

The entire development could be spread over more than a generation. Projected figures for the cumulative increases in production (as percent of the total agricultural production of West Pakistan) based upon starting one project per year, are shown in Figure 3. 1, together with curves of estimated population growth for the Province, using the maximum and minimum rates projected by the United Nations (see Table 1. 3). With the cumulative increases in productivity per year, a surplus over present production per capita should begin in seven to nine years, even without allowing for the present productivity increase of about two percent per year for the Province as a whole.

Our basic conclusion is, therefore, that, by concentrating investment and effort on one project area after another over a period of 2 to 3 decades until finally the entire Indus Plain is covered, a rate of increase of agricultural production can be established and sustained that will be greater than the rate of increase in the total population of West Pakistan. After examination of the past record and consideration of other alternatives, we believe this is the only valid approach to the chief problem of West Pakistan agriculture, which is to develop the vast resources of land, water, and natural gas in the Indus Plain, and to improve the economic condition of its farming population of 23 million people. Both adequate capital and intelligent use of resources are vitally necessary. Without both of these, the present situation of widespread poverty, malnutrition, and misery can only continue to worsen.

We do not advocate a lessening of present agricultural development efforts in the Potwar Uplands and other regions outside the Indus Plain, or a decrease in present widespread attempts to gain some improvement throughout the Plain itself. But we urge a strengthened effort, based on an integration of all factors of production, concentration on a series of project areas in timed sequence, and attainment of initial momentum in improvement through construction of tube-wells and provision of a greatly increased supply of fertilizer.

The rate of development we have suggested should be regarded as a minimum one. After experience has been gained with the first few projects, it may be possible to proceed more rapidly with the others, and thereby to lay an earlier base of farm purchasing power for industrial development.

Hopeful Factors

In spite of the stagnant character of agricultural production, there are many hopeful factors in the present situation. Although portions of the salinated soils have incurred severe sodium damage which has reduced their permeability, most of the soils and subsoils are relatively permeable. Accumulated salts can