khayrābād, but several

of his men were there to put his case. The director-general showed considerable patience in letting the peasants put their point of view, and skill in disentangling the evidence. The peasants had a good case, but power was on the other side. It was alleged that armed toughs had been sent into the village some days previously to molest the peasants. The director-general, while accepting that right was on the peasants' side, sought a compromise in order to avoid future bloodshed and strife, and also that the water from the well should not be wasted, but used for agricultural purposes. In the afternoon we went with some of the peasants to seek out the manager in the neighbouring village of Mu'minābād, in the hope of reaching a settlement.

Half of Mu'minābād was owned by the manager of Khayrābād or his family, and the other half was *vaqf*. He also managed the village. When we got to Mu'minābād, we found the peasants of the village assembled in a field on the outskirts. They complained that the manager had not carried out his undertakings under the tenancy agreements which he had made with them, and that he had forced some of them to sell their rights to him. They also alleged coercion by his agent. Eventually the manager himself turned up—in a flaming temper. Long discussions and arguments then took place. There was much shouting by the peasants and display of temper by the manager. Great ill-feeling between the two parties obviously existed, and was reflected in the state of the cultivation of the land. The beet crop had not been properly weeded or irrigated, though in fairness it should be added that there was a shortage of water. Eventually, long after dark, a compromise over Khayrābād was reached, by which the villagers were to receive jointly 500 ha. (c. 1,235 acres), which would give them as large holdings as they could cultivate properly with existing methods, and one-third of the land disputed round the well was to go to the manager, in return for which he would make a reduction in the peasants' rent. An official was to return two days later to draw up the agreement. As regards Mu'minābād a new tenancy agreement for the part of the village which was not *vaqf* was drawn up on the spot and signed.

The following day the manager of Khayrābād came into the



offices of the department of agriculture in Mashhad, to say that he was not prepared to accept the compromise concerning Khayrābād, but would accept settlement by division, i.e. that the land should be divided between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was divided under the crop-sharing agreement. The director-general of agriculture had meanwhile gone to Tehrān to attend a conference. When an official went to the village to draw up an agreement for division the peasants, fearing that they were being cheated in some way or other, refused to agree, and determined to wait until the director-general returned from Tehrān. This episode illustrates some of the difficulties attending land reform and shows how difficult it was for the peasants to get a hearing unless the head of the local land reform office was strong and a convinced supporter of the reform. It was not easy for the peasants to speak against a landowner of influence or his agent, for fear of reprisals; and similarly it was difficult for minor land reform officials to stand up to such a man.<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion I went with one of the land reform officials to investigate a dispute at Šaydābād, near Mashhad. This was a case of a different nature, which also illustrates the difficulty of seeing that justice was done. Those concerned were small men. The village was not large, and belonged to several owners on a *mashā'*, or joint, tenure. Under the second stage the owners and peasants had selected settlement under Article 17, i.e., the formation of an agricultural unit. The peasants, it seemed, had agreed to this form of settlement in the hope of getting rid of the former lessee (though under the Land Reform Law he ought, in any case, to have disappeared). It was alleged that this man was seeking to perpetuate his former influence by having induced some of the owners to make him their agent. The peasants objected to this, and declared that he was attempting by a legal trick (*kuāh-i shar'i*) to continue his former role under another name.

There were two main issues: first, one of the owners (a woman), who owned rather less than half the village, wanted

<sup>1</sup> The outcome of the dispute over Mu'minābād and Khayrābād was not, however, entirely satisfactory. I was told in 1968 that the manager had succeeded in the previous year in turning some of the peasants out.

her share separated from that of the other owners (who had made the former lessee their agent). This involved the delimitation of the village land, which the other owners were not prepared to undertake. Secondly, the peasants alleged that the former lessee (now the agent of some of the owners) was refusing to let them have their proper share of the water, which he was using for his own sugar-beet crop, grown on land outside the village. The preparation of the land for sowing (*nasagbandi*) takes place towards the end of September in this district and the peasants, because they had been deprived of water, were unable to get on with the necessary work.

When we came to the village, the various parties to the dispute were already assembled. The former lessee was represented by his son, who seemed to regard it as natural and fair that he (or his father) should take the water for his beet, while some seventeen peasant families should go without. A compromise was finally reached by which the beet crop would temporarily have the water by day (in order that it should not be ruined) and the peasants by night. With regard to the second matter, the delimitation of the owners' shares, the parties concerned agreed to come to the offices of the department of agriculture in Mashhad that evening to draw up a settlement. Land reform in villages such as *Şaydābād* had not by 1965 greatly helped the peasants; but at least it had enabled them to air their grievances and offered them some possibility of obtaining redress. This was, perhaps, no small advance.

From *Şaydābād* we went to *ʿAbdullāhābād* to investigate another dispute, though it turned out to have been settled by the peasants themselves before we arrived. It was of a somewhat different nature. Settlement by tenancy had been chosen by the landowner (who had recently died). The peasants, some twelve in number, had complained that their shares in the land were unequal in size and value, although the share of the rent demanded from them under the tenancy agreement was equal. The compromise they arrived at was that the land should be redistributed in equal shares.

I was also present in Firdous at the settlement of another case by the director-general of agriculture for *Khurāsān* in the autumn of 1965; this illustrated in a striking way the change taking



place in society. A peasant had complained that the local head of the department of finance had withheld water from his land. The two parties were summoned to the house at which the director-general was staying. He had just arrived in the town; many of the local officials and notables had come to pay their respects, and the room was full when the two parties to the dispute arrived. They were both told to sit down (which in itself was a measure of the change which had taken place), and to state their case.

The peasant had a tenancy for some *vagf* land, which the head of the department of finance had formerly rented. The burden of the peasant's complaint was that the agent of the head of the department of finance had abused and assaulted him, refused to give him his proper share of the water (the *vagf* property being watered by a *qanat* which also watered property owned by the head of the finance department), and had prevented him from putting fertilizer on this land; and also that the head of the finance department had forced him to sell his rights in some land which belonged to the former and had not paid him for them. The head of the finance department, who appeared to be on the defensive and indulged in a good deal of shouting, denied withholding the water, and alleged that he had bought the fertilizer from the peasant to whom, therefore, it no longer belonged. He also alleged that the peasant had sold his rights willingly, but admitted that he had not paid the full price for them.

After a long shouting match, the director-general ordered the head of the local land reform office to see that the peasant was fully reinstated in the *vagf* land and given the proper share of the water. It was not possible to overrule the transaction concerning the sale by the peasant of his rights because both parties had, at an earlier date, agreed to this and a minute, or document, had been drawn up and signed to this effect. Accordingly the director-general induced the peasant to accept from the head of the finance department the remainder of the money due to him for his rights. Finally the two parties said, rather unwillingly, that they were satisfied. But the director-general would not let them go until they had given each other a kiss of peace. This they eventually did, the peasant's whole face lighting up as he did so. This

was a skilful piece of negotiation by which each side was eventually induced to compromise. The head of the department of finance and a number of the officials and notables present found it, I think, hard to accept that he should be made to sit down and negotiate on equal terms with the peasant. That a peasant should be able to get his case heard in this way is, indeed, a great step forward. But there was not time to deal with all disputes at such length, and nor did all (or even the majority of) officials have the personal authority and qualities to bring about conciliation in this way.

On another occasion I was present by chance at the investigation of a dispute at Giliān near Fasā, which illustrates another type of problem which sometimes faced the land reform officials: how they were to weigh the development of the land by the landowner as gardens and orchards against the continuation of what was virtually subsistence farming by the peasants. I first visited Giliān in 1960. The owner had made the village, which had been in very poor condition, into a flourishing estate and planted gardens. He looked after the peasants well, if somewhat autocratically, and had provided some medical and educational facilities for them. The village had been settled shortly before my visit in the autumn of 1965 by division, i.e. the land was divided between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop had been shared under the crop-sharing agreement. The landowner had complained to the land reform office in Fasā that the water-rights (*haqqābeh*) allocated to him were too small, and that a garden he had planted was drying up for lack of water. This garden had been planted just before land reform began, and the water used to irrigate it was taken from the existing water resources used to water the village land.

The dispute was broadly as follows: one-sixth of the village was *raqf*, and, according to the document constituting the *raqf*, it had the right to one-sixth of the water (*bā haqq al-sharb qadr al-ḥisseh*). The remaining five-sixths of the village was divided under the second stage of the land reform, the peasants receiving one share and the owner five, each with water according to the customary division of the water. In 1963-4, that is before settlement under the second stage, one-eighth of the village water went to the gardens. In that year the owner for five months bought



9 hours' extra water from the peasants. This was a temporary transaction and did not constitute customary practice (*'urf-i mahall*). Consequently when the land was divided under the second stage, the land reform officials allocated one-sixth of the water to the share which was *vagf* and one-eighth of five-sixths of the water to the gardens. The owner claimed that he should have been given more, i.e., that his purchase of 9 hours' water in 1963-4 constituted local custom.

Another dispute in Fasā, concerning a small village called Husaynābād in Miān Jangal, illustrates the difficulty of arriving at the true facts. Some five *dāngs* of this village belonged to a retired gendarmerie officer and about one *dāng* to a Fasā merchant. It was a new village and therefore had no tax assessment. One morning in the autumn of 1965, when I was in the land reform office in Fasā, two peasants came in, and claimed that they were the occupying peasants of Husaynābād and that they had been wrongfully turned out. They alleged that pressure had been put on them by the main owner with the connivance of an official of the land reform office. Their statements seemed open to doubt, because the land reform office had a dossier in their names, in which there was a letter signed by them saying that they had left the property of their own free will because they could not make an adequate living. Further, when they decided to leave, the landowner had brought them to the land reform office, and a former head of the office had attested that their departure was of their own free will. Nevertheless, the main landowner was summoned and the two parties brought face to face. The landowner alleged that the two peasants had left voluntarily, and that he now employed two others as labourers in their place. After discussion, the head of the land reform office decided that the two peasants had no rights in the property and had left of their own free will. It seemed that the two peasants, knowing that the property would be settled under the second stage, had come back hoping to benefit from the settlement.

I accompanied one of the land reform officials from the Fasā office to Husaynābād later in the day, because there was also a dispute between the two owners and the peasants concerning the status of the latter, which affected the question of the settle-

ment of the property under the second stage. There were four peasants, who lived in appalling conditions. Two had been in the village from the beginning, and two were the replacements for those who had gone away. The owners alleged that these two were labourers and not crop-sharing peasants. The two permanent peasants denied this and declared that the other two were crop-sharing peasants also. When the latter, ill-clad miserable-looking individuals, were questioned, they swore that they were only labourers; one alleged he had been in the village three years and the other said he had been there six to eight months.

The main owner of the village wanted to settle his property by division under the second stage. If he was to succeed in substantiating the claim that two of the peasants were labourers and not crop-sharing peasants, the land they cultivated would be exempt from settlement, since he claimed that it had been ploughed by tractor. The women in the village, including the wife of one of the replacements, all alleged that both the peasants whose status was disputed were crop-sharing peasants, and had both been three years in the village. They declared that the two men had been told by the owners to say that they were labourers, and that they feared that if they did not do as they were told, they would lose the miserable pittance which they had. I do not know the result of the matter, since a decision was deferred pending further investigation. This incident shows, however, that the peasants, even in small properties owned by unimportant people, were subject to pressure by, and fear of, the landowners, especially where economic conditions were bad.

The cases quoted in this chapter, typical of the disputes which the land reform officials were called upon to solve in the execution of the land reform, will have revealed something of the difficulty of their task. Something, too, has been shown of the immense patience and skill required, and in many cases exercised, in the solution of these disputes. Some of these, such as the selection of the 'chosen' village, the drawing up of tenancy agreements, and the delimitation of the village land under settlement by division, are temporary problems. Those concerning the relationship of the landowner and peasant are likely in the course of time to become less acute, as the suspicion and



distrust born of centuries of oppression and arbitrary government lessen, and will, perhaps, disappear as land records become fuller and more reliable. Those concerning agricultural practice and the conflicting interests of the different parties drawing a living from the land are, on the other hand, likely to be more long-lasting, since they involve questions of agricultural and economic policy which have not yet been settled.

## CHAPTER XIII

### IRRIGATION

---

THE most frequent criticism urged against the land reform by its critics was that the peasants to whom the land was transferred would not be able to run the irrigation system. It is true that irrigation is of vital importance to Persian agriculture. Water is the limiting factor to agricultural development in almost all parts of the country. Nearly everywhere there is a crying need for water, in both the dry-farming and the irrigated areas. Rainfall is inadequate everywhere except in the Caspian provinces, and even there extra irrigation is needed for the rice cultivation. In the main dry-farming areas of the country, Āzarhāyjan, Khurāsān, and Kirmānshāhān, crop failures due to insufficient rainfall are of frequent occurrence. Irrigation is carried out by various methods: by river water, led off by canals, or raised by pumps, wells operated by cattle, power-operated wells, and on the plateau, especially in central Persia, by underground irrigation channels known as *qanāts* (and in eastern Persia as *kāriz*).

The water of large rivers belongs to the government, which is responsible for its conservation and distribution. Water dues were normally collected from the users, either landowners or peasants. In the case of most rivers, customary rights to the water, acquired over the centuries, belonged to the land through which the water flowed. If dams or major irrigation works were constructed after the original division of the water, this was then modified. The construction of temporary dams for irrigation purposes, and the cleaning and dredging of major irrigation channels were in some cases, as in Sīstān, carried out by the landowners by *corvées*. In many areas of Khūzistān and elsewhere, the rivers flow below the level of the land, and pumps are required to raise the water required for irrigation. These pumps might belong to the owner of the land, the man who cultivated it, or a third person.



The wells operated by cattle or other traditional means and power-operated wells usually belonged to the owner of the land in which they were situated; though in Fārs it was not uncommon for landowners to lease *daymī* (unirrigated) land to a third person who would sink a well and cultivate the land under a crop-sharing agreement with the peasants. The *qanāts* also were usually owned by the owner of the land which they watered; and if they flowed through lands which were severally owned, each piece of land normally had a customary right to a share of the water. In some parts of the country, however, the *qanāt* and the land which it watered were in different ownership. In such cases the water was bought, but its distribution was usually based on custom.

It was laid down in the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 that irrigated land subject to purchase by the government and transfer to the peasants under the law was to be transferred with its water-rights, and that the amount of water going to each piece of land transferred was to be in accordance with local custom, taking into account agricultural practice (see above pp. 75-6). In the case of jointly owned *qanāts* and jointly owned irrigation channels leading off from rivers, the water rights which belonged to the land transferred to the peasant were to be handed over with it. Supervision of the water resources of the transferred lands, and the upkeep and repair of irrigation channels were to be the responsibility of the relevant co-operative society (Note 1 to Art. 17 and Art. 32). The land reform council, in part one of paragraph four of its proceedings on 19 January 1963, recommended that in the case of a *qanāt*, the ownership of which was separate from the land, the relevant co-operative society should buy the *qanāt*; if the owner or owners refused to sell it, provisions for compulsory purchase would be laid down in the regulations which would be drawn up for the execution of the new law. (This recommendation, however, appears to have been seldom acted upon.) In order to prevent disputes between the former landowners and the peasants over water, the land reform council laid down in paragraph 2 of its proceedings on 9 April 1963, that the documents for transfer were to state that the water rights of gardens, defined by time or in whatever other way was customary in the

village, must be assured according to custom at the same rate as formerly.

The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, in the section dealing with the relations between the landowners and peasants on land which had not been transferred to the peasants, made it incumbent on the former to pay for the repair and upkeep of *qanāts* and other irrigation works according to local custom; and also to pay the running costs of motor-pumps, pumps, and irrigation in those districts in which this was customary (see above p. 84). The landowners were also to endeavour to use modern methods of irrigation. If a special agreement existed between the landowner and the peasant concerning the payment of the cost and use of pumps and motor-pumps, this would, however, continue to be observed (Art. 20, A(i) and (ii) and note). The peasants and the landowners were also jointly charged with the supervision and upkeep of *qanāts*, wells, ponds, irrigation channels, and canals; and were to co-operate in the adoption of methods to prevent the wastage of water and secure its better exploitation for agricultural purposes (Art. 20, C(i)).

The Additional Articles of 17 January 1963 laid down that the water rights belonging to the land which was transferred to the peasant must also be transferred to him if the settlement under the second stage was division of the land between the two parties in the same proportion as the crop was shared under the crop-sharing agreement (see above p. 104). The regulations for the Additional Articles, however, made an exception in the case of deep or semi-deep wells (i.e. power-operated wells) and water resources exploited by some form of power: these were not to be transferred to the peasants, and water was to be paid for on the basis of custom and mutual agreement (see above p. 203). Neither the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 nor the Additional Articles and the regulations for their execution envisaged any change in the distribution of the water to the land. Just as no change was to be made, broadly speaking, in the field lay-out of the village lands, so too irrigation practices were to continue, an exception being made only in the case of areas in which development organizations were set up. In such cases landowners and peasants were to implement the plans of the development organization with regard to irrigation and



other technical matters (see also above p. 211). In land which was transferred to the peasants responsibility for the supervision of the distribution of the water and the upkeep of local installations connected with irrigation was handed over to the co-operative societies, which were to take over the functions of the landowners. In practice, however, this supervision was in many cases exercised by the peasants using the water rather than by the co-operative society through its executive committee.

It was, perhaps, somewhat optimistic of the drafters of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 to suppose that the landowners would, in fact, carry out the duties with regard to irrigation laid down for them in Article 20. Article 21 (see p. 85) was, however, rarely invoked. Many landowners even before land reform had not regularly cleaned or worked on their *qanāts*; and those who had formerly invested in *qanāts* and irrigation works now ceased to do so. Power-operated wells were to some extent an exception, since they were exempted from the provisions for transfer under the law, but in their case also there was in some districts a temporary decrease in investment (see also above p. 193). Thus, in the first instance, in those properties which were not subject to transfer to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform, irrigation received a setback because of the prevailing uncertainty. Similarly, those who owned *qanāts* but no land were reluctant to invest new capital in their *qanāts*. But in general, in land which was bought by the government and transferred to the peasants, contrary to expectation, there was no break-down in irrigation.

The government continued after land reform to control the distribution of water from large rivers and to collect water dues. If land watered by a river was transferred to the peasants under the land reform law, water dues were collected from them. In the case of a river such as the Zāyandeh-rūd, with a familiar and traditional division of the water among the villages through which it flowed, no major problem was involved. The peasants were accustomed to dealing with the official in charge of the distribution of water, the *mīrāb*, and his subordinates, and to a regular division of the water, even if there were often disputes over its distribution and sometimes

violence in years when water was short. Certain modifications had taken place in the distribution of the water after the construction of the Kūhrang dam.

As for the big rivers in the south, before land reform, water dues were paid, for the most part, by the landowners, who also arranged for the cleaning and dredging of irrigation channels, and, if necessary, for the construction of temporary dams for irrigation purposes; the work was usually done by *corvées*. After land watered by the great rivers was transferred under the land reform law to the peasants, water dues were collected from them by the state, a practice which they did not always appreciate. Work on the upkeep of irrigation channels and the construction of temporary dams needed for the irrigation of village land was in some cases shared among the ploughlands of the village, under the supervision of the local department of agriculture, as was the case in some districts of Āqilī.

Responsibility for the distribution of water and the upkeep of some lesser dams such as that on the Shāhvūr River between Andīmishk and Ahvāz, from which water flows into the Lashkarābād canal, was handed over in the summer of 1966 to the provincial office of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. Formerly the distribution of the water had been under the local office of the ministry of water and power. There had been some usurpation of the water, and as a result of complaints made through the co-operative societies of the villages which had been deprived of water, the management of the dam and its water was handed over by the water department to the co-operative societies. They appointed a committee, called the Management Committee for the Lashkarābād canal, which was to levy water dues for the upkeep of the dam.

Since the setting up of the ministry of water and power, there has been a tendency to extend state control over small as well as large rivers. A great variety of practice, however, still prevailed in 1966. After the ministry had extended its control in parts of Āzarbāyjān in 1964, customary water rights were abolished. The intention was to ensure a more economical use of water resources. In practice, this was not always the result. In a number of districts it was alleged that water was sold to the highest bidder. Discontent with the new water administration



was particularly strong in 1964 in the Tabriz district and Mahābād, where water dues were being demanded from the peasants to whom land had been transferred. Formerly they had not been liable to the payment of water dues. They felt cheated in that they were being called upon to pay not only the annual instalment due to the Agricultural Bank on the land which had been transferred to them, but also new, and in some cases relatively heavy, water dues. It appears that these were allocated in some parts of Āzarbāyjān without regard to the agricultural prosperity or otherwise of villages, the number of their inhabitants, and the nature of local farming practices.

In the Tabriz office of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation I met a number of peasants who had come to appeal against the assessment of water dues. They alleged that an annual due of 370,000 *ri.* (c. £1,682) per annum was demanded from their village, which grew only grain crops (and therefore used relatively little water). There was also great discontent in Kūshksarāy near Marand in the summer of 1964 over alleged abuses in the distribution of the water supply, which had been taken over by the local irrigation office. Allegations of peculation over the distribution of water in the Tabriz district were also made. On the other hand, in Ardabil, where the distribution of water of some eight minor streams had been taken over by the water department, and customary rights had been abolished, it was said that the distribution of water was in accordance with cropping needs, and that both peasants and landowners were satisfied. I think this was probably true, but that it was an exceptional case.

In the same year I also visited some villages in Lāhijān, where it was alleged that since the building of the Safīd-rūd dam water dues had been collected from them, but that no extra water had been allocated to them. In Iṣfahān, on the other hand, there appeared to be no discontent in the summer of 1964 over the distribution of water.

Local custom may in some cases be outmoded and unscientific, and doubtless requires emendation, irrespective of land reform. Much water is lost through evaporation; and better control of flood irrigation would probably enable a larger

area to be irrigated than is at present the case. Clearly, it is desirable that the available water resources should be distributed according to agricultural and cropping needs. But water, in Persia, is an extremely valuable commodity. To be successful, any fundamental reorganization of the distribution of the water resources of the country presupposes a hydrological survey and the collection of technical data, and also a large number of officials with high standards of integrity to supervise the distribution. What is urgently required is a revision of the legislation dealing with *ganāls* and deep and semi-deep wells, and a policy decision with regard to their use (see below p. 288).

The setting up of development organizations in some areas has closely affected land reform, and not always advantageously. A case in point is the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority, which distributes the water and power made available by the Diz dam. In addition to providing water for new land which had been brought into cultivation at Haft Tappeh, where sugar cane plantations have been started, it supplies water to an area of 22,000 ha. with some 50 villages in the Dizfūl district, and controls the irrigation system and agricultural practice in this area. Some of these villages were distributed wholly or partially under the first stage of the land reform. Because agricultural practice is controlled by the authority, the benefits of land reform have not been felt by the peasants to the same extent as in other areas, such as Shūshitar. The peasants fear that they have merely exchanged one master for another (see above p. 156).

The officials of the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority based their conception of land reform entirely on economic criteria. They had elaborate tables and statistics in their office in Dizfūl showing the use of the water, but seemed entirely to neglect the human element. They appeared to have little care for the well-being of the peasants, whom they seemed to regard simply as instruments in the experiment, to be kept or discarded according to their use to the Authority. When I visited Dizfūl in the summer of 1966, there seemed to be no real contact or understanding between the peasants and the officials of the Authority, many of whom had been trained abroad and some of whom belonged to the former landowning families. Discon-



tent prevailed in the villages run by the Authority, which, from the point of view of the peasant, had largely made nonsense of land reform. Agriculture is not a matter of tables and statistics, and unless the goodwill and the co-operation of the peasant is enlisted and his confidence won, production is unlikely to increase. The Water and Electricity Authority claimed that their experiment had been successful. Investigation in the field did not entirely bear this out. Further, whereas in 1949-50 the Dizfūl villages were flourishing while those of Shūshtar were decaying, the latter seemed to me in 1966 to have changed enormously for the better, while those of Dizfūl had not.

Qazvīn is another area in which there has been a development plan especially concerned with irrigation. According to a pilot study this, too, although carefully worked out from a technical point of view, has not apparently been wholly satisfactory in furthering the social and political aims of land reform. In January 1963 Israeli consultants, employed by the government to plan and execute the development plan, started work in the field. The area allocated to the plan consisted of some 378,000 ha., of which about 92,000 ha. was used for agricultural purposes, 58,000 ha. of it being irrigated. There were some 300 villages and 150,000 persons in the area. Much of the area had been devastated by a disastrous earthquake in September 1962; and the flow of many of the *qanāts* had decreased or dried up. Water shortage was the main problem of the area. The development authorities appear to have been primarily concerned with the technical aspects of the plan, and to have failed to enlist the co-operation of the peasants, who were not fully informed of the purposes and details of the plan. They tended to look upon the development authority as a new landowner, who had superseded the old landowners; and their attitude was at worst one of resistance and at best one of passive acquiescence.<sup>1</sup>

Water resources, the exploitation of which depended on some form of power, were, as stated above, not subject to purchase by

<sup>1</sup> See, further, Engineer Mossane, 'A pilot study and evaluation in Gharvin plain villages' in *Seminar on Evaluation of Directed Social Change*, ed. Dr. N. Afshar Naderi, University of Tehran, Institute for Social Studies and Research (Tehran 1967).

the government and transfer to the peasants in the same way as the land. The reason for this was a practical one. In the case of power-operated wells, the capital investment and running costs were considerable, and in many cases the peasants and co-operative societies were unlikely to be able to provide immediately the funds required. The use of motor pumps to raise water from rivers was confined mainly to Khūzistān where the peasants were, for the most part, extremely poor; and apart from the fact that special agreements existed in many cases for the exploitation of the land by this form of irrigation, it was unlikely that the peasants would be in a position immediately to buy and run the pumps. This was the case with the *mu'assasāt* in the neighbourhood of Ahvāz (see above p. 156). In Sūsangird there were cases of disputes over water between the pump owners, who in some cases were the shaykhs, and the peasants, as in Ahū Humayzeh (see above pp. 159-60). The peasants hoped that the pumps would be bought and run by the co-operative societies.

In the case of irrigation by water raised from wells by motor-pumps, as practised in parts of Fārs, a slightly different situation prevailed. The pump-owners were seldom the owners of the land. In some cases they were middlemen who, under tenancy agreements with the landowner, installed pumps in what had been unirrigated land and themselves had crop-sharing agreements with the peasants who worked the land; in others they worked the land under a crop-sharing agreement with the landowner. A variety of practice arose under land reform; in some cases the pump-owners received land under the first stage and participated in the settlement under the second stage. In others they were not included among those who received land or in the settlement, but continued to provide those who cultivated the land with water under existing agreements. In such cases irrigation practices were little affected by land reform.

The sinking of power-operated deep and semi-deep wells usually required considerable capital expenditure. In spite of this there was some development after land reform by the co-operative societies, or groups of peasants to whom land had been transferred. Two wells were sunk by the co-operative society at Āk near Qazvīn; at Narjeh, also near Qazvīn, four



were sunk by the co-operative society and were in operation in 1964. In Amzājird near Hamadān, half of which was transferred to the peasants under land reform, twenty-four wells had been sunk by the peasants by the summer of 1964. In Chinārān near Mashhad, which was transferred to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform, the *qanāt* had dried up before land reform began. The co-operative society, with additional investment by the peasants, sank a deep well, and with the water thus made available brought back into cultivation land which had ceased to be cultivated before land reform. In the summer of 1965 this land was growing excellent crops.

At Jalālābād on the borders of Mārbīn and Līnjān near Iṣfahān, the peasants to whom part of the village was transferred in 1962 (see above p. 147) used the second loan they obtained from the co-operative society, which had been set up when the land was transferred, to sink a deep well. The cost of this was said to have been 425,000 *rs.* (c. £1,932). Only part of this was met by the loan from the society, the remainder being raised by the members on the security of the sugar beet crop for 1964. At Husaynābād in the same district, one-third of which was transferred to the peasants under the first stage (see above p. 148), the co-operative society sank a deep well. This had come into production in the summer of 1964, and some difficulty was then being experienced over the use of the water and payment for it by those who cultivated the two-thirds of the village land not subject to transfer.

Where the water resources were in the same ownership as the land and required special steps for their exploitation, the fear of a breakdown was greatest. And it was, indeed, not mainly with reference to the great rivers, pumps or wells, that the critics of the land reform prophesied disaster, but with regard to *qanāts*. The making of *qanāts* and their upkeep is an expensive and skilled operation, carried out by craftsmen known as *mugannī* (and in east Persia as *chāhkhū*). *Qanāts* are found all over the Persian plateau and many are of considerable antiquity. It was estimated that the average cost of digging a *qanāt* in the Qazvīn area, where they averaged three to five miles in length and 100 ft. in depth (though some were only 60-70 ft.), was 2,000,000 *rs.* (c. £9,090), which was roughly the same as the

cost of sinking a well of 150-300 ft. together with the installation of an engine and pump.<sup>1</sup>

If the fall of the land is slight, the *qanāts* tend to be long and the cost of their upkeep proportionately heavy. If the soil is soft, subsidence in the underground channels is likely to be frequent and repairs are required more often. The flow of water in *qanāts* is affected by the amount of rainfall, but in the case of deep *qanāts* it tends to be adversely affected only if there is a series of dry years, such as there was in many parts of the country in the years 1963-5. Shallow ones, however, are more quickly affected. The greatest danger to *qanāts* comes from sudden floods, which may block the wells and cause subsidence in the channels, sometimes causing thousands of pounds' worth of damage.

As stated above, after land reform began investment by landowners in *qanāts* declined or virtually ceased. The case of the landowner in Khwāf, who prior to land reform employed 50 *muqannīs* but ceased to do so after land reform, has already been mentioned (see above p. 243). Some landowners before land reform kept their *qanāts* in good condition; more rarely, they invested in new ones. The majority of landowners, however, did little work on them. After land reform began, in spite of the provisions of the law, they ceased in many cases even to do the bare minimum needed to maintain the flow of water. In Isfahān, for example, there was considerable discontent in 1964 among the peasants on land which had not been subject to transfer under the law of 9 January 1962. They alleged that their condition had deteriorated because the landowners were allowing the *qanāts* to decay.

At Haydarābād, a village owned by small landowners near Jahrum, there were complaints by the peasants in the summer of 1965 that no work had been done on the *qanāl* by the landowners since land reform, and that in consequence they (the peasants) were worse off than before. The landowners were accordingly warned by the head of the local land reform office

<sup>1</sup> See paper entitled 'Planning the Ghazvin Farming Area' by Colin Maher prepared for the CENTO Agricultural Machinery and Soil Conservation Training Centre, Karaj, dated 28 March, 1963. See also P. H. T. Beckett, 'Agriculture in Central Persia' in *Tropical Agriculture*, vol. 34, No. 1, p. 13, for an estimate of the capital costs of two *qanāts* in Kirmān in 1950.



that if they did not carry out the necessary work on the *qanāt*, Article 21 of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 would be invoked. This was the only case I came across of an appeal being made to this article.

In some villages in which the *qanāt* was owned partly by the landowner, who had retained a portion of the land, and partly by the peasants, to whom the rest of the land had been transferred, the situation was often not wholly satisfactory, as for example at Qār near Sanandaj (see above p. 183).

1964 was an extremely bad year in most of the country. Everywhere the cry was for water. In many areas the flow of the *qanāts* decreased; and disputes over the use of the available water were common. As in Isfahān, there were complaints that since land reform no work had been done by the landowners on the *qanāts*. For example, in Amzājird near Hamadān great difficulty was being experienced over water. Two of the *qanāts* had dried up and a third was giving very little water. No *muqannī* had worked on them for two years. It was alleged that appeals to the land reform office in Hamadān to force the landowner to undertake the work, or alternatively for permission to be given under Article 21 to the co-operative society to carry out the work at the landowner's expense, had been unavailing.

Disputes over water, particularly in years when water is abnormally short, have always been common in Persia. This continued to be the case after land reform, and particularly in those districts which had been only partially subject to transfer. A typical case occurred in the summer of 1964 at a village near Malāyir called Zanganeh, of which 69 *sha'irs*, i.e., rather over half, had been transferred to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform. Zanganeh and some of the neighbouring villages were watered by a local stream or small river, the water of which was divided among them by local custom; and they each had the right to build a temporary dam at a certain place. It was alleged that the owner of Parī, the village immediately above Zanganeh, had built a second dam, thereby depriving Zanganeh of its water. Complaints had immediately been made by the peasants of Zanganeh to the department of justice in Malāyir, which had issued a judgement in their favour. The water department was alleged to have refused to recognize this.

Reference had then been made to Hamadān and Tehrān, and a letter was obtained from the land reform organization in Tehrān addressed to the gendarmerie, requesting them to prevent interference with the customary distribution of water. This had no effect, and it was alleged that the two *mīrās* of Zanganeh did not dare go to Parī to ensure that water came to Zanganeh because of the threats made to them by the people of that place. One peasant said to me rather bitterly that formerly their landowner had defended their interests in the matter of water against the neighbouring villages, but now they were impotent in their own defence.

In Kirmān, grain land was unimportant and the main agricultural revenue derived from garden and orchard produce, notably pistachio nuts; here in many instances in which the arable land, excluding gardens, was transferred to the peasants under the first stage of land reform, the water was reallocated, a larger share being given to the gardens retained by the landowners. This was, strictly speaking, contrary to the provisions of the land reform law. The reason given for it was economic: namely that, in view of the prevailing water shortage, either the pistachio orchards would dry up or grain cultivation would suffer; and since the former were more important from the point of view of the economy of the country, additional water was allocated to them. There was some substance in this argument; but I am inclined to think that there was in 1964 also a good deal of malpractice over the allocation of water.

In the Kūhpāyeh-i Darakhtingān district of Kirmān, it was alleged that the local landowners had not only secured a larger share of the water for their gardens than before, but also that they withheld from the peasants part, or the whole, of the share which had been allocated to them when the land was transferred to them. In some cases the peasants thought that the landowners were attempting in this way to drive them out, so that they (the landowners) could then mechanize the land (or allege that they had mechanized it), thus making it exempt from the provisions of the land reform law. In Lower Dihshib, two and a half *dāngs* of which had been transferred, it was alleged that when the agreement allocating the water between the transferred land and the land retained by the landowner was drawn



up, the peasants, who were all illiterate, having received assurances that the allocation was satisfactory, put their thumb marks on the document. Subsequently it transpired that the allocation was different from what they had supposed, and that the landowner had got most of the water. Another way of depriving peasants of water was by changing the rotation of the water (*madār-i āb*); for example, if the rotation had been, say 8 days, the land held by the peasants having the right to water once in 8 days, the rotation would be increased to 15, and the peasants would get water only once in 15 days, instead of once in 8 days.

In Rustamāhād near Kirmān, it was alleged that whereas 18 *habbehs* of land were transferred to the peasants under the first stage of the land reform, only 10 *habbehs* of water were allocated to them. The peasants then decided that if the land was to be of any use to them, they must have water, and so they joined together and sank a well. After this had been working for some five months, the landowners of the village obtained an order from the local department of justice to have the well sealed off. This was done, and the crops watered by the well ruined. The peasants declared that the 'experts' sent to decide whether the well was drawing off water from the landowners' *qanāt* were not impartial, and were the nominees of the landlords. (If the names of the experts given me were correct, it would seem that there was, perhaps, substance in this allegation.) Four other wells sunk by peasants in neighbouring villages had been similarly sealed off.

Nevertheless, apart from difficulties such as those mentioned above, contrary to general expectation, the peasants showed themselves well able to maintain the *qanāts* in running order in most districts in which the land and water rights were transferred to them. There were exceptions, especially in those villages where the peasants were poor or faction prevailed. In Mubārikeh, near Irānshahr in Balūchistān, which was transferred to the peasants under the first stage, it was alleged in 1964 that since transfer the *qanāt* had fallen into disrepair. In Rāzi-ānkārī, a small village in the Mamassanī, in which both poverty and faction prevailed, the *qanāt* had dried up in 1965, and no work was then being done on it. But this was perhaps an extreme case, and it was not by any means clear that the flow of the

*qanāt* would have been increased if work had been done on it. In contrast to many of the villages in the Mamassanī in which there had been a marked change since land reform, Rāziānkārī was a depressed village in which there appeared to be little inclination among the peasants to co-operate with each other. But this was not the result of a breakdown of irrigation after land reform, but rather of poverty and unfavourable physical circumstances.

In general, as the numerous instances quoted in the previous chapters show, the peasants worked on the *qanāts* after transfer, and in many cases increased their flow. This was especially the case where the whole village was transferred to the peasants and no possibility of conflict with the landowner remained. For example in Zharī, a small village in Turbat-i Haydari, part of which was transferred to the peasants under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 and the remainder bought by the government under the decree of 1 March 1962 and transferred to the peasants, it was alleged that the former landowner had for several years done no work on the *qanāt*, which had fallen into a state of disrepair. When I visited the village in the late summer of 1965, the peasants were working on the *qanāt*, using the money which the co-operative society received from leasing the village pastures to pay for this work.

Except where great poverty and faction prevail, it is not true to say that the peasants cannot manage irrigation without the landowners. And so far as poverty and faction exist, they have been perpetuated by the former system of land tenure and administration, if they were not caused by it. In general, where the village land has been wholly transferred to the peasants and the intervention of the landowner wholly removed, not only has there been no breakdown in irrigation but the maintenance of existing resources has improved. Further, there has been, as shown by the examples quoted in this and preceding chapters, considerable investment by the peasants and co-operative societies in irrigation works.

There is, however, a matter connected with irrigation which requires urgent consideration, namely the question of deep wells and their effect upon the water-table, and thus upon



*qanāts*. This problem has not been caused by land reform although it became a matter for serious concern immediately after its inception. In the years preceding land reform in many parts of the plateau, particularly on the edge of the central desert, as for example in Nayshāpūr, Iṣfahān, and Yazd, there was considerable development of agriculture through the sinking of power-operated deep and semi-deep wells. There seems reason to suppose that the serious diminution in the flow of *qanāts* in these areas which has taken place in recent years, while due in part to a series of dry years, has been greatly aggravated by a lowering of the water-table through the sinking of deep wells.

Existing legislation governing the *ḥarīm* of *qanāts*, i.e., the area surrounding a *qanāt* within which certain operations, such as the sinking of wells, are forbidden, was drafted before power-operated deep or semi-deep wells were in operation in Persia. Consequently, it is possible to sink such a well which may dry up the *qanāts* in the neighbourhood without contravening the law. This has almost certainly happened in the Burkhwār district of Iṣfahān, where the development of summer cropping and orchards by means of water provided by power-operated deep or semi-deep wells has been carried out at the cost of the decay of neighbouring land previously flourishing and cultivated by *qanāt* water.

In parts of Khurāsān, notably Nayshāpūr, the development of power-operated deep and semi-deep wells has adversely affected land reform in the following way. If the land is settled by division under the second stage, i.e. divided between the peasants and the landowner in the same proportion as the crop was divided under the crop-sharing division, or the landowner retains mechanized land in the village, he is often able, without contravening the law, to sink a deep or semi-deep well in his part of the village land. The effect of this may be to lessen the flow of the *qanāts* watering the rest of the land or to dry them up altogether, so that the peasants receiving land are not able to obtain a living from it. In Nayshāpūr, as stated above, one of the reasons which influenced the peasants' agreement to the setting up of agricultural units under Article 17 of the regulations for the Additional Articles was the fact that the *qanāts* had been

drying up during the last few years, and the landowners had been turning over to irrigation by power-operated wells. In this case the breakdown in *qanāt* irrigation is *not* the result of land reform, but due to new technological developments which happen to have coincided with land reform.

This is not the place to discuss the permanent physical damage which may have been caused by the lowering of the water-table, nor to examine the case for power-operated wells versus *qanāts*, but merely to point out the need for new regulations with regard to the *ḥarīm* of *qanāts*, pending a further investigation of the problem. This might include such matters as how many wells can advantageously be sunk in a given area and whether irrigation by *qanāt* may not be, given the investment of capital already made, at least temporarily more profitable in some areas, than investment in power-operated wells.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES AND THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION FOR RURAL CO-OPERATION

---

THE second major criticism made against the land reform was that the co-operative societies would not be able to take the place of the landowners in the provision of credit and management, and that there would consequently be a breakdown in these fields if the landowner was eliminated. This, as in the prophesied breakdown in irrigation, rested upon a false assumption: namely that the landowners provided the credit needs of peasants and management in the village. This was only true to a minor extent so far as management was concerned. In the vast majority of cases the landowner was an absentee. Usually he was represented by a bailiff or overseer, who in most cases was the village headman. The latter was responsible for the general supervision of village affairs, but since agriculture was organized on the basis of the ploughland or group of ploughlands, there was, in fact, no question of the management of a large-scale enterprise. The extent to which the headman or bailiff intervened varied considerably in different parts of the country. In those areas in which the subjection of the peasant was more marked, the power exercised by the headman was greater.

As regards the provision of credit, the landowners in many cases provided seed, which was subsequently deducted from the harvest. Some, but not by any means all, also gave advances to the peasants. These were often given towards the end of the winter when the peasants' reserves were exhausted and the price of grain was at its highest, and repaid at harvest time when the price of grain was at its lowest. In many parts of the country indebtedness to the landowner was widespread and went on from year to year, and much of the new harvest went to the repayment of outstanding debts. Any credit provided by the landowners was thus used, not primarily for long-term or

medium-term productive purposes, but for consumption, and to some extent perpetuated the poverty of the peasant.

It was not only, or even mainly, to the landowners that the peasants were indebted. The local shopkeepers, pedlars or travelling merchants, and town merchants also gave credit to the peasants, usually at very high rates of interest. The fore-selling of crops was another practice deriving from the peasants' need for credit and was very common. It was much to their detriment. Merchants would come to the village at a time when the peasants' resources were low or had been totally used up and their bargaining powers thus reduced, and conclude arrangements for the purchase of the next year's crop.

In general, the margin of profit on agricultural operations was small, particularly in respect of grain, which over most of the country was the staple crop. Under the crop-sharing agreements, the amount going to the peasant left little possibility for the accumulation of reserves to tide him over bad years and natural disasters, such as a destruction of his crop by hailstorms, pests, or sudden floods. Unpropitious natural conditions coupled with the existing land system led to widespread indebtedness. This increased existing poverty and resulted in low production. It is true that in times of need the landowner sometimes came to the rescue of the peasant, providing him with seed and food grain or credit to buy draught oxen and so on. The remedy, however, was not to be found in a continuance of the same system, but in freeing the peasant from the need to borrow money at high rates of interest for his day to day needs, and in encouraging him to increase the investment of labour and capital in his own land so that he would not become burdened by debts which he had little prospect of paying.

Those who drafted the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 intended that the co-operative societies should take the place of the landowners in villages which were transferred to the peasants: they were to provide credit and also general supervision and direction of agricultural affairs. A note to Article 16 made it a condition that those persons who received land should be members of the co-operative society of the village. Note 1 to Article 19 empowered co-operative societies to expel from membership any peasants to whom land had been transferred



who failed to take part in the programme for agricultural development drawn up by the society or to carry out the duties entrusted to them. In such cases the land was to be taken away from them and transferred to others entitled to receive it under the law. Article 32 entrusted to the co-operative societies agricultural affairs of common interest, such as the upkeep of *qanāts* and irrigation channels, the use of agricultural machinery, and the prevention of plant and animal pests in the villages transferred to the peasants.

The legal basis for the formation of rural co-operative societies, or primary co-operative societies, was the law for co-operative societies of 1955, which set up a co-operative council whose task was to lay down rules and regulations governing such societies. On the whole, Persia followed the classical pattern of co-operative law and administration, developed from the English experiments and later adopted in Europe and India. There was, in particular, some influence from the latter country. The co-operative council consisted of the ministers of labour, interior, and agriculture; and officials from the ministry of finance, the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank and the Plan Organization were co-opted to it. All co-operative societies had to be registered at the local office of the ministry of justice.

The functions of rural co-operative societies included all or some of the following activities: (i) operations concerned with the production, exchange, storage, transport, and sale of the produce of its members; (ii) the provision of agricultural implements and machinery, pesticides, and fertilizers; (iii) the provision of primary necessities, such as foodstuffs, fuel, clothing, and household utensils, etc.; (iv) the purchase of the agricultural produce of the members, or its storage and sale; (v) the giving of loans to members to tide them over the period until they sold their crops and to provide what they needed for the cultivation of their crops, and, where necessary, sums for the improvement of the means of production, and loans on easy terms with low interest rates especially to members who had incurred debts at high rates of interest; (vi) to accept deposits from members; and (vii) to obtain credit. Rural co-operative societies were permitted to participate with other co-operative

societies, or other societies, or co-operative federations for the furtherance of mutual aims, and to borrow from such organizations as the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank.

The membership of a rural co-operative society was open to peasants (*kishāvarzān va dihqānān*) and persons engaged in agriculture who lived in the area in which the society was situated, and was acquired by the purchase of at least one share. The ultimate decision in affairs relating to the co-operative society lay with the general assembly, which was composed of all members. Day to day administration was in the hands of an executive committee consisting of three members and two reserve members who were appointed by the general assembly on a majority vote for a period of two years. On the expiry of this period they were eligible for re-election. The executive committee appointed from its members a chairman (*ra'īs*) and secretary (*munshī* or *dabīr*); it also designated a manager (*mudīr-i 'āmil*) from the members of the co-operative society other than members of the executive committee or the inspectors (see below), or from outside the society, to carry out its decisions and those of the general assembly. The offices of the executive committee and the manager were honorary; their expenses on co-operative business were paid and the manager was, if necessary, given a commission (*ḥaqq al-zahmeh*) by the executive committee.

This committee met at least once a fortnight. Its decisions were by a simple majority. The manager had the right to be present at its meetings, unless the meeting was to discuss matters concerning him personally, but not to vote. He could call upon the committee to hold a meeting. If the executive committee did not hold a meeting for 45 days and the affairs of the society were for this reason held up, it was deemed to have been dismissed, and the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank or the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation (which was set up in 1963 to take over the running of the co-operative societies from the bank, see below pp. 297ff.) was to invite the two reserve members to run the affairs of the society for the remainder of the two years. If, after being called upon, they did not do so, after a period of fifteen days they would also be deemed to have been dismissed, and the bank or the Central



Organization for Rural Co-operation would summon an extraordinary general assembly to appoint a new committee.

All cheques and documents involving undertakings on the part of the co-operative society were signed by the manager and the chairman of the executive committee, or in his absence by another member of the executive committee authorized to do so, and stamped with the society's stamp. Ordinary correspondence was signed by the manager. The executive committee was the legal representative of the co-operative society, and had the right to draft regulations within the limits of the constitution of the society. The manager represented the society vis-à-vis third persons, the courts, government offices, and private organizations. Members of the executive committee, the manager and the inspectors were prohibited, while they held office, from undertaking directly or indirectly in the area in which the society was situated, activities such as pedlary or trade, which might compete with the activities of the co-operative society.

The executive committee was empowered to reject applications for membership, but those whose applications were rejected had the right of appeal through the inspectors to the general assembly, whose decision was final. The executive committee had the right to terminate the membership of anyone convicted of an offence involving a loss of social rights (*ḥuquq-i ijtima'i*), or who, after three warnings, failed to pay his debts to the society or to fulfil obligations undertaken towards it, or who carried on activities detrimental financially or morally to the society. In such cases there was, similarly, a right of appeal through the inspectors to the general assembly, whose decision was final.

Ordinary meetings of the general assembly, at which a chairman and secretary were elected, were held at least once a year. Their main purpose was to receive reports from the executive committee, the manager, and the inspectors; to pass the balance sheet, the budget, and the programme for the ensuing year, and decide the amount to be put to reserves, and the rate of interest to be paid on shares. If a net profit was made, at least 20 per cent was to be allocated to reserves and 5 per cent for instruction in co-operation in the area in which the society was situated, this sum to be spent by the Agricultural Credit and Rural

Development Bank or the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. The interest rate on shares was not to exceed 6 per cent. Decisions at ordinary meetings of the general assembly were by a simple majority. In the event of a tie, that side on which the chairman of the meeting voted was deemed to have the majority.

A majority of the executive committee, the inspectors, or one-fifth of the members of the society, had the right to call for a special meeting of the general assembly. The Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation severally could also call for a meeting. Fifty-one per cent of the members of the society constituted a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, a second meeting would be held fifteen to thirty days later to discuss and take decisions on the minutes of the meeting at which there had been no quorum. On this occasion those present would constitute a quorum.

The general assembly appointed two inspectors to hold office for one year. They were eligible for re-election. Their office was honorary, and their duty was to see that the affairs of the co-operative society were run in accordance with its constitution and the regulations drawn up under it. They had the right to examine all the books of the society; it was their duty to examine the accounts at least twice a year and to submit the balance sheet, duly confirmed or with such comment as they wished to make, to the executive committee twenty days before the annual meeting of the general assembly. They were to consider the budget and the programme for the coming year, and give their comments thereon in writing to the executive committee. These were submitted with their report to the general assembly. They had the right to require the managing committee to call an extraordinary meeting of the general assembly, should they consider this necessary, and if the executive committee failed to call the meeting, they could themselves do so.

Extraordinary meetings of the general assembly were summoned for the purpose of changing the constitution or winding up the co-operative society. Three-quarters of the members constituted a quorum for an extraordinary meeting. If there was no quorum, a second meeting would be called, for which



50 per cent of the members would constitute a quorum. If there was no quorum on the second occasion, a third meeting would be summoned at which those present would constitute a quorum. The decisions of the meeting were final. At an extraordinary meeting of the general assembly, decisions were by a two-thirds majority.

The constitution of the rural co-operative societies thus provided for the effective transaction of day to day business by a small executive committee and a manager, but submitted the affairs of the society to the general consensus of members, who exercised the ultimate control over its affairs. The general assembly was the place where different points of view could be put and discussed, and common action decided. This might appear a cumbrous procedure to the casual observer or to the reformer anxious for quick results in the economic field. But it was a wise decision. The essential task was to enlist the co-operation of the peasants. This could hardly be done unless they were given genuine participation and some degree of control. In the past the peasants had counted for little or nothing in the life of the country. Their reaction to this had been a passive resistance to change. If this was to be altered, the peasants had to be made to feel that they had a stake in the country and that what they did mattered.

In 1963 a Central Organization for Rural Co-operation was established and took over from the land reform organization and the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank the setting up and supervision of rural co-operative societies. It was an independent corporation set up by charter as an independent joint-stock company governed by the commercial code. Its functions were to give guidance to the rural co-operative societies and their federations, audit their accounts and balance sheets, and to train staff to do this; to train the members of the co-operative societies in the principles of co-operation and management; to expand the co-operative network in rural areas; to provide the rural co-operative societies and their federations with credit for the execution of projects which they might plan directly or with the help of development organizations for the increase of output per unit; to expand the area under cultivation; to encourage mechanization and better marketing; to

provide farming implements and requisites; to give help so that manpower and resources might be fully used; to establish or develop factories for agricultural requisites which belonged, or would belong, to the federations or the rural co-operative societies; to provide credit against movable or real-estate mortgage and/or sureties; to carry out commercial transactions essential to the execution of the projects and operations of the organization; to take steps for the establishment of companies and to grant credit to them for the provision of agricultural requisites, and processing, packing, or storing agricultural products; to extend credit to rural co-operatives and federations for the construction of warehouses and cold storage plants; to prepare programmes for the support and improvement of cottage industries through rural co-operative societies and their federations; to support the trading interests of the rural co-operative societies and their federations with the relevant authorities; to establish relations with consumer co-operative societies, and international co-operative organizations; and to stand surety for rural co-operative societies and their federations in transactions with internal and foreign organizations. The organization was authorized to obtain credit from the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank and other banks and financial organizations.

The authorized capital of the organization was 1,000 million *rs.* (c. £4½ million) divided into shares of 10,000 *rs.* (c. £45) each. The shares were allotted and half the value paid up. Only the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank and rural co-operative federations could buy shares. Sums paid by the federations for the purchase of shares were to be added to the capital. In fact, the authorized capital, except for fifteen shares held by the directors as caution money, was bought by the bank though not up to the full limit authorized, and the bank's contribution appeared in the balance sheet as 'temporary participation in the capital of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation'. When the shares were fully paid up it was intended that the authorized capital should be doubled and that the federations should buy the other half from the bank.

The organization was run by a general assembly, council, board of directors, and an inspector (or accountant). The gen-



eral assembly was composed of stockholders, the minister of agriculture and the manager of the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank acting as representatives for the stock held by the bank. The main functions of the general assembly were to approve the balance sheet; to take decisions regarding operations for the ensuing year proposed by the board of directors; to appoint or re-elect the members of the board of directors, the council, and the inspector; and to take decisions concerning resolutions put forward by congresses of rural co-operative societies. The chairman of the assembly was elected by a majority vote of the members present at the assembly. Stockholders holding at least 50 per cent of the organization's capital or their representatives formed a quorum. If a quorum was not formed at the first meeting, the assembly would be convened a second time, on which occasion its decisions would be final. Decisions of the general assembly were by a majority of half plus one of the members present, and in the event of a tie the chairman of the assembly had the casting vote. Changes in the constitution of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation could be carried out only by the extraordinary general assembly, in which decisions were by a majority of two-thirds of the members present. In the case of an extraordinary general assembly, stockholders having at least three-quarters of the organization's capital constituted a quorum. If a quorum was not formed at the first meeting, a second meeting would be convened, at which stockholders having at least half the organization's capital would form a quorum. If a quorum was not formed then, a third meeting would be convened, the decisions of which were final, provided stockholders having one-third of the organization's capital were present. Members of the board and the council, and the inspector, had the right to attend and vote at ordinary meetings of the general assembly.

The council was composed of five members appointed by the general assembly for a term of three years. These consisted of two officials of the ministry of agriculture, two officials of the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, and one representative of the Plan Organization. Four members formed a quorum for its meetings, and its decisions were binding provided at least three members cast affirmative votes. The main

functions of the council were to take decisions on the recommendations of the board of directors concerning the establishment or dissolution of branches or agencies of the organization, recruitment, and employment; to consider proposals for obtaining credit from banks and financial organizations; and the establishment of co-operative societies and investment in co-operative societies set up to provide agricultural requisites or to process or pack agricultural produce.

The board of directors was composed of three persons, a chairman and two members, elected by the general assembly for a term of three years. The chairman was to act as the general manager of the organization. The directors were eligible for re-election. The decisions of the board were binding, provided the general manager or his deputy and one other member of the board approved the proposals. The main functions of the board of directors were to arrange programmes for the guidance of existing co-operative societies and federations and the expansion of the co-operative network in the rural areas of the country, in accordance with the land reform programme and the approved budget; to draw up regulations for recruitment for submission to the council; to submit to the council projects for co-operative establishments and investment in agricultural operations, proposals for the establishment and dissolution of branches or agencies of the organization, and plans for obtaining credit and loans from banks or financial organizations; and to take decisions concerning credit required by the federations of rural co-operative societies and the issue of letters of guarantee in their favour.

The general manager had authority to take decisions concerning the appointment, dismissal, and suspension of employees, their salaries, allowances, promotion, and recruitment according to the recruitment regulations and the approved budget. He was responsible for the execution of the decisions of the general assembly, the council, and the board of directors, and the running of the organization according to the relevant regulations, except as regards matters pertaining to the renting, construction, or purchase of buildings, which required the approval of the council. It was also his function to arrange an accounts system for the organization, the federations of rural



co-operative societies, and the rural co-operative societies and to supervise the operations of the accounts department of the organization. A competent accountant was to be elected annually by the general assembly to audit the organization's accounts.

Supervision of the rural co-operative societies was carried out on a provincial basis. Each province was divided into a number of areas, in which the rural co-operative societies, i.e. the primary co-operative societies, were organized for purposes of supervision into groups of fifteen or twenty under a district supervisor (*sarparast*) or assistant supervisor (*kumak-sarparast*), who was under the general control of an area supervisor.

Because of the speed with which the land reform was carried out in the beginning, there was little opportunity to educate the peasants in the meaning and purposes of co-operation before the co-operative societies were set up. Consequently when they were started, few of the peasants were able to run the affairs of the societies without close supervision or to keep the books and prepare the balance sheet. Most of the time of the supervisors was therefore spent in keeping the books, and little time was left for the training and education of the members. Each co-operative society was visited every fourteen days or so by the supervisor, or assistant supervisor, who was present at the meetings of the executive committee. The agenda for meetings was drawn up by the supervisor or assistant supervisor, or in close consultation with him, and the collection, transfer, and disbursement of funds was carried out by him. This was a matter of considerable responsibility, and attended by some degree of risk in the remoter areas where communications were bad and society sometimes rough.

Difficulty was experienced in recruiting a sufficient number of experienced men as supervisors. For the most part the provincial and area supervisors were men who had been seconded from the co-operative department of the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank. The district supervisors and assistant supervisors were mainly young men newly recruited. Some, in the early days of land reform, were given a brief training in co-operation in Israel. After the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation took over supervision of the co-operative

movement from the bank, courses at the Agricultural College in Karaj, where the bank's officials had mainly been trained, were discontinued and new recruits were sent to the Central Agricultural School at Mamazān for training. Courses were also run at the National University (*Dānishgāh-i Millī*) in Tehrān, mainly with a view to training accountants and auditors.

The co-operative officials were a keen and dedicated body of men. In the circumstances in which the land reform took place, it was inevitable that many of them should be inexperienced, and their actions sometimes hasty. But in general they did an extremely good job of work. They were in many areas under great pressure because of local faction and intrigue. Most of them were over-worked. Means of transport were often inadequate; and physical conditions hard. A sense of urgency, at least in the early days of land reform, was noticeable among them. I was, by chance, in Hamadān and Rīzā'iyyeh respectively on a Friday (the local holiday) during August 1964. On both occasions I found the district supervisors and assistant supervisors (or a considerable number of them) assembled in the area office, being briefed by the area and provincial supervisors respectively.

Some of the supervisors had a genuine care for the welfare of the young men under them and a real understanding of the peasants and their problems. Many of them, even if not experts in the co-operative movement, had done extremely good work in educating the local peasants in the elementary principles of co-operation, a task requiring great patience and understanding. This I found to be the case in numerous villages which I visited in 1964, 1965 and 1966. There were exceptions; for example in Āstārā in 1964 there appeared to be very little supervision of the co-operative societies, and it was alleged by the peasants that no effective help was given to them. In general, however, the officials in the co-operative organization were men of integrity and enthusiasm who succeeded, to a striking degree, in gaining the trust of the peasants in a country in which the gulf between the government and the governed has seldom been bridged.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT 1962-4

---

SOMETHING has already been said in the preceding chapters about the activities of the co-operative societies and the societies run by the Agricultural Bank before land reform began. In the early period of land reform, co-operative societies were set up by the land reform officials in the villages bought by the government and transferred to the peasants, and run under the supervision of the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank. In theory a co-operative society was to be set up wherever land was transferred to the peasants, but in practice it was not possible to set up a society in every village which was wholly or partly subject to transfer under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Pre-land reform societies, where they existed, were used for the purpose of land reform. In many cases the societies served several villages. This was almost always the case when a very small proportion of a village was purchased by the government and transferred to the peasants, and great difficulty was often experienced over the provision of co-operative facilities when small widely-scattered parcels of land were bought and transferred.

It was irregular for land to be transferred to peasants who were not members of a co-operative society, but in some cases this happened because no society existed in the locality and for some reason or other could not be set up. And in villages where very few peasants received land they were sometimes made members of a co-operative society situated too far away from the village for their membership to be effective.

It also sometimes happened that when a large number of peasants received land in a village or district, the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation did not have sufficient supervisors to cope with a sudden influx of new members, and so land

was transferred before the peasants became members of the local co-operative society. A case in point was the Amzājird society near Hamadān. The village consisted of 110 ploughlands. The society was started before land reform in 1960 and had a membership of some 250 persons, which was later increased to 450. Half the village was purchased in 1963 by the government under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 and transferred to 958 peasants. By the summer of 1964 they had not received documents for the official transfer of the land or joined the co-operative society, which was with its existing resources unable to absorb them. Many of those who belonged to the society did not in fact hold arable land but only gardens; and some who held gardens in Amzājird and belonged to the society lived outside the village. The latter did not receive loans from the society, but it was said that their membership was regarded as a confirmation of their title to the gardens. A similar situation existed in some of the neighbouring co-operative societies.

The general policy of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation was not to set up separate co-operative societies in villages of less than one hundred families, or with less than fifty or more than three hundred members. Some of the pre-land reform societies were much larger. The co-operative in New Harzand near Marand, for example, had over 600 members. But, in many cases, these societies did not have an effective existence. This was also true of some of the early land reform societies. Because of this the published figures giving the numbers of co-operative societies are somewhat misleading.

Membership of the pre-land reform societies was not confined exclusively to peasants holding ploughlands or parts of ploughlands or to those engaged in agriculture. They included in addition agricultural labourers, shepherds, persons who derived their living from the keeping of flocks (*dāmdārān*, *māldārān*), market-gardeners (*bāghdārān*), village craftsmen, weavers, shopkeepers, and small landowners. If a pre-land reform co-operative society, situated in a village subject to purchase and transfer under the land reform, was taken over by the land reform to serve as a land reform society, the general policy was to terminate the membership of all except those who held part of the village ploughlands. The extent to which this policy was fol-



lowed, however, varied, and there was consequently some divergence in the matter of membership.

The Hīr society near Ardabil in Eastern Āzarbāyjān, part of which had been transferred to the peasants, was a pre-land reform society serving several villages, and in August 1964 many of its 557 members were still persons who did not hold part of the village ploughlands. In Rizā'iyyeh, where it was a widespread practice for a peasant holding arable land to allow a *khreushnishīn* to cultivate summer crops on part of his holding, it was the policy of the co-operative societies to allow such persons (who, although not holding land, were permanently engaged in agriculture in the area) to belong to the societies. In the first year after land reform, the peasants in the Rizā'iyyeh area were chary of allowing the *khreushnishīnhā* to cultivate summer crops on their land lest, under the maxim 'he who cultivates the land shall own it', they should establish a title to the land. The fears of the peasants were dispelled, and by 1964 former practice had been resumed.

In Arashārān in 1964, peasants from villages not subject to transfer under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 were being accepted as members of the co-operative societies. The reason for this was that those peasants who qualified under the land reform for membership were widely scattered, so that it was difficult to start societies for them alone. In the Tabriz neighbourhood peasant proprietors, i.e., those who had before land reform owned the land they cultivated, were also being accepted as members of the co-operative societies in 1964.

The Sardasht society in Zaydūn, a district of Bīlbahān, set up in 1963, had 186 members, of whom 154 had received land when the village was transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The remainder were market-gardeners (*bāghdārān*) and *gārbāndī* who had arrangements with other peasants for the cultivation of summer crops on land made available to them temporarily; and with whom they divided the crop equally. Numerous other examples of mixed membership in different parts of the country could be quoted. A number of the pre-land reform co-operative societies had a small proportion of women members, as also did many of the land reform societies. Some of these held land in

their own right, but most of them were widows holding land pending the majority of their sons.

As the first stage of the land reform was extended to the whole of the country, the pressure on the co-operative organization became increasingly heavy: neither the funds needed to start societies in the numbers required nor the personnel to supervise them were available. In the summer of 1964, in many districts in which land had been transferred to the peasants, the co-operative societies were still in the process of formation. In some cases they had not been registered or had only recently been registered; and in others shares had not yet been bought by the peasants, or shares had been bought but no meetings had been held. 170 co-operative societies had by that time been set up in the Hamadān district but not all were fully in operation. Difficulty was being experienced in some cases in collecting money from the peasants because of the bad harvest and a lack of confidence on the part of the peasants in the intentions of the government. In the Hamadān-Tūysirkān-Malāyir region there were some 300 societies; many of them were still in the process of formation. In Bijār, where the land reform started later than in many other districts, there were by the summer of 1964 some 60 co-operative societies, of which 40 had been recently set up, and were not fully in operation. In Marand, of the 30 or so co-operative societies in existence in the summer of 1964, some 12 to 15 were pre-land reform societies. In all these districts the number of staff available for the supervision of the societies was wholly inadequate.

In the south where land reform proceeded more slowly than in the north, the task of the co-operative societies was more difficult. The submissive habits of the peasants in some districts, coupled with a high rate of illiteracy, the apparent lack of support for land reform by government officials in other departments, and the retention by the landowners in some districts of their influence, placed a heavy burden on the co-operative officials. To persevere in such circumstances required real dedication.

A number of the societies in the south and east were pre-land reform societies. A few worked well, but many had no effective existence. In Khāsh there were six societies, of which four were



pre-land reform and were performing a useful function. In Irānshahr, on the other hand, the co-operative societies were ineffective. In Bampūr, where there were six, most of which were pre-land reform societies, no credit had been sanctioned in 1964 because the members had not fully repaid the loans received the previous year. The co-operative societies in Balūchistān virtually close down in August and September for the date-picking season, so that I was unable to see any of them in operation when I visited the area in September 1964.

In the Bāft-Sirjān area of Kirmān the co-operative societies worked well, and were an exception to the societies elsewhere in the province in the early period of land reform. They were mainly pre-land reform societies. Their books were in almost all cases written up by the members themselves. Outstanding among them was the Sa'ādatābād society near Sirjān. This was set up some two or three years before land reform began, since when its capital had nearly doubled. In 1964 it had 432 members including some 70 women carpet-weavers, some 60 shepherds (*dāmdār*) and some 20 ironsmiths, carpenters, and other craftsmen. In 1964 it served 12 villages, in some of which a few *habbehs* had been transferred to the peasants under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962. Grain was being bought from members in September 1964 to forestall the activities of pedlars; the buying was being done by the executive committee. When I had visited the Sa'ādatābād society on a previous occasion in 1959, it was said that local rates of interest had been brought down by the activities of the society; and it was alleged in 1964 that fore-selling by members had virtually stopped. It is probable that the Sa'ādatābād society owed something to the business management of its pre-land reform members, i.e. to those who were farming their own land before land reform began. It sometimes happened that the richer members ran a society to the detriment of the smaller men, as was alleged to be the case in some of the Shahrizā societies. This was not so in Sa'ādatābād. The relatively satisfactory condition of the co-operatives in the Bāft-Sirjān area was due, I think, largely to the fact that the local officials of the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank in Sirjān had over a period been favourably disposed to the movement, and in particular to the efforts of the young bank

official who had been in charge of the co-operative societies. The situation in Sīrjān contrasted strongly with that in Kirmān where the manager of the bank had been hostile to the co-operative movement. Consequently, although a number of co-operative societies were set up after land reform, until a new manager was appointed to the bank in 1964, in the majority of cases no loans had been given by the societies to their members.

The Kūhpāyeh-i Darakhtingān society existed only in name. It had 74 members drawn from 17 villages, with a capital of 61,800 *rs.* (*c.* £281). No loans were given until the summer of 1964. The conception of the co-operative movement among the members of the Kūhpāyeh society at that time was, not unnaturally, extremely elementary. All the committee were illiterate, but some of them had a certain native shrewdness. I asked one of the members whose the co-operative was; he replied that it belonged to the government. When I questioned him on this, he laughed, and said that he had had to give that answer, but, of course, it really belonged to the members. Another member from Sar Tāhūneh, one of the villages served by the Kūhpāyeh society, when asked the same question, looked at me very carefully for a moment or two before answering, wondering, I think, whether he dared give a true answer, and then said it belonged to the peasants.

The co-operative societies in Yazd, which was not subject to the first stage of the land reform, were also something of an exception, both because they were all pre-land reform societies and because of their efficiency and liveliness. The Central Organization for Rural Co-operation, on account of the heavy pressure upon its funds and personnel, had given instructions that no new societies were for the time being to be set up in the Yazd area. This decision, forced by circumstances upon the Central Organization, was unfortunate: there was a great demand in the area for co-operative societies and the peasants were in need of help because of heavy losses due to the prevailing drought and severe damage done to the fruit and other trees by the intense cold of the winter of 1963-4. Moreover, the peasants in the Yazd area because of their industry, thrift, and robustness were ready, perhaps more than in almost any other



area in the country, to benefit from the co-operative movement.

The Na'imābād society, just outside Yazd, seemed in 1964 to be in a healthy state. It was formed in 1961 with 125 members and a capital of 84,650 *rs.* (*c.* £385). By 1964, membership had risen to 185 and the capital to 157,750 *rs.* (*c.* £717). Some 500,000 *rs.* (*c.* £2,273) had been given in loans to the members since the society started. Na'imābād had a population of some 6,000. Many of those who were not yet members of the society wished to join it, but it was alleged that its size could not be increased because additional personnel were not available to supervise a larger society. The Na'imābād society and four others of the Yazd societies had a savings department. 4 per cent interest was paid on accounts in these departments, and non-members could and did invest in the savings department. Many of those who had accounts were the wives and children of members. In 1963-4 the Na'imābād society made a profit of 26,805 *rs.* (*c.* £122); out of this members were paid 6 per cent interest on their capital. In 1961-2 the members put the loans they obtained from the society into a company, which they formed with a number of other local peasants who were not members of the society, and sank a power-operated well. It was alleged that various local persons of influence (including some of those who used formerly to give loans to the peasants) were seeking to have the well sealed off. The company also had a project for sinking another well, with the water of which they intended to bring some dead land into cultivation. The manager of the society seemed to be a sensible fellow, trusted by his fellow peasants. The executive committee was said to meet once a week. The executive committees of some of the other societies in the Yazd area also met once a week instead of the more usual once a fortnight.

The Baghdādābād society in Mihriz near Yazd, formed in 1959 with 150 members, had 346 members (out of a population of about 8,000) in 1964. The original capital was 50,000 *rs.* (*c.* £227), and had been increased by 1964 to 210,000 *rs.* (*c.* £950). The society was, however, only permitted to give up to 450,000 *rs.* (*c.* £2,045) in loans, and wanted authority to increase this sum. It also had a savings department for members and non-members. The Upper Khwurmiz society, also in the

Mihriz district, was founded in 1961. The membership, originally 150, was in 1964 174, and its capital had been increased from 50,000 *rs.* (*c.* £227) to 110,000 *rs.* (*c.* £500). It compared unfavourably with the Baghdādābād society; and the members seemed to have less idea of the purposes of co-operation. The local peasants admitted their relative backwardness, and attributed it to the fact that there were more schools, and schools up to a higher class, in the Baghdādābād neighbourhood.

The original intention of those in charge of the land reform had been to set up multi-purpose co-operative societies. Under the rules of the rural co-operative societies, it was possible for them to be either credit or multi-purpose societies. At first, however, the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation deliberately confined the operations of the societies to the provision of credit because of a lack of trained personnel to supervise more complicated operations, and because the members themselves had little or no experience in co-operation. Gradually the operations of the societies were extended to the provision of seed grain, fertilizers, pesticides, and cloth. In the early years the societies seldom had premises of their own or storehouses for goods. Usually they met in the house of one of the members.

The Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank held the funds of the societies. Their capital was in most cases small, and consisted of money paid for shares bought by the members and a government grant through the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, which gave credit to the societies up to five times the capital subscribed by members. This was later raised to ten times the amount, and was made available to the societies at 4 per cent. This did not, however, mean that the societies could always get that amount. Often a lower limit had to be imposed because funds meant for the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation were diverted elsewhere, and the local office could not get the money from Tehrān. Loans were made by the co-operative society to members at 6 per cent. One of the richest societies in 1964 was at Nīār near Ardabil, a pre-land reform society of 346 members. The village, which consisted of some 500 families, was not typical in that its prosperity, which was greater than that of neighbouring villages, derived from its large export of sugar-beet seed. It was the first village



to be purchased by the government and transferred to the peasants in the Ardabil district. The peasants alleged that the landlords had usurped the village, and when land reform started they withheld payment of the landlord's share. At the suggestion of Dr. Arsanjāni, they deposited this in the co-operative society. Eventually after a good deal of strife and intervention by the gendarmerie, the two parties were prevailed upon to reach a settlement. The land was then bought by the government and transferred to the peasants. The capital of the society in 1964 was 1,500,000 *rs.* (c. £6,800).

The capital of most of the societies varied from 150,000 *rs.* (c. £680) to 200,000 *rs.* (c. £909). Some had even less. A few had more. The Gāzarān society in Sharrā, a district of Arāk, started in 1962 with 194 members, had a capital of 319,000 *rs.* (£1,450). Dāshband, a pre-land reform society near Būkān, in a 'chosen' village, with 130 members, had a capital of about 240,000 *rs.* (c. £1,090). The members had built premises for the society and a school. In east Persia the capital of societies tended to be small. In Sīstān, where most of the few existing co-operative societies were pre-land reform societies with a membership of 90-300, their capital in 1964 varied from 30,000 *rs.* (c. £136) to 200,000 *rs.* (c. £909). In Bandar 'Abbās there were in the summer of 1964 eleven societies, some of which were pre-land reform, with a total membership of 1,107 and a total capital of 2,007,250 *rs.* (c. £9,124).

In general the chairman of the executive committee of the co-operative society tended to be something of a figurehead and chosen for his 'respectability'. The manager, on the other hand, was usually the most competent of the local peasants, and in practice initiative and power rested with him. In some societies, as for example at Bifānuj near Asadābād and Amzājird near Hamadān, the manager had formerly been the village headman, the landowner's representative. This was in keeping with Persian tradition, according to which the local official tended to serve whoever was in power. In Qasabeh, a large village near Mishkinshahr, the manager in 1964 was the schoolmaster, a local man whose father and brother were working peasants. In the Sunnī areas of Kurdistān the local *mullā* sometimes played a prominent part. Thus in the Qarāgūl society near Mahābād,

the manager in 1964 was the local *mullā*; and in Qabānkandī, also near Mahābād, the chairman of the executive committee, and in Dāshband, near Būkān, the secretary of the executive committee was the local *mullā*. In some of the societies the manager was rather more affluent than many of the other members. In Āk near Qazvīn the manager in 1964 seemed to be well off compared to the ordinary villager. With his father and four brothers he worked some 63 ha. (c. 156 acres) of land, of which one-third lay fallow each year. He had been to Austria with a number of managers, who were invited to visit that country after the Shah's visit in January 1964. He was so impressed with Austrian standards of living that when he returned to Āk he built himself a new house of a somewhat superior standard to that found in the village. His fellow villagers seemed to be impressed by his initiative.

Some of the managers were men of energy and understanding, but in some villages it proved difficult to find a man capable of exercising the functions of manager. For example, in Sūdirjān in Linjān the manager in 1964 was a retired gendarmerie officer, who seemed to have no idea whatsoever of the function or purposes of a co-operative society. It was, admittedly, often difficult in a village such as this, which, although not far from Isfahān, was devoid of almost every amenity, to find a man with enough education and authority to run a society. But there was considerable danger that the co-operative societies might get into the hands of some local person, who, for one reason or another, was able to impose himself on the membership, and to exploit it to his own advantage or that of a small group.

As the activities of the co-operative societies expanded and the demands made upon the time of the manager became heavier, the question of remuneration for his services was raised. The practice of awarding a bonus to the manager if the society made a profit, was instituted. In Hamadān in 1964 some eight managers were given bonuses ranging from 9,000 r. (c. £41) to 12,000 r. (c. £55). And in subsequent years the managers in most areas received 5 per cent of the profits of the society, subject to the approval of the executive committee.

The degree of literacy of the executive committees varied. Usually the members, or the majority of them, were literate,



though in some cases this did not go much beyond an ability to write a signature. Occasionally one of their number had had a secondary school education. It was rare in the early years for the books to be written up and kept entirely by the manager. Amzājird near Hamadān, a pre-land reform society, and some of the societies in Sirjān, were exceptions to this.

By 1964 the land reform societies had, at most, held elections for the executive committee only twice. It was unusual for the members elected on the first occasion not to be re-elected on the second. In the pre-land reform societies changes in the executive committee were also rare. This was due partly to a lack of qualified persons, the generally conservative nature of society, and a lack of practice in consultation and democratic processes. There were exceptions. In 1963 in 'Askarābād near Rīzā'iyyeh the members of the co-operative society were dissatisfied with the executive committee, called a general meeting, and elected a new committee.

In several of the co-operative societies there seemed to be a general acceptance among the members that unity was essential to progress. This was notable in many of the societies which I visited in 1964, even if, in practice, faction was still widely found. In the Nīār society, and elsewhere, the peasants admitted that they did not yet know how to discuss their affairs or to 'consult' with one another. Similarly, in the Qarāgūl society members admitted the existence of faction and their lack of practice in co-operation, but expressed the hope that their society would eventually be the means of providing them with better facilities for education, with health services, and agricultural implements. In 1964 at the Limūchāy and Kinārsar society in Gilān, a small group of members, whom I had met in 1962, although they seemed reasonably satisfied with the progress of land reform and the co-operative movement, complained of a lack of unity and quarrels among the community, and a failure to respect individual rights.

The amount a member could obtain as a loan from his society was first fixed at five times the value of the shares he held in the society. It was later raised to ten times this sum, with an upper limit of 10,000 r. (c. £45).<sup>1</sup> The placing of an upper ceiling on

<sup>1</sup> By 1968 the limit had been raised to 20,000 r. (c. £90).

the amount obtainable was the cause of some dissatisfaction among the members of the richer societies such as Niār, who considered they should be able to obtain loans in proportion to their investment.

The Central Organization for Rural Co-operation laid down that new loans should not be made to members by a society until all members had repaid their existing loans. This was variously interpreted. In some areas it was taken to mean that if members had debts outstanding to other government agencies, no loans could be granted. Thus, in Kānrūd near Āstārā, although the co-operative society had been in existence for two years, no loans had been given by 1964 because some members had outstanding debts to the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank (see also above pp. 136-7). This seemed an unfortunate case. Granted that there was nothing to be gained by giving loans from one source merely to pay off debts incurred from another, it was clearly a mistake to encourage peasants to buy shares in a society in the belief that it would help them, and then to disappoint their hopes. A brighter side to the matter was offered by some of the co-operative societies whose more affluent members were lending money in 1964 to their poorer brethren to enable them to pay back their loans to the society, so that new loans could be obtained. Owing to the exceptionally bad harvest in that year, many peasants were unable to pay back their loans, and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation temporarily relaxed its ruling that no new loans could be granted until those outstanding had been repaid.

In spite of the small sums made available by the co-operative societies to their members, the effect in many areas was to reduce the fore-selling of crops. At the Kalkhwurān society near Ardabil the members stated, when I visited the society in the summer of 1964, that they had not taken loans from the local shopkeepers or other sources since they had joined the society. In a bad year they admitted that the loans given by the society were not enough to provide for all their needs, but in such a case they said that they would sell something rather than get into debt. I had the impression that the peasants of Kalkhwurān were, relative to many other villages, fairly well off. Conditions in Shāmaspī, also near Ardabil, for example, compared unfav-



ourably with theirs. The members of the co-operative society said in 1964 that they had been in debt at the time of the formation of the society; they were still in debt, and therefore forced to fore-sell their crops. They complained of poverty and, in contrast to the peasants of Kalkhwurān, seemed rather depressed.<sup>1</sup> In Qarāgūl near Mahābād it was alleged that fore-selling had ceased in 1964 although it had been common prior to that time. In Zanganeh near Malāyir, on the other hand, fore-selling and borrowing were still common in 1964, and the members of the co-operative society said that they were all indebted. Zanganeh was, however, having special difficulties over water (see above pp. 285-6).

Everywhere the peasants were conscious of the evils of fore-selling, and anxious to prevent this. At the co-operative society serving Sarveh and Rīzvān, two peasant proprietor villages in the Bandar 'Abbās area which had been formed shortly before land reform started, some of the members said in the summer of 1964 that they were very keen to increase their capital so that larger loans could be given to members; without these, they said, it would be impossible to stop the fore-selling of crops. The society then had 110 members and a capital of 36,000 *rs.* (c. £255). These two villages were probably something of an exception in the area. Irrigation was by twenty-two pumps and three *qanāts*. The crops were mainly vegetables; they ripened early and were fore-sold to Tehrānī and Isfahānī merchants. The manager of the Sarveh-Rīzvān society appeared to have a relatively good grasp of the importance of the co-operative societies and their function. His son was the local schoolmaster. By way of reservation, however, I must add that I saw in Rīzvān only the manager and his family; and how far he spoke for the whole village I cannot be certain. Marketing by societies or groups of societies, especially in the case of villages with exports of fruit and vegetables, was clearly a desirable development, but it would require capital far in excess of the potentiality of most societies and managerial experience which was unlikely to be available.

The question of indebtedness is an extremely thorny one. In many cases the peasants were already burdened with debt when they joined the co-operative societies. They seldom started with

<sup>1</sup> By 1968 the society had improved and seemed to be in a healthy state.

a clean sheet. Criticism of the co-operative societies by some hostile sources was made on three accounts: first that the loans obtained from the co-operative societies were merely used to pay off other creditors, secondly that the loans were not spent on productive purposes, and thirdly that the amount of money available was far too small to bring about a fundamental change in conditions. There is some truth in all these criticisms, but it is not fortuitous that there was a decrease in the fore-selling of crops and indebtedness after the co-operative societies started under the land reform, and a rise in the standard of living of the peasants in those villages in which the societies operated. Fundamental changes in agricultural practices could, however, hardly be expected unless more capital was made available; but the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation was rightly concerned not to burden the peasant with debts which he could not repay. Hence it was careful to keep the loans given through the co-operative societies small and within the ability of the members to repay, short of some natural disaster, such as flood or drought. There was a noticeable increase in the use of fertilizers in the land reform villages; and by 1964 many of the co-operative societies were selling fertilizers, mainly urea, to their members. There was also activity by societies in the field of irrigation (see above Chapter XIII). Pesticides were sold by some of the societies.

Another activity of the co-operative societies, which later became widespread, was the sale of oil and paraffin as agents of the National Iranian Oil Company. One of the first societies to do this was the Damaq society in the Sardarūd district of Hamadān, a pre-land reform society, which received an agency from the N.I.O.C. shortly before the land reform began. By 1964 the expenses incurred over the construction of storage tanks and buildings had been paid off, and profits from the sale of oil were going to the funds of the society. It supplied some 60 villages with oil and paraffin.

Almost universally the peasants expected the co-operative societies to provide first loans and secondly water by wells or other means. Thirdly, and particularly in the south, except in those villages situated near towns, there was a wish that the societies should open local stores or depots for the sale of com-



modities. Members felt that the setting up of such stores would be a great convenience to them, and save them time, effort, and money. In many of the societies which I visited in 1964 there were already some who saw them not simply as providers of credit but as instruments for the improvement of village standards of life, though they had no very clear idea of how such improvements were to be achieved.

In the 'Askarābād society near Rizā'iyyeh, which I visited in August 1964, there was a rather striking instance of a member who was clearly determined to better himself and his family and saw the society as the means of accomplishing this. The case of this man incidentally illustrates the way in which the country forms a population reservoir for the towns. The man himself was illiterate and came of peasant stock. He cultivated some 7 ha. (c. 17 acres) of land and had started a small flour-mill. Of his ten children, three sons worked with him on the land; a fourth was studying in the National University in Tehrān; a fifth was in Germany on some course; a sixth was an army officer; and the remaining four were girls.

On the whole, the members of the co-operative societies after two years of land reform seemed well pleased with them. They regarded the societies as their own, and had towards them a certain sense of loyalty, and in some cases pride. There were exceptions. The members of the Hir society near Ardabil alleged in 1964 that it gave them no help. But the reason for this was that they had not repaid their loan the previous year. They were not a very 'co-operative' community. They had refused to use the fertilizers which the society had bought; and they also alleged that the seed grain provided for them by the society was no good. It is possible that there was some substance in the latter complaint. Hir is situated just off the Ardabil plain and seed which was suitable for the plain may not have been so there. The Kūshksarāy society, a pre-land reform society near Marand, was another in which discontent prevailed in 1964. Abuses were alleged over the distribution of water, which had been taken over by the irrigation department of the newly established ministry of water and power; and the co-operative society was said to be run by a number of well-to-do persons in the village to their own advantage. The peasants alleged that the

society was useless to them and that their condition had not improved since land reform had begun. They were frightened to complain because of possible reprisals by the well-to-do who, they alleged, had the support of government officials in Marand.<sup>1</sup>

Under the land reform it was intended that the rural co-operative societies in each area should be united into federations. Provision was made for this under the statutes of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. In the early years of land reform, the latter was already stretched to the limit in setting up rural co-operative societies to keep pace with the reform. Accordingly, the setting up of federations was deliberately delayed. By 1964 there were ten in existence, which included those at Qazvin, Rasht, Ardabil, Rizā'iyyeh, Marāghch, and Arāk. At that time policy with regard to the federations had not been settled. In Qazvin the federation worked under the close control and inspection of Tehrān, whereas those in Rasht and Marāghch were allowed a considerable degree of autonomy. The Rasht federation was marketing rice successfully and selling consumer goods. It had also started a model garden or farm near Lasht-i Nishā. In the summer of 1964, this compared favourably with the neighbouring garden belonging to the local department of agriculture.

Each federation was in theory to be formed by some forty co-operative societies. In practice there was considerable variation in the size of the federations. The Ardabil federation was still in a very early stage in 1964, and its main activity was the distribution of fertilizers. It was intended to open at a later date stores or shops in a number of villages for fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural machinery, and some consumer goods. Each federation had a manager appointed by the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation and an executive committee, the chairman of which was normally a local peasant. The executive committee met every fifteen days or so. At first there was probably not a great deal of real discussion or exchange of views at

<sup>1</sup> I visited the society again in 1968. By then there had been a great improvement in conditions in the village. There had been changes in the executive committee of the co-operative society and a new manager, and the members were satisfied with the society. The water difficulties had been overcome, several members, or groups of members, having sunk wells.



these meetings, but by the summer of 1964 some progress had been made in the practice of discussion and consultation.

In the summer of 1964 the Rizā'iyyeh federation, which was formed in the spring of 1963 by 45 co-operatives, was buying grain from the members of the co-operative societies in the Rizā'iyyeh district and elsewhere. The federation held the grain and later sold seed grain to the peasants. The purpose of this operation was to prevent the peasants from selling their grain at a disadvantageous price to merchants and being forced later to buy seed grain from them at a high price. The federation hoped in the future to buy from the members of the co-operative societies other crops and produce, such as pulses, grapes, eggs, and honey, and to market these. It had a store or depot in Rizā'iyyeh, which sold seed, pesticides, fertilizers, and some agricultural machinery and implements; and seven other stores in the province. The federation had bought a number of Russian tractors from the Marāghēh federation (see below) for the Rizā'iyyeh store. It had also leased land in a number of *khālīsh* villages, in which it was carrying out experiments to improve methods of cultivation. It had various plans for the expansion of its activities but lack of managerial experience and capital forced it to proceed slowly.

The first, and perhaps the most successful, of the federations was the Marāghēh federation, formed by fifteen co-operatives in the spring of 1963 with a capital of 1,013,000 *rs.* (c. £4,600). By 1964 ninety-one co-operatives, with 16,351 members, from the Marāghēh-Miāndūāb-Hashtrūd area belonged to it; and its capital had increased to 30,000,000 *rs.* (c. £136,360). It appointed and paid its own employees. 80 per cent of the profits were put to assets, and 20 per cent divided among the member societies. It obtained money at 3 per cent from the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation, and loaned this at 4 per cent to its member societies. These, in turn, loaned it to their members at 6 per cent. By 1964, the federation had given 35,890,000 *rs.* (c. £163,136) in loans to its member societies. It had set up (or taken over) seven weekly markets in the area, at which consumer goods and livestock were sold. Prices were fixed by the federation, and a small due levied by it on sales. It also sold fertilizers at these markets. Its income from the sale of fertilizers

at the markets and from its own depot was, in 1964, some 800,000 *rs.* (*c.* £3,636). It intended to collect fatstock statistics with a view to organizing fatstock marketing on a large scale.

It had bought 250 Russian tractors for 52 million *rs.* (*c.* £236,363), payment for which was to be made partly in kind by raisins. 110 tractors had been sold by 1964, the payment for which was to be made in five annual instalments. A ploughing company had been formed by the federation, and ten tractors allocated to it in Marāgheh and Mahābād respectively. These could be hired by peasants; and some 1,600 ha. (*c.* 3,954 acres) had been ploughed by the company in 1964. The price charged was at first 60 *rs.* (*c.* 6s. 5d.) per hectare; it was later reduced to 50 *rs.* (*c.* 4s. 7d.); the cost of harrowing was 25 *rs.* (*c.* 2s. 3d.) per hectare. Members of the co-operative societies paid half the cost immediately and the remainder at harvest time; non-members paid the whole cost immediately. The cost of tractor-ploughing by contractors tended to be about the same. During the winter of 1963-4 a course for tractor-drivers was held by the federation; 92 peasants took part. The Marāgheh experiment with tractors was not, however, entirely successful. The price paid for the tractors was said to be fairly high, considering their state when delivery was finally taken by the federation. Further users were unwilling to pay economical rates for contract work, and so the company was eventually wound up.

The Marāgheh federation owned a raisin-drying plant. This was originally provided by the Plan Organization, which handed it over to the ministry of agriculture; this, in turn, transferred it to the federation. No payment had been demanded by 1964, but the federation had taken the precaution of making an allowance for it in the balance sheet. In 1963 some 600 tons of grapes were bought by the federation, dried, packed, and sent to Russia in part payment for the tractors. A bonus was awarded to the federation for good packing and grading.

Seed grain amounting to some 150 tons was bought by the Marāgheh federation from the peasants in 1962, and this together with 160 tons bought outside Āzarbāyjān was subsequently resold to the peasants. In 1963, 500 tons of seed grain were sold to them. This included 180 tons of seed grain which had been placed at the disposal of the federation by the U.S. in 1963.



From the proceeds of the sale of this grain some 112 miles of side roads were made to land reform villages. Buildings for thirty co-operative societies were erected from the proceeds of the sale of another lot of grain placed at the disposal of the federation by the U.S. 200 ha. (c. 494 acres) of land near Miāndūāb, which had been transferred to the land reform organization, was being used in 1964 by the federation to grow seed grain. Some land near Ardabil was being used by the Ardabil federation for a similar purpose. The Marāghch federation also managed a pasture of some 400 ha. (c. 988 acres) in connection with which it had a project for fattening livestock. The Arāk federation similarly managed several pastures.

By the summer of 1964 there had been considerable progress in the co-operative movement. Many of the rural co-operative societies had made a good start and the supervisors and assistant supervisors were laying sound foundations. The hostility which the co-operative societies and the federations aroused among land owners and middlemen was, perhaps, a measure of the success of their activities. The case of Ḥasanābād-i Tulkamīn in Fārs has already been mentioned (see above pp. 152-4). The opposition and violence shown towards the co-operative society there were extreme. In general, opposition was of a more insidious kind. It was, for example, harder for the peasants after the commencement of land reform to get advances and loans from sources other than the co-operative societies, and the terms offered tended to be stiffer. This applied not only to peasants to whom land had been transferred. There was also a tendency after the land reform began for landowners in some areas, such as Lāhijān and Mahābād, to withhold advances from the peasants, and to tell them to go to the co-operative (which in some cases was unreasonable, since only peasants to whom land had been transferred were members). Other forms of indirect pressure were also used. For example, in Rīzā'iyyeh, where tobacco and sugar-beet were important crops, contracts were normally concluded by the peasants with the government organizations concerned for their exploitation; under these the peasants received advances and later delivered the crop to the appropriate organization. It was alleged in 1964 that the local authorities in some cases withheld contracts from members of the co-operative

societies, or made difficulties and unduly delayed the signature of the necessary documents. Such allegations were difficult to check; but I came across at least one case where this seemed to have happened. In these and other ways attempts were made to impede the progress of the co-operative societies and to discourage the peasants from supporting land reform.

The federations similarly met with considerable opposition from merchants and middlemen, and did not always receive the support to which they were entitled from the local authorities. The Rīzā'iyyeh federation was a case in point. When attempting to sell tractors and other agricultural machinery, it had to contend with intrigues and rumours spread by commercial companies selling agricultural machinery, which alleged that the federation was insolvent and unable to provide spare parts. Attempts were also made to frustrate the federation's efforts to stabilize prices and to market goods. When in 1963 it began to buy the grape harvest from members of the co-operative societies, merchants began to offer higher prices in the hope of breaking the federation which, in fact, was in the end forced to withdraw from the market. Similarly, merchants opposed the Marāgheh federation's efforts to buy and market raisins, and when Russian concerns asked for quotations in 1963 attempted to undercut its prices.

The co-operative movement was clearly fundamental to the success of the land reform as originally conceived. By 1964, when the first stage was nearing completion, the situation was encouraging. Although many of the co-operative societies had been very recently founded, they had already made a great impact on the villages. Understanding of the purposes and functions of the co-operative movement was still somewhat primitive and many of the co-operative societies did not yet function effectively; but this was not surprising in view of the poverty and subjection of many of the peasants, and centuries of arbitrary government. Much more surprising was the fact that a large number of the co-operative societies worked, and that in many of the villages men came forward to take an effective part in running them. This is not to deny either the weaknesses of the societies or the need for more trained personnel and addi-



tional credit. Ideally, closer supervision of the co-operative societies was required, and more time should have been spent in educating the members in the practices and purposes of co-operation. Ideally, too, greater attention should have been given to teaching the members to run the societies themselves. Many of the supervisors sought to achieve this ideal. But this was not everywhere possible, and in any case required time and patience—and time, because of the speed with which the land reform was necessarily put into operation, was not available, at least initially.

When the land reform started, the co-operative societies were intended to become the centre for the conduct of village affairs generally. This followed naturally from the intention to create an independent, self-supporting and responsible peasantry. There are, however, certain objections to using the co-operative societies to conduct all village affairs. First, all villagers are not members, and secondly, since government agencies have a legitimate interest in certain village affairs and in getting certain things done, it gives them an opportunity, if not the right, to interfere with the co-operative societies if they are the general agent for all village affairs. In fact, though not necessarily for these reasons, the co-operative societies did not become the sole agency for the conduct of village affairs, and there was a certain overlapping of effort in the villages by various organizations. This, in view of the shortage of personnel, was somewhat wasteful. The ministry of the interior in theory, though not always in practice, set up in each village a council charged with the administration of its affairs and 'uplift' (see also pp. 41 ff.). The council sometimes cut across the activities of the co-operative society, and there was often confusion between the two bodies because the same persons constituted the village council and the executive committee of the co-operative society. In some areas there was also set up in the village, under a law promulgated in 1963, a local tribunal (*khāneh-i insāf*) to settle minor disputes. This was of benefit to the peasants in that it avoided the need for a journey to the local town (which might in some cases involve considerable time and expense), but it was also occasionally a divisive influence in the village.

The federations, although like the co-operative societies still

in an early stage of development, showed marked promise. There was a great shortage of trained personnel to manage and supervise them, as there was in the primary co-operative societies. There were, however, great possibilities for expansion, if trained personnel could be made available. One obvious field was the sale on easy terms of agricultural implements and machinery, irrigation pumps, fertilizers, and pesticides, if necessary with government subsidies, provided that depots and repair shops with training facilities were also set up in the regions in which the federations were situated. The marketing of the produce of the members of the co-operative societies and of consumer goods was another field in which the federations could, if they were provided with enough personnel and capital, operate with advantage to the peasants and the community at large, since such operations if efficiently performed, would *inter alia* bring down prices. But it was clearly impossible for the federations with the resources at their disposal in 1964 to enter this field in a big way. Any attempt to extend their activities was likely to meet with the opposition of vested interests, which would do all they could to break the federations and the co-operative movement. Unless they received effective support from the government they could not succeed, no matter how great their own initiative and integrity. This was also true of the co-operative movement as a whole.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

1965-6

---

THE number of villages settled under the second stage of the land reform, as stated above, was far larger than the number of villages wholly or partially transferred to peasants under the first stage, and the number of peasants concerned was also much greater. It was not possible for co-operative societies to be set up immediately in all the villages affected; and membership of a co-operative society was not made obligatory upon the peasants cultivating the land settled under the second stage in one or other of the ways permitted by the law. But it was intended that the co-operative network should eventually cover the whole country. Article 22 of the regulations for the Additional Articles required the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation to initiate co-operative societies in the villages subject to land reform and co-operative federations; to supervise them and extend to them financial and technical help; and to provide for the practical training of peasants to establish and manage such societies.

If villages were settled by tenancy under the second stage, in both privately owned and *saqf* land, the tenancy agreement could be drawn up by the co-operative society on behalf of the peasants concerned, if they authorized it to do so (regulations for the Additional Articles, Note (i) to Art. 1 and Art. 8(a) and (e)). In such cases the co-operative society was to receive a commission of 2 per cent for collecting the rent.

Article 25 of the Additional Articles laid down that all public places within the limits of villages subject to transfer would, on the decision of the land reform organization, be transferred gratis to the ownership of the co-operative society for the benefit of the people of the village concerned; and the society would be responsible for their preservation and supervision. Pastures situated within the village limits were to be exploited

in accordance with local custom, as laid down in special regulations (which had, however, not been drawn up by the summer of 1966).

In villages in which settlement was by division (i.e. the land was divided between the landowner or landowners and the peasants in the same proportion as the crop was shared between them under the crop-sharing agreement), the administration of the water resources was to be the responsibility of either the majority of the owners or the co-operative society (Art. 33 of the regulations for the Additional Articles).

Just as the Additional Articles and the regulations to some extent represented a weakening of the original intentions of the land reform law, in one respect the regulations indicated a similar weakening in the decision to transfer the functions of the landowners to the co-operative societies. This was connected with the setting up of agricultural units, the fourth method of settlement permitted under the second stage. In such cases there was apparently no intention of setting up a co-operative society. The management of affairs was entrusted to a committee of three (see above pp. 204 ff.). The Central Organization for Rural Co-operatives was, however, to give the necessary help and guidance in setting up and administering such units (Note 2 to Art. 17 of the Additional Articles). This method of settlement was, perhaps, intended partly to lighten the burden upon the co-operative organization, which under the second stage was extremely heavy. The establishment of a management committee of three in the villages in which agricultural units were set up may have seemed to some to be a convenient method of overcoming the difficulty of providing management and credit. The fact that this arrangement was made possible nevertheless suggests that it was no longer the general intention to hand over control of local affairs to the peasants through the co-operative societies, and to use these as a means for strengthening local self-government and fostering the development of an independent self-supporting peasantry.

Something has already been said in the course of Chapters X and XI of the operations of the co-operative societies under the second stage of the land reform. As the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation gradually became more firmly estab-



lished and its field staff increased, a greater degree of uniformity was introduced into the co-operative societies. The pre-land reform societies were to an increasing extent made to conform with the land reform societies. Where they had served a large number of villages, they were broken up, and some of the members transferred to new societies. In Sanjābi there had been some ten to twelve pre-land reform societies, each serving a large number of villages with a few members from each. By the summer of 1966 they had been split up, and a number of additional societies formed.

A certain degree of re-organization was also found necessary in some of the land reform societies. In Tikāb they had been set up somewhat hastily at the beginning of land reform by the land reform officials, who had had very little experience of the co-operative movement. Often several villages had been grouped together when they had no real affinity or contact; and there were cases of as many as twenty-five villages belonging to one society. Many of these societies had little or no activity. Reorganization was gradually taking place in 1966. In some cases, there had been irregularities in their accounts. An added difficulty was that whereas Tikāb for the purposes of land reform was under Rīzā'iyyeh, the co-operative societies were run from Sanandaj. This was unsatisfactory, because it made it more difficult for the supervisors to arrange for the co-operative societies to get assistance from government departments such as the agricultural extension service, since they could not refer directly to offices in another province.

According to the report made to the annual meeting of the general assembly of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation on 21 July 1965, up to March 1965, 4,280 rural co-operative societies with 574,650 members and a capital of 525,381,408 *rs.* (*c.* £2,388,097) had been registered, or were in the process of being registered, and 29 federations had been set up, of which 23 were registered and in operation. During the year 1964-5, 1,049,342,807 *rs.* (*c.* £4,769,740) had been made available to the co-operative societies and their federations by the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation from the organization's funds and from funds made available by the Plan Organization. The co-operative societies themselves had

made available to their members from their own funds additional credit amounting to over 574,108,271 *rs.* (c. £2,609,583). These figures give a rather more favourable picture than the situation actually warranted. Many of these co-operative societies had no effective existence and officials to supervise them were not in all instances available.

The officials, in particular those in charge of the provinces (*sarparastān-i ustān*), were in many cases very overworked. They had to supervise extensive areas, and exercise almost pastoral care over both the supervisors of the districts and the assistant supervisors, who were often inexperienced and, by force of circumstances, inadequately trained young men; they also had to run the central co-operative office of the province, and supervise the work of the federations. The work of the officials of the land reform organization grew lighter as settlement proceeded, while that of the officials of the co-operative movement became, if anything, heavier. The burden upon some of those I met in 1966 seemed to me to be too great. The district supervisors usually had surveillance over a large number of co-operative societies, and they sometimes had to run the local federation as well; the assistant district supervisors usually had to look after fifteen or twenty co-operatives. I met one assistant supervisor in Marīvān who had sixteen societies under his charge, and in no case was the village in which the society was situated served by roads. This was a tough assignment. I visited some of the societies in question, and, as far as I could judge, the work was being well done.

The shortage of officials was particularly felt in the higher grades: an increasing number of young men were being trained to act as assistant district supervisors, but the number of persons qualified to be provincial supervisors or to run the federations was limited. Many of those in the higher ranks had been seconded from government departments and organizations, in particular the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, and in 1966 they were beginning to be recalled. Salaries and wages were probably low compared with those offered by other semi-independent organizations. Further, those seconded were sometimes at a disadvantage when they returned to their own offices. This tended to make them reluctant to remain with



the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. It was, in fact, alleged in 1966 that the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank was making it more difficult for its employees to serve with the co-operative movement.

Although it is clear that in the circumstances adequate training could not be given to the junior officials of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation or to the members of the co-operative societies, considerable progress was being made. At the Pahlavī University in Shīrāz, courses on co-operative societies were instituted. A programme of short courses or seminars for the managers and executive committees of the co-operative societies had also been arranged. Such courses were held in different parts of the country, though a lack of funds limited the number which could be held. In the summer of 1966 I met several peasants who had attended a course at Sanandaj, Bījār, or Ilām. They were very appreciative of this opportunity to increase their knowledge of the co-operative movement and its purposes and to establish contact with members of other societies.

In general, the instruction given to the co-operative societies and to peasants who wished to start a society, although still inadequate, was a great deal better in 1966 than it had been earlier. The members of some of the newly-established societies which I visited in the summer of 1966 in Kurdistān and Ilām, had, given existing circumstances, been well instructed. In almost all the societies I visited in 1965 and 1966, there was no doubt in the minds of the members that the society was theirs. In a few cases only was there a tendency to compromise and say that it belonged to the people (*mardum*) and the government. When questioned on this, the peasants would justify their reply, logically enough, by saying that since the government provided some of the money the society belonged in part to the government.

When the co-operative societies were first set up, as stated above, the great hope of their members was that these would provide them with credit and water. In 1966 there was a growing demand for multi-purpose co-operative societies; and it was the ambition of many members of the societies which I visited in Kirmānshāhān, Kurdistān, and Khūzistān for their

society to sell consumer goods and agricultural machinery and, in some cases, to market the crops of its members. A few of them had started small stores, as for example the Kūtiān society near Dizfūl, which had a store which sold soap, pulses, cloth, electrical appliances, and oil products.

The members of the societies were developing to an increasing extent a sense of loyalty towards, and in some cases pride in, their society. It was rare for them to default on their loans, even when they were indebted to other persons and institutions. Almost the only case of default in Kirmānshāhān was the Khusrovi society, of which some 25 members had defaulted in 1964 and whose debts were still outstanding in 1966. At Tūp Āghāch in Bijār, loans given in 1965 were not repaid in 1966 owing to an almost complete crop failure in 1965.<sup>1</sup>

I was told a story by one of the officials of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation illustrating the loyalty of members to their society. When he had been working in Luristān, a Lur had come to one of the societies he was supervising and taken a loan, tied the money up carefully in a handkerchief, and taken it away. When the time came for repayment, he brought it back in the same handkerchief, apparently untouched. He was asked why, when he had no need of the money, he had taken a loan on which he would have to pay interest. He replied that the society was his, and in this way its capital would be increased and the society strengthened, so that it would be able to give him greater help, if and when he needed it.

In Bijār, the members' pride and confidence in their societies was noticeable in 1966. At the Shāh Najaf society near Shūshtar, the members seemed to have a feeling of loyalty to their society, although they said, when asked, that it belonged to the government. They appeared to feel a sense of unity with other societies, and said that all the co-operative societies were behind each other; this was a source of strength to them—an unusual and rather advanced point of view.

There was a general feeling in 1965 among the peasants in the Mamassanī, on the other hand, that the supervision of the co-operative societies was inadequate. This was probably the case, and was due to a lack of personnel. Some of the Mamas-

<sup>1</sup> By 1968 the loans had been fully repaid.



sani societies were functioning better than others. One such was the society serving Sharaf and Karashūb. It had been in operation since 1962 and had some 190 members. In 1965 it had given loans amounting to 600,000 rs. (c. £2,727), i.e., at the average rate of some £14 per member. This figure might appear too low to make a material difference to conditions; but the peasants seemed satisfied with it. It was alleged that the yield of the land had been increased by the use of fertilizers and better cultivation. The peasants had been heavily indebted at the time when the land was transferred to them under the land reform law, and were in some cases still paying off these debts in 1965. The fore-selling of crops, which had been common formerly, had stopped. The area of land held by the peasants varied. Each had been given what he cultivated when the land was transferred. The headman, who had been formerly the landowner's agent, held more land than anyone else. He was not, however, a member of the executive committee of the co-operative society. When I asked the peasants how this was, since he must have been one of the most influential local persons, they said, 'We're not going to let him in on our affairs!'

In Gachgarān, which was a pre-land reform society with some 190 members, there had been an improvement in the economic condition of its members since land reform and in their morale. Owing to a series of bad years, there had been some delay over the repayment of loans to the co-operative society, but outstanding debts had been repaid in 1965. New loans were accordingly given that year to the amount of 600,000 rs. (c. £2,727). There was said to be no fore-selling of crops; but old debts, incurred outside the co-operative society, were still being paid off. This society was exceptional in that it had seventy women members. They were not mainly holders of land, but their sons and husbands were, and it was alleged that the loans given to them were used for agricultural purposes. The society had a contract with the new sugar factory, which was to go into production in 1966, for the cultivation of 40 ha. (c. 99 acres) of sugar beet.

Although there had been a great increase in the number of co-operative societies in the country as a whole, a large number of villages still had no society in the summer of 1966. Further, in

those villages in which there were societies, the peasants did not necessarily join them immediately the second stage was put into operation. I came across several instances of this kind. It also frequently happened that when a society was set up under the second stage, many of the peasants only joined it after a period of time. Failure to apply for membership was usually attributed to poverty. Nevertheless there was, almost everywhere, a great demand for co-operative societies. One of the provincial supervisors, who had formerly worked in Khūzistān in the co-operative department of the Agricultural Bank, told me in the summer of 1966 that the peasants had been suspicious and reluctant to join the co-operative societies before land reform. He had spent six months in Hindijān and succeeded in setting up only one society; but now there was a great demand for them from the peasants. In Īlām when land reform societies were set up in 1966, the initial unwillingness to join was rapidly overcome. In Sūsangird, on the other hand, there was from the first a great demand for co-operative societies. Some observers attributed this to the allegedly greater poverty of the inhabitants, though in parts of Īlām they were probably as poor or poorer.

Under the second stage, priority was given to the setting up of co-operative societies in *vaqf* villages for which tenancies had been concluded. In Khurāsān the general understanding in 1965 was that new societies would, for the time being, be started only in villages wholly or partially *vaqf*. In many cases, the proportion of the village held as *vaqf* was extremely small and the number of peasants involved too few to make it practical to run a co-operative society for them alone; the new societies therefore often served the peasants from a number of villages having tenancies on *vaqf* land or included peasants on other lands in the village or villages which had been subject to land reform; occasionally even peasants working land not subject to transfer or settlement were included. There was a considerable variety of practice.

Several of the societies I visited in Khurāsān and Fārs in the summer and autumn of 1965 had been set up recently and were not yet in effective operation, or had given loans to their members only in that year. Others had been in operation for a



number of years. Their members almost invariably expressed satisfaction with the help which the society had afforded them and with the guidance of the supervisor or assistant supervisor in charge of the society. Loans given by the societies had, apart from exceptional cases, been repaid regularly.

There were some 130 co-operative societies in the Mashhad area by the summer of 1965. Their effectiveness varied considerably. In the Kūhpāyeh area, where most of the villages were *khurdehmālik*, i.e. owned by small landed proprietors or peasant proprietors, and in which the percentage of literacy was high compared to many villages in neighbouring districts, they worked fairly well. Loans received by the members were repaid regularly. The activities of moneylenders had been very much reduced, but advances still had, in some cases, to be obtained from sources other than the co-operative society. For example, in Vayrānī, in the Kūhpāyeh district, advances were obtained from corn chandlers at 10 per cent and repaid at harvest time. The co-operative society in this village was a pre-land reform society. It had 124 members with a capital of c. 200,000 rs. (i.e. c. £909). The members, perhaps because of their longer experience of co-operation, seemed to have a better idea of the purpose of co-operative societies than the peasants in many villages in Khurāsān.

In the Nayshāpūr district in 1965 there were still very few co-operative societies. Most of those I visited seemed to be at a rather elementary stage of development. Those set up under the second stage of the land reform were not at that time in effective operation. The Manṣūriyyeh society, established under the first stage, was, perhaps, an exception. The manager seemed to have a good idea of what co-operation entailed. He was on the managing committee of the newly formed federation in Nayshāpūr.

Most co-operative societies in Dārāb also seemed to be at a fairly elementary stage of development in the autumn of 1965.<sup>1</sup> One at Mavārīzī seemed rather more advanced. It served

<sup>1</sup> Later, as the result of a programme of supervised credit based on advice from various departmental experts and extension workers in the area, co-ordinated by an official from the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation, the position of the Dārāb societies greatly improved.

several villages and had some 120 members. The cost of building the society's premises had been met by money received from the sale of wheat in 1963-4. The managing committee had been changed once. Apparently there had been some speculation over the purchase and sale of wheat, and the inspectors of the society had demanded a general meeting. At this a secret vote was taken (so it was alleged) and the committee changed.

Under the first stage about 150 societies with a capital of 37 million *rs.* (c. £168,182) had been set up in Kirmānshāhān. There was a rapid increase during the second stage and by the summer of 1966 there were some 350 co-operative societies with about 34,000 members. Although the figure was still increasing in the summer of 1966, there were not by any means societies in all the villages subject to land reform. Many of the existing societies served several villages. In Kirmānshāhān under the second stage, in the setting up of new societies, preference was given to villages settled by division and *vagf* villages.

Some 86 societies with a total capital of 4,195,450 *rs.* (c. £19,070) and a membership of 7,505 persons were in operation in Sūsangird when I was there in July 1966. Twenty more, with a membership of 686, had been set up but were not then operative. Seven more were required to cover the whole of Sūsangird.

Special conditions prevailed in Ilām, where the peasants were poor and backward. Their understanding of the functions of the co-operative societies was in many cases rudimentary. In Chārmilleh Ayyān where a society with 52 members was established in 1964, the meetings of the executive committee were at first irregular. In 1965 a course or seminar on co-operation was held in Ilām. This stirred the members to greater activity. The manager alleged, however, that the members had very little idea of co-operation. Mihrān, one of the districts of Ilām, had some seventeen co-operative societies, most of which were started in 1966. Not all were in land reform areas. One of these was at Hurmuzābād, a village which had formerly belonged to the Vālī of Pusht-i Kūh, to whom the inhabitants had paid rent. In the reign of Reżā Shāh it became *khālīqeh*, and was later transferred to 320 families on a joint (*mushā'*) tenure. They had apparently full ownership of the land and the right of sale and transfer. The land was watered in part by the river, on which



a dam had been begun above Mihrān about 1957. Work had subsequently been discontinued, but had been restarted in 1966. If finished, the dam would enable the people of Hurmuzābād to bring new land under cultivation. A deep well had also been sunk. In a good year, Hurmuzābād had a surplus of grain. The area under cultivation was said to have increased about ten times since the year 1937-38 and especially since 1941-2. Tractors were hired from Ilām and about 500 *ri.* (c. £2) per hectare were charged for ploughing.

A co-operative society was set up in 1966. Its establishment had been opposed by the headman, who apparently feared that it would diminish his own influence. Pressure was eventually brought to bear on him, I think through the security authorities, and he bought a share in the society; others followed his example and the society was set up at first with twenty-three members. The number soon rose to seventy and finally to ninety-two, all of whom cultivated land in the village. When I visited the village in August 1966, other peasants wished to join the society. A loan was given to members almost immediately after the society was registered. Part of this was apparently used by the members to pay off some of their debts; they argued that this was virtually using the loan for agricultural purposes, because if they had not used the loan to pay off their debts they would have had to pay these in wheat and then would have been forced to buy seed grain. Fore-selling was common in the area. The members wanted the society to buy a tractor and also to sell consumer goods. It had an agency for the sale of oil and paraffin, which, they said, made their lives easier.

The members said that since the formation of the society their condition had improved 100 per cent. They were quite definite about this; but since the society had been in operation a matter of weeks, it was difficult to see how this could have been the case. Probably the change had been one mainly of 'atmosphere'. Recent improvements in communications had also, no doubt, helped. Hurmuzābād was a clean village, and the houses well constructed with high windowless rooms, which were cool in summer. The people were Zargūshī Kurds, who had come from Ābdānān and settled in the area some two hundred years ago. Rugs (*jāīms*) and coarse blankets were woven locally. There

was a *khāneh-i inṣāf* (local tribunal) in the village; the manager of the society was the chairman. It had a good deal of work mainly connected with the settlement of local disputes. The people much appreciated the opportunity it gave for cases to be settled on the spot.

There was also a co-operative society in the village of Mihrān, the centre of the district of that name. A difficulty had arisen in 1966 over the accounts of the oil agency run by the co-operative society. Contrary to regulations, the manager had apparently given oil on credit to the gendarmerie. Subsequently, the society had run out of oil, and it seems that the gendarmerie had then complained against the society to Tehrān, on the grounds that since Mihrān was a frontier area oil ought always to be available to the gendarmerie post. What exactly had happened I could not make out. It may be that the manager had merely wanted to ingratiate himself and the society with the gendarmerie by giving concessions to them, or there may have been some dishonesty. It was clearly difficult for a co-operative society to function smoothly unless it had the goodwill of the gendarmerie. This was particularly true in remote frontier areas where the gendarmerie often had considerable power.

At Šāliḥābād, a small village near the Iraqi frontier, situated on a little river which had dried up about 1960, an abortive attempt was made by the government to sink a power-operated well in the year 1964-5. In anticipation of its producing water a co-operative society was set up. It remained inoperative until permission was given for it to be taken over as a land reform society. It had some 63 members, and seemed a somewhat primitive organization. The executive committee were, however, all literate. The members appeared pleased with their society, but they admitted that they had been frightened to join it in the beginning. They had received one loan, the repayment of which had not fallen due when I visited the village. When asked whose the society was, the members answered that it belonged to the government; and when asked how this was, they said that they had not themselves possessed enough capital to form a society, and, moreover, had not set up a society until instructed to do so by the government. Great uncertainty as to



the future and great poverty prevailed in the village. The only crop grown was grain, which often did not suffice for the needs of the population, and in a bad year they were forced to borrow, or to emigrate to Iraq. The population, which belonged to various tribal groups, Bābā Rikā, Sar Nay, Kaligou and others, each with their own elected headman, amounted to about 1,000 persons. They alleged that they had for generations been *khurdehmālik* although semi-nomadic. Under Reżā Shāh the land had been divided, 1 ha. (2.4 acres) being given to each family (though if they were, as they claimed, *khurdehmālik* this was a usurpation of their rights). Subsequently there had been some buying and selling of holdings, the largest of which was some 20 ha. (c. 49 acres) in 1966.

Co-operative societies were also set up in some of the other villages of Ilām which were not land reform areas. Bahmanābād between the Rinān pass and Ilām, was a *khurdehmālik* village of 150 families, by origin Qurayshī Arabs, who derived their livelihood partly from agriculture and partly from the keeping of flocks. It was not subject, according to the inhabitants, to either stage of the land reform. When a co-operative society was started in the winter of 1965-6 or spring of 1966, there had been general reluctance on the part of the peasants to join it. By the summer it had 115 members. It had given one loan to members, to be repaid after the 1966 harvest. The members alleged that since the society had been started their conditions had improved. They regarded it as their own.

In 1965 and 1966 it was still hard to find suitable men to become managers of the co-operative societies. It was rare for them to be able to run the business side of the society's activities without the help of the supervisor. Most of the books were, by now, written up by the managers, and this was often neatly and tidily done; but in the majority of cases they could do no more than keep a simple record of moneys paid out and paid in. There was sometimes difficulty in finding men to be managers who would, in fact, be the servants of the society, and not use it as a means of continuing to exercise the influence which they had formerly exerted in the village as the headman, the land-owner's bailiff, or his tenant. This was particularly true of areas where the peasants were backward or had no tradition of inde-

pendence. There was clearly a danger that such persons, if made the manager of a society, might exploit the village. In some villages, however, there was no one but the headman capable of running the society. Further, since he would in any case continue to live in the village, he would, as likely as not, intrigue against it and impede the operations of the society if he was not involved in the running of it. This was a real difficulty. At Akbarābād near Fasā, a *vaqf* village for which tenancies were concluded, the manager of the co-operative in 1965 was the son of the headman, who had formerly rented the village from the administrator of the *vaqf*. The headman and his family seemed prosperous compared to the peasants in the village. In such cases there was a real danger that the manager of the society would interpret his functions somewhat broadly.

In the tribal or semi-tribal areas in which the headman was both the tribal and the village headman, he was often the obvious choice for the office of manager, as for example in Kūzgarān in Sanjābī (see above p. 247). This was also sometimes true of the settled villages. For example, the manager of the Kūshk-i Bībicheh society near Shirāz in 1965 was the former headman. He was an intelligent and vigorous man, who saw the society as the means by which conditions could be improved and the peasants become independent and self-supporting. 'We must now,' he said, 'work for ourselves.' Sometimes, however, the headman was either not elected to the executive committee of the society, as in the Sharaf and Karashūb society in the Mamassani (see above p. 331), or was turned off the committee, as happened at Qār near Sanandaj. In the latter place the former headman, who had also been the landowner's representative, was elected to the executive committee of the society, which was set up in 1963, but he was not re-elected in 1965 because it was alleged that he had made trouble.

The standard of literacy on the executive committees was often low. A higher standard of literacy on the part of the committees and of the members in general was clearly desirable and necessary if the societies were to develop. But their success in the first instance was not necessarily in direct proportion to the literacy of their members. In one society which I visited, Kākliābād in Marīvān, the manager was illiterate. Nevertheless



the society seemed to function fairly well; the members alleged that they worked together.<sup>1</sup>

In the Biār society on the Kirmānshāh-Sanandaj road, none of the executive committee except the manager were literate. He was a member of the executive committee of the Kirmānshāh federation and also the chairman of the village council of Biār, and seemed a lively and competent man. The executive committee of the society, in addition to its regular business meetings, also met informally once a month or so to exchange ideas. Similarly the executive committee of the Sarāb society near Saqqiz met once every month or two months to discuss matters of common interest, in addition to their ordinary business meetings every fortnight. The members of the executive committee in this case were all literate. The manager was a tailor living in the village, and had no land.

Some of the managers in 1965 and 1966 were beginning to emerge as local leaders. For example, the manager of the Huvarrū society, which served a group of six villages between Shāhābād and Gahvāreh, had won the trust of the people of the villages served by the society, whether they were members of it or not. He seemed a sensible, competent man; and it was said that the local people brought their problems to him for solution. There appeared to be a strong sense of unity among the members of the society. They said that since land reform they had helped each other to pay off their outside debts.

The executive committees of all the societies I visited in Kirmānshāhān, Kurdistān, and Khūzistān in the summer of 1966 seemed to meet regularly, and in some cases members also met at intervals for a general discussion of their problems. To what extent there was real discussion and consultation it was difficult to determine. I think there was probably a good deal of variation. Many of the societies had not yet built premises and were still meeting in the house of one of the members. In many of them the members were putting the interest on their shares into a special fund for the building of premises; and in a number of societies which I visited in 1966 the building of premises was going on, as for example in Dihgul on the Kirmānshāh-Sanandaj road. In Bijār most of the societies in 1966 had built,

<sup>1</sup> The society was later split by faction and did not work well.

or were building, premises for themselves. Where this had occurred, there was a beneficial effect on morale.

The main function of the co-operative societies in 1965 and 1966 continued to be the granting of credit. In spite of allegations to the contrary by opponents of the land reform, the loans given by the co-operative societies had, undoubtedly, contributed greatly to the well-being of the peasants. In 1966 the members of all the societies which I visited in Kirmānshāh, Kurdistān, and Khūzistān were appreciative of the help given. These loans, small though they were, had materially decreased indebtedness and the fore-selling of crops. The peasants belonging to the society serving Shāhgudār, Ghulām 'Alī Beg, Samangāh, Āhangarān, and Bizāvil, a group of villages near Kirmānshāh, subject partly to the first and partly to the second stage of land reform, for example, said that the loans they had received from the society in 1964 and 1965, both of which had been bad years, had saved them from disaster.

In many cases the peasants were in debt when they joined a society, but it was rare for the loans given by a society to be used to repay existing debts. In some cases the peasants, because of their greater prosperity and security, were able to free themselves from debt altogether, and in others to reduce the extent of their indebtedness. Similarly the fore-selling of crops had in many cases ceased and in others been materially reduced. The Bihbahān area was an exception. There indebtedness was still a major problem; the high rates of interest charged by money-lenders and their efforts to keep the peasants in debt still continued to be a major evil.

The story of the man whose *gīvehs* (a kind of shoe made partly of cotton) cost him 1,250 *rs.* (c. £5. 14s.) told me by one of the supervisors in Khūzistān illustrates how the co-operative societies, operating on a small scale, were able to improve the position of their members. The man, when asked why he had joined the co-operative society in his village, said he had joined because his *gīvehs* had cost him 1,250 *rs.* The supervisor asked him how this could have been so (since *gīvehs* normally cost 120-250 *rs.*, i.e. c. 11s.-£1. 3s.). He replied that his *gīvehs* had worn out, and that he had had to borrow to buy new ones; and by the time he had been able to pay back the loan with interest



and compound interest the *giŕahs* had cost him 1,250 rs. But now, when he needed money, he could borrow it from the co-operative society at 6 per cent.

At Rām Hurmuz, on the other hand, there were some signs of disillusion with the co-operative societies and land reform. But Rām Hurmuz, like the neighbouring district of Bihbahān, was riddled with faction, and it was extremely difficult to arrive at the truth. In Bunch Ākhund, which was partially transferred to the peasants under the first stage and the remainder settled by tenancy under the second stage, a co-operative society with a membership of 127 was set up in 1963. Prior to land reform, there had been a co-operative society centred on the village with 400 members drawn from some sixteen villages in all. It was dissolved after land reform and a new society set up. There were allegations that the first elections to the society had been 'rigged'. There had also been some trouble over the granting of loans and their repayment. Members said that the society could not fully provide for their needs, and that the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank and merchants would no longer lend them money. They were thankful for land reform but nevertheless appeared to have considerable reservations. They said they listened to the radio, and were told by it that the co-operative societies brought consumer goods to the peasants, and provided them with other amenities, and solved all their difficulties and so on. This, they alleged, was simply not true in their case.

I visited another society near Rām Hurmuz at Shahriār, a village transferred under the first stage. Here also it was difficult to get at the truth. I also visited the Bunchhā society, which served a group of villages or hamlets consisting of Bunch Hājjī, Sundira, and Zarzūri. Conditions there seemed better. The main reason for this was, I think, that contrary to most of the villages in Rām Hurmuz and Bihbahān, there was no faction. The villages had been transferred to the peasants under the first stage. The society had 120 members; it sold fertilizers, which had not been used before land reform, and cloth, and had an agency for the sale of paraffin. The members had built premises for the co-operative.

The sale of fertilizers, mainly urea, by the societies in 1965-66

and their use throughout the country spread. In the west and in many other districts chemical fertilizers had not been used by the peasants before land reform. They were supplied to the co-operative societies by the federations (where these existed). The Khākibeg society near Sanandaj, which had 191 members drawn from five villages, by the summer of 1966 had sold 5,000 kilos of fertilizer since land reform had begun. It seemed to be an active society. Its members had no doubt that it was theirs and they were keen to raise capital to buy a tractor.

Pesticides were also being sold by the co-operative societies in a small way. In 1966 in Kirmānshāhān marketing was initiated by a few societies, which were buying pulses produced by their members and selling these to the army. In various parts of the country the societies also continued, on a limited scale, to buy seed grain from the peasants, and to sell it back to them. In Sūsangird in 1965 70 tons of seed grain were sold by the societies to their members. In 1966 also seed grain was bought, but instructions from Tehrān to buy grain arrived late, after much of that year's crop had been sold.

From 1966 onwards, in many parts of the country an increasing number of the societies acted as agents for the National Iranian Oil Company for the sale of oil products, mainly paraffin. About 190 of the societies in Kirmānshāhān and 43 in Sūsangird and many of the societies which I visited elsewhere had received agencies by the summer of 1966. The sale of paraffin and gas oil was a matter of great convenience for the local people, whether members of the co-operative society or not. The use of paraffin for domestic purposes in rural areas has greatly increased in recent years and has, *inter alia*, had a beneficial effect in slowing down deforestation.

Some co-operative societies in the west had already taken over the management of village pastures in 1966, although the regulations governing pastures had not by then been issued. In some cases contracts for the exploitation of gum tragacanth were also concluded by the co-operative societies.

Quite apart from fulfilling their main function of the provision of credit, the co-operative societies served a useful purpose in giving the peasants some education in business and teaching them the connection between better farming, better business,



and better living. They provided their members with practice in consultation; and gave them a centre where the common mind might be found and expressed. In this way they helped to bring out the latent ability of their members. Often a village leader has emerged through the co-operative society. This is an extremely important development, not only in terms of land reform, but also for the general wellbeing of the country.

What the co-operative societies did at the village level, the federations did at the district level. Even if their activities in marketing and the provision of goods were very limited, the bringing together of representatives of the member societies to discuss problems of common interest was in itself valuable and widened their experience. In Nayshāpūr in the summer of 1965 I met some members of the executive committee of the newly formed federation. They seemed intelligent and keen, with some understanding of the function of co-operative societies.

Similarly, the assembling of representatives of the co-operative societies from all over Persia for the annual celebration of Peasants' Day, while somewhat artificial in that the representatives were selected and sent under official auspices to Tehrān or wherever the celebrations were to take place, was, nevertheless, important in fostering among the peasants a sense of unity and purpose. It was noteworthy that the horizon of many of those who attended these celebrations was widened. I talked in 1965 to the executive committees of several of the co-operative societies in Fārs, including that of Chāh Marvārid near Jahrum, and in Khurāsān, who had attended the celebrations of Peasants' Day in Tehrān that summer, and in 1966 to some in Kirmānshāhān and Kurdistān, including the chairman of the Mūchish society; all of them had been impressed by the greater progress made by the co-operative societies in Gilān and Āzarbāyjān compared to Fārs, Khurāsān, and western Persia.

Progress in the setting up of federations continued in 1965 and 1966, but was rather slower than in the establishment of co-operative societies. By the summer of 1966 there were some fifty federations, but only about half of them were in operation. Apart from the lack of sufficient experienced and competent personnel to run the federations, both among the officials of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation and the members

of the co-operative societies, a major factor limiting their establishment was the absence of roads and transport in remote areas. The difficulty of getting consumer goods to distant localities, and more particularly of marketing goods from them at competitive prices was a real one.

The Dizfūl federation, to which 23 of the 33 co-operative societies in the area belonged, was an example of an active and successful federation. Its net profit in the year 1965-6 from the sale of grain, pulses, and consumer goods was 1,200,000 *ri.* (*c.* £5,454). In 1966, however, there was still not much marketing by the federations. The Tehrān federation, which was formed by the co-operative societies of Shahriār and Karaj in 1965, started to sell vegetables and fruit in Tehrān, but met with much opposition from the owners of the markets selling these commodities (*maydāndārkhā*). The first attempt to set up a market was abortive. A second attempt was made, and a shop opened in the Maydān-i Qibleh in the Gumruk Avenue. At first there was a certain reluctance on the part of the Shahriār societies to sell through the federation because they had received advances from the *maydāndārkhā* and because of alleged intimidation by them. Further, the sale of goods to the retailers by the wholesalers of fruit and vegetables (*bārfurūshkhā*) was largely on credit, and the proportion of bad debts was said to be high. The federation could not sell on credit—its financial position was not strong enough—and because it sold for cash it had to sell at slightly lower prices than the *bārfurūshkhā*. This was not agreeable in the first instance to the peasants belonging to the Shahriār societies, but their reluctance to deal with the federation was overcome and three new shops were opened. The wholesalers were alleged to have tried to break the federation in 1966 by underselling it, and all kinds of obstacles were put in its way by interested parties. It was said that if the federation were allocated sufficient funds to enable it to give advances to the growers through the co-operative societies, it could start a new system of packing and grading, which would enable it to compete with its rivals. As the situation was in 1966, grading machinery could not be economically used because the quantity produced by the individual peasant was very small.

In the interim period between the beginning of the second



stage and the setting up of new co-operative societies to serve all the villages covered by this stage, loans were provided for the peasants in some areas by the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank. This was, I think, intended to be a temporary measure pending the establishment of co-operative societies, but in 1966 the bank was competing in some places with the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. This was the case in Khurramshahr and Ilām, where the bank was offering the peasants short-term loans, and thereby discouraging them from joining the co-operative societies. In an area such as Ilām, where poverty and ignorance were common, the offer of loans without any security by the bank might well have appeared more attractive to the peasants than membership of a co-operative society, from which they could not get a loan until they had bought shares in it. It was alleged that the bank gave loans without due regard to the ability of the peasants to repay them, and that there had been several cases of peasants eventually being sold up because they had borrowed beyond their means. In Šālīhābād just off the Shāhābād-Ilām road, preliminary steps were taken in the summer of 1966 to set up a co-operative society. Two or three days before I visited the village in the summer of that year, an official of the bank had come there and offered the peasants loans with no security; the peasants had therefore held up the collection of money for the purchase of shares in the co-operative society.

The rivalry between the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation and the Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, and the conflict in policy between the two which appeared to be developing, or becoming more definite, in 1966 were unfortunate developments. They probably were an indication of a weakening of government support for the land reform as originally conceived, in which the societies were to play a key role in fostering the growth of an independent peasantry. As the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation extended its activities, it met with increasing jealousy and distrust not only from the bank, but from other government departments. This, if not curbed, will impede the further progress of land reform, and thereafter the very existence of the co-operative movement.

The growing coolness towards the co-operative societies in

1956 was accompanied by an increased interest in the development of private investment in agriculture, and was almost certainly to be explained, at least in part, by the growing influence in government circles of the school which regarded the main aim of land reform to be increased production. This school included in its ranks many of the younger western-educated economists and bankers, who took the view that the peasants had neither the capital nor the experience to increase production. Their policy was to turn away from the peasants, and to support and encourage men with capital to embark on mechanized farming.

Another somewhat disquieting tendency was gaining ground in some circles in 1965 and 1966, although it was not openly expressed. This was opposition to anything which would strengthen the independence of the co-operative movement. Coupled with this, the desirability of making the co-operative movement into a fully governmental organization was also being canvassed on the pretext of the need for 'direction' and 'leadership'. In all probability this was at least partly inspired by the landlord class and by merchants and entrepreneurs, in the belief that they would be able to influence the co-operative societies or neutralize their activities more easily if they were governmental organizations than if they were independent.

To make the co-operative movement into a government department would, I think, be a fatal step. One of the reasons why the officials of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation were able to win the trust of the peasants was that they were not regarded as government officials, or at least not in the same way as the general run of civil servants. And one of the reasons why the co-operative societies, with all their weaknesses, worked reasonably well was that the members regarded the societies as their own and felt towards them a certain loyalty and pride. If the co-operative societies are transformed into organizations entirely run by the government, they will cease to command the loyalty of their members and to be effective instruments in the creation of an independent, self-respecting, self-supporting peasantry, and land reform as originally conceived will fail.



## CHAPTER XVII

### ACHIEVEMENTS, PROBLEMS, AND TRENDS

---

THE changes brought about by the land reform in the four years between 1962 and 1966 were considerable, whether measured in social, political, or economic terms. Prior to 1962 the large landowners were dominant throughout most of the country; and owned a large proportion of the cultivated land. The relationship between landlord and peasant was in most cases regulated by a crop-sharing agreement. The peasant, to a greater or less degree, lived in conditions of subjection, and had little possibility of redress in the event of oppression and extortion, from whatever quarter this might come. There was, in effect, a gulf between the peasant and the rest of the population. The first stage of the land reform materially altered the distribution of landownership, and the second stage brought the relationship based on a crop-sharing agreement to an end in most districts.

The peasant for the first time began to feel that his voice counted for something, and even that he had a responsibility towards the country and the community. In the past, he had been well aware that he lived in unfavourable, and sometimes primitive, conditions, and that he was 'underprivileged'; but until land reform began he had never believed that it was possible to change these conditions. There had been talk before of plans to improve the lot of the peasant and to ameliorate rural conditions. This had left the peasant unmoved; experience had shown him that it was empty talk. The land reform of 1962, however, had certain new features. It was essentially pragmatic. Moreover, those charged with its implementation sought the co-operation of the peasants in putting the law into operation.

There was another factor which also played an important part in convincing the peasant that the land reform of 1962 was different, and represented a genuine attempt to secure for him

improved conditions. This was the absence of any foreign influence or intervention in it.

Since the land reform began there has been a striking change in the morale of the peasant. He became convinced for the first time that change was a practical possibility; and he gained a new self-confidence and independence. This was most marked among the peasants to whom land was transferred under the first stage, but it was also noticeable among those on land which was settled under the second stage.

Economically and agriculturally the effects of land reform are more difficult to gauge because the time span is too short to assess the new trends. But almost everywhere that the land has been transferred to the peasants it is better cultivated because they regard it as their own; and in many villages more land has been brought under cultivation. There has also been a marked increase in the use of fertilizers. Further, in many areas there is now a greater diversification of crops than was the case before land reform, and an increase in cash cropping. Better security and freedom from interference from the landowner in land which has been settled under the second stage have, on a smaller scale, brought about similar results.

In most of the land reform villages, the peasants claimed that there had been a reduction in the fore-selling of crops and of indebtedness. In many of them there has been great activity by the peasants in building better houses for themselves. This is clear evidence of an improvement in social and economic conditions. Before land reform the peasants in many districts did not dare to undertake activity of this kind. Now, using local raw materials and utilizing surplus labour or seasonal off-time labour, they are exerting extra effort to raise their standard of living. This activity, moreover, has not been confined entirely to housing; there has also been some communal effort for the provision of public utilities such as schools, baths, and local roads.

It is true that the land reform has not affected all peasants equally: those to whom land was transferred under the first stage received more favourable treatment than peasants on land settled under the second stage. Further, the number of peasants directly affected by the land reform is much less than the total



number of peasants in the country. The position of the 'landless' peasants or agricultural labourers, has been affected only indirectly by the reform. So far as living conditions in the villages have improved and oppression lessened, they have profited, but the benefit is, at best, marginal. These are anomalies. But it may be fairly argued that a limited reform which works is better than an all-embracing reform which breaks down because of lack of credit and lack of personnel to carry it out. Experience would suggest that the decision to attempt a limited reform was wise, and that even this stretched resources in credit and personnel to the limit.

A number of problems still remain to be tackled. Among them is the minimum size of holding. Article 47 of the regulations for the Additional Articles stated that within six months of their approval a series of regulations would be prepared in order to provide for the proper conduct of agricultural affairs, to ensure that uncultivated lands did not remain uncultivated, to prevent the fragmentation of holdings, to regulate the relations between the peasants, and to maintain the minimum economic agricultural unit. The latter question has provoked some discussion, but no decision had been taken by the summer of 1966. The minimum holding is a complicated problem in Persia, to which there is no simple or universal solution. The quantity of the land, the availability of water, the method of irrigation, and the standards of husbandry and understanding, which vary widely in different parts of the country, all affect the question. It was, perhaps, wise of the land reformers to postpone a decision on the minimum holding pending the completion of the second stage. It is true that the peasant holding in some parts of the country is too small to afford a living. Land reform has, however, halted further fragmentation, since it forbids the breaking up of existing peasant holdings; but this does not deal with the problem of the holding which was already too small before land reform began, or the holding from which too many people have to live although the holding itself is not subdivided. The solution of this problem is closely bound up with the relationship between agriculture and industry, and the availability of sources of employment other than agriculture. These considerations are also relevant to the question of mechanization. In some regions,

especially dry-farming areas and sparsely-populated districts, there is a good case for mechanization. But this is not so everywhere, at least as long as animals and labour are available. Tractor work is not much better than hand or animal-powered work; and the costs of the latter are lower.

Allied to the question of the minimum holding is the consolidation of individual peasant holdings. The land reform in the first instance again wisely did as little as possible to upset the field lay-out of the village lands. The peasant holding normally consists of several plots of land situated in different parts of the village. The quality of the land and the availability of water usually vary greatly. Compulsory consolidation would have aroused opposition and hostility among the peasants. There are, however, exceptions. In a few villages consolidation, complete or limited, has been carried out since land reform, but such action is rare. Clearly consolidation must eventually come, but to force it on a reluctant peasantry when there is, in general, no shortage of labour would seem unwise. In due course, with the spread of mechanization, increased use of fertilizers, and better irrigation, the advantages of consolidation will become apparent. The demand for it among the peasants will then, in all probability, spread.

The Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 laid down that agricultural extension services should be provided in the villages that were transferred to the peasants. Some progress has been made in this, and good work has been done. But the officials, especially in the early years, were very thin on the ground, partly because many of them had been seconded to the land reform organization and diverted from their own work. Some help has been given by the creation of an extension corps (*sipāh-i tarviḡ va ābādānī*) in 1965 (see above p. 122 n.). The provision of an agricultural extension service, however, is different from the teaching of literacy, for which a limited technique only is necessary. The peasants, in most cases, are not unskilled in agricultural practices. Many of them, given the means at their disposal, cultivate the land extremely well; and, in any case, have local experience, which is of great importance in agricultural affairs. Consequently, they are not always ready to accept advice from newcomers. A degree of experience and



maturity is therefore essential in the extension service, if it is to make a valuable contribution to agricultural improvement.

Although in the few years which have elapsed since land reform began the peasants on the land which has been transferred or settled have become, on the whole, better off, great poverty still prevails in many parts of the country. Lack of water is a major factor contributing to this. Water in Persia has always been the limiting factor in agricultural development. This shortage has not been caused by land reform, but if it is not halted, it may well bring ruin to much of the countryside; and in that case land reform will fail. Remoteness and bad communications are also a contributory factor to rural poverty.

There have been a number of side effects from land reform, affecting rural life and the country as a whole. The improvement which has occurred in security, notably in certain districts in Fārs and other tribal areas, although not the direct result of land reform, is closely connected with it. If the power of the landowners had not already been reduced by land reform in Āzarbāyjān and Gilān, and real or alleged opposition to the reform had not given the government an excuse for action, the government would probably not have been able to reduce the tribal leaders of Fārs as rapidly and successfully as it did. Security in the countryside, despite many vicissitudes in recent years, has everywhere improved, particularly in the remoter areas. But there remains another aspect of security, namely freedom from the exercise of arbitrary power; and in this respect it is clear that there is a long way to go before the peasants enjoy security or real equality with other classes of the population before the law, without which land reform cannot wholly succeed. In other words land reform, if it is to be fully effective, must be accompanied by reform in other aspects of the life of the country.

In spite of certain anomalies and shortcomings, it can nevertheless be fairly claimed that as a result of land reform a movement of change has begun in the countryside. It may not yet have gone very deep, but its existence cannot be denied. It is to be seen, for example, in the great demand for education and in the considerable number of children who now have some sort of schooling in the villages, whether in the ordinary schools run by

the ministry of education, the schools started by the literacy corps, or the tribal schools in Fārs. But above all, this movement of change is expressed in the new sense of purpose, independence, and self-reliance of the peasants, and the emergence of leaders in the co-operative societies. Their strength and numbers are admittedly not yet great. It is not this fact which is remarkable, but that leaders should have emerged at all in such a short space of time. It is of importance for the well-being of society that these developments should be encouraged. This will require integrity, patience, and understanding on the part of officials in giving necessary guidance to the peasants and in encouraging them to accept responsibility. It also presupposes the existence of a government whose concern is not to remove the landowning class so that it can exert a tighter control over the rural population, but to create an independent and prosperous peasantry.

From the beginning, it was realized that the co-operative societies were central to the success of the land reform. They are still the key to further advance. The first task is to extend the co-operative movement, so that it effectively covers the whole country. But in increasing the number of societies and in expanding their activities, care and restraint is needed so that a burden beyond its strength is not placed on the co-operative movement. There have been occasional examples of pre-land reform and land reform co-operative societies being organized beyond the ability and loyalty of their members and their consequent failure. The suggestion which has been put forward that the co-operative societies should run a social insurance scheme for their members would seem, at this stage, wholly unrealistic. The basic need of the peasants, almost everywhere, is short-term credit. The rural co-operative societies have made an excellent start in providing this. A sense of loyalty to the societies has developed among their members, and there is some measure of responsibility for the grant of credit and its repayment. But in general, their sense of responsibility for and control over the funds of the society are still weak—and inevitably so since co-operative funds are, in part, provided from government sources, and the supervisors are paid by the government through the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. The



transfer of responsibility by the supervisors to the members and the acceptance of responsibility by the latter is a matter which must receive urgent attention.

There is already a widespread desire among the members of many of the co-operative societies for their society to undertake the provision of consumer goods and marketing. This is difficult to organize, and in present circumstances, apart from exceptional cases, is likely to be beyond the managerial ability and financial resources of the societies. Most of them are too small and too poor to carry out such work, except, possibly, as the agent of a federation. The policy of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation has been to keep the co-operative societies small because of the difficulty of supervision. There would seem to be a good case for gradually throwing them open to all the village population engaged in agriculture, stock-raising, and cottage industries. But even if this were done, many of the co-operative societies would still be too small and financially too weak to appoint and pay competent managers. The amalgamation of a number of societies is not likely to provide a solution because of bad communications and the distances involved. The problem is a real one, experienced in other countries besides Persia.

The main function of the co-operative societies has been to grant short-term credit. This, however, has not always been used for short-term purposes. There have been several instances in which it has been used for medium or long-term ends, in particular for the purchase of pumps and tractors and the sinking of wells. While every encouragement should be given to these activities, the confusion of the two types of credit is unsatisfactory and likely to lead to difficulties: for example, failure or delay over the repayment of a loan used for a medium or long-term purpose may lead to the withholding of short-term credit needed for current agricultural operations. As the federations grow in strength it might be desirable to leave the handling of medium and long-term credit to them and to the banks, who would deal with individuals or groups of members within a society, rather than with the society as a whole. But however credit is made available, the co-operative societies and their federations will require trained and competent managers. More

training in co-operation and in particular in management and accountancy is, therefore, fundamental to continued advance. More supervisors who will instruct the general membership of the societies, and more managers who will handle the business operations of the societies and their federations must be trained. This will be no easy task. There is a growing demand for managerial skill in the industrial field and for trained men in other sectors of public life; and unless conditions of service and opportunity in the co-operative movement are made attractive, the shortage of personnel is not likely to be relieved and may, indeed, become more acute. However much integrity, vigour, and courage the co-operative movement may have in its own ranks—and it has much—it cannot succeed without co-operation from other government departments. Not only has this sometimes been withheld, but the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation has all too often met with opposition and obstruction.

The minister of agriculture, General Rīāḥī, promised a third stage of land reform in a speech on 9 January 1966, the fourth anniversary of the land reform law. The aims of the third stage were to be (i) an increase in production to provide foodstuffs and raw material for industry, (ii) a rise in production per head of the peasant population in order to improve their conditions of life by self-help and co-operation, and (iii) a stabilization of food prices by increased production and marketing. This stage was to come into operation on the completion of the second stage in March 1967. While the first and second stages were mainly concerned with tenurial and social changes, the purpose of the third stage was to achieve a full exploitation of the agricultural resources of the country.

To what extent the third stage of the land reform will be a continuation of the first and the second remains to be seen. It was from the beginning realized that there must be an increase in production if the land reform was ultimately to succeed. The original conception was that this would be achieved by creating a prosperous and independent peasantry, and by developing a co-operative movement which would provide credit and marketing facilities. A good start was made in this. But as the land reform progressed, a certain ambivalence towards it seemed



to develop in government circles. By 1966 there were signs of a new credit policy, which was likely to divert badly needed funds from the land reform and the co-operative movement to private investment in agriculture. Support was still expressed in government circles for the reform and the co-operative movement and to some extent given. But there were indications that the purposes of land reform were no longer seen as the spread of peasant proprietorship, the emergence of an independent peasantry and a strong co-operative movement.

While an increase in production is important, and without it the standard of living of the peasants cannot be materially improved, it would be a fatal mistake if the Persian government were to concentrate on the question of production to the exclusion of other aspects of the land reform, and with this in view expend their main effort on the development of agriculture outside the reform. There were signs of a weakening in the confidence of the peasantry in some parts of the country during the second stage. If the government turns towards other groups for the cultivation of the land, or transfers land to them before the land worked by the peasants has been satisfactorily settled, and weakens or withholds its support from the co-operative movement, their confidence will almost certainly be destroyed, and with it the incentive to work, which the reform has shown to be a powerful factor in increasing production.

Although trends in agricultural production cannot be accurately assessed over so short a period as has elapsed since the land reform began, the figures quoted in F.A.O. estimates suggest that there has been some increase since land reform except in the year 1964-5 (when there was a failure of the harvest because of lack of rain). Some of this increase comes from new land which has been brought into cultivation by landowners and others. But there is also evidence that agricultural production has increased in many of the land reform villages. If the reform proceeds on existing lines and the co-operative societies develop their activities, a continued rise in production may be expected (apart from fluctuations due to climatic causes), and the peasants will achieve a better standard of living. Once this result has been attained, it will then be possible, working through the co-operative societies, to make further changes in agri-

cultural methods and organization without destroying the confidence of the peasants.

Industrialization is fashionable talk in Persia. Statements have been made that the ratio of rural to industrial population must be reversed. This is a long term policy. It implies a degree of mechanization and an ability by industry to absorb the surplus agricultural labour which is likely to take many years to accomplish. In the immediate future Persian agriculture is likely to continue to depend largely on the production of the peasant holding. On these grounds alone, apart from strong social and political grounds, it would seem desirable, if not essential, to foster the confidence of the peasants through the land reform and the co-operative societies. Disillusion may well lead to disaster, economically, politically, and socially.

The first stage of the land reform marked a genuine change in the political and social life of Persia. Its aims were clear and unambiguous and its operation, on the whole, rapid and effective. The second stage was not merely, or even mainly, a consolidation of the ground already won; it was rather a weakening of the original purpose. But although its aims were to some extent equivocal, in those districts where its implementation was fair and vigorous, progress continued to be made, particularly in the co-operative movement; where it was not, the peasants began to lose confidence because their hopes were disappointed. It is of profound importance that the government should give practical reaffirmation to the aims of the first stage and regain the full confidence of the peasants. Without this there will be no rise in production over the country as a whole.



## POSTSCRIPT

---

In the summer and early autumn of 1968 I revisited Persia. The second stage of the land reform had been officially completed except for those districts which had not yet been registered or estates whose title was disputed. Leaving aside deliberate evasions of the law, the settlement of a considerable number of estates was, nevertheless, still outstanding. In some settlement had been held up because the two parties had been unable to agree upon the method. There were also estates subject to the first stage for which the price had not yet been communicated to the peasants, or for which no demand for the payment of instalments had been made. Note 6 to Article 1 of the Additional Articles, which limited the amount of rice land a landowner might retain to 30 ha. (74 acres), was only beginning to be put into operation in Gilān in the summer of 1968. Article 17 of the Additional Articles (the provision for the establishment of an agricultural unit), which, according to the figures issued by the land reform organization in February 1966 (see above p. 221), accounted for the largest number of estates settled under the second stage, had in many cases been subsequently altered to some other form of settlement. Where the choice stood it was not put into operation as originally intended. A managing committee of three as laid down seldom had an effective existence, and the unit did not apparently have legal personality. Nor, as had been intended, was the need for a co-operative society obviated.

Attention was being increasingly directed to the question of a full exploitation of the agricultural resources of the country. In this connection irrigation is of paramount importance. Without a big increase in water supply, a major rise in production cannot be achieved. This will require big and costly irrigation schemes, which only the government can carry out. Many large dams have been built and others are under construction. On 6 October 1967 the nationalization of all water resources

within the country was announced by the Shah in his speech from the throne when opening the new session of the National Consultative Assembly. A proper control of irrigation and the maximum utilization of available water are in themselves highly desirable. Unfortunately the immediate effect of the nationalization of water, in the absence of detailed plans and effective means for their implementation, has been to create uncertainty and to discourage investment in irrigation.

Neither the first nor the second stage, for good and sufficient reasons, attempted to deal with the question of uneconomic or sub-economic holdings or the excessive parcellation of holdings. The first step taken under the third stage to grapple with this problem and increase output by mechanization and a more economic use of manpower was a law passed on 26 December 1967 by the National Consultative Assembly and on 16 January 1968 by the Senate for the establishment of agricultural corporations. Their area of operation was to comprise at least two villages. They were in a sense, perhaps, a development, or reformulation, of the agricultural unit provided for in Article 17 of the Additional Articles. They were to be run in the first instance under the control of the government, which was to invest considerable sums of money in them. The idea behind them—to abolish the fragmentation of holdings within the area worked by the corporations and to facilitate irrigation and mechanization—was on the face of it plausible and obviously desirable, so much so that the government was under a strong temptation to pursue the project without critical analysis. Those holding land in a district in which a corporation is set up hand their land over to the corporation and receive in its place a share in the corporation. They have no responsibility for the cultivation of the land, and are employed by the corporation, if at all, as agricultural labourers. In some respects the corporations were a reversal of the original reform, which had stimulated production because it had given the peasants security of tenure. It is true that the declared aim is eventually to hand the corporations over to their members, but there is an obvious danger that they will become managerial operations carried on by officials. Should this happen it is unlikely that the interest and confidence of the peasants will be maintained.



Some fifteen or sixteen corporations were set up in 1968. They were established mainly in districts in which good land and adequate water were available. There was strong hostility to the idea of the corporations among the peasants in many districts, especially those in which land and water were valuable. On the other hand, in some of the dry-farming districts where land has little value and the peasants are too poor to develop it and are forced to make agreements with tractor-owners and others for its cultivation, the idea was more favourably received. It is not, however, intended to set up corporations in these areas, but in those having good agricultural potential. It is too early to appraise their social and economic effects. So far as the project has created uncertainty in the minds of the peasants as to the security of their title to the land, it is likely to discourage them from efforts to improve their holdings and extend their operations, both of which were notable features of the early years of the reform. At this stage there would seem to be a strong case for delaying any measures which will destroy the newly won confidence of the peasants, however desirable such measures may be in themselves.

The second step taken under the third stage was a bill submitted to the National Consultative Assembly on 17 October 1968 for the abolition of tenancies except in charitable *sugāf* and the sale of the land to the occupying peasants. In the case of tenants on land belonging to landowners subject to the first stage, this is a desirable step, in continuation of the original reform. There is, however, especially in some of the villages round the central desert, a class of small landowners who live in the villages and are themselves often no better off than the peasants. In their case the question is more complicated, and careful drafting will be required if they are not to be reduced to even greater poverty than at present. The question is one of local over-population and cannot be solved simply by a redistribution of land.

Evidence of increased attention to production is also afforded by the reorganization of the ministry of agriculture. In October 1967 three new ministries were created, the ministry of natural resources, the ministry of agricultural products and consumer goods, and the ministry of land reform and rural co-operation.

The last named incorporated the former land reform organization of the ministry of agriculture and the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation. This shows that there was to be no lessening of government interest in land reform or rural co-operation, and perhaps indicated an intention to play a greater part in the provision of managerial functions. Under the new constitution of CORC the minister for land reform and rural co-operation is the representative for stock held by the government in the organization. By the summer of 1968 the activities of CORC had not been much changed by this step, but its incorporation into the new ministry had dealt a severe blow to the morale of the field staff. For the reasons against such a step advanced in Chapter XVI, and because both the training and duties of co-operative officials are necessarily different from those of the ordinary civil servant, it is a retrogressive step, likely to be detrimental to the growth of the rural co-operative movement. If sound co-operative principles and practices are to be followed, the morale of the field staff restored, and the confidence of the societies retained, it is essential that CORC should have an independent or semi-independent existence.

By the spring of 1968, 8,652 societies with a membership of 1,105,402 persons<sup>1</sup> serving some 20,803 villages had been established. Their capital and reserves amounted to 1,453,453,433 *rs.* (£6,606,606). By the same date 81 federations with a membership of 6,158 societies and a total capital of 300,758,150 *rs.* (£1,367,082) had been set up. Not all of these societies or federations were in full operation. In the year 1967-8 loans amounting to 4,076,608,590 *rs.* (£18,530,069) were given to 670,425 persons. The average loan was thus 6,080 *rs.* (£27 12s.), whereas in the year 1966-7 it was 5,400 *rs.* (£24 10s.), and in 1965-6 4,800 *rs.* (£21 16s.). Not every land reform village was served by a society, but as the land reform offices provided the provincial offices of CORC with statistics on the completion of the settlement of each district, the co-operative network was extended.

The increase in the capital, membership, and number of societies was partly because a small percentage of every new

<sup>1</sup> Assuming these are heads of families and reckoning the average family at five persons, the societies therefore serve some 5,527,010 persons.



loan was put to the share capital of each member, and partly because, as the second stage progressed, the number of peasants eligible for membership was greatly increased. The main reason for the increase in membership was, however, that the societies had been seen to work. In some second stage villages and peasant proprietor villages the initiative for the establishment of a society had come from the village and not from CORC. Some of these were promising societies. There was a growing realization among the societies in general that their strength depended upon their resources and a widespread keenness among their members to add to their capital by investment. Many were confident that they could increase their capital so that they would eventually be independent of government help, a state of affairs to which they looked forward with obvious keenness and pleasure. Among some of the more backward societies, however, there was still a failure to understand that they could give loans only from their own capital.

The defects of the early organization of the societies, due to the haste with which many of them had been established, had been largely overcome by the summer of 1968. The preparation for new societies was being carried out more thoroughly, and education, while still not entirely adequate, was greatly improved. More supervisors had been trained. Pressure on the field staff had been reduced, although the supervisors still had too many societies to look after. The leaders of CORC were well aware of the dangers of asking a society to carry burdens beyond the capacity of its members, and also of setting up societies which did not, or could not, fulfil a need. They were, therefore, deliberately, and rightly, attempting to consolidate the gains already made.

During my stay I was fortunate in being able to make an extensive tour in the district of Hamadān and the provinces of Kūrdistān, East and West Āzarbāyjān, Gilān, Iṣfahān and Kirmān. I visited a large number of societies, to some of which I had been on former occasions. In many cases the improvement was marked. I was particularly impressed by the growth in understanding and competence of the managers and also, though to a lesser extent, of the executive committees.

In some societies, especially in districts where the literacy

rate was low, difficulty was still being experienced in finding suitable managers, and in the larger societies in finding men who could devote enough time to their affairs. On the whole, the amount of time which members were prepared to devote to the affairs of their society was admirable, but as these expand, the question of full-time paid managers will have to be considered. At the present stage of development, however, the working peasant makes the best manager. He knows the problems of the members, enjoys their trust (if he is well chosen), and is, to use their own word, *dilsūzta*, i.e. he cares more.

The classes for managers run by CORC in provincial centres were an effective means of increasing their competence. Many who had participated in such courses told me how useful they had been. The fortnightly paper published by CORC, *Rūznā-meh-i Ta'āwun*, was another important medium in spreading understanding of the co-operative movement, stimulating initiative, and encouraging emulation of the world movement.

There were strongly marked local differences in the development of the societies. In all the districts I visited there had been much progress, and leaders were emerging in many of the societies. During my tour I saw numerous instances of better living resulting from their operations. The building activity in the land reform villages to which attention was drawn above (see p. 348), has continued. This is also true of the communal efforts for the provision of public amenities, such as schools, baths, and local roads. Some villages have installed pumps, piped water, and electricity. These activities usually come under the village council and not the co-operative society, but they would not have been possible except for the improved condition of the local population resulting from land reform and the work of the societies.

Seen in relation to some of the early criticisms made of the land reform, the societies have achieved a remarkable degree of success. First, in respect of the provision of credit, the general experience is that the loans provided by them have been larger than the advances formerly provided by the landowners (many of whom did not, in fact, provide advances). In many cases the



society loans have enabled the peasants to get off the ground. To the poorer members the availability of credit at a low rate of interest has been an enormous boon. Time and again I was told in the societies I visited how helpful this had been, and in several cases members said that the society had saved them from disaster.

It was frequently claimed by members that the activities of the societies had greatly reduced indebtedness and fore-selling, and that moneylending by travelling merchants had been considerably lessened and in some cases stopped. In some societies there was now said to be no indebtedness except to the society. It would be too much to claim this for the country as a whole, but there is no doubt that indebtedness has been reduced. Two qualifications must however be made. First, as credit is no longer provided by landowners, the position of peasants who are not yet members of a society has worsened. As the co-operative network expands this situation will be remedied. Secondly, the upper ceiling of credit given by the societies is low: members whose operations are extensive are forced to borrow from banks and other sources. There is therefore still borrowing outside the societies for short as well as long and medium term purposes. There has been some relaxation over the upper limit of loans in specific cases. Larger loans for a term of two years are given for purposes such as the sinking of wells and the repair of *qanāts*. The rate of repayment of loans to the societies is high—in the year 1967-8 it was 93.1 per cent—and bears witness to the loyalty of members. It also suggests that the loans were used for productive purposes.

Secondly, with regard to irrigation, leaving aside the difficulties experienced because of the fall in the water-table (which are not the result of land reform), the peasants to whom land has been transferred have shown themselves well able—except where natural disasters, such as earthquakes or floods, have occurred—to maintain the flow of the *qanāts* and to increase their flow by better and more regular cleaning and the operation known as *pishkanī*, i.e. new excavations at the head of the *qanāt* where the aquifer is tapped. Much work on *qanāts* and irrigation channels has been done by the members of societies with loans from their societies and other sources. There have

also been numerous instances, notably in Iṣfahān, Khurāsān, some districts of Hamadān, Yazd, and Kirmān, of groups of members joining together and sinking wells partly or wholly financed by loans from their society. In Kirmān 200 wells had been sunk in this way and were being run by the societies or groups of their members.

Thirdly, with regard to management and good farming practice, excellent work is being done in the sale of fertilizers and improved seed. In the year 1967-8 some 12,000 tons of fertilizers were sold through the federations and societies. In the same year 1,585,920 kg. of improved seed and 5,587,481 kg. of good quality local seed were sold by the societies. The improvement in standards of cultivation in the land reform villages, which was a marked feature of the first and second stage, has been maintained.

A frequent criticism of the societies was that they merely provided credit. An increasing number now have stores and sell a small quantity of consumer goods, such as cloth, soap, rice, pulses, and some household commodities. In some societies the work is done on a voluntary basis; in others where the volume of business is large, a store-keeper is sometimes paid. The goods offered for sale are obtained by the societies from the local federation and by it from other federations. Where no local federation exists the societies deal direct with other federations. Goods not available from the federations are obtained direct from the suppliers. A large number of societies hold agencies from the National Iranian Oil Company for the sale of oil products in those villages in which the NIOC has no agent. This is of great benefit alike to the societies and to the local people, whether members or not of the societies.

In the field of marketing progress is by force of circumstances slow. There have been a few small ventures by individual societies to market members' crops, but in general, in spite of a widespread desire to embark on marketing, the members of the societies have not yet either sufficient business ability or confidence in each other to permit this. Some of the federations have made a small beginning, but they too are hampered by a shortage of personnel with business training and also by lack of capital. Without men trained in market research and large-



scale business using larger capital resources, they cannot compete with the dealers and merchants who manipulate the markets of the big cities. The assembly of sufficient quantities of goods from the societies at some central point for grading, sorting, and packing requires much organization. Distances are long, roads are often bad, and transport costs heavy. Storage facilities are bad or non-existent; perishable goods deteriorate. Consumer demands change, and prices fluctuate. Lastly, the markets are already dominated in many cases by dealers, brokers, and merchants, disposing of considerable financial resources which they are prepared to use to break new competitors. Without some government supervision of markets and price control, it is unlikely that the federations will be able to undertake marketing on a large scale in the near future.

The societies are performing an essential function in providing their members with credit, which is being used for productive purposes. But they cannot mobilize savings which are not there. This is a real problem. If the input per worker is to be increased—and without this a major increase in production cannot be achieved—the peasants must be provided with the means of investing more capital. The organized provision of credit on such a scale will require much larger funds than CORC disposes of at present. It would be a tragedy if there were now a change of direction and CORC were either neglected and starved of funds, or forced to abandon sound co-operative principles in order to advance at a pace too swift for the societies. Both agriculture and co-operation require time and infinite patience; both also need supporting services, in particular extension services (which are at present almost non-existent over the country as a whole), more agricultural research, and above all better communications.

The success of the land reform in the six years since it started has been considerable. A significant proportion of the total cultivated land has been transferred to the occupying peasants. The social and political power of the landlords has been broken. The levy by them of dues and services from the peasants has been abolished. The peasants have thus been liberated from institutions now recognized as obsolete. As in other countries of the Middle East, this, seen in an historic perspective, is the

significance of the reform.<sup>1</sup> The co-operative movement has made astonishing progress. A large number of societies have been set up and are working. They are providing their members with practice in co-operation, fostering a spirit of self-help and independence, and encouraging a sense of responsibility. This, also seen in an historic perspective, is the great achievement of the Persian land reform.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform in Principle and Practice* (Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 8.



## GLOSSARY

---

*aḥkām*, see *ḥukm*.

*ā'in-nāmeḥ*, regulations (for the execution of a law).

*ākhund*, member of the religious classes, 'ālim (see below).

'ālim (pl. 'ulamā'), learned man especially in Islamic religious sciences.

\**allāf*, corn-chandler.

*amlāk* (pl. of *miṭṭ*), private landed estates; *amlāk-i dāng-i parākandeh*, scattered parcels of land; *amlāk-i vāguzārī*, the private landed estates of Reżā Shāh which were handed over after the abdication to be returned, in certain circumstances, to their original owners.

*anḥār*, see below *nahr*.

*arāzi-i shahr*, cultivated land round or in a town.

*arbāb*, master; landowner, landlord.

\**arjeh*, see below *a'yān*.

'*avāmil-i zirā'atī*, 'agricultural elements', i.e. land, water, seed, draught animals, and labour.

\**awāriz*, dues.

*a'yān*, *a'yānī*, tangible property; land and chattels corporeal; in popular usage the house, out-houses, and trees of an agricultural holding as distinct from the land on which they stand, or grow, which is called the \**arjeh*.

*āyish*, fallow; crop rotation.

*bāgh*, garden, market-garden.

*bāghdār* (pl. *bāghdārān*), market-gardener.

*bāgh-i mātikāneh*, the landowner's share of the crop under a crop-sharing agreement.

*bakhsh*, district.

*bakhshdār*, district governor.

*baqqāl*, chandler who sells groceries such as tea, sugar, pulses, etc.

*barzigar* (pl. *barzigarān*), cultivator, peasant. Article 1(iv) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 defines *barzigar* as one who does not own any of the 'agricultural elements' ('*avāmil-i zirā'atī*) but provides labour, for which he receives a share of the crop from the landowners or the *gāwbānd*.

*bāyir*, *bāyireh*, waste, uncultivated (of land); *zaminhā-yi bāyir*, waste lands.

- bāzras*, inspector; *bāzras* (-i *shirkat-i ta' āmni*), official charged with the accounts (of a co-operative society).
- bāzyār*, (in Khūzistān) agricultural labourer (not a crop-sharing peasant).
- bigāri*, labour service.
- birkeh*, cistern.
- buneh*, ploughland; several ploughlands grouped together and worked as a unit.
- bungāh*, institute, foundation.
- bunjāl*, (in Bihbahān) several ploughlands grouped together and run as a unit.
- chākhkhā*, see below *muqanni*.
- chashmehsār*, water-meadow, land having a spring or springs.
- dādghāh*, court (legal).
- dādsitān*, public prosecutor.
- dāmdār* (pl. *dāmdārān*), shepherd, one who derives his living from keeping flocks.
- dānāneh*, (in Kurdistān and Kirmānshāhān) levy made at harvest time on the peasants for the landowner's horses.
- dāng*, one sixth part of any piece of real estate.
- dashbān*, village official whose duty it is to protect the village fields from damage and theft; in some areas he also oversees irrigation.
- dastūr-i pardākht*, promissory note, payment order.
- daym*, *daymā*, unirrigated (of land), dry (of farming).
- daymkār*, *daymikār* (pl. *daymkārān*, *daymikārān*), peasant cultivating unirrigated land outside the land watered by the village water supply.
- dih*, village. Article 1 (x) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 defines *dih* as a centre of population and the place of residence and work of a number of families engaged in agricultural operations in the village lands, the income of the majority of whom derives from agriculture, and which is by custom recognized locally as a village; *dih-i aslī*, main village (of a group of settlements); *dih-i intikhābi*, chosen village, i.e. the village which a landowner selects for retention under the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962.
- doureh*, (agricultural) year, season.
- fard*, (in Jahrum) unit of land.
- farmān*, imperial rescript.
- farmāndār*, governor.
- farmāndāri-i kull*, (independent) governorate (not a subdivision of a governorate-general).



*fatvā*, judicial or religious decision given by a competent religious authority.

*furūshgāh*, store, shop.

*garmūr*, warm lowlands (in which flocks winter).

*gāband*, is defined in Article 1 (ii) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 as one who is not the owner of the land but, possessing one or more of the other agricultural elements (*'avāmil-i zirā'ati*), cultivates the land by means of an agricultural labourer who is paid a share of the crop or a cash wage (*barzigar* or *kārgar-i kishāvarzi*) and gives a share of the crop in cash or kind to the landowner.

*habbeh*, measure of area varying in size; in some villages the land is divided into *habbeh*s, the number of which varies.

*hall-i ikhtilāf*, the solution of disputes, for which special provisions are laid down in the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962, (see Chapter XII).

*hammām*, bath.

*haqq al-arz*, ground rent.

*haqq al-zahmeh*, commission (for undertaking some work).

*haqq-i rīshēh*, see *rīshēh*.

*haqq-i ta'āsāt*, water due (levied by the Khūzistān Water and Electricity Authority).

*haqqābeh*, water right.

*harāseh*, (in parts of Fārs) number of ploughlands grouped together and run as a unit.

*harāsi* (ʔ = *kharāsi*), deciding the value of a crop by estimation.

*harīm*, the 'borders' of a property, and especially an area of land around a well or *qanāt* within which certain operations are forbidden.

*hay'at-i mudīreh*, executive council (of a co-operative, etc.); board of directors (of a company, etc.).

*hukm* (pl. *ahkām*), order, decree.

*ifrāz kardān* (*namādan*) to delimit (land, etc.).

*ikhthiṣāsi*, separated or delimited (of land).

*imām*, see below *shī'a*.

*intikhābi*, see above *dih*.

*iqṣā'*, land assignment.

*iqlāhāt-i arzī*, land reform.

*istakhr*, pond, water storage-tank.

*ittiḥādīyyeh*, federation; *ittiḥādīyyeh-i shirkathā-yi ta'āwuni-i rūstā'i*, federation of rural co-operative societies.

*jālm*, woven rug.

*jarib*, measure of area varying in size. In Tehrān it is usually reckoned at 1,000 sq. metres (see further *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 405 ff., and W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*, Leiden, 1955, pp. 65-6).

*jaribāneh*, due levied on the area of land held.

*jarimeh*, due levied by the landowner for the settlement of disputes.

*juft*, yoke of oxen; ploughland; measure of water.

*juftbandi*, division of the village land into ploughlands.

*jūq*, (in parts of Kurdistān) several ploughlands grouped together and worked as a unit.

*kadkhudā*, headman of a village; leader of a section of a tribe or tribal group (usually, but not always, by hereditary descent).

*kadkhudā'i*, due levied for the *kadkhudā*.

*kalāteh*, (in east Persia) small village or hamlet.

*kamāneh*, due formerly levied by the landowner in some districts.

*kārgar-i kishāvarzi*, agricultural labourer. Article 1(v) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 defines a *kārgar-i kishāvarzi*, as one who does not own or provide any of the 'agricultural elements' (*'avāmīl-i zirā' atf*) and receives a wage, in cash or kind, for some specific agricultural work.

*kārtz*, see below *ganāt*.

*khālsheh*, state land; (in Kirmānshāhān and Kurdistān) land excepted from the village land distributed among the crop-sharing peasants which was worked by the landowner himself, usually with free labour provided by the peasants.

*khānīvār*, family.

*khānīvārī*, hearth tax (?). Originally a payment made by the village to a soldier (or his family) while he was serving with the army.

*kharman*, harvest; grain brought to the threshing floor.

*kharvār*, 100 *manns* (see further *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 406-7 and W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*, pp. 14-15); in some areas land is reckoned by the amount of seed it takes, i.e. at so many

*kharvār-i bagr afshān* (an area that takes so many bushels of seed).

*khish*, ploughshare; plough; ploughland.

*khur*, creek, estuary; wide bed of a river into which tidal water flows.

*khurdehmālik* (pl. *khurdehmālikīn*), small landowner; peasant proprietor.

*khushnīshīn* (pl. *khushnīshīnhā*), inhabitant of a village who is neither landowner, peasant, nor agricultural labourer.

*kumak-sarparast*, assistant supervisor (of a co-operative society).

*lārūbi*, dredging, clearing silt, etc. from a water channel.



*ma'ābir*, see below *ma'bar*.

*ma'bar* (pl. *ma'ābir*), road, path; intersection of roads, etc.; ferry.

*madār-i āb*, rotation period of water used for irrigation.

*madraseh*, school in which the religious sciences are taught.

*mafrūz*, delimited (of property, the shares of the joint owners of which are delimited).

*mafrūz al-ra'yyat*, delimited among the peasants (of ploughlands worked by peasants under a crop-sharing agreement).

*mahdūdeh-i jablī*, registration area.

*majhūl al-mālik*, of unknown ownership.

*maktab*, old-fashioned 'private' school.

*māldār* (pl. *māldārān*), see above *dāmdār*.

*mālīāt*, taxes; due formerly levied in cash by the landowner in some districts.

*mālik* (pl. *mālikān*), landowner. Article 1(viii) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 defines *mālik* as one who owns the land but is not personally occupied in agriculture.

*mann*, measure of weight. There are a large number of *mann*s of varying weights in use. The most commonly used is the *mann-i tabriz* (of 40 *sirs*) which is 2.97 kg. or 6.5464 lb. The *mann-i shāh* is twice the *mann-i tabriz* and the *mann-i ray* four times the *mann-i tabriz*; the *mann-i hamadān* consists of 50 *sirs* or 8.183 lbs. Unless otherwise stated the *mann* is the *mann-i tabriz* (see also *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 405 ff., and W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*, pp. 16 ff.).

*manzil mahārīkeh*, (in Kurdistan) due formerly levied by the landowner's agent when he visited a village.

*mavāt*, dead lands.

*mazra'eh* (pl. *mazāri'*), hamlet; (small) area of cultivated fields without any dwelling houses and cultivated by peasants from a neighbouring village.

*mināl*, due levied by the state from peasants on *khālīzeh* land; in some districts it is used to denote the landowner's share of the harvest under a crop-sharing agreement.

*mirāb*, official in charge of the distribution of water.

*misqāl*, measure of weight = c. 4.6 grammes.

*mu'assiseh*, establishment, foundation; used in Khūzistān of a pump installed in *khālīzeh* land to raise water from a river and the land watered by it.

*mabāshir*, bailiff.

*mudarris*, official or teacher in charge of a *madraseh*.

*mudīr-i 'āmil*, manager (of a rural co-operative society or federation

- of co-operative societies); general manager (of the Central Organization for Rural Co-operation).
- mudir-i kull*, director-general (of a ministry).
- mujtahid*, member of the religious classes who has reached a degree of eminence which permits him to issue opinions on matters of faith.
- mullā*, see above *ākhund*.
- maqannī*, one who makes and repairs *qanāts*.
- muqta'*, holder of an *iqṭā'*.
- muravvij*, agricultural extension officer.
- muravvij-i khānehlārī*, domestic economy extension officer.
- musā'idah*, advance given by a landowner to a peasant.
- mushā'*, jointly owned in undivided shares (of land).
- mustaṣṣiyāt*, land excepted from transfer or settlement under the first or second stage of the land reform.
- mu'tamid-i mahall* (pl. *mu'tamidin-i mahall*), village elder.
- muta'addī*, overseer; administrator of a *vaqf*.
- mutavallī*, administrator of a *vaqf*.
- naṣar*, man taken for labour service.
- nahr* (pl. *anḥār*), canal.
- nānāneh*, (in Kurdistān and Kirmānshāhān) levy made at harvest time on the peasants for bread for the landowner.
- nasāq*, field lay-out of the village lands, division of the village lands into ploughlands.
- nasāqbandī*, the operation of dividing the village land into ploughlands; the preparation of these for cultivation.
- nāw-i ṣimān*, cement water-duct.
- naẓār*, reedbed.
- nīmchār*, pertaining to a crop-sharing agreement (normally in *daym* land) under which either party receives half the produce.
- nīmchār* (pl. *nīmchārān*), peasant who receives half the crop under a crop-sharing agreement in *daym* land.
- noukanī*, new excavation (in connection with a *qanāt*).
- oṭqāf*, see below *vaqf*.
- aurāq-i khazāneh*, treasury bonds.
- ṭishkār*, new excavations at the source of a *qanāt*.
- plāk*, registration unit; *plāk-i far'ī*, subsidiary registration unit.
- qabḡ* (pl. *qubūḡ*), bill of exchange, promissory note.
- qa'eh*, fort; walled enclosure in which the peasants' houses, stables, and storehouses are situated.
- qanāt*, underground irrigation channel made by excavation.
- qariḡh*, village (see above *dīh* with which it is synonymous).
- qishlāq*, winter quarters (of a tribe, etc.).



- qif eh*, (pl. *qif iât*), plot (of land).  
*qif ehbandi*, division of the land into plots.  
*qubûz*, see above *qabz*.  
*ra'is-i hay'at*, chairman of council, committee, etc.  
*rajabât*, estates belonging to a *vajf* or to the *khâliqeh* administration.  
*riâl*, unit of currency worth approximately 1d. (see p. xiii).  
*risheh*, root; *haqq-i risheh*, right acquired in the soil by cultivating it.  
*rismân*, see below *jannâbâneh*.  
*roughan*, ghee, clarified butter.  
*rouzehkharânî*, formal recital of an episode in the life of one of the *imâms*, etc.  
*ruqbâ*, *haqq-i ruqbâ*, usufruct for life.  
*rusûm*, *rusûmât*, dues.  
*sabzi*, vegetables.  
*sabzikâr* (pl. *sabzikârân*), peasant engaged in the cultivation of vegetables.  
*sabzikârî*, cultivation of vegetables.  
*sâhib nasaq*, peasant holding a ploughland or a part of a ploughland in a village.  
*sahm*, share, portion; unit into which land in some villages is divided; a measure of water (of varying volume).  
*sahrâ*, (in east Persia) several ploughlands grouped together and run as a unit.  
*salâf-furûshî*, fore-selling (of crops and produce).  
*salt*, (in Tikâb) unmarried man living in a village but working outside it.  
*salîlâneh*, (in Tikâb) due paid to a landowner by a man residing in the village but working outside it.  
*sanad* (pl. *amâd*), document; *sanad-i rasmi*, official document.  
*sar-daftar-i amâd-i rasmi*, public notary.  
*sardâr*, (in Balûchistân and Sîstân) tribal leader, landowner.  
*sardsîr*, cool uplands; summer quarters to which flocks are taken.  
*sarparast*, supervisor (of a co-operative society).  
*sar-za'îm*, (in east Persia) head peasant of a group of peasants cultivating a ploughland or ploughlands.  
*sayfi*, summer crops.  
*sayfikâr* (pl. *sayfikârân*), peasant engaged in the cultivation of summer crops.  
*sayfikârî*, summer cropping.  
*sayyid* (pl. *sâdât*), descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad through his son-in-law 'Alî and his daughter Fâtîmah.

*sāzmān-i khadāmāt-i ijtimā'i-yi shāhshāhi*, Pahlavi foundation for social service.

*sāzmān-i ta'āwun-i rūstā'i-i markazī*, Central Organization for Rural Co-operation.

*shahristān*, governorate.

*shā'ir*, a measure of weight =  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a *misqāl*; also a measure of length. In some villages the land is divided into 96 *shā'irs*.

*sharī'a*, canon law of Islam.

*shatvi*, winter crops.

*shī'a*, the party of 'Alī, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad.

Sunnī Muslims recognize the succession of caliphs as the legitimate successors of Muhammad. The *shī'a* on the other hand hold that the leadership of the community passed on the death of Muhammad to 'Alī, whom they consider the first *imām*, and after him, by hereditary succession, to his heirs. Shī'is of the Ithna 'Asharī rite recognize twelve *imāms*, the last of whom, Muhammad al-Mahdi, disappeared in A.H.260/A.D. 873-4; those of the Ismā'īlī rite recognize seven *imāms* only. Shi'ism of the Ithna 'Asharī rite is the official religion of Persia at the present day.

*shī'i*, adherent of Shi'ism (see above, *shī'a*).

*shirkat-i ta'āwun-i rūstā'i*, rural co-operative society.

*sipāh-i bihdāsh*, health corps.

*sipāh-i dānish*, literacy corps.

*sipāh-i tarāij va ābādānī*, agricultural extension corps.

*sipāhi-i bihdāsh*, member of the health corps.

*sipāhi-i dānish*, member of the literacy corps.

*sipāhi-i tarāij*, member of the agricultural extension corps.

*suknā, haqq-i suknā*, right of residence.

*sulh*, (in law) contract by which a dispute is obviated; conciliation.

The subdivision of estates under the laws of inheritance is sometimes avoided by recourse to *sulh*, the owner transferring some or all of his estates during his life-time to his heir or heirs (see further *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 200).

*sunnī*, see above *shī'a*.

*sūrānsh*, payment made by a peasant to a landowner for permission to marry.

*suyūrgāh*, grant of land or assignment of revenue in lieu of salary or by way of a pension.

*ṭalabeh* (pl. of *ṭālib*), students of a *madrasah*.

*jannābānsh*, due levied on the area of land held. In Rīzā'iyyeh

1 *jannāb* = 400 sq. m.

*taugh*, cleaning (a *ganāh*).



- taqāwī*, advance given by a landowner to a peasant.  
*tagrim-i arāzi*, distribution of land (to peasants, etc.).  
*tarūj-i kishāvarzi*, agricultural extension service.  
*taṣarruf-i 'udvānī*, usurpation (of property).  
*ta's'ir*, conversion rate by which a tax assessed in one currency or in kind was converted into another currency or cash; premium added to a tax.  
*taṣṣīb-nāmeḥ*, decree.  
*tulumbah*, pump.  
*tulumbekār* (pl. *tulumbekārān*), one engaged in cultivating land with water raised by a pump.  
*tuyūl*, assignment of land or revenue.  
*tuyūldār*, holder of a *tuyūl*.  
*'ulamā*, see *'ālim* above.  
*'umdehmālik* (pl. *'umdehmālikīn*), large landowner.  
*'umrā*, *ḥaqq-i 'umrā*, life interest.  
*'umrān*, agricultural development.  
*'urf*, customary law, custom; *'urf-i maḥall*, local custom.  
*'urfī*, customary (of law, etc.).  
*ustān*, governorate-general.  
*ustāndār*, governor-general.  
*vaqf* (pl. *vaqāf*), land immobilized for some purpose (usually religious or charitable).  
*vaqf-i 'āmm*, charitable *vaqf*.  
*vaqf-i khāṣṣ*, private or family *vaqf*.  
*vaqf-nāmeḥ*, deed constituting a *vaqf* which lays down the purposes and conditions concerning the expenditure of its revenue.  
*vikālat-nāmeḥ*, mandate, power of attorney.  
*yaḡlāq*, summer quarters (of a tribe, etc.).  
*zābiṭāneḥ*, due levied by or for the landowner's bailiff.  
*zāri*, peasant. Article 1(ii) of the Land Reform Law of 9 January 1962 defines *zāri* as one who is not the owner of the land but who, possessing one or more of the 'agricultural elements' (*'avāmīl-i zirā'atī*), personally or with the help of members of his family cultivates land belonging to a landowner, to whom he gives a portion of the crop in cash or kind.  
*zarīb*, coefficient.  
*zawj*, (in Khurāsān) yoke of oxen; ploughland; measure of water.

# INDEX

- 'Abdullāhābād, 268  
 Ābrūd, 224  
 Abū Chilāg, 160-1  
 Abū Humayzeh, 159-60, 282  
 Abū Sa'īdī, 263  
 Additional Articles, 64, 104 ff.; exemption of mechanized land from provisions of, 105; term for payment of transferred land extended by, 106; provisions of, concerning: customary water rights, 104; rice-growing land, 105, 357; settlement under: division, 104-105; sale, 104; tenancy, 104; *see also* 100f  
 Additional Articles, regulations for, 107-8, 194 ff.; provisions of, concerning: *ʿayān*, 211; barren lands, 212; mechanized land, 195-6; water resources, 203-4; settlement under: Article 17, 202-6, 221-2, 250 ff., 326, 357; Article 45, 206-207, 221-2, 253-5; division, 202-4, 221-2; sale, 201, 221-2; tenancy, 198 ff., 207, 213; *see also* Land reform (*second stage of*), and 100f  
 Administrative divisions, 10  
 Agricultural Bank, 46, 77, 103; *see also* Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank  
 Agricultural corporations, 358-9  
 Agricultural Credit and Rural Development Bank, 46, 72 n.1, 328-329, 345  
 Agricultural disputes, committee for the investigation and solution of, *see* Land reform and Land reform laws  
 Agricultural extension corps, 122, 350  
 Agricultural extension services, 81, 122, 350-1  
 Agricultural labourers, 9, 73-4, 349  
 Agriculture, 4 ff., 13-14, 19, 44-5, 168; improvement in standards of, 110, 197-8, 189, 192-3, 240, 348, 364; methods of, 29  
 Āhangarān, 340  
 Ahar, 93, 125  
 Ahl-i Haqq, 18  
 Ahmadābād (Sarāb-i Saqqiz), 227  
 Ahmadābād (Tikāb), Lower and Upper, 188  
 Ahvāz, 156, 157  
 Ahvāz-i Qadīm, 157  
 Ā'tneh, 174  
 Āk, 137, 282, 312  
 Akbarābād, 398  
 'Alam, Mr. Asadullāh, 108  
 'Alī Akbar, 174  
 'Alī Hāshim, 18  
 'Alīak, 142-3, 197  
 Alinjān, 5  
 Amīnī, Dr. 'Alī, 60 ff., 99, 108  
 Anār Parvīz, Mr., v  
*anzāk-i nāguzārī*, 50-2  
 Amzājird, 283, 285, 304, 311, 313  
 'Aqīlī, 162-3, 278  
 Arab shaykhs, 158-9, 282  
 Arab tribes, 13, 15, 18, 145, 169  
 'Arabistān, *see* Khūzistān  
 Arāk, 10, 99, 127; disputes over mechanized land in, 262; faction in, 129; land reform in, 92, 118, 119, 136  
 Arāk federation of co-operative societies, 318, 321  
 Arasbārān, 115, 118, 125, 305; disputes between peasants and landowners in, 263  
 Ardabīl, 9, 106, 127; disputes between peasants and landowners in, 262; land reform in, 93, 118; reorganization of water distribution in, 279  
 Ardabīl federation of co-operative societies, 318, 321



- Ardakān (Fārs), 9  
 Armenian villages, 11, 14, 127  
 Arsanjāni, Dr. Hasan, v, 50, 61 ff.;  
     resignation of, 109-110  
 Asadābād (Khāsh), 146  
 'Askarābād, 313, 317  
 Āsmānābād, 190  
 Āstārā, 11, 12, 302  
 Āstarābād *see* Gurgān  
 a'yān, a'yāst, 26; *see also* Additional  
     Articles, regulations for, Land  
     reform, and Land reform laws  
 Āyask, 238-9  
 Āzarbāyjān, 4, 5, 9-11, 110; exodus  
     from, 35; land reform in, 130,  
     136; separatist movement in, 36-  
     37; water rights in, 278-9;  
     Eastern, 4, 10; co-operative socie-  
     ties in, 361; landowners in, 87-8;  
     land reform in: *first stage*, 120-2;  
     *second stage*, 219-21; Western,  
     10, 127; co-operative societies in,  
     361; land reform in: *first stage*,  
     120-2; *second stage*, 216, 218-19  
  
 Bābān-i Sanjāhi, 247-8  
 Badali, 164-5  
 Bāft, 47, 307  
 Baghdādābād, 309-10  
 bāghdār, 197-8  
 Bakhtiārī tribes, 14  
 Bahmanābād, 337  
 Bahrāmābād, 178  
 Bālājūb-i Shūrkān, 174-6  
 Balūch, 16  
 Balūchistān, 3, 10, 16; co-operative  
     societies in, 306-7; land reform  
     in: *first stage*, 119, 121, 145-6;  
     *second stage*, 219-21  
 Bāmpūr, 119, 307  
 Bandar 'Abbās, 9; co-operative  
     societies in, 311; land reform in,  
     121, 122, 219-21  
 Bāneh, 18  
 Barā'ān, 246  
 Barren lands, 78 ff., 212, 220; *see*  
     also Additional Articles, regula-  
     tions for, Land reform laws, and  
     Waste lands  
 Barzehlik, 174  
 Bavānāt, 235  
 Bāvi, 224  
  
 Bavvān, 151  
 bāyneh, *see* Barren lands and Waste  
     lands  
 Baytābād, 146  
 Biār, 225, 339  
 Bideh, 253  
 Bifānī, 311  
 biḡārī, *see* Labour service  
 Biḡbahān, 9, 125; faction in, 129;  
     indebtedness in, 340; land reform  
     in: *first stage*, 119, 163 ff.; *second*  
     *stage*, 232-4, 237  
 Biḡbahāni, Sayyid Ja'far, 56  
 Bījār, 10, 125, 168, 169; co-opera-  
     tive societies in, 306, 330, 339-40;  
     land reform in, 178-80  
 Bilivār, 128, 169; land reform in:  
     *first stage*, 177-8; *second stage*, 225-  
     227, 248-9  
 Birtakārī, 245  
 Bisar, 227  
 Bizāvil, 340  
 Boir Ahmadi, 14, 113, 224  
 Bunch Ākhund, 341  
 Bunch Hājji, 341  
 Bunch Haydar, 162-3  
 Bunchhā, 341  
 Burchalū, 93  
 Buridar, 186-8  
 Burkhwār, 289  
 Burūjirdi, Āyatullāh, 56, 58  
 Bushire, 3; land reform in: *first*  
     *stage*, 121, 122; *second stage*, 219-  
     222  
 Buzhḡān, 140-1  
  
 Caspian provinces, 3-5, 10-12; *see*  
     also Gilān, Māzandarān, and  
     Gurgān  
 Central Organization for Rural Co-  
     operation, 122; activities of, to  
     March 1965, 327-8; collection of  
     instalments for land by, 135; con-  
     stitution of, 297 ff.; incorporation  
     of, into ministry of land reform  
     and rural co-operation, 360;  
     newspaper published by, 184,  
     362; officials of, 123-4, 218, 301-  
     302, 328-9, 361; policy of, 304,  
     310; training courses run by,  
     329, 362  
 Chāh Marvārid, 136, 343

- Chalkeh**, 174  
**Chardāval**, 93, 190  
**Charmilleh Ayyān**, 190, 334  
**Chashmeh Sangin**, 179  
**Chinārān**, 283  
**Chirām**, 224  
**Chuqāgūlān**, 235  
**Constitutional revolution**, 31-2  
**Co-operative societies**, 62-3, 74-5, 96-9, 103, 256, 291 ff., 352-4; activities of (1962-4), 303 ff., (1965-6) 325 ff.; capital of, 310-311; membership of, 96, 294, 304-306; numbers of (1962), 91, (1963) 116, (1964) 306, (1965) 327-8, (1968), 360; opposition to, 321; pressure on, 306, 308; progress of, 322-3, 362 ff.; responsibility of, for upkeep of public places, 211, 325; constitution and management of, 294 ff.; legal basis, 293; functions, 293-4; general assembly, 295-7; executive committee, 98-9, 294-295, 311, 313, 338-9; inspectors, 296; managers, 99, 294-5, 311-312, 337-9, 361-2; supervisors, 301-2; economic functions of: provision of credit, 110-11, 313-314, 316, 340, 352-3, 362-3, 365; purchase of grain and pulses, 342; sale of consumer goods, 98, 364; sale of fertilizers, 316, 341-2, 364; sale of oil products, 316, 342; sale of pesticides, 316, 342; sale of seed grain, 342, 364; sinking of wells, 282-3, 364; pre-land reform societies, 46 ff., 96, 303-5, 327, *see also* Central Organization for Rural Co-operation  
**Co-operative societies, federations of**, 318 ff., 343 ff., 364-5  
**Crop-sharing agreements**, 24, 33, 36-8, 169, 347  
**Crops**, 4-5, 11-17, 41-2, 82-3; reduction in fore-selling of, 192, 314-16, 340, 348  
**Cushing, Dr. G. F.**, vi  
**Damaq**, 316  
**Dāmghān**, 10  
**Dārāb**, 14, 244-5, 255, 333-4  
**Daryā**, 50 ff.  
**Dāshband**, 311-12  
**Dasht-i Mishān**, *see* Sūsangird  
**Dasht-i Chārū**, 168  
*dastkhān*, 26  
**Dead lands**, 27-8; *see also* Land reform laws  
**Dār**, 176-7  
**Dūshar**, 153-6  
**Dihgul**, 339  
**Dihkāfi**, 146  
**Dihkhār**, Lower and Upper, 245  
**Dūshīb**, Lower, 286  
**Dilqand**, 254-5  
**Dīnavar**, 174  
**Dīvān Darreh**, 168  
**Dizfūl**, 155-6, 290, 249-50, 280-1  
**Dizfūl federation of co-operative societies**, 344  
**Draught animals**, 29  
**Dues**, 25, 33, 39-40, 169; effect of the abolition of, 189, 223, 256  
**Endowments** *see waqf*  
**Faction**, 96, 129-30, 258, 288  
**Fahliān**, 149 n.1  
**Farahābād**, *see* Kharābeh  
**Fārs**, 4-5, 10, 13-15, 130; irrigation in, 282; land ownership in, 102, 144; ploughland in, 7; tribal leaders in, 102, 119; land reform in: *first stage*, 93, 101-2, 120-2, 149 ff.; *second stage*, 218-22; Article 45, 255; division, 242-4; sale, 241-2; tenancies for *waqf* land, 234-5  
**Farvandeh**, 154  
**Fasā**, 14  
**Fayzābād**, 245-6  
**Fertilizers**, increased use of, 198, 192, 316, 348; *see also* Co-operative societies (sale of fertilizers)  
**Firdous**, 240, 268-70  
**Firūzābād**, 101, 149  
**Flocks**, *see* Stock-raising  
**Foot and mouth disease**, 168, 228  
**Free men and women of Persia**, congress of the movement of, 114  
**Fānā**, 92, 94-5  
**Futūbābād**, 132, 136



- Gachgarān, 331  
 Gardens, 26, 221; *see also a'jān*  
 Gashak, 152, 154-5  
 gāshand, 24-5, 37, 41, 52  
 Gāzarān, 135, 311  
 Ghulām 'Alī Beg, 340  
 Gilān, 5, 10-12, 110, 127; co-operative societies in, 361; Soviet Socialist Republic of, 33; land reform in: *first stage*, 92, 120-2, 130, 136; *second stage*, 218-19, 221  
 Giliān, 270-1  
 Goud Asā, 216-17  
 Gourājūb-i Bābā Karām, 172  
 Gourājūb-i Murād Beg, 172-3  
 Gūrān, 172-3  
 Gurgān, 10-12; land reform in, 121-122, 219, 221  
 Gurney, Mr. J. D., vi  
 Gurūrān, 178  
 Hājjīābād, 244  
 Hamadān, 4, 127; co-operative societies in, 306; faction in, 129; land reform in: *first stage*, 118-22; *second stage*, 219-21  
 Hānkar, 178  
 Hārīsābād, 245-6  
 Harzand, New, 304  
 Hasanābād (Dastgirdān), 136  
 Hasanābād (Ravānsar), 189-90  
 Hasanābād (Sanandaj), 182-3  
 Hasanābād-i Tulkamīn, 131-2, 152-4  
 Hashtrūd, 90  
 Haydarābād (Jahrum), 284-5  
 Haydarābād (Khūsh), 145-6  
 Health corps, 122 n.1  
 Hikmatābād, 259  
 Hir, 305, 317  
 Hirtikēh, 226  
 Hurmuzābād, 334-6  
 Husaynābād (Kirmān), 146  
 Husaynābād (Mārbīn), 148  
 Husaynābād (Miān Jangal), 271-2  
 Husaynābād (Takistān), 97-8  
 Husaynābād-i Āqā, 163 n.1  
 Huvarrū, 339  
 Idebū, 180  
 Ilām, 10, 17-18, 115, 169; co-operative societies in, 329, 332, 334 ff., 345; land reform in, 190-191; land registration in, 115; society in, 169  
 Industrialization, 44, 356  
 iglā', 21  
 Irānshahr (Balūchistān), 119, 307  
 Irānshahr (Sagqiz), 228-9  
 Irrigation, 4-5, 17, 101, 274 ff., 363-4; administration of water resources under land reform laws, 76, 203-4, 210-11; lowering of water-table, 288 ff.; nationalization of water resources, 357-8; power operated pumps, 204, 276-7, 282-3, 288 ff.; river water, 274, 277 ff.; wells: power operated, 204, 275, 282-3, 364; traditionally operated, 275; *see also qanāts*  
 Isfahān, 4-5, 8-10, 13-14, 101; co-operative societies in, 361; land ownership in, 144; *qanāts* in, 130, 284, 289; standard of cultivation in, 145; land reform in: avoidance of, 147; disputes over mechanized land, 262; *first stage*, 118-19, 121-2, 147 ff.; *second stage*, 219-21, 246  
 Isfarvarīn, 130  
 Isfābād, 185-6  
 Ismā'īlābād, 139-40  
 Isrā'el, 122, 301  
 Isfādāgi, 162-3  
 Ja'farābād, 154  
 Jahrum, 119, 197-8, 225  
 Jalālābād, 147-8, 283  
 Jangali movement, 33  
 jarībānsh, 37  
 Jigarlū Āqā Birār, 174  
 Junābād, 243-4  
 Jiroft, 16  
 jagh, 7; *see also* Ploughland  
 Juvayn, 216  
 Kādāhād, 26  
 Kā'idān, 163  
 Kākābād, 338-9  
 Kalkhwarān, 262-3, 314  
 Kamshūr, 225-6  
 Kānrūd, 136-7, 314  
 Karaj Agricultural College, 302

- Karashāh, 331  
 Karīmābād, 146  
 Kāshān, 9  
 Kavardeh, 139  
 Kāzrūn, 149, 242  
 Kazzāz, 92-3  
 Khadr, 198  
 Khākibeg, 133-4, 223, 342  
*khālīqeh*, 27, 37; sale of, 45, 49-50;  
 under land reform, 118-19, 156 ff.  
 Khamsch tribes, 15  
*khāneh-i ʿasf*, 323  
 Kharābeh, 161  
 Khāsh, 119, 145-6, 306-7  
 Khayrābād, 265-7  
 Khayrābād, Lower, 163-4  
*khūsh*, 7; *see also* Ploughland  
 Khīst, 242  
 Khumaynī, 112  
 Khurāsān, 4-5, 10, 12-13, 130; co-  
 operative societies in, 332-3; land  
 ownership in, 138; land reform in:  
*first stage*, 120-2, 198 ff.; *second*  
*stage*, 219-22, 224; Article 17,  
 250-1; division, 242-4; tenan-  
 cies for *cag*/land, 234, 332  
 Khurramshahr, 9, 345  
 Khuzestān, 230-1  
 Khuzrūjūd, 250  
 Khuzrūvī, 330  
 Khūzistān, 3, 5, 10, 13, 15; co-  
 operative societies in, 329-30,  
 330, 340; emigration to, 35;  
*khālīqeh* in, 49-50, 119; land  
 ownership in, 144; poverty of  
 peasants in, 129; pump units in,  
 156-7, 282; land reform in: *first*  
*stage*, 121-2, 136, 155 ff., 260;  
*second stage*, 219, 221, 223-4, 230 ff.,  
 229  
 Khūzistān Water and Electricity  
 Authority, 155-6, 231, 249, 280  
 Khwāl, 244  
 Khwūrnūz, Upper, 309-10  
*khushkashān*, *khushkashānā*, 9, 75,  
 250, 305  
 Kilāneh, 184-5  
 Kirmān, 5, 8, 10, 15-16; co-opera-  
 tive societies in, 307-8, 361, 364;  
 land ownership in, 144; peasants  
 in, 145; *qasr* in, 13, 24, 41, 130,  
 146, 286; land reform in: avoid-  
 ance of, 147; *first stage*, 119, 121-2,  
 146 ff.; *second stage*, 195, 219-22  
 Kirmānshāh, 9  
 Kirmānshāhān, 4-5, 10, 17, 130;  
 land ownership in, 168-9; land  
 registration in, 115; redistribu-  
 tion of ploughlands in, 7; co-  
 operative societies in, 128, 329-30,  
 334, 339-40; management of pas-  
 tures by, 342; purchase of pulses  
 by, 342; land reform in: disputes  
 over 'chosen' village, 259; disputes  
 over mechanized land, 262; *first*  
*stage*, 93, 120-2, 125, 135, 170 ff.;  
*second stage*, 219-21, 225, 235-6,  
 247 ff.  
 Kouraki, 246  
 Kūchik Khān, Mīrzā, 39  
 Kūhgūlūyeh, 14-15, 126; land regis-  
 tration in, 115; land reform in:  
*first stage*, 113, 166; *second stage*,  
 224, 261  
 Kūhpāyeh, 333  
 Kūhpāyeh-i Darakhtingān, 134,  
 146, 286, 308  
 Kūku, 174  
 Kulhā'i, 128  
 Kurdistān, 4-5, 10, 17; co-operative  
 societies in, 329, 338-40, 361;  
 disputed titles in, 185; diversifica-  
 tion of crops in, 168; land owner-  
 ship in, 168-9; land registration  
 in, 115; road building in, 168;  
 separatist movement in, 36-7;  
 land reform in: *first stage*, 121-2,  
 135-6, 180 ff.; selection of 'chosen'  
 village, 259; *second stage*, 219-21,  
 251-2  
 Kurdistān (Bibbāhān), 232-4  
 Kurds, 11, 13, 17-18, 50  
 Kūshk-i Bibicheh, 338  
 Kūshk-i Qāzī, 234-5  
 Kūshkarāy, 279, 317-18  
 Kūttān, 231, 330  
 Kavār, 93  
 Kūzgarān, 247-8  
 Labour service, 25, 33, 39-40, 169,  
 189  
 Lāhijān, 92, 94-5, 279  
 Land, rice-growing, *see* Additional  
 Articles



- Land ownership, 20 ff., 35, 53; in Āgarbāyjān, 87-8; in Khurāsān, 138; in south Persia, 144; in west Persia, 168-9
- Land reform: achievements of, 110, 192-3, 347 ff., 365-6; *ā'yām* under, 262; criticisms of, 89-90, 274, 291; demonstrations against, 108, 112-13; investigation and solution of disputes under, 257 ff.; opposition to, 124-6, 194; side effects of, 351; *first stage* of, 87 ff.; attempts under, to evict peasants, 101; avoidance of, 147; collection of statistics for, 95-6; co-operative societies under, 62-3, 292-3; effects of, 191 ff.; execution of, 131 ff.; irregularities in execution of, 184, mechanized land under, 105, 261-2; payment for transferred land under, 120-2, 135-6, 139, 170, 192; provision of funds for implementation of, 91; purchase of land under, 116-17, 136; transfer of land to peasants under, 98; *second stage* of: Article 17, 221-2, 250 ff., 357; Article 45, 221-2, 254-5; collection of statistics, 216-17, 224; division, 221-2; execution of, 216 ff., 255-6; mechanized land, 195-6, 261-2; sale, 221-2; tenancies, abolition of intermediary, 209, 239-40; tenancy, 221 ff.; *third stage* of, 354, 358-9; *see also* Land reform laws, Additional Articles, and Additional Articles, regulations for
- Land reform laws: Law of 17 May 1960, 56 ff.; Law of 9 January 1962, 63 ff.; abolition of intermediary tenancies, 209; *ā'yām*, 76, 82-3; co-operative societies, 292-293; council for land reform, 80; dead and barren lands, 78 ff.; duties of landowners and peasants, 82-5; fragmentation of holdings, 76; funds for implementation of, 77-8; investigation and solution of disputes, 85-6; irrigation, 84; limitation of holdings, 64 ff.; mechanized land, 68; *ma'atamiy-jāt*, 68; price of land, 71-2, 106; purchase of land, 65; receipt of land, conditions for, 73 ff.; relations between landowners and peasants, 81 ff.; transfer of land, 70 ff.; *waqf*, 69-70; village, definition of, 65-6; village, landowner's choice of, 64-5, 67, 258 ff.; water rights, 75-6; Decree of 17 February 1962, 77-8; Decree of 1 March 1962, 71, 91, 93, 117-18; *see also* Additional Articles
- Land reform organization, 80-1, 124, 360; officials of, 99, 122 ff., 218, 260-1; instructions to officials to show conciliation, 264
- Land reform and rural co-operation, ministry of, 359-60
- Land registration, 34, 94, 115, 258; disputed titles, 115-16, 138, 185; rectification of faulty titles, 213-214
- Land tax, 32, 34
- Landowners, 20 ff., 30, 32-3, 48-9, 53, 58-9; campaign against, 55, 88; opposition of, to reform, 53-5, 194; provision of credit by, 291-2; temporary dispossession of, in Āgarbāyjān, 37; small landowners, 88-9, 359; peasants withhold dues of, 215, 263; reforms promised in villages owned by, 103-104; support promised to, 103; *see also* Land ownership
- Lash-i Nishā, 92, 99
- Līmūchāy and Kinārsar, 313
- Literary corps, 103, 122, 193
- Luristān, 14-15; co-operative societies in, 330; land reform in, 121-2, 218-22
- McLachlan, Dr. K. S., vi
- Mabābād, 11, 119, 129, 279
- Mahakī, 174
- Mahakī Amīn, 174
- Mahakī Mahramāt, 174
- Mākū, 119
- Malāyir, 306
- Māllān, 151
- Malik Kandī, 100
- Malik Qulā, 159
- Malham Khān, 49

- Mamasani**, 14, 15, 113; co-operative societies in, 330-1; land reform in, 113, 119, 135, 149 ff.  
**Mamazān**, Central Agricultural School at, 302  
**Mādanī**, 163  
**Mandil**, 227  
**Manšūriyyeh** (Bihbahān), 237-8  
**Manšūriyyeh** (Nayshāpūr), 333  
**Marāgheh**, 11; land reform in, 62, 87, 98, 129; distribution of title deeds at, 90  
**Marāgheh federation of co-operative societies**, 318-22  
**Marand**, 118, 306  
**Margivar**, 119  
**Marvān**, 18, 169, 170; land registration in, 115; land reform in, 227  
**Marzabānī**, 248  
**Mashhad**, 12, 333  
**Mavārizī**, 333-4  
*marūt*, *see* Dead lands  
**Māzandarān**, 5, 10, 11; land reform in: *first stage*, 120-2; *second stage*, 218-21  
**Māzihān**, 186-8  
*mazra'eh*, 65-6  
**Mechanization**, 45-6, 125, 168, 193, 349-50, 358; number of estates worked by mechanized means, 220-1; *see also* Additional Articles, Land reform, and Land reform laws (mechanized land)  
**Miāndūb**, 90, 118  
**Miānkūh**, 130  
**Mihān**, 18, 169, 334-6  
**Mir 'Azāz Jadid**, 235-7  
**Mir 'Azāz Qadīm**, 235-7  
*mīrāb*, 26  
**Moneylenders**, 47  
**Monopolies, government**, 34-5  
**Mossaed, Mr.**, v  
**Mu'addī, Dr. Muḥammad 'Alī**, 53  
**Mubārīkeh**, 287  
**Mūchish**, 181-2  
**Muhammad Rezā Shāh**, 50 ff.  
**Muhammadābād**, 54  
**Mu'minābād**, 266-7  
**Muḥaddīq, Dr.**, 37, 40, 54-5  
*muḥā'* tenure, 24; delimitation of land held on, 70-1, 94; settlement of land held on, 198, 208-9; transfer of land held on, 133-4  
*mustafaiyyāt*, *see* Land reform laws (Law of 9 January 1962)  
**Na'imābād**, 309  
**Narjeh**, 137, 282  
**Naṣrābād-i Sarāb**, 173-4  
**Naṣrābād-i Sayyid Ahmad**, 173  
**National Consultative Assembly**, 22, 35, 53, 60, 63, 114-15  
**National University**, 302  
**Nayshāpūr, co-operative societies in**, 333; land reform in, 250-1; *gazds* in, 130, 141-2, 289-90  
**Nayshāpūr federation of co-operative societies**, 343  
**Niār**, 136-7, 310-11, 313  
**Nigāz-i Buzurg**, 157-8  
**Nigil**, 252-3  
**Nilābād**, 132, 141  
*nīmeh-āz* agreements, 179  
**Nizāruābād**, 131, 197  
**Nūrābād**, 150  
**Occupation rights**, 82; *see also* Additional Articles, regulations for (settlement under Article 45)  
*ouqaf*, *see* *vayf*  
**Owamān**, 169  
**Pahlavī estates**, 51 ff., 57, 190  
**Pahlavī foundation for social services**, 50  
**Pahlavī University**, 329  
**Panj Sūtūn**, 174  
**Pastoralism, nomadic**, 6; *see also* Tribes  
**Peasant holding**, 92, 98, 349-50; fragmentation of, 76, 338; redistribution of, 25-6, 81-2, 131-2; minimum holding, 76, 349  
**Peasant proprietors**, 24, 37-8, 93, 145, 355  
**Peasants**, 9, 32, 47-8, attitude of, towards land reform, 126 ff., 147, 169, 181, 222; drift to towns of, 35-6; eligibility of, for receipt of land, 73 ff., 100, 195-8; eviction of, 82, 262; food consumption of, 92, 176, 192; growth in confidence of, 110, 114, 189, 192, 348-9, 352; improvement in



Peasants—*contd.*

- housing of, 137, 198, 192, 348, 362; poverty and indebtedness of, 29-30, 48, 129, 291-2, 315-16; reduction in indebtedness of, 192, 316, 340, 348, 363; rise in standard of living of, 192-3; usurpation by, 89, 100-1, 262
- Peasants, national congress of, 102-3
- Peasants' Day, 114, 343
- Pihābād, 258
- Pishavari, 37, 88
- Pishvā, 47
- Plan, Seven Year Development, 43-4, 46
- Ploughland, 7-8, 132; *see also* Peasant holding
- Point IV, U.S. Point IV programme for technical assistance, 59, 54
- Population, 6-7, 9, 11-13
- Pul-i Māhūt, 174
- Pump units, 156-7, 282
- Pusht-i Kūh, 130
- Qabānkandī, 129, 312
- Qal'ehcheh, 227
- Qal'ehgāh, 227
- qawāt, 4-5, 13, 41, 90, 275 ff., 283 ff.; cost of, 283; decrease in flow of, 130, 243, 286 ff.; duties of landowners with regard to, 84; in Kirmān, 41; need for new legislation on, 280, 289, 90; upkeep of, 76, 363; regulations for: Law of 9 January 1962, 275-6; Additional Articles and their regulations, 276
- Qār, 183-4, 338
- Qarā Bulāgh, 258
- Qarāghul, 311-13, 315
- Qarāpalchūq, 180
- Qaraqiyeh, 229-30
- Qasabeh, 311
- Qashqā'i, lamā'il, 69
- Qashqā'i khāns, 101
- Qashqā'i tribes, 15, 113
- Qavām al-Saltāneh, 37
- Qazvin, 10; development plan for, 281; extortion by landowners in, 101; land reform in, 91-2, 118, 132, 136
- Qazvin federation of co-operative societies, 318
- Quchaq, 227
- Qumm, 9, 112
- Qunqārī, 235
- Quruq, 263
- Rahmatābād, 141-2
- Rainfall, 3-4
- Rām Hurmuz, 163, 341
- Ramand, 91
- Rasht federation of co-operative societies, 318
- Ravānsar, 189-90, 259
- Rāziūkārī, 288
- Kazin, 177-8
- Referendum, six-point, 103, 108-9
- Rezā Shāh, 34 ff., 45, 49-50
- Riāhi, General, v, 109, 354
- ritshēh, jagq-i*, *see* Occupation rights and Additional Articles, regulations for (settlement: under Article 45)
- Rizā, shrine of the Imām, 12, 28, 138, 234
- Rizāh, 251-2
- Rizā'iyyeh, 10-11, 119, 305; Armenian villages in, 127
- Rizā'iyyeh federation of co-operative societies, 318-19, 322
- Rizālūk, 174
- Rizehvand, 174
- Rizvān, 315
- Royal estates, *see* Pahlavī estates
- Rūdsar, 115, 129
- Rural fund societies, 46; *see also* Co-operative societies (pre-land reform societies)
- Rustamābād, 146, 287
- Sa'adatābād, 47, 307
- Sabzavār, 215, 250-1, 254-5
- Sa'dābād, 140
- Safar-i Nigāz, 158
- Safid-rūd, 2, 279
- Sā'in Qal'eh *see* Shāhīn Dizh
- Salāmi, 243-4
- Salavātābād, 242
- Salihābād (Ilām), 345
- Salihābād (Mihrān), 336-7
- Salour, Mr. Abbas, v
- Samangāh, 340

- Sanandaj, 169, 329  
 Sanjābī, 128-9, 176-7, 235-7, 327  
 Saqqiz, 128, 227-9  
 Sarāb, 227, 339  
 Sar Asmānābād, 190  
 Sar Tāhūneh, 194, 308  
 Sarāb Ayyān, 190-1  
 Sarāb Nīlūfār, 171-2  
 Sarband, 92-3  
 Sardasht, 305-6  
 Sarveh, 315  
 Sāuj Bulāgh, *see* Mahābād  
 Sāuj Bulāgh (Tehran), 108  
 Saydābād, 267-8  
 Services, personal, 25, 39-40  
 Shāh Najaf, 161-2, 390  
 Shāhābād, *see* Abū Chīlāj  
 Shāhābād (Kirmānshāhān), 168  
 Shāhgudār, 340  
 Shāhin Dīzh, 90  
 Shāhin Oulā, 142-3, 197  
 Shahrūtār (Karaj), 344  
 Shahrūtār (Rām Hurmuz), 341  
 Shāhsivān, 11  
 Shāmaspī, 314-15  
 Shamsābād (Dizfūl), 249-50  
 Shamsābād (Shūl), 152-3  
 Sharaf, 150-1, 331  
 Sharā, 92-3  
 Shātīrābād, 235  
 Shāvūr dam, 278  
 Shīrāz, 14  
 Shīrāzī, 166  
 Shīrkān, 109, 174-6  
 Shīrvān, 93  
 Shīshbulūk, 255  
 Shu'aybiyyeh, 157-8  
 Shūshtar, 161 ff.  
 Sichūn Nigāz, 158  
 Silāvak, 164-5  
 Sinnān, 10, 121-2, 219-21  
*sipāh-i bikhāshī*, *see* Health corps  
*sipāh-i dānuh*, *see* Literacy corps  
*sipāh-i tarāj* *see* *ābādān* *see* Agricultural extension corps  
 Sīstān, 3, 10, 16-17; co-operative societies in, 311; sale of *khālīq* in, 49; land reform in: *first stage*, 119, 121; *second stage*, 219-21  
 Soil erosion, 6  
 Soumī'eh Sarā, 92, 94  
 State land, *see* *khālīq*  
 Stock-raising, 9, 11-13, 26, 48, 93  
 Sūdīrjān, 148, 312  
 Sulfān Qulī, Lower and Upper, 178  
 Sumāq, 226-7  
 Sundira, 341  
 Surnī, Upper, 178  
 Sūsangīrd, 15, 158 ff.; co-operative societies in, 332, 334, 342; disputes over water in, 282  
*supārghāl*, 21  
 Tā'ān-i Irān, 184, 362  
 Tabas, 138, 143  
 Tābātābā'ī, Sayyīd Zīā al-Dīn, 49  
 Tabriz, 9-11, 278-9  
*tafīlūt-i 'amal*, 32  
 Tamlah, 248-9  
 Targīvar, 119  
*tas'īr*, 32  
 Tāzchābād, 179-80  
 Tāzīābād, 185-6  
 Tehran, 9-10, 120-2, 219-21  
 Tehrān federation of co-operative societies, 344  
 Tenancies, 209, 239-40; *see also* Land reform, Land reform laws, Additional Articles, and Additional Articles, regulations for  
 Tikāb, landowncrship in, 168; re-organization of co-operative societies in, 327; land reform in: *first stage*, 90, 94, 188; *second stage*, 220-30  
 Tilchkhūh, 164-5  
 Title, disputed, *see* Land registration  
 Towns, drift to, 35-6  
 Tribal leaders, 20, 23, 53, 126-8, 144; rebellion by, in Fārs, 113  
 Tribes, 6, 10, 14-16, 20, 48, 101-2  
*tulumchikār*, 197  
 Tūp Āghāch, 330  
 Turayghmān, 143  
 Turbat-i Haydarī, 120, 142-3, 200, 254  
 Turkomans, 11-13  
 Turkomānsarāy, 12, 45  
 Tūysirkān, 306  
*tsūf*, 21-2, 25  
 Twenty-fifth Shahrīvar (village of), 150



- 'Umayrah, North and South, 231-2  
 Urūmiyyeh *see* Rīzā'iyyeh
- Valiān, Dr., v
- waqf*, 27-8; abrogation of intermediary tenancies for, 210; charitable, 28, 57, 108; tenancies for, under Additional Articles and their regulations, 106, 200-1, 234 ff.; private or personal, 28, 69-70, 117; sale of, under Additional Articles, 106; tenancies for, under Additional Articles and their regulations, 201
- Varāmin, 54
- Varjūy, 96-7
- Varmazān, *see* Sumān
- Vayrānī, 333
- Vayst, 162-3
- Village, 6-9, 116 n.1; *see also* Land reform laws (Law of 9 January 1962)
- Village council, 38 ff., 323
- Village craftsmen, 26
- Warriner, Professor Dorcen, vi
- Waste lands, 27, 117; *see also* Barren lands
- Weaving, 26-7
- Wells, *see* Irrigation
- White Revolution, 109
- Wordsworth, Mr. Matthew, vi
- Yarch, 151-2
- Yazd, 8, 13, 47, 193; co-operative societies in, 308-10, 364; land ownership in, 144; *qandis* in, 130, 289; standards of cultivation in, 145; *waqf* in, 237
- Yūsufābād, 141-2
- Zāhidān, 121-2
- Zanganeh, 285-6, 315
- Zangvān, 190
- Zarzūri, 341
- Zāveh, 142-3
- Zāyaudeh-rūd, 3, 13, 277-8
- Zayd 'Alī, 172
- Zaydān-i Nigāz, 158
- Zharf, 288
- Zhāveh-rūd, 186 ff.
- Ziā, Sayyid, *see* Tabāṭaba'i, Sayyid
- Ziā al-Dīn
- Ziār, 246
- Zibājūb-i Shirkhān, 174-6
- Zindān, 185
- zooj*, 7; *see also* Ploughland

