STATEMENT BY BACHAN (LUIA), TEA GARDEN COOLIE

Statement given by two tea garden workers of Assam regarding poor conditions in the gardens to the Royal Commission on Labour.

I come from Bahraich district. I was 7 months on the tea garden. I went with Badlu and have been working on the same garden. I intend to come back, I am going to my own country to recruit and I may stay one year or little more. My family is on the garden. Conditions are very good on our garden; the doctor is a very good one and gives us good medicine. I get from about Rs.1-8 to Rs.1-14 a week. It is sufficient to keep us. There are just myself and my wife. There are two chowkidars in our line. The chowkidars' business is to get people out to work. If the men do not come out to work the chowidar goes and reports it to the office. I do not know what happens in the office. I have saved nothing. I have nearly been 7 months there and I have not got any cattle. I have just had enough to live on. At Suikata the water is very bad and people do not get enough to eat. People can not get enough to eat because they are ill very much and can not work. They are not severely treated on the garden; it is only a question of sickness. Nobody leaves our garden without getting permission. If a man wants to go without permission the Sahib will say: “what are you going for. You have come to work on my garden.” Nobody has ever run away from our garden.

(The witness withdrew)

STATEMENT BY SAMUJ (CHAMAR), COOLIE, GOING TO ASSAM

I have not been on a garden before Moti Lal Sardar recruited me. He is not here. A chaprasi brought me from my district. I come from Basti district. I am going for 6 months. I came here because I wanted to. My sardar told me I could earn from 8 annas to a rupee per day as I wished. I do not know the name of the garden to which I am going; I do not know what district it is in. The sardar was a Lunia. I have left my family behind in my village at Rampur. I do not intend to leave my country for good. I have a brother, a father and a mother left behind to look after the fields. I have been told I shall get Rs.10
when I reach the garden. I have got a \textit{thali} (plate) and a \textit{lota} (pot), two blankets, a \textit{dhoti} and loin cloth.

(The witness withdrew)

Source: Meeting held at the Forwarding Agency for the recruitment of Assam Tea Garden labour at Gauhati - 19th Jan, 1930

The names of the members who were present in the meeting- Mr. A.G. clow, C.I.E.I.C.S., Miss B. M. Le Poe Power) Commissioners Rev. Thenuram Saikia, Lt. Colonial H.C. Garbett, Superintendent, Kanjikoah Budla Beta Tea Co. Ltd.) Assistant Commissioners, Mrs. Ataur Rahman, Lady Assessor Mr. A. Dibdin, Joint Secretary

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