

THE AFRICAN IMMIGRANT FACTOR IN
SOUTHERN RHODESIA, 1890-1930: THE ORIGIN
AND INFLUENCE OF EXTERNAL ELEMENTS
IN A COLONIAL SETTING

by

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(ii) The Nyasaland African labour "ulendos"¹ and the journey to the South 1903-1923

I Differences in policies and attitudes between Zomba and Salisbury towards Nyasaland African labour migration

Master, we have return'd.
Hard was the work, the food was very bad;
Our masters were unkind, and would not hear
Our hymns and psalms.

From Bulawayo came we by the paths,
Hoping to save some money by the same;
But food was very dear. Christo has brought
His children pretty safely here--but yet
Aaron and Matthew died upon the way.
Here is their wealth; master make note of it,
That we may show their brethren in Blantyre
Lest that they say we murder'd them to steal.
Now stamp our passes, master, let us go.
Johannisber will never see us more,
And we will turn our weary footsteps North.²

When Kingsley Fairbridge, in his capacity as the R.N.L.B. official for Umtali, wrote his poem Mabandawi, quoted above, on the tribulations of Tonga migrant labourers from Nyasaland to South Africa and Southern Rhodesia in 1909, the phenomenon of labour emigration from the British Central Africa Protectorate (as Nyasaland was called up to 1907) to Southern Rhodesia had become a total fait accompli. The origins of this movement may not have bothered the colonist employers of labour in Southern Rhodesia in the least, not only because of their lack of

¹For the term ulendo, a Chewa (Nyanja) word meaning "a party (gang) of travellers",: Vide: File C.O.417/588: Statements of Nyasaland migrants before J.G. Roberts, J.P., Mt. Darwin and "Wiri" Edwards, N/C, Mrewa: May and June 1917: P/R/O: London.

²Fairbridge: op. cit. pp. 63-4.

historical perception, but also because of the fact that the beginnings of this particular process were themselves shrouded in obscurity and haphazardness, especially during the period before 1903. Indeed, it may be argued that it is mainly because of this obscure character of early Nyasaland labour migration to markets below the Zambesi that the movement has often rendered itself subject to the fallacious quasi-anthropological argument that the genetic factor and the slave trade tradition, prevailing around Lake Nyasa during the second half of the nineteenth century, were largely responsible for inculcating the idea of job-seeking in foreign lands into the mind of the Nyasaland African.³

Of course, neither the genetic factor nor the slave trade tradition argument contributes anything substantial to our understanding of Nyasaland labour migration to the South, at the close of the nineteenth century, more so that neither of these two theories, satisfactorily, takes into consideration the economic conditions of Nyasaland at the time and the role of African group response to early white presence. The presence of the Scottish missionaries, it may be argued, and the positive response their teaching received from the battered African subject societies, like the Tonga of northern Nyasaland between the 1870's and 1890's, and the consequent absorption of such African societies into the continuum of European thought and economy for instance,⁴ were, obviously, some of the decisive factors, which influenced the origins of Nyasaland labour emigration. Moreover, early attempts by the Johnston Administration to

³Vide: F.E. Sanderson: "The Development of Labour Migration from Nyasaland 1891-1914:" Journal of African History: 1961: pp. 259-60; and Margaret Read: "Migrant Labour in Africa and its Effects on Tribal Life:" International Labour Review: Vol. XIV: No. 6: 1942: pp. 605-6.

⁴Pachai: op. cit. pp. 168-72.

supply labour from the Ngoni and Tonga country, in the north of the territory, to the planters of the Shire Highlands, in the South, may have also contributed in no small way to the process of labour migration in and outside Nyasaland.⁵

In one respect, the obscure origins of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, in particular, may have been complicated by both the inadequate administrative infrastructure put up by Johnston in early Nyasaland, due to lack of satisfactory financial backing from the Foreign Office and the generally indifferent attitude amongst the early colonist employers of labour in Southern Rhodesia to this class of labour. Indeed, with a force of only 71 men of mixed origin to count on for administrative and military purposes in a territory where some of the more belligerent Yao and Ngoni rulers had still to be subdued,⁶ Johnston could hardly afford to cope with the problem of inter-territorial labour movements, especially in a region where few physical boundaries existed to demarcate more effectively, those areas of African settlement, where clear-cut anthropo-geographical divisions were difficult to achieve, thus making the whole question of overlapping between the African communities of Nyasaland and those of the neighbouring B.S.A.Co. and Portuguese territories a very complex one.

On the part of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia, though Nyasaland Africans were reported to be offering for services in the territory in increased numbers in the post-1896/7 period, the white colonists of the territory were not quite enthusiastic over this development. The labour-intensive mining industry of Southern Rhodesia, for example, which should have obviously had greater cause for celebration

⁵B.S. Krishnamurthy: "Economic Policy, Land and Labour in Nyasaland, 1890-1914: "in Pachai (ed.): op. cit. pp. 391-2.

⁶B.S. Krishnamurthy: Land and Labour in Nyasaland 1891-1914: Ph.D Thesis (unpublished): London University: 1964: pp. 46-7.

over this influx of Nyasaland labour into the country, was, on the contrary, not in the least, enamoured as well. Apparently, the general feeling amongst colonist employers of labour in Southern Rhodesia, in this pre-1903 era, was that Swahili and other African labour material from the North, could only be used for railway construction and other forms of employment not connected with mining work. In fact, at the end of 1898, Sir Marshall Clarke, the new Resident Commissioner in Salisbury, observed that the Mashonaland Native Police (the "Black Watch") was also composed of African recruits from North-Eastern Rhodesia and British Central Africa (Nyasaland) whom he termed "Swaheli (and) ... bastard Swaheli ...," but who were paid only a pittance in wages, in comparison with their more highly esteemed Zulu and Sotho counterparts from below the Limpopo.⁷

For this and numerous other reasons, it is, therefore, not surprising that when Tulloch, one of the B.S.A.Co. envoys to Aden and the horn of Africa in 1901, proposed to his sponsors in Salisbury and Bulawayo, that alternative arrangements be made to procure East African labour from the Buganda and Bunyoro territories in Uganda; from the Wihe country in German East Africa as well as from the region between Lake Nyasa and the Indian Ocean inhabited by the Makua, Yao and various Swahili-speaking communities,⁸ the idea would not impress his superiors in any manner. In short, the mining industry in early Southern Rhodesia had no room whatsoever, in its reckoning, for labour material from the British Central

⁷Vide: Supra: Chapter 2: pp. 89-96; 155-60

⁸A 11/2/8/2: A. Tulloch, Bulawayo, to Secretary, B.S.A.Co., Bulawayo: March 1, 1901.

Africa Protectorate and the regions beyond. At this particular period, the value of such African labour as this was further worsened by the pre-occupation of Southern Rhodesia's colonist employers with their ineffectual schemes on Abyssinian, Arab and Asiatic labour, which lasted up to the end of the Anglo-Boer war.

Notwithstanding this overtly disdainful attitude amongst the colonist employers in early Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland African labour migration was however gathering momentum by the first decade of the twentieth century. Individuals and administrative officials in Nyasaland were in fact becoming more and more aware and sensitive over this movement at this period than their counterparts in the neighbouring B.S.A.Co. territories. The planters and other interested parties, like missionary-agriculturists and railway construction companies, in Nyasaland were particularly concerned over this process of labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia and, for this reason, constituted, even at this early stage, some of the most voluble critics of this phenomenon either at the close of the nineteenth century or the beginning of the twentieth one. Thus in 1900, the British Central Africa (or Blantyre) Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, a body representing such diverse groups as the secular colonist planters of the Shire Highlands, on the one hand, and Dr. Alexander Hetherwick's Church of Scotland Mission, on the other, pleaded with both Sir Alfred Sharpe, the Commissioner and Consul-General for British Central Africa, and his subordinate, Robert Codrington, the Deputy Administrator of North-Eastern Rhodesia, then taking orders from Zomba, to put an end to labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia and Beira on account of the adverse social, moral and economic consequences, which, so it was alleged, the movement entailed.

Pointing out the social and moral disadvantages which labour migration was bound to produce in relation to its impact on the African societies of Nyasaland, this pressure group of planters, missionaries and

transport companies singled out, in particular, the danger of exposing Nyasaland labourers to strong drink; an eventuality which these petitioners considered almost inevitable, due to the proclivity of "unscrupulous persons" in Southern Rhodesia to try, in their desperation, to "hold out strong drink as an inducement to the natives to return there to work." Moreover, the opponents of labour migration were worried by the ease with which Africans in Beira could, for instance, get access to this drink through "the lowest class of canteen keepers ... supplying drink to the natives on credit." A situation of this nature was regarded as, certainly, unwelcome for the African societies of Nyasaland and the picture painted by these petitioners, on labour migration to the South, was not attractive at all. They emphasized that:

... natives are in such request (on the Southern labour market) to work in the mines, on railways, and other such works for periods of not less than six months, during which time they come more or less in contact with a civilization which is unknown here (in Nyasaland) at present and they are (likely) to become imbued with the vices which such gold-mining centres as Johannesburg have instilled into all the natives, ... in South Africa. Beira and Salisbury and such large towns in gold mining districts offer inducements in vice and drink which are not found in an agricultural country.

Besides, labour emigration to the South along with its various facets of arbitrary separation of men from their families and kinship groups for long periods at a time, were not regarded as blessings in any respect. In anything, it was felt by this particular pressure group that the social problems the movement spawned, in form of "the evil of

⁹A 11/2/8/5: Petition prepared by the Committee of the B.C.A. Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce for presentation through H.M. Commissioner to the Foreign Office: n.d.: Enclosed in Codrington, Fort Jameson, to Chief Secretary, Salisbury: January 31, 1900.

concubinage on the part of the men and ... unfaithfulness on the part of the women", more so that the men left "their wives and families unprovided for" during their absence, were too immense to be ignored.

These grievances mooted by the Blantyre Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture in 1900 on the adverse social effects of labour emigration for the African communities of Nyasaland were, of course, correct. Indeed, a Committee appointed by the government of Nyasaland to look into the matter, thirty-five years later, came to the same conclusion.¹⁰ But what makes all the difference, with regard to the complaints of these planters and missionaries in 1900, is the manner in which a pressure group, with evident vested economic interests on the question of African labour supply in Nyasaland, resorted to altruistic devices to promote, in a subtle manner, its own objectives. For this reason, it is logical to conclude that the opposition of planters and missionaries to labour emigration from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was a blatant manifestation of the classical dog-in-the-manger type of attitude amongst various competing economic interests. Consequently, it is more than proper and sound to assess the credibility of the Blantyre Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, in relation to labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, from an economic point of view rather than on social and moral assumptions, which had little relevance to the economic realities of the time.

From the economic angle, the planters, missionaries and transport companies of early Nyasaland had good cause to oppose the then incipient phenomenon of labour migration to Southern Rhodesia. Whilst labour demand amongst these local planters was certainly high, the wages for these labourers were, however, too low to stand any comparison with those

¹⁰ Vide: Report of the Committee Appointed by His Excellency the Governor to Enquire into Emigrant Labour: Zomba: 1935: pp. 31-8.

offered at various employment centres below the Zambesi. In the 1890's for instance, African labourers in Nyasaland were reputedly paid in trade goods, particularly calico, for their services either to the planters or in the tenga-tenga industry. The average wage rates for African labourers, for example, amounted to about 8 yards of calico for males and 6 yards for females, engaged on the plantations in Southern Nyasaland for three-months service; and 12 and 8 yards, respectively, for a twelve-months period. This calico currency, valued at 3 or 4 pence per yard, was also issued out to the labourers for their rations.¹¹ These low wages and the generally poor working conditions on the plantations were obviously repellent to a large number of potential labour respondents and the consequent labour shortage, among these local employers, was, therefore, in many respects, a logical sequel to this existing state of affairs on the local labour market in Nyasaland.

Yet in spite of these economic realities, the colonist employers in Nyasaland would not accept the argument that low wages and poor labour conditions, either on the plantations or in the portering industry, were a contributory factor to labour emigration from the Protectorate to outside territories, especially those below the Zambesi. On the question of low wages, the Blantyre Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, for instance, argued, with some justification though, that Nyasaland being an agricultural country, it could not be expected to pay wages comparable to those of Southern Rhodesia, as this would mean an increase of about 200 per cent in wage tariffs and thereby consequent economic ruination for the planters and the transport companies of the Protectorate.

Besides, since the wages paid throughout the Nyasaland Protectorate were approved by the government, there was, therefore, no need for the local employers to court economic disaster simply to be able to compete

¹¹Krishnamurthy: Land and Labour in Nyasaland 1891-1914: pp. 170-1.

with their counterparts outside the country. From the social and moral point of view too, Nyasaland employers were not convinced that the issue of high wages below the Zambesi should be accepted as adequate compensation for the arbitrary removal of labourers from their local environment to distance centres of employment, whereas by engaging for work, locally, these men would be "accompanied by ~~(their)~~ women and children who ~~(would)~~ do the lighter work on the plantations and ~~(in return)~~ receive proportionate wages" On an even stronger moral basis, the local employers in Nyasaland, perhaps imbued with the nineteenth century conviction that work was a self-contained moral value independent of its productive implications,¹² went on to justify the low wages obtaining in the territory in terms of, allegedly, intangible moral benefits the African labourers derived, in the process, in the following manner:

Experience has proved that the raw native will work only at stated intervals, which intervals are the longer the more pay he receives for a given month's work. By raising his wages he would either work a shorter term or return only at a longer interval while he would work no harder or better than he at present does. At the same time it should be pointed out that natives who are what might be termed 'skilled' receive much higher wages than the ordinary labourer and thus the native¹³ is encouraged to adopt habits of steady industry.

These arguments, emphasizing the social and moral consequences of African labour emigration from Nyasaland to the territories either below the Zambesi or elsewhere, and the role of low wages on the local labour market in the Protectorate itself, significantly, constituted the gravamen of the whole dialogue between the planters and their sympathisers,

¹²Vide: Cairns: op. cit. pp. 79-81

¹³A 11/2/8/5: Petition prepared by the Committee of the B.C.A. Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

on the one hand, and the government of Nyasaland, on the other, especially, during the period 1900 to 1907, when labour migration from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia had not yet received the necessary sanction from the authorities concerned. After the petition of the Blantyre Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture in 1900, other specious forms of opposition to labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia and other territories in the South, were also pursued between 1900 and 1907. In one respect, the outcry of these Nyasaland employers heightened in tone as the volume of labour migration from the protectorate increased in volume. Thus in mid-1902, the rate of labour immigration into Southern Rhodesia from Nyasaland and other trans-Zambesian territories was said to have reached such a peak that it was held directly responsible for the consequent saturation of the Southern Rhodesia labour market with surplus "surface labour", which the mining industry did not desire, and for the general reduction in the African wage tariff which also ensued.¹⁴

In 1903, the B.S.A.Co. authorities in North-Eastern Rhodesia, in fact, conceded that the influx of British Central Africa labour migrants to Southern Rhodesia was still mounting, as these labourers resorted to the Fort Jameson labour routes to the South, to avoid possible hindrance by the authorities in their own territory. To substantiate this view, Codrington, accordingly, gave the following statistical data for the period ranging from January to April 1903, as indicated in Table VIII below:

¹⁴C.O. 417/344: Clarke to Milner: August 6, 1902.

Table VIII

Statement of Number of Natives (sic) Who Passed
Through Feira: January to April 1903:¹⁵

Migrants Going South:	Month:	B.C.A.P. (Nyasaland)	N-E. Rhodesia	P.E.A.	Total
	Jan. (1903)	120	-	-	120
	Feb.	97	10	-	107
	March	351	262	28	241
	April	<u>1,899</u>	<u>354</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>2,333</u>
	Total:	2,431	636	108	3,101

Migrants Going North:	Month:	B.C.A.P. (Nyasaland)	N-E. Rhodesia	P.E.A.	Total
	Jan. (1903)	511	21	-	532
	Feb.	288	-	-	288
	March	480	16	-	496
	April	<u>504</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>555</u>
	Total:	1,783	88	-	1,891

The Fort Jameson-Feire labour route from the north to Southern Rhodesia was after all, by no means, the only channel through which Nyasaland and related labour migrants reached the territory's labour markets. In any case, as a demonstration of this increasing influx of Nyasaland and other trans-Zambesian labourers entering Southern Rhodesia through Feira, the Salisbury Administration also felt sufficiently concerned with these developments that arrangements were made, at first, with a firm of private contractors and later with the R.N.L.B., when this body was formed in mid-1903, to assist labour traffic between Feira, on the North-Eastern Rhodesian side of the Zambesi, and Sipolilo in Southern Rhodesia. The Bureau agent, Mr. Andrews, appointed for the purpose, was here detailed, specifically, to help the labour migrants in crossing the Zambesi and to provide facilities by means of which these migrants could

¹⁵These figures are based on C.O.417/385: Codrington to B.S.A.Co.: May 13, 1903.

obtain water and food and thus avoid the indignity, frequently incurred by these people, in working for the local Shona communities, especially in the Lomagundi district, merely for food and survival.¹⁶

As symptoms of a rapprochement between the Nyasaland authorities and the colonist employers of labour in both Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, over the supply of labour from this Central African territory, became more apparent between 1903 and 1907, the opposition of the local economic interests in Nyasaland became more strident and desperate. These local interests were certainly not enamoured by the combined effects of the twin factors of labour emigration from Nyasaland, represented here by both independent labour migration and organised recruiting with the blessings and assistance of Nyasaland officials. Since independent labour emigration alone, up to 1903, had so seriously bothered these local interests, it is quite obvious that additional organised recruiting came to be viewed by the planters and their associates in Nyasaland as a master stroke from which they could never recover. For this reason, the railway construction companies in Nyasaland, namely the Blantyre and East Africa Company Ltd. and the Shire Highlands (Nyasaland) Company Ltd., felt quite genuinely threatened by the decision of the Nyasaland authorities to grant labour recruiting facilities to the Rand labour agency in 1903 and, accordingly, protested against the measure in mid-1904. But the protests of these railway companies were unacceptable to either the Nyasaland authorities or the Colonial Office, to which the territory had been transferred a year before by the Foreign Office.

From Sharpe's point of view, labour was quite plentiful in

¹⁶C.O. 417/396: Milton to Codrington: October 22, 1903.

Nyasaland, but the main problem with the railway construction firms was, essentially, that the labour at the disposal of these companies, such as the 2,500 force then engaged by the Shire Highlands Railway (Nyasaland) Company on the line from Chiromo to Blantyre, was not effectively used. Moreover, it was argued that the coffee industry had been on the decline since 1902, whilst its substitute, cotton, had not sufficiently taken root to tie down any sizeable labour supply and thus successfully frustrating the efforts of the railway companies to procure their share.

However, in spite of the prospective reciprocal commercial benefits which Nyasaland expected to receive from South Africa in return for its labour supply to the Rand and the fact that W.N.L.A. had, by the beginning of 1904, recruited only 1,900 out of the promised total of 5,000 annual turnover, Sharpe was prepared, for the sake of local economic interests, to suspend the Rand scheme either by the end of 1904 or the beginning of 1905. Apparently, the administrative problems, which the Rand labour scheme involved for an already over-stretched bureaucratic infrastructure like that of Nyasaland, were rather too many and quite complex.¹⁷ But the Colonial Office would not and was not prepared to see the Rand labour scheme dropped either in 1904 or 1905. If local economic interests had any grievances over inadequate labour supply, these were of their own making and not a result of the W.N.L.A. recruiting activities. In this particular case, the Colonial Office blamed the railway construction firms, with regard to their outcry on labour shortage, indicating that:

They ‹the railway companies› may not have handled their natives well; and the natives may not like railway work,¹⁸

¹⁷C.O. 525/2: Sharpe to C.O.: August 16, 1904.

¹⁸Ibid. Minute by C.A. Harris to Graham: October 13, 1904.

The attitude of the Colonial Office and its commitment to the question of labour supply from Nyasaland to the Rand is quite comprehensible. The whole post-war reconstruction programme in South Africa was, in fact, a matter to which the British Tory government attached great economic and sentimental value. Labour supply to the Rand mines, be it African or Asiatic, was possibly the most dominant issue in Imperial reckoning on the African sub-continent between 1902 and 1904.¹⁹ In this respect, the Colonial Office was quite fortunate in having the unstinted support of Milner, the High Commissioner for South Africa, and, to a lesser extent, that of Sharpe in Nyasaland as well. Sharpe became gradually sympathetic towards Milner's grandiose schemes on the reconstruction of a British-dominated South Africa in which the mining industry was calculated to play a crucial role. Thus when the Indian labour importation scheme failed to meet Milner's requirements, Nyasaland labour supply proved quite handy in the process, not merely as an alternative, but as an ancillary measure to the more highly priced Chinese importation programme.

Under these circumstances, Sharpe was, therefore, prepared, by April 1903, to forward to the Rand what he termed an "experimental batch" of 1,000 Nyasaland labourers to pave the way for impending large-scale recruitment.²⁰ By degrees, this organised labour recruitment for the Rand set in motion a spontaneous wave of interest for service on the Rand. Perhaps attracted by what officials in Nyasaland called the news on "good treatment and good pay spread by home coming gangs", a large number of potential labour migrants were said to be offering for

¹⁹Vide: Supra: pp. 301-6

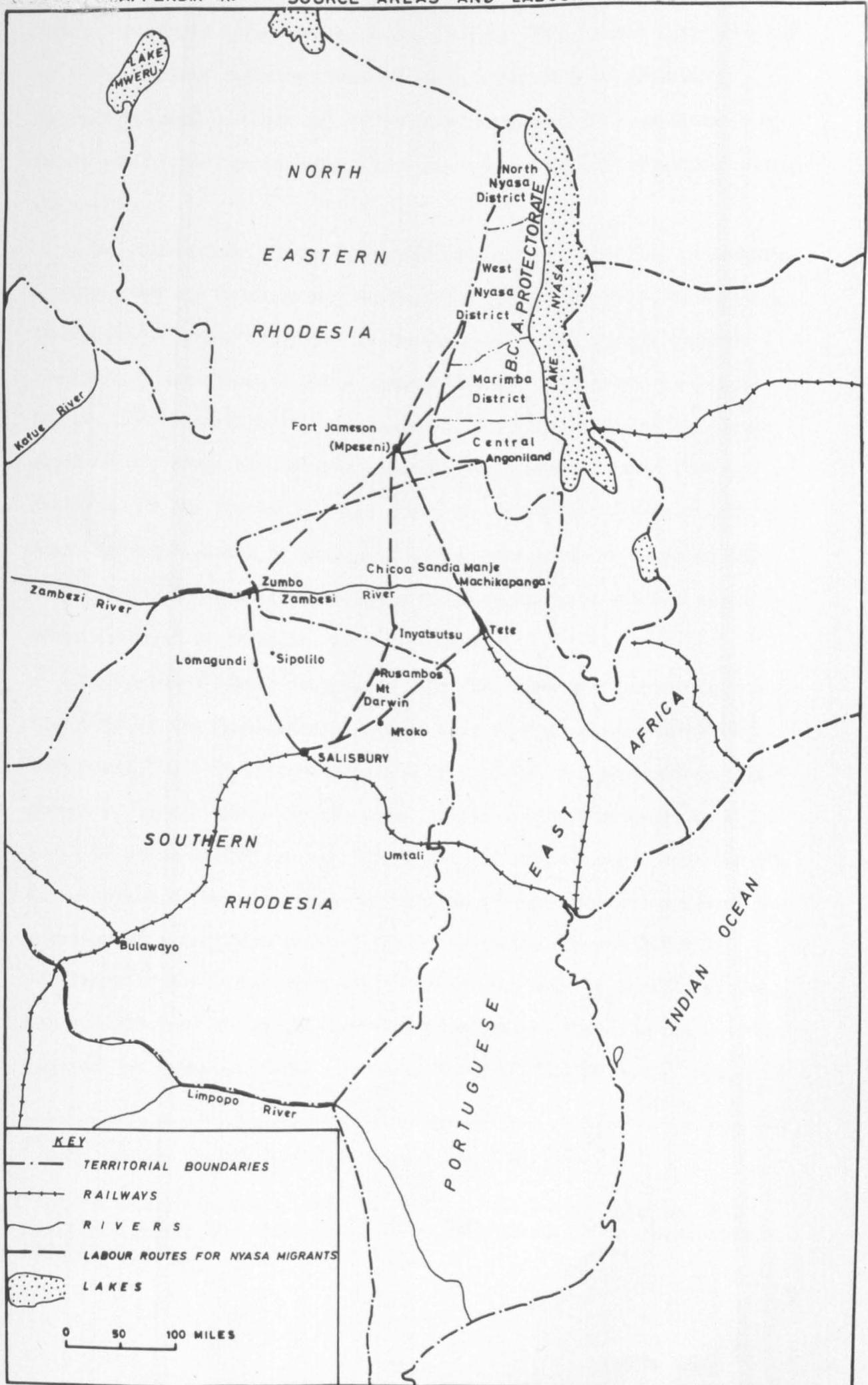
²⁰C.O. 417/383: Sharpe to F.O.: Telegram: April, 13, 1903.

engagement on the Rand by 1905. In the Dowa district alone, for instance, about 750 able-bodied males were said to have registered with their Assistant Collector to proceed to the Rand in April 1905, whilst an equally large figure was also recorded for the whole of Central Angoniland.²¹ Ideally, it could thus be argued here that favourable official attitudes towards the Rand mines were being deployed to promote labour migration to this particular destination.

With regard to Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, the authorities of the Protectorate were not as enthusiastic as they were in relation to labour supply to the Rand. Whilst Nyasaland official policy towards labour migration to Southern Rhodesia may not be regarded as having been outrightly hostile before 1907, at the same time, it could hardly be described as one of co-operation. What may have, in the final analysis, redeemed Southern Rhodesia as a possible centre of attraction to Nyasaland labour migrants, may have been, primarily, its geographical position in comparison with the Rand and, therefore, its significance as a transit camp for labourers proceeding to the richer mines below the Limpopo. Nyasaland officials, in the pre-1907, were, in fact, not only unco-operative, with regard to labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, but they were also obstructive in one way or another. Thus when the decision to allow the recruitment of labour in Nyasaland for the Transvaal had been reached in 1903, Sharpe concluded that to make the arrangement in question more effective, it was, therefore, only logical to plug all the loopholes through which independent labour proceeded from the Protectorate to Southern Rhodesia. With this view in

²¹C.O. 525/8: Extract from a Report by the Collector of the Central Angoniland District for the Month of April, 1905: Enclosed in Sharpe to C.O.: May 8, 1905.

APPENDIX X: NYASALAND LABOUR MIGRATION TO S. RHODESIA BY 1904: SOURCE AREAS AND LABOUR ROUTES



(Sketch based on enclosure in C.O. 525/2: Sharpe to C.O. July 19, 1904, P/R/O: London)

mind, therefore, a request was made, in June 1904, to the Administration of North-Eastern Rhodesia, through which a majority of Nyasaland migrants passed on their way to Southern Rhodesia, to co-operate in a joint administrative endeavour to weaken this line of independent labour migration.

The assumptions of the Nyasaland authorities, in 1904, in adopting a calculated and deliberately obstructive course of action in relation to Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, though somewhat simplistic, were however quite straightforward. Although Sir Alfred Sharpe, the Protectorate's Commissioner, was, just a few months later, destined to assure the railway construction firms and other economic interests in the territory, that there was sufficient labour supply to meet the requirements of the local economic interests as well as those of the Rand,²² his attitude towards Southern Rhodesia was not by any means coloured by illusions of this nature.

Independent labour emigration from the three most important labour districts of the Protectorate, namely Central Angoniland, Marimba and West Nyasa, to Southern Rhodesia and other B.S.A.Co. possessions, "in search of highly paid labour", which Sharpe then estimated at an annual total of about 15,000 men by 1903,²³ did not seem to augur well for the Protectorate government. For this reason, Sharpe took advantage of the marriage of convenience between the Protectorate and the B.S.A.Co. territory of North-East Rhodesia to demand for what he termed "active assistance" from the Codrington Administration in Fort Jameson, on the question of Nyasaland labour entering North-Eastern Rhodesia, either to

²²C.O. 525/2: Sharpe to C.O.: August 16, 1904.

²³Ibid: Sharpe to C.O.: July 19, 1904: Vide also: Appendix X: Nyasaland Labour Migration to Southern Rhodesia by 1904: Source Areas and Labour Routes.

seek work there or to proceed to Southern and North-Western Rhodesia. Perhaps to underline Codrington's obligations on the matter by virtue of the latter's subordinate position in relation to the Nyasaland Protectorate, Sharpe readily pointed out the importance which the Colonial Office attached to the Nyasaland/Rand labour arrangement and the need for Codrington to contribute towards the success of this particular scheme in order to avoid the dire consequences non-co-operation would invoke back "home" (in London).²⁴

In the reckoning of the Nyasaland authorities, the significance of the Rand labour arrangement was such that it was assumed that everyone was bound to see sense in the whole business. From this arrangement, the Nyasaland authorities were convinced that the Central African protectorate would derive enormous commercial benefits in form of privileges, then promised to these officials, that agricultural products from Nyasaland would procure access to the South African markets. Besides, the Transvaal labour arrangement was viewed as a necessary "diversion ~~for~~ a portion ... of the stream of labour which at present finds its own way to countries outside ~~(Nyasaland)~~, into an authorised channel." In this way, it was hoped that the government of Nyasaland would not only have the chance to regulate and control the volume and course of labour emigration from the territory, but could also minimise those adverse social and economic consequences, which independent labour migration entailed and were, in this particular instance, clearly symbolized by cases of omission, amongst independent African labourers to Southern Rhodesia, to pay their taxes; provide for their families and the uncontrolled departure of able-bodied men en masse for foreign

²⁴C.O. 417/401: Sharpe to Codrington: June 7, 1904.

labour markets, causing, in the process, severe economic and social disruptions.

These social and moral arguments, advocated by Sharpe in 1904, were, of course, not new, but comprised a greater part of the chorus to an old dirge, frequently resorted to by local economic interests in Nyasaland, in reciting the story of their misfortunes.²⁵ What was only new, in this particular case, was the manner in which officials, who had previously denounced the altruism of the local planters, missionaries and transport firms, were, in their turn, easily converted to the gimmicks of those lobbyists whom they had hitherto vigorously denounced. But as far as Sharpe was concerned, the Rand labour scheme was too important to be exposed to the subterfuge, which independent labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia here represented. For this reason, he asserted his total commitment to the obstruction of this form of labour migration, if only for the benefit of the Rand arrangement, in the following terms:

What appears to me the right course is to discourage, if not to forbid, what may be called 'unauthorised' emigration for work; but to provide a proper system under which a reasonable proportion of those more enterprising natives of the Protectorate {Nyasaland} who look for higher wages than they can obtain locally and are prepared to absent themselves from their homes for (say) a year, may have secured for them comfort on the journey to their field of labour, proper treatment under Government supervision during their term of service, and a safe return to their homes.²⁶

Sharpe's seemingly noble, but deceptive, ideals on labour migration from Nyasaland to the Rand would, unfortunately, not work. In the first place, potential African labour migrants in Nyasaland were not convinced by the bona fides of the Rand labour scheme. In their opinion, the

²⁵Vide: Supra: pp. 573-5

²⁶C.O. 525/2: Sharpe to C.O.: August 16, 1904.

attempts by the Nyasaland authorities to regulate and control labour mobility "by sending it direct (sic) to the Transvaal (and) by providing proper transport, (were)", as Sharpe himself also confessed, "represented as a form of forced, or undesirable labour"²⁷ Secondly, vested interests in the B.S.A.Co. territories were quite adept in frustrating the efforts of the Nyasaland government to canalize their labour migrants to particular destinations. Thus Sharpe himself indicated, in this connection, that it was "a simple matter for natives in the Protectorate (Nyasaland) to be collected and taken South without any actual or visible 'recruitment'" by labour agents, but simply through such unorthodox devices by colonist employers, as the issuing out to capitaos, head money "for all the men they (took) back to the South" on returning from their homes in Nyasaland or by sending out "messages and promises" on favourable labour conditions below the Zambesi, to headmen and chiefs, through labour migrants returning to Nyasaland.²⁸

Thirdly, though the commitment of the Imperial authorities to the post-war labour problems of the Rand was well known and unequivocal, the Colonial Office, however, felt that Sharpe's attitude in trying to force Codrington's hand to co-operate in preventing a leakage of labour from the Protectorate to the B.S.A.Co. territories, a phenomenon regarded as one "of the most natural type," did not sufficiently take into account the principles of "laissez-faire" in regard to the labour supply of the Protectorate (Nyasaland)" Moreover, the Colonial Office feared that Sharpe's actions were likely to arouse protests from London Wall, on the grounds of "interference with the Company's territory (North-Eastern Rhodesia)."²⁹ Finally, and most important of all, Sharpe's attempts to

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid. Minute by Harris to Graham: October 13, 1904.

solicit Codrington's co-operation, in promoting the Nyasaland/Transvaal labour scheme, were rejected totally by the Fort Jameson official.

It might perhaps be argued here, and with good reason too, that by soliciting the help of a B.S.A.Co. official, to be privy to a plan whereby various economic interests, in whatever part of the B.S.A.Co. possessions, were likely to be adversely affected, as Sharpe tried to do with Codrington over Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia in mid-1904, the Zomba administrator was certainly being too unrealistic. Although it is quite true that under the North-Eastern Rhodesia Order in Council of 1900, the Commissioner of the British Central Africa Protectorate had, in theory, some measure of political control over Codrington,³⁰ in practice, the Deputy Administrator of this territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia was attached more strongly to the B.S.A.Co., which held sway over the country's economic well-being, than to Zomba. Thus as early as 1900, Codrington had refused to abide by any requests from Nyasaland, to exercise any undue influence over the course of labour emigration from that country to Southern Rhodesia and, by so doing, frustrated the demands of the Blantyre Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture on the matter.³¹ Similarly, no form of either pressure or persuasion could influence him to meet the demands of the Nyasaland government on the same subject in 1904.

As Codrington argued, the Nyasaland government's demand on him, to block any leakage of labour from that territory to Southern Rhodesia, was unacceptable on the grounds that there was no legal justification on the measure, since Nyasaland neither had any legislation of its own against voluntary labour emigration nor a pass law, like that of

³⁰Ibid: Sharpe to C.O.: July 19, 1904.

³¹C.O. 417/309: Codrington to Chief Secretary: Salisbury: January 31, 1900.

Southern Rhodesia, through which the movement of labour migrants in and out of the Protectorate could be controlled. In the absence of such legislative mechanisms, Codrington, therefore, refused to blockade labour emigration from Nyasaland through his territory to either Southern Rhodesia or North-Western Rhodesia. All he conceded to observe, on the subject, was the request to apprehend any illegal labour touts perpetrating their nefarious industry to the detriment of Nyasaland.

Yet even if Codrington's Administration in Fort Jameson had decided otherwise, the dimensions of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia by 1904 had become so complicated that all efforts to contain the movement would have foundered. For instance, whilst, by March 1904, about 6,126 Nyasaland migrants had passed through Feira, where the government of North-Eastern Rhodesia maintained a ferry, for crossing the Zambesi, on their way to Southern Rhodesia as opposed to 3,514 returning northwards, it could not be argued with certainty that this was the only number of Nyasaland African migrants involved in the movement. As Codrington himself indicated, various routes were actually used by Nyasaland migrants on their way to the South and when it became known that the government of the Protectorate was opposed to independent labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia, the pattern of migration became even more complex, as these people tried to avoid bomas, either in their own country or through the territories they passed. For this reason, it was reported that Nyasaland migrants were crossing the Zambesi at various points; the main entreports being Feira, Zumbo and, for those migrants proceeding to Wankie, somewhere higher up the Zambesi river than Zumbo. In addition, other migrants were also said to be crossing this river somewhere in the Portuguese territory. But for all these various preferences, these labourers had one factor in common: the desire to avoid major footpaths to South, lest they fell into a police net or any undesirable man-made obstacle. Accordingly, Codrington refused to be party to a wild scheme, which, as far as he was concerned, seemed so impract-

icable that even the maintenance of a regular cordon of police and soldiers along the Nyasaland/North-Eastern Rhodesia would have proved both ineffective and too costly.³²

Of course, as has been already pointed out, the genesis of Nyasaland labour to centres of employment in the B.S.A.Co. territories, either north or south of the Zambesi, was, by 1904, a pretty complex issue and no administrative action, like the one Sharpe proposed in this particular case, could effectively untangle a movement of this nature overnight. In fact, it may be pertinent to observe here that the B.S.A.Co. and some missionaries in Nyasaland were themselves partly responsible for developments in this direction, particularly through a pact, whereby the Company was required to provide an annual grant of £50 to the Livingstonia mission to promote its educational activities, whilst Dr. Robert Laws, the head of this mission, was, in turn, expected "to induce some of his pupils as he {thought} suitable to take service with the Company {B.S.A.Co.} and to give those {pupils} that {elected} to do so some special training and instructions."³³

This arrangement mentioned above, which was arrived at in March 1904 and was destined to have a profound impact on the Civil Service of Northern Rhodesia and its role as the employer of most skill Africans from Nyasaland for a long time to come,³⁴ was evidently a result of the realization by London Wall, that those educated Africans from Nyasaland, engaged in North-Eastern Rhodesia with the African Transcontinental Telegraph Company by 1904, as "native telegraphists", and with the

³²C.O. 417/401: Codrington to Sharpe: June 25, 1904.

³³C.O. 417/398: Annexure 7 to B.S.A.Co. Minutes of March 23, 1904.

³⁴Note the complaints by B.S.A.Co. officials in Northern Rhodesia over the restrictions by the Nyasaland government on African artisans from that territory in 1913. Vide C.O. 417/534: Minutes of an Interview between B.S.A.Co. Directors and N. Rhodesian Officials by D.O. Malcom: June 11, 1913.

B.S.A.Co.'s stores and transport divisions, as "native tally clerks", had in many ways proved "to be very useful, and ... (effected) a considerable economy in clerical, mechanical and Public Works Staff".³⁵ The Asiatics (Goanese) and some Europeans, who had been hitherto engaged in these services, were actually being replaced by these educated Nyasaland Africans, as the former classes of labour were considered too expensive and, at the same time, liable to easily succumb to tropical diseases. In the light of this arrangement, Codrington could hardly be convinced to blockade labour emigration to the B.S.A.Co. territories, without the necessary guarantees that skilled Africans from Nyasaland would still find their way, especially to North-Eastern Rhodesia. In any case, Codrington refused to participate in any measures to blockade the emigration of either skilled or unskilled labourers from Nyasaland to any part of the Company possessions without instructions from the B.S.A.Co. directorate itself.

From the preceding evidence, it is clear that Nyasaland authorities were not pleased with the process of African labour emigration from that country to Southern Rhodesia, during the first decade of the twentieth century. Whilst overt actions to prevent the movement of labour, on voluntary basis, between the two countries would not work, due to lack of co-operation and goodwill from the neighbouring administrations and, to some limited extent, from the Colonial Office as well, it became, therefore, necessary to take measures, inside Nyasaland itself, designed to discourage and weaken this movement in one way or another. To this end, the Native Labour Ordinance of 1904 was introduced to supercede the Native Labour Regulations of 1895.

³⁵C.O. 417/398: Annexure 7 to B.S.A.Co. Minutes

The new labour legislation reflected the determination of the authorities of Nyasaland to tighten their hold on the recruitment of labour in the territory for either internal or external use. Greater responsibility was placed by this law on the recruiters and employers to fulfill the conditions under which labourers were engaged. Indeed, as a proven test of the efficacy of this legislative measure to regulate the course of labour recruitment in Nyasaland, it could be pointed out here that between 1904 and 1909, when this particular legislation was operational, only seventeen permits were issued to recruiters, of which a greater proportion went to W.N.L.A. and the agents of the local railway construction firms.³⁶

In this manner, the government of Nyasaland, therefore, attempted to canalize labour supply from the territory to particular labour markets, though with what degree of success, one could hardly say, and, at the same time, appease local economic interests, whose denunciation of labour migration from the territory to external markets was, in every sense, unrelenting between 1903 and 1907. Of course, in characteristic fashion, the local economic interests in Nyasaland felt that they were not getting an adequate share of the labour supply, due to the constraints imposed by labour migration and the chronic reluctance of the African to work.

As R.S. Hynde, the big-time tobacco grower, a newspaper owner and Chairman of the Joint Labour Committee of the British Central Africa Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce as well as the Nyasaland Planters' Association, expressed the matter in June 1906, the local planters badly needed government help to procure labour, either through the agency of a

³⁶Report of the Committee Appointed ... to Enquire into Emigrant Labour: pp. 9-11.

Labour Bureau or the "mild compulsion of the hut tax." Either of these measures, it would appear, was necessary to Hynde and his colleagues, because the African allegedly lacked the necessary economic incentive to work and had, as it was said, lately acquired a sinister practice, whereby "he (native) {went} South to the mines mostly 'to see life' and having been there once he {was} not, as a rule, desirous of returning."³⁷ Planters of this calibre, steeped in their peculiar stereotypes, could hardly be persuaded that they could improve the prospects of labour supply by instituting reforms on wages and general labour conditions on their properties. Government attention, and not reforms, was what they were looking for in relation to labour supply and emigration from Nyasaland, during the period 1903 to 1907.

Between 1907 and 1908, the course of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, however, underwent drastic changes, which were wrought, primarily, by factors over which the whims of either government officials or colonist employers were both irrelevant and ineffectual. For the Nyasaland authorities, the most serious blow was the ban imposed by the Imperial authorities on the Nyasaland/Rand arrangement, under which W.N.L.A. had been granted special labour recruiting privileges in the Protectorate for employment at the Rand in return for minor concessions of a commercial nature. Moreover, the high mortality rate amongst the Nyasaland labour recruits at the Rand mines was such that the newly elected Liberal government in Britain, with less sympathy for the Randlords in the Transvaal, could no longer tolerate the state of affairs. Individual mining properties at the Rand, like the Premier Diamond Mine, with a record mortality rate of 113 deaths per 1,000 labourers per annum,³⁸

³⁷C.O. 525/13: R.S. Hynde, Chairman, The Joint Labour Committee of the B.C.A. Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce and The Nyasaland Planters' Association, to Sharpe: June 9, 1906.

³⁸Lord Elgin to Lord Selborne: December 6, 1907: in: Correspondence Relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate...

may have certainly spoiled the broth for both the Rand mining industry and the Nyasaland authorities, who had hitherto attached so much significance on the Nyasaland/Transvaal labour scheme.

However, on the whole the Rand employers themselves were equally responsible, in a general way, for the subsequent disruption of the Nyasaland labour recruitment plan. They would not, for instance, accept the restrictions proposed by the Colonial Office, whereby Nyasaland labourers were to be employed mostly for surface work and, if engaged for underground work, were to be assigned to the day shifts only, since it was during the night shifts, so it was alleged, that they succumbed to pneumonia.³⁹ For employers who, in some strange way, felt quite convinced that they could procure surface labour elsewhere and thus manage without the unsolicited interference of the Colonial Office on the working routine on their properties, the requirements of the Imperial authorities, to alleviate the mortality of Nyasaland labourers, constituted a price too heavy to pay.⁴⁰ Because of such differences between the Randlords and the Liberal government in London, labour supply from Nyasaland to the Rand was terminated at the close of 1907.

It was from such an unexpected turn of events, as the one mentioned above, that colonist employers of Nyasaland labour in Southern Rhodesia, inadvertently, stood to benefit. The idea of organised Nyasaland labour recruitment for Southern Rhodesia had never been favourably considered by the authorities of Nyasaland. As late as 1906, requests had been made

for the Transvaal and Southern Rhodesia Mines: Cmd. 3993: March 1908:
p. 85.

³⁹Lord Elgin to Lord Selborne: October 10, 1907: in Correspondence Relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate ...
p. 74.

⁴⁰Lord Selborne to Lord Elgin: Telegram: August 22, 1907: in Ibid:
p. 68.

by the R.N.L.B., for permission to recruit labour in Nyasaland for use in Southern Rhodesia, but without much success. In this instance, it was alleged by the authorities in Zomba, that no concessions could be extended to professional labour recruiting organisations without the overt backing of their respective governments. In essence, the Nyasaland authorities turned down the request of the R.N.L.B. because they preferred to deal with the government of Southern Rhodesia on this labour issue, in order to procure a credible quid pro quo, similar to the commercial concessions granted to Nyasaland coffee and tobacco by the Transvaal in 1903.⁴¹ Unfortunately, however, the situation in Nyasaland had changed by 1907.

The restrictions (and later a total ban) on Nyasaland labour recruitment for the Rand brought into play new factors altogether and Nyasaland authorities found themselves faced with excess labour supply, which the local market could not effectively absorb. From the point of view of the Acting Commissioner of the Central African protectorate, Major F.B. Pearce, "the necessity of finding work for the Protectorate {Nyasaland} native {had}", by October 1907, "assumed a somewhat more urgent character ..." and for that reason, he suggested that "it would greatly relieve congestion with regard to labour in this Protectorate, if an arrangement could be come to between the Protectorate Government and the Government of Southern Rhodesia"⁴²

Under the existing arrangements with Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland authorities were prepared, at first, to allow the recruitment of only between 5,000 and 10,000 labourers annually, for use in Southern Rhodesia.

⁴¹F.B. Pearce, Acting Commissioner, Zomba, to C.O.; October 9, 1907: in Ibid: pp. 76-7.

⁴²Ibid.

But on account of their desparate position in the wake of the Rand ban, these Nyasaland authorities consequently lost the potence of their former formidable trump card, in the form of labour supply to Southern Rhodesia and other B.S.A.Co. possessions. In the final analysis, recruitment of labour in Nyasaland for the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers was allowed to go ahead by the beginning of 1908, but on terms which were much more watered down than would have been the case in 1906 or before.

According to the conditions which governed this particular arrangement, the Nyasaland government was to put its District magistrates and residents in charge of those potential Nyasaland labour migrants intending to proceed to Southern Rhodesia and then forward them, after necessary registration and other preliminary procedural matters, to an approved depot in Fort Jameson. The main idea, as far as Sharpe was concerned, was to eliminate the element of actual touting for labour in Nyasaland for Southern Rhodesia, activities which the Protectorate authorities had never approved of in the first place. Besides, the measure was also designed to avoid the need for establishing a labour bureau in Nyasaland itself, for collecting this labour, which was also considered unnecessary, as a similar body had failed to work before.⁴³

For its part, the government of Southern Rhodesia was required to establish a recognised agency at Fort Jameson, to liaise with the Nyasaland authorities across the border. This agency was to replace the existing system, whereby a large number of independent Nyasaland labour migrants crossed the border and surreptiously engaged with the then unrecognised R.N.L.B. agent at Fort Jameson, Mr. Verreker,

⁴³Sharpe to C.O.: December 13, 1907: in Ibid: p. 88.

strategically placed at this point for the purpose, after the Bureau had twice applied for permission to directly recruit labour in Nyasaland in 1906 without success. These clandestine migrants, who were said to be mostly Yaos from the South Nyasa district; Achipeta from the Central Angoniland district; Tonga from West Nyasa and Angoni from the Mombera district, were reputedly proceeding to Southern Rhodesia either on their own or through the medium of the Bureau, to which they submitted themselves in North-Eastern Rhodesia, thus generally causing a lot of concern for the authorities in Zomba. Such anxiety, as may have occurred amongst the Nyasaland authorities over the pre-1908 labour migratory movement to Southern Rhodesia, was engendered, naturally by the fact that, because the government of Nyasaland had by then no machinery for regulating this type of movement as it did with those migrants proceeding to the Rand, it lost a lot of income in form of capitation fees and other incidental charges, like the fees on passes for intending migrants.

For the sake of those Nyasaland labourers already in Southern Rhodesia, it was also felt that independent labour migration allowed too much room for possible abuse of Nyasaland people, once they were engaged in Southern Rhodesia, because the colonist employers of that territory made "little attempt to care for native welfare generally so long as a supply of labourers (was) forthcoming somehow and from somewhere." Besides, this question of the Nyasaland labourers' welfare was further complicated, so it was concluded in Zomba, by the fact that the colonist employers of labour in Southern Rhodesia, lacking any knowledge on trans-Zambesian African languages, ethnic groups and chiefs, were not likely to bother about either the identities or any other detail con-

cerning these labour migrants.⁴⁴ From this perspective, it was, therefore, considered essential to provide for an inter-governmental apparatus whereby Nyasaland labour migrants could be brought under control, whilst their welfare would be guaranteed in one way or another.

In addition, Nyasaland authorities demanded for some measures through which the government of Southern Rhodesia could be bound to provide for the necessary facilities for the convenience of Nyasaland migrants along the main routes used by these people on their way to the South. Whilst the Fort Jameson-Broken Hill railway route to Bulawayo, via Livingstone, was, for example, considered relatively safe, the alternative overland one, the Fort Jameson-Feira route to Salisbury appeared to, a large extent, a hazard, in every sense of the word, to the labour migrants. Though the R.N.L.B. had, in 1906, promised to provide ferries at convenient points, like the Zambesi and Luangwa rivers, the route itself was not in the best of conditions, from the point of view of the Zomba authorities.

Indeed, it was observed that since the Fort Jameson-Feira-Salisbury route had been abandoned, as a mail route between Southern and North-Eastern Rhodesia, due to the arrival of the railway line at Broken Hill in 1906, it had gradually deteriorated because of lack of attention. It had by 1907, virtually become overgrown and choked with grass, as no frequent clearing of the track was being carried out any more. Man-eating lions had also taken over the control of the route; a fact which J.C. Casson, the Superintendent of Natives in Nyasaland, discovered during his overland route to Cape Town in early 1907, for his leave in England. Moreover, because of the high cost of food along this route

⁴⁴Report and suggestions relating to Nyasaland Natives at work in, and proceeding to, Southern Rhodesia, by J.C. Casson, Superintendent of Natives, Nyasaland, November 1907: in *Ibid*: pp. 81-2. The same report is also contained in File C.O. 525/22, P/R/O, London.

and also the inhospitable attitude of the African communities, living along this same route, to labour migrants, it was discovered that Nyasaland Africans, on their way to Southern Rhodesia, were usually compelled to travel with as little food as possible. For this reason, these labour migrants had often sacrificed their sick companions for the sake of the well-being of the rest of the gang and, consequently, as Thornicroft, the Magistrate of the Petauke district of North-Eastern Rhodesia, corroborated in 1907, the number of Nyasaland migrants, to and from Southern Rhodesia, either found dead on the way or killed by lions, was said to be increasing.⁴⁵ It was, therefore, to forestall this state of affairs, that Nyasaland authorities wanted to see the government of Southern Rhodesia more involved in providing rest-houses and food depots for labour migrants, as a pre-condition to a mutual agreement on Nyasaland labour recruitment for Southern Rhodesia between 1907 and 1908.

This insistence, on the part of the Zomba authorities, that labour recruitment in Nyasaland, for Southern Rhodesia, could only be permitted on an inter-governmental basis, introduced new complications in the labour policy of Southern Rhodesia. Since 1901, the government of Southern Rhodesia had been forbidden to participate in matters concerning labour recruitment. This ruling, by the Colonial Office, was a result of the report by Sir Martin on the involvement of the Native Department and other B.S.A.Co. officials in forced labour and how this development had contributed to the 1896/97 risings in that territory.⁴⁶ Although in practice, the Native Department of Southern Rhodesia had, in reality, never seriously observed the ruling, as has been amply demonstrated in

⁴⁵Report and Suggestions relating to Nyasaland Natives ... by Casson: in Ibid: p. 83.

⁴⁶Vide: Chapter 2:

this study,⁴⁷ in theory, it was important for both the Colonial Office and the B.S.A.Co. Board of Directors to keep up appearances and thus save the B.S.A.Co. Administration in that territory from its unrelenting critics.

What actually baffled most officials involved in this Zomba/Salisbury labour arrangement between 1907 and 1908, was the failure by the Nyasaland authorities to appreciate the solidity of the relationship between the R.N.L.B. and the government of Southern Rhodesia. The Bureau was, as a matter of fact, a para-statal organisation, funded and backed by the B.S.A.Co., together with other finance houses in London and Southern Africa, and not the simple private labour organisation that the Nyasaland government mistook it to be.⁴⁸ Accordingly, Lord Elgin, the Colonial Secretary, commented, for the benefit of Major Pearce, on the refusal of the government of Nyasaland to grant the R.N.L.B. permission to recruit labour in the Protectorate, pointing out that:

In further negotiations which may take place between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia you will, no doubt, bear in mind that the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau is a responsible body, and is sufficiently under the control of the Administration of Southern Rhodesia to justify you in permitting it to recruit labour in Nyasaland⁴⁹

In the end, the consent of the Imperial authorities and the B.S.A.Co. officials to allow the government of Southern Rhodesia, to participate actively in the process of Nyasaland labour migration, was merely cosmetic to hoodwink the Zomba authorities. Thus it is not surprising that for all the assertions and promises made by the Salisbury government to undertake the supervision of Nyasaland labour

⁴⁷Vide: Makambe: "Colonialism and Racism ..."

⁴⁸Vide: Supra: Chapter 5.

⁴⁹Lord Elgin to Major Pearce: December 3, 1907: in Ibid: p. 85.

as its own responsibility, the only material change made by this Administration, in that direction, is that it transferred the Inspectors of Native Compounds from the Native Department and made them answerable to the office of the Administrator, instead of the Chief Native Commissioners' as of old.⁵⁰ In most respects, the R.N.L.B. remained in charge of labour recruitment and forwarding of recruits to the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, whilst the Rhodesia Agricultural Union helped with the distribution of most of the farm labour recruited in Nyasaland.⁵¹ Such changes as these were certainly too insignificant to speak of, but provided here some measure of psychological satisfaction to the government of Nyasaland, which appeared reluctant to give in on this phenomenon of labour movement over which it had neither the will nor the means to control.

In a nutshell, it might be said that the pretence of the Salisbury Administration and London Wall, to assume shadowy control over Nyasaland labour immigration into Southern Rhodesia, paid off some dividends, as it was on the strength of this assumption that the first batch of 1,000 Nyasaland labourers, the so-called "experimental batch", were dispatched to Southern Rhodesia in January 1908.⁵² This "experimental batch" and subsequent groups of Nyasaland labourers sent into Southern Rhodesia throughout 1908 were, of course, governed by specific conditions on which the two governments had agreed on. The period of service for either farm or mine labour from Nyasaland was twelve months. They were all engaged on deferred pay basis, with one-half on their wages being compulsorily sent back to Zomba together with deductions for hut tax.

⁵⁰C.O. 417/451: Milton to Lord Selborne: January 20, 1908.

⁵¹C.O. 417/454: Earl of Crewe to Lord Selborne: December 18, 1908.

⁵²C.O. 417/451: Lord Selborne to Milton: Telegram: January 22, 1908.

These aspects of the Salisbury/Zomba agreement of 1907 were, apparently, some of those few stipulations on which the conditions of service for both categories of farm and mine labourers from Nyasaland were similar. In various other respects, these conditions differed quite considerably; with mine labourers getting a better bargain than their farm counterparts in the process. Thus on the question of wages, for example, Nyasa farm labourers were to receive 10/- each per month, for the first six months, and 12/-:6d for the last part of their one-year term of service, as compared to the wide-ranging rate of 22/- to 45/- per month promised to Nyasa mine labourers, depending on their skills as surface or underground workers. For the mine labourers, specific scales of diet and accommodation were also laid down by legislation, whereas those for farm labourers were not even defined. Finally, Nyasaland mine labourers were brought down by railway transport via Broken Hill and Livingstone to Bulawayo, whilst farm labourers were marched overland via Feira to Salisbury.⁵³

The rationale for the differentials between these two classes of Nyasaland labour was quite interesting. In the opinion of the Resident Commissioner for the B.S.A.Co. territories, Major James Fair, the justification for the superior treatment of mine labourers over issues like food and accommodation was that:

life on a farm {was} the natural existence of the native, {and} no special regulations {were} necessary, but ... in the case of mine boys, the life {was} to a great extent artificial.⁵⁴

⁵³C.O. 417/454: Conditions of Service applying to Natives of Nyasaland supplied {to} the Southern Rhodesian Administration for employment of farms and mines: Enclosed in Major J.G. Fair to Lord Selborne: October 27, 1908.

⁵⁴Ibid: Major Fair to Lord Selborne: October 27, 1908.

This explanation did not satisfy everybody however. In the Colonial Office, it was felt that the colonist farmers in Southern Rhodesia were likely to exploit this absence of specified regulations to their own advantage. One official, for instance, commented that:

Recent cases in (Southern) Rhodesia show that the farm natives are liable to abuse at the hands of the whites and have practically no legal remedy. I am inclined to think that the absence of regulations cannot be defended on the ground that farm life is natural to the native whereas mine life is not. The point rather is whether it is not desirable to have regulations securing fair treatment in matters of food and quarters at all events.⁵⁵

In any case, the allocation of Nyasaland labourers into mine and farm categories was not important by itself as such, because, in the long run, the high mortality of Nyasaland mine labourers was such that it nearly led to a total ban on all forms of Nyasaland labour recruitment for further service in Southern Rhodesia.⁵⁶ But the movement was allowed, at least, to take root solely on the strength of the low morbidity rate amongst Nyasaland farm labourers, in this destination area, and, therefore, paved the way for the dominance of this class of labour, especially in Mashonaland, up to the more recent times of Southern Rhodesia's history.⁵⁷

The Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesia labour arrangement of 1907/8 did not work very well and this failure was, to a large extent, to signify the peripatetic character of the whole plan on officially sponsored

⁵⁵ Ibid: Minute by A. Robinson: December 9, 1908.

⁵⁶ C.O. 417/476: Milton to Sharpe: March 24, 1909.

⁵⁷ For the dominance of Nyasaland labourers in Southern Rhodesia's farming industry in the 1940's and 1950's: Vide: J.C. Mitchell: "Wage Labour and African Population Movements in Central Africa:" in K.M. Barbour and R.M. Prothero (eds): Essays on African Population: Routledge and Kegan Paul: London: 1961: pp. 226-7.

labour supply from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia between 1907 and 1911. A number of factors were responsible for this uneven development of this particular labour supply during this period. In the first place, the high mortality rate of the Nyasaland mine labourers sent to the Battlefields mine in the Bubi district of Matabeleland in 1908, certainly did not warrant any further attempts by the Nyasaland authorities to cooperate on this matter of labour supply to Southern Rhodesia. Though the Administration of Southern Rhodesia tried to play down the adverse effects of the poor labour conditions, obtaining at the country's mining centres, by blaming the high mortality rate on such factors as the poor physique and susceptibility of Nyasaland labourers themselves, especially those from the Dowa and Lilongwe regions of Central Angoniland, to pneumonia; the long railway journey between Broken Hill and Bulawayo and what was termed, in Salisbury official circles, the "exceptionally early and trying winter" of 1908, stretching from April to November rather than ending in August, as was often the case in most years,⁵⁸ the argument would not impress the Nyasaland authorities from whom the Salisbury Administration was then requesting for more mine labour in March 1909.⁵⁹

The Nyasaland government was obviously unnerved by the high mortality rate amongst its nationals and was thus understandably reluctant to grant any further favours to Southern Rhodesia over mine labour from the Protectorate.⁶⁰ In this regard, Nyasaland authorities were supported by the Colonial Office, where the mortality rate of between 126.7 and 200 deaths per mille at the Battlefields mine was viewed as

⁵⁸C.O. 417/476: Milton to Sharpe: March 24, 1909.

⁵⁹Ibid: Milton to Sharpe: Telegram: March 25, 1909.

⁶⁰Ibid: Sharpe to Milton: Telegram: March 25, 1909.

"a shocking figure."⁶¹ Indeed, the Colonial Office was certainly quite quick to write off the Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesia labour arrangement, on these grounds, as a total failure and argued that Southern Rhodesian colonist employers should, as an alternative, look to the probability of securing their labour supply from German South-West Africa (Namibia) instead.⁶²

In the second place, it would appear that the controversy over the mortality rate amongst Nyasaland mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia was reinforced by the dubious approach of the Southern Rhodesian Administration, on the question of further labour supply from the Central African protectorate in 1909. The association of the Salisbury Administration with private labour touts, like George H. McCulloch for example, did not augur well at all for the future of the Nyasaland labour plan. In fact, the government of Nyasaland was itself quick to pick on this alliance of interests, as constituting an obstacle to the relationship between Zomba and Salisbury on Nyasaland labour supply.

McCulloch, as it so happened, was the former Native Commissioner of the Lomagundi district of Mashonaland; a position which he lost for marrying an African woman according to Shona customary law in 1903.⁶³ After this abrupt end to his career in the Native Department, this former official had consequently taken to stock trading and labour recruiting as alternative occupations. Apparently, it was during one of his stock-purchasing escapades to the Kilimanjaro region of German East Africa (Tanganyika) that this former B.S.A.Co. official observed, on his return journey to Southern Rhodesia through Nyasaland in January 1908,

⁶¹C.O. 417/460: Minute by Robinson to Just: September 10, 1909.

⁶²C.O. 417/476: Minute by Robinson to Lambert: March 13, 1909.

⁶³Vide: Makambe: "Colonialism and Racism"

the "well populated districts {of Central Angoniland} with the natives in need of work, and a good short route through Portuguese territory to Mashonaland."⁶⁴

On the basis of the above observations, McCulloch not only "brought a gang {of recruits} down {to Southern Rhodesia} ... {for} working on farms",⁶⁵ but also conceived a grandiose semi-permanent scheme, whereby he could possibly supply Nyasaland labour to the Mashonaland farming community on a regular basis. Thus an agreement was reached between this labour tout and the Mashonaland Farmers' Association in July 1908, under the terms of which McCulloch was to supply, at first, 1,000 labour recruits from the Dowa and Lilongwe districts of Central Angoniland to the Mashonaland farmers, in return for a capitation fee of about 10/- or 15/- for each labourer engaged by the farmers, once these recruits had arrived in Salisbury.⁶⁶ These Nyasaland recruits, who were supposed to use the Misale-Mtoko labour route via Tete in Portuguese territory, were, at the same time, expected to arrive in Southern Rhodesia by September or the beginning of October of each year, when the winter season was long ended, with the rain season about to start and, significantly, when labour was difficult to come by, as local Africans went to prepare their own fields.

The interesting feature of the McCulloch affair was not necessarily the readiness of one man to relieve the labour problem of Southern Rhodesia's farming industry, but the issues which it raised in terms of the insistence of the Nyasaland authorities over government control in the whole process of labour migration from the Protectorate to Southern

⁶⁴C.O. 417/500: G.H. McCulloch to Lord Selborne: April 2, 1909.

⁶⁵Ibid: Milton to Sharpe: Telegram: July 20, 1908.

⁶⁶Ibid: McCulloch to Lord Selborne: April 2, 1909.

Rhodesia. In the first place, McCulloch was placed under the ambit and control of his business partners, the Mashonaland Farmers' Association, and it was with the assistance of the Executive Committee of this organisation, when it pledged to accept responsibility in this labour arrangement, that this labour agent was able to procure accreditation from the government of Southern Rhodesia to proceed to Nyasaland and carry out his plans.

Secondly, other private interests were also involved in this arrangement, especially with regard to its potential profit value. One such man accordingly associated with the scheme was William Smith, a property dealer and an estate and mining agent based in Salisbury as well as a former General Manager to The Exploration (of) Land and Minerals Company Limited and The Rhodesia Goldfields Limited. The financial prospects, which the Nyasaland labour arrangement entailed, were of particular fascination to William Smith.⁶⁷ The third and final factor, in the McCulloch affair, was the position of the Salisbury Administration and its role in providing the credibility to McCulloch's enterprising plan on Nyasaland labour supply to Southern Rhodesia. The Salisbury government, with all its awareness that the Nyasaland authorities were averse to all forms of labour recruitment by private labour agents and touts, had greatly enhanced McCulloch's optimism on the probable success of his scheme by, allegedly, assuming control over the whole affair and informing McCulloch that:

You (McCulloch) are appointed to represent this (Southern Rhodesia) Government in the matter (of Nyasaland labour recruitment) and will act accordingly in that capacity..... (The) Administrator desires to impress upon you that as you represent this Government that every care must be

⁶⁷A 3/18/30/15: William Smith: Property, Estate and Mining Agent, Salisbury, to Milton: June 22, 1911.

taken to meet the wishes of the Nyasaland Government and to make the experiment such a success as to lead to further importation (of Nyasaland labour)⁶⁸

It was essentially this ambivalent attitude on the part of the Salisbury Administration, which mystified the Nyasaland authorities and certainly created a feeling of self-confidence for a private labour recruiter like McCulloch, at a time when it was apparent, in most official circles in South Central Africa, that labour recruiting for personal gain was nothing but a foolhardy exercise. The views of the Nyasaland government were, for instance, quite clear on private labour recruitment, right from the first negotiations between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia over labour supply in 1907, following the ban on the Nyasaland/Transvaal arrangement. As Sharpe was to emphasize once more in June 1909, with regard to the McCulloch affair, Nyasaland authorities were convinced that:

Nothing (could) be worse than the system which was formerly in force, under which irresponsible men such as G.H. McCulloch found their way North of the Zambesi, collected together by whatever devices appeared to them the most likely to succeed numbers of natives, took them South under conditions often of great discomfort, and finally handed them over to applicants (for labour) in Southern Rhodesia at so much money per head. Their (labour agents') actions were subject to no control, and in many cases they deceived the natives they collected both as to the amount of wages they were to receive, the description of work they were expected to do, and the length of time for which they were to be employed. No contracts were entered into before Magistrates or any other responsible officials, and the system generally was a most undesirable one.⁶⁹

⁶⁸C.O. 417/500: Secretary, Department of Administrator, Salisbury to McCulloch, Mtoko: Telegram: July, 1908.

⁶⁹C.O. 417/477: Sharpe to Lord Selborne: June 30, 1909.

With such strongly held views against the system of labour recruitment and touting by private agents and their repertoire of runners, it is clear that the Nyasaland government, from the start, succumbed to the McCulloch labour scheme in mid-1908 only through ignorance. Indeed, the assurances given by the Salisbury Administration on the matter were not quite straightforward and may have deceived the Zomba authorities on this score. For instance, Milton had assured Sharpe in July 1908 that:

McCulloch is known to me and I am prepared to accept responsibility for him and to see that engagements are carried out and {Nyasaland} natives repatriated under supervision at the end of {their} term. The gangs {of labourers} will come under notice of our {Southern Rhodesian} Native Commissioners from Mtoko to Salisbury on which road there are ample {food} supplies and McCulloch is prepared to satisfy your {Nyasaland} Government that they {labourers} will be properly supplied on {the} journey through Portuguese Territory.⁷⁰

From the foregoing evidence, it is apparent that neither the Salisbury government nor that of Nyasaland were aware of the risks involved in their commitment to the McCulloch affair. It is not sufficiently clear that much attention had, in the first place, been paid to the financial position of McCulloch in relation to this ambitious private enterprise. For its part, even the more gullible Salisbury Administration had never actually ascertained McCulloch's financial capability to meet the expenses the Nyasaland labour scheme entailed. All what the Salisbury authorities had informed McCulloch, as a pre-condition to the successful implementation of the labour importation plan this agent was about to embark on, was that he would

⁷⁰C.O. 417/500: Milton to Sharpe: Telegram: July 20, 1908.

"have to satisfy this {Salisbury} Administration that you {McCulloch} have made proper arrangements for feeding, rest, and general care of natives on their way down {to Southern Rhodesia}." ⁷¹ But even this belated requirement, which would have naturally reminded McCulloch of his financial obligations in this Nyasaland labour plan, had little effect on a man who was thus informed at Mtoko, well on his way to the Central African protectorate.

It might be assumed here that this oversight, on the part of the Salisbury government, to emphasize the importance of adequate capital outlay for the proper care of the Nyasaland labour recruits, as stipulated many times over by the Nyasaland government itself, may have spurred McCulloch to proceed with his plan in spite of the very little capital which he then had. In essence, McCulloch had with him, when he set out for Lilongwe, a sum of £4.00 only, raised from his own private sources. From this sum of money, he discovered he was required to pay a tax advance of 6/- each for the 1,000 labour recruits he needed; 1/- each for the official stamp at the local pass office in the Lilongwe district; 3/- for a blanket, 3/- for a jersey and 2/- for medical examination for each one of the Nyasaland labourers recruited for farmwork in Southern Rhodesia. According to McCulloch's own simple estimate, these requirements, insisted on by the Nyasaland authorities, were bound to cost him about £750. ⁷²

For the reasons given above, McCulloch, therefore, decided to raise his labour recruits, in the Lilongwe district, as cheaply as possible. To effect economy in the whole process, it became even necessary for him

⁷¹Ibid: Secretary, Department of Administrator, Salisbury, to McCulloch, Mtoko: Telegram: July 23, 1908.

⁷²Ibid: McCulloch, Lilongwe to Charter, Salisbury; Telegram: August 31, 1908.

to ask for advances on supplies from the African Lakes Corporation, on the strength of a loan on which the Nyasaland government itself was expected to provide the necessary guarantees for his sake. He also decided on engaging a missionary doctor, at a cheaper rate, to carry out the requisite medical examination of recruits. But when this proved impracticable too, he applied to the Superintendent of Native Affairs for permission to do away with this pre-condition altogether, pleading, at the same time, that the labour scheme he was thus pursuing was only a private enterprise and that scrapping away the normal pre-conditions to labour recruitment was "consistent with my {McCulloch's} position as an unpaid agent"⁷³

Thus through the sheer force of those constraints imposed onto this labour agent by and on account of his indigence, McCulloch spoilt the whole labour arrangement for his sponsors by unwittingly revealing that the scheme had, after all, been conceived as a private profit-making business venture and that the role of the government of Southern Rhodesia, in the affair, was, essentially, perfunctory. Under these circumstances, the McCulloch venture of 1908, on Nyasaland labour for the colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia, died a natural death. The government of Nyasaland was by no means enchanted by private deals on labour supply from their territory. Sharpe, the Governor of Nyasaland, was quite scathing and forthright in his condemnation of the McCulloch affair, when he stated that:

In fact it {the McCulloch affair} was the precise system which I have for years been working to do away with; and it would have been totally impossible for me in the face of all that has been said and written on the matter {labour recruitment} previously to have consented to allow G.H. McCulloch to carry out his venture.⁷⁴

⁷³Ibid: McCulloch to Lord Selborne: April 2, 1909.

⁷⁴C.O. 417/477: Sharpe to Lord Selborne: June 30, 1909.

Not even McCulloch's threats to engage the services of W.P. Schreiner, the well known Cape Town lawyer, and sue the government of Nyasaland for damages, would here reverse the decision of the Zomba authorities to expell this labour agent from their territory.⁷⁵

In the final analysis, it was only on compassionate grounds that McCulloch was permitted to serve as an escort to Nyasaland labour recruits forwarded to Fort Jameson, whence they were in turn to be passed on to Southern Rhodesia via Feira by Hawksley. This Bureau official at Fort Jameson was, for the convenience of the Nyasaland labour scheme and to appease the Nyasaland authorities in particular, quite aptly dubbed the "Government (Southern Rhodesian) Inspector and Agent" or just "the Agent for the Southern Rhodesia Government at Fort Jameson."⁷⁶ It was, therefore, through the collusion between the R.N.L.B. and the Salisbury Administration that McCulloch was finally saved from utter embarrassment, whilst the Nyasaland farm labour scheme was, for its part, salvaged from an abrupt end.

From the preceding argument, it is evident that whilst labour migration from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia was well established by the first decade of the twentieth century, the movement was, however, not always a smooth one. It was not infrequently bedevilled by a number of issues which created some measure of mistrust and misunderstanding between the government of Southern Rhodesia, in whose territory Nyasaland migrant labour was destined for employment, and that of Nyasaland, which supplied, if it could, this labour the colonist employers in Southern Rhodesia were greatly in need of. Issues of

⁷⁵C.O. 417/500: McCulloch to Major Pearce: Telegram: September 9, 1908.

⁷⁶Ibid: Milton to Sharpe: Telegram: August 31, 1908 and Sharpe to Milton: Telegram: September 1, 1908.

various kinds, like the McCulloch affair and the high morbidity rate amongst Nyasaland labourers in Southern Rhodesia, very often appeared to undermine the foundations on which inter-governmental agreements on this class of labour migration were based. In 1909, when Zomba was beginning to manifest a cold attitude towards labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, it became necessary for the Salisbury government to send trusted envoys to the Central African protectorate, to make new negotiations and give further assurances on the welfare of the Nyasaland labourers during the course of their service in Southern Rhodesia. This delegation, which left Salisbury for Zomba between July and September 1909, consisted of H.M. Hole, the well trusted B.S.A.Co. official and a veteran of many labour missions to foreign lands like Aden in 1901,⁷⁷ and P.B.S. Wrey, a director of several mining companies in Southern Rhodesia and current Chairman of the R.N.L.B.

The objectives of the Hole/Wrey labour mission to Zomba, in the second half of 1909, were, of course, many and wide-ranging. In the first place, it was hoped that the mission would allay the fears of the Nyasaland authorities over the mortality rate amongst labourers from that territory and, by so doing, obviate the impending ban on Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, which was evidently in the pipeline, especially that the disapproval of the Nyasaland authorities on the issue had the support of the Colonial Office.⁷⁸ Secondly, the government of Southern Rhodesia was anxious to explain its relationship with the R.N.L.B. and the role of the latter in the processes of labour mobilisation and the distribution of both local and foreign African labour supplies in Southern Rhodesia. For this reason, Hole, the

⁷⁷Vide Supra: Chapter 3.

⁷⁸C.O. 417/466: Major Fair to Sir Hely-Hutchinson: July 31, 1909.

representative of the Salisbury Administration, was quick to point out to Sharpe, the Governor of Nyasaland, in Zomba that "Mr. Wrey and myself {Hole} {represented} a common cause {on labour supply}" The aim here was "to dispel any hesitation which the Governor might have {had} in his mind as to dealing directly with the Chairman {of the Bureau} in the discussion {on labour} which we hoped would ensue."⁷⁹ The attitude of the Nyasaland authorities towards private labour agents and labour organisations, run by and for the benefit of private persons, was too well known to be ignored even by accredited envoys like Hole and Wrey.

Thirdly, a large proportion of colonist employers in Southern Rhodesia had apparently relied, to a very large extent, on independent labour immigration from Nyasaland and the volume of this independent labour influx into the country up to 1909 was such that most of these employers may have been quite contented with the state of affairs. In this respect, C. Knipe, the former Collector of the Kota-Kota district of Nyasaland but since 1903 a district manager of W.N.L.A. in that territory, may not have been quite off the mark, when he gave his somewhat over-dramatized version on the extent of this independent Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, after a visit to that country in 1907. Knipe indicated in January 1908:

... I found during my recent visit to Salisbury that the whole of the town was over-run by Nyasaland natives. In the public offices, in the shops, in the factories, in private houses and hotels the lesser services were invariably performed by these natives. The common language in the streets was Chinyanja.⁸⁰

⁷⁹C.O. 417/477: Hole, Secretary, Department of Administration to Milton: September 6, 1909.

⁸⁰C. Knipe, District Manager, W.N.L.A. to Major Pearce: Zomba: January 11, 1908: in Correspondence Relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate p. 111.

Sharpe himself admitted as much on the extent of independent labour emigration from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia when he stated in June 1909 that:

Southern Rhodesia undoubtedly presents one of the most advantageous markets for both skilled and unskilled ordinary labour from Nyasaland. Many thousands of Protectorate {Nyasaland} natives are ready to go there and this Government {of Nyasaland} is ready to facilitate such emigration so long as the system is controlled by the two Governments and is entirely under Government supervision.⁸¹

Yet whilst confessing to this extensive nature of independent labour emigration to a territory where employment centres like the Wankie Colliery were alleged to be quite popular amongst Nyasaland labour migrants, because the Wankie district was favourably spoken of as having "a fairly hot climate {which} suits Nyasaland natives,"⁸² the Nyasaland authorities, at the same time, aroused a wave of concern in Southern Rhodesia, when, by July 1909, they adopted a strictly restrictive attitude towards independent labour emigration. A hint by Governor Sharpe that a stage might be reached when all independent labour migrants from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia had to be turned back, obviously, caused a lot of anxiety in Salisbury. It was, therefore, one of the aims of the Hole/Wrey mission to Zomba in 1909, to persuade the Nyasaland government to reverse its attitude on independent labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and, at the same time, provide assurances to the officials concerned, that "a certain proportion of these independent labour-seekers {had to be} intercepted by the Bureau's

⁸¹C.O. 417/477: Sharpe to Lord Selborne: June 30, 1909.

⁸²Report and Suggestions relating to Nyasaland Natives ... by Casson: November, 1907: in Ibid: p. 81.

agent at Kanyemba's (on the border of Southern Rhodesia) and if found fit for work and willing to accept agreements with the Bureau, were thenceforth treated in the same manner as other natives engaged by them (the Bureau)."⁸³

The final aim of the Hole/Wrey labour mission to Nyasaland in 1909, dealt with the problem of transit for the Nyasaland labour migrants through the Portuguese territory of Mozambique. The road from the districts of Southern Nyasaland, via Tete on the Zambesi, to Mtoko or other entreports along Southern Rhodesia's north-eastern frontier, was one of the major labour routes popularly used by migrants from Nyasaland. But in the first decade of the twentieth century, the difficulties encountered by these migrants were legion. Even for those migrants from the northern and central regions of Nyasaland, who preferred to take alternative labour routes like the Fort Jameson-Feira and the Fort Jameson-Broken Hill labour routes through North-Eastern and North-Western Rhodesia, friendly sister British possessions, the various impedimenta which the Nyasaland labour migrants faced on their way to Southern Rhodesia were quite unnerving.⁸⁴

For those labourers who passed through the Portuguese territory, either via Tete or at any other crossing-point lower down the Zambesi, the trials they faced were a veritable test of their resolve to proceed for work in the labour markets of the South. In 1904, Codrington had aptly pointed out the nature of these migrants' problems through the Portuguese territory, when he stated that:

They (Nyasaland migrants) were robbed and murdered passing through Portuguese territory, were

⁸³C.O. 417/477: Hole to Milton: September 6, 1909.

⁸⁴Vide: Supra: pp.

swindled at the Zambesi ferry and died of thirst
and starvation on unknown routes. In spite of
this they persevered⁸⁵

It was, therefore, to problems of this complexion, that the official party of Hole and Wrey to Zomba had to pay attention. For this reason, these envoys negotiated with the Nyasaland government on the need for the construction of a satisfactory labour route to Mashonaland via Tete and Mtoko, for the convenience of the labourers. Besides, consultations were also carried out, by these envoys, with the Governor of Tete and the Governor-General of Mozambique at Delagoa Bay on the matter in August 1909.

From Salisbury's point of view, the Hole/Wrey labour mission to Zomba was quite a success. For a period, it apparently facilitated the ebb and flow of labour between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia, to the great delight of the colonist employers in the latter territory and with minimum conflict between the two governments involved. After giving their assurances to tighten up all the screws and close those possible loopholes, through which Nyasaland independent migrant labour could possibly frustrate the attempts of the Protectorate government to bring this kind of labour movement under control, the Southern Rhodesian envoys were thus able to lay down the necessary infrastructure for a successful labour importation scheme from the Central African protectorate. Having convinced the Nyasaland authorities too on the degree of mutual dependence between the R.N.I.B. and the government of Southern Rhodesia, it became possible, in the final analysis, for Hawksley, the Bureau Inspector at Fort Jameson in North-Eastern Rhodesia, to effectively assume the role of an official of both the Bureau and the government of Southern Rhodesia in the two territories of Nyasaland and North-Eastern

⁸⁵C.O. 417/401: Codrington to Sharpe: June 25, 1904.

Rhodesia. It was Hawksley's duty, in this ambivalent role, to act as a linkman between the Bureau and the two governments concerned on the matter of Nyasaland labour supply to Southern Rhodesia and to inform the officials concerned on such issues as the distribution of Nyasaland recruits, deaths and financial problems when they arose.⁸⁶ The duties of the labour agents operating in both North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland for Southern Rhodesian interests were to be drawn up and supervised by Hawksley himself, who was also, at the same time, required to organise their payment on salary and commission basis.⁸⁷

One such agent, the latest addition to the Bureau retinue in 1909, was Maryan Steblechi, a former notorious private labour recruiter in early Nyasaland and lately a functionary of W.N.L.A., before this body's activities were temporarily prohibited in 1907.⁸⁸ For Wrey and Hole, the two Southern Rhodesian envoys, Steblechi was a valuable asset for the success of their Nyasaland labour scheme. He was appointed on terms which stipulated a basic salary of £5 a month and a commission of 7/- per head for every labourer he recruited and forwarded to Hawksley at Fort Jameson;⁸⁹ an assignment which this seasoned recruiter promised to carry out "with utmost care and conscientiousness."⁹⁰

Steblechi's services were certainly valued by the Hole/Wrey party in a number of ways. For instance, it may be pertinent to observe here that to avoid the recurrence of the disaster, which characterized the 1907/8 Nyasaland labour experiment, when the high mortality rate amongst Nyasaland mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia literally scared most

⁸⁶C.O. 417/477: Hole, Zomba, to Hawksley, Fort Jameson: July 29, 1909.

⁸⁷Ibid: Wrey to Hawksley: July 29, 1909.

⁸⁸Krishnamurthy: Land and Labour in Nyasaland 1891-1914: pp. 249-50.

⁸⁹C.O. 417/477: Hole, at Domira Bay, to Steblechi: August 3, 1909.

⁹⁰Ibid: Steblechi to Hole: August 3, 1909.

officials associated with the plan, the two Southern Rhodesian envoys insisted in 1909, that of the 1500 potential mine labourers and the 800 farm labour recruits intended for employment in Southern Rhodesia, a greater proportion of these should be raised, at least, from the Ngoni of the Mombera district and the Yao of the South Nyasa district. Very little labour from the Dowa and the Lilongwe districts was favourably regarded in Southern Rhodesia, since the colonist employers and officials in that territory associated the high mortality rate amongst the Nyasaland recruits brought down in 1907/8 with the peoples of these two districts, rather than with the endermic problems of their territory's mining industry.

In a nutshell, it appears that by 1909, it had become an article of faith amongst the colonists of Southern Rhodesia that labour material from the Dowa and Lilongwe districts was "not the most satisfactory in respect of physique or constitution", although it was also apparent to the Nyasaland officials that these two areas were likely to yield, for Southern Rhodesia's requirements, the greatest labour surplus in the protectorate.⁹¹ Once they had, however, conceived this kind of prejudice against the Chipeta, Chewa and other formerly non-belligerent ethnic groups of the protectorate, nothing would persuade these colonist employers in Southern Rhodesia to the contrary. What they required as labourers, in this particular instance in 1909, were the former militaristic Ngoni and Yao recruits, whose physique they considered was "of a robust and satisfactory type."⁹²

The Southern Rhodesian colonist attitudes, obviously helped to promote what became known, in more recent times, as the peculiar proclivities of various Nyasaland ethnic groups for specific occupations

⁹¹Ibid: Hole to Milton: September 6, 1909.

⁹²Ibid.

during the course of their diaspora in the labour markets of the South. An apt example here is the generalized assumption that the Tonga labour migrants were, for instance, averse to minework, which their Tumbuka compatriots appear to have preferred and gone for en masse.⁹³ However, it was in situations of this kind, where eclectic tendencies and irrational stereotypes seem to have had their own way, with regard to various classes of labour material, that the need for labour agents of Steblechi's calibre, well acquainted with the local conditions in Nyasaland, became a paramount factor which the Southern Rhodesian envoys could not ignore.

The Hole/Wrey mission to Zomba may have succeeded in another aspect of Nyasaland labour migration to the South; that is, the attempt to minimise the hazards faced by these labour migrants through the Portuguese territory. Once the Governor-General of the Portuguese territory in Lourenco Marques had given his pledge that Nyasaland recruits could pass via Tete "provided that they {came} quite willingly and {remained} subject to the Laws and Regulations {of Mozambique}" and also that they should not be accompanied by soldiers,⁹⁴ it became easier for Hole and Wrey to negotiate the terms governing particular aspects of their labour scheme with the Governor of Tete. In a way, it might be said that the requests of the two Salisbury envoys, to have the Bureau allowed to establish necessary facilities for the convenience of the Nyasaland labour migrants to Southern Rhodesia via Tete, were timely. Already three roughly hued roads converged at Tete by mid-1909. Two of these ran north and east from Tete and were quite convenient for

⁹³J. Van Velsen: "Labour Migration as a Positive Factor in the Continuity of the Tonga Society:" in A. Southall (ed.): Social Change in Modern Africa: Oxford University Press: London: 1961: pp. 233-4.

⁹⁴C.O. 417/477: Governor-General, Lourenco Marques, to Governor, Tete: Telegram (Translation): n.d.

labourers from several areas of Nyasaland. The road running northwards from Tete, for instance, was in this case considered very convenient for labourers from such districts as the Dedza, Lilongwe, Dowa and the like, whilst the easterly one was assigned to those Nyasaland labourers from the Shire Highlands and the South-Central districts of the Protectorate. The third road ran in the southwards direction from Tete to a place called Marengo, close to the borders of Southern Rhodesia with the Tete province of the Mozambique territory.

In addition to the Portuguese sanction that Nyasaland labour, under proper escort, could make use of the existing crude roads to and from Southern Rhodesia, Hole and Wrey were, it would appear, also able to appoint agents, resident at Tete, to represent Bureau and Southern Rhodesian interests in relation to labourers from Nyasaland passing through that part of the Portuguese territory. Two important firms based at Tete were here appointed to fulfill these duties. These were the African Lakes Corporation Ltd. and Messrs Ludwig Deuss & Co.⁹⁵ The former was particularly more co-operative on this matter as it had vested interests of its own in Nyasaland, where the labour in question was expected to come from. From Hole's point view, and one which indicated that he was quite optimistic that these facilities at Tete should be in full use by 1910, the only remaining part to a complete and fully-fledged labour infrastructure was the absence of a Native Commissioner's office on the Southern Rhodesian side, opposite Marengo in Portuguese territory, where pass and medical officers could be placed, to take charge of those Nyasaland labour migrants entering the country along the Tete-Marengo route.⁹⁶

⁹⁵Ibid: Hole to Milton: September 6, 1909.

⁹⁶Ibid.

The zest and scrupulousness which Hole and Wrey manifested in their Nyasaland labour mission in 1909, certainly deserved tangible dividends in return. At least this was the general expectation shared amongst the sponsors of these two envoys to Zomba. London Wall, for example, expressed this optimism in October 1909, in a rather unguarded manner, when it observed that:

The result of the deputation {Hole and Wrey} may be regarded as eminently satisfactory, and it is hoped that the care which will be taken of the {Nyasaland} natives sent into {Southern} Rhodesia and their treatment at the mines to which they are sent will be such as will satisfy the Administration of Nyasaland that {Southern} Rhodesia presents a desirable field for the employment of their natives, and that the experimental batches that will shortly be sent down will be the precursors of a continuous supply of natives from the {Nyasaland} Protectorate.⁹⁷

Unfortunately, however, the course of events in both Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia between 1909 and 1911, could neither sustain this optimism of the B.S.A.Co. officials nor meet their expectations. On the contrary, inter-governmental co-operation between the two territories was under severe strain, whilst labour migration from Nyasaland as a phenomenon, faced problems of such dimensions that they threatened its very existence.

It may thus be remarked here that Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia as a movement had never really enjoyed the popularity approximating that associated with a parallel contemporary exodus to the Rand. In both official and colonist circles in Nyasaland, labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia was deeply resented for a variety of

⁹⁷ Ibid: Memorandum on Native Labour Recruiting in Nyasaland Protectorate and the Position of the R.N.L.B., By H. Price Powell, Chief Clerk, B.S.A.Co.; October 12, 1909.

reasons, which did not seem to apply with equal force to the Transvaal case. In the event, it is quite evident that the various agreements between the two governments, on Nyasaland labour supply, were, essentially, rammed down the throats of the Zomba authorities by sheer force of circumstances. For instance, the argument pursued by the Colonial Office, in restricting Nyasaland labour migration to the Transvaal in 1907, was cogent enough, on account of the high mortality rate amongst Nyasaland labour migrants at the Rand and the subsequent outbreak of diseases, like beriberi, amongst these labourers even after returning to their homeland in Nyasaland.⁹⁸ Such concrete evidence on the ill-health of Nyasaland migrants to the Rand may have, of course, proved the case of the Colonial Office, but, on the contrary, it never successfully dissuaded Nyasaland officials and colonists against their conviction and faith in the practical benefits of the 1903-7 labour arrangement between Nyasaland and the Transvaal. All what the Nyasaland authorities were looking for, in substituting the Nyasaland/Transvaal arrangement with the Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesia one in 1907, was a credible solution by means of which they could alleviate those problems arising out of the ban on labour recruitment for the Rand.

On this score, most officials in Zomba were quite agreed that the problem of surplus labour and unemployment in Nyasaland, especially during the dry season, was bound to create complications for the Nyasaland Administration. In this instance, the situation was not at all helped by the reduction of the local railway companies' labour force in 1907 by between 10,000 and 12,000 men, as they neared the completion of the earthworks on the Shire Highlands Railway, in the South

⁹⁸C.O. 525/17: Sharpe to C.O.: March 8, 1907.

of the country.⁹⁹ Moreover, this glut of labour supply on the local market in Nyasaland was considerably worsened by extensive immigration of the Nguru or the Lomwe of the adjoining Portuguese territory into the Shire Highlands region, estimated in 1907 at about four or five thousand men annually, thus resulting in a state of affairs whereby these Portuguese colonial residents were, allegedly, "{taking} large sums of cash out of Nyasaland into Portuguese territory to the loss of the Hut-tax Revenue and the Customs Revenue of Nyasaland, ... {whilst} at the same time thousands of Nyasaland natives {were} unable to earn {locally} the money necessary to pay their taxes."¹⁰⁰ Official resentment against Nguru immigration into the Nyasaland Protectorate and the problems they created for an already flooded local labour market were such that a call was made to arrest this development, by introducing restrictive legislation on the pattern of the North-Western Rhodesia Proclamation No. 19 of 1904, which severely restricted, in theory, alien immigration from Angola into Barotseland.¹⁰¹

Whilst official opposition in Nyasaland to the ban on labour recruitment for the Rand was based on anxieties over loss of revenue and associated problems of administrative nature, unofficial opposition, on the other hand, had its own specific areas of concern in the matter as well. A section of the planters, represented by Allan F. Kidney of the African Lakes Corporation and an unofficial member of the Nyasaland Legislative Council, for example, had never accepted the decision of the Nyasaland government and the Colonial Office to put an end to officially assisted labour migration to the Transvaal and the resultant Southern

⁹⁹Sharpe to C.O.; November 3, 1907: in Correspondence Relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate: p. 74.

¹⁰⁰Report and Suggestions relating to Nyasaland Natives at work, and proceeding to, Southern Rhodesia by J.C. Casson: November, 1907: in Ibid: p. 84.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

Rhodesian alternative arrangement, which these restrictions entailed. Kidney and his followers were, obviously, a different breed from the colonist school represented by Hynde and his newspaper the Central African Times, which had opposed all forms of labour emigration from Nyasaland whether to the Rand or to Southern Rhodesia, thus earning for the Hynde camp the dubious reputation of being singled out by their opponents, as "a small handful of ... chronic malcontents."¹⁰²

For Kidney and those tobacco planters who supported his views, labour migration from Nyasaland to the Rand was, indeed, something too fundamental to be interpreted purely in terms of the denudation of labour supply, which it wrought onto the local labour market. The quid pro quo granted to Nyasaland by the Transvaal, in form of free import of Nyasaland tobacco into that country and the treatment of this commodity on equal terms with the Transvaal leaf, a move that had apparently occasioned some outcry from the Transvaal Farmers' Association, were deemed here sufficient benefits the tobacco growing lobby of the Nyasaland Protectorate could not afford to lose.

In fact, as early as October 1907, Kidney had resolutely argued against any measures, on the part of the Nyasaland government, which might endanger the progress the territory's tobacco industry had made between 1903 and 1907, due to the privileges which it enjoyed on the Transvaal market, in return for Nyasaland labour then being utilized on the Rand. For this reason, Nyasaland tobacco was alleged to have, successfully, fetched very high prices in Johannesburg, selling in October 1907, for instance, at about 8½d per lb; a price which it could never have fetched on the British open markets, where superior American

¹⁰²C.O. 525/24: Allan F. Kidney, Blantyre to Sharpe, Zomba, June 25, 1908.

leaf reigned supreme. In view of these facts, tobacco planters in Nyasaland had good cause to lament the prospects of an impending suspension of the Nyasaland/Transvaal labour arrangement, which they regarded as "a serious {drawback} to the tobacco industry in this country {Nyasaland}." ¹⁰³

An interesting dimension to the general opposition to Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, between 1907 and 1909, was the reluctance of W.N.L.A. agents and their sympathizers, operating in South Central Africa, to accept the 1907 Colonial Office ruling against Nyasaland labour recruitment for the Transvaal as a hard and fast rule which could not be challenged in any manner. W.N.L.A., whose activities in connection with Nyasaland labour were being seriously threatened by the new developments to canalize an asset which it had hitherto considered its preserve to new destination centres, took a very active part to discredit and undermine the new Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesia labour arrangement. To this end, Knipe, the W.N.L.A.'s district manager in Nyasaland, informed the Nyasaland government in January 1908 on the futility of the new labour plan, due to what he regarded as the unpopularity of the Southern Rhodesian mines and other centres of employment in that territory. In his lurid account on the conditions obtaining in Southern Rhodesia and their role in alienating the African labourers, Knipe concluded:

During my recent visit {in 1907} to Salisbury I made it my business to find out why natives would not go to these mines, and what was the cause of their extreme shortage of labour. The solution was not hard to arrive at. In the first place there is no efficient Government supervision of the employers of labour, but, at the same time grave scandals have been exposed, hushed up, and nothing

¹⁰³ Ibid: Kidney to Sharpe: October 31, 1907.

done to bring the fault home to the offenders. I found that the natives were improperly housed amid unsanitary conditions, scantily fed, and questionable methods employed in paying their wages. By the continuance of this short-sighted policy for many years it has naturally come about that {Southern} Rhodesia is the last place our {Nyasaland} natives wish to go to.¹⁰⁴

Much of what Knipe revealed here on the poor labour conditions on the Southern Rhodesian mines was quite correct.¹⁰⁵ But on this particular occasion, it would appear that this Nyasaland-based W.N.L.A. boss, simply, hoped to promote the cause of his employers by pulling away the rug from under the feet of his opponents rather than positively arguing the merits of the Rand case before the Nyasaland authorities. In spite of this obviously unfavourable comparison between the Southern Rhodesia and Rand labour markets, no amount of persuasion could, however, reverse the decision of the Imperial government on the recruitment of Nyasaland labour for work in the Transvaal. In this connection, perhaps it may have been better for Knipe to argue against the Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesia labour plan of 1907/8, by emphasizing the threat which W.N.L.A. deliberately intended to pose to the Nyasaland authorities by stationing its agents in the Portuguese territory, on the westerly and eastern borders of the Nyasaland Protectorate.

With W.N.L.A. basis in places like Anguruland and the domain of the Companhia do Nyassa in the Portuguese territory, it was hoped that W.N.L.A. could effectively weaken the basic foundation of the Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesia labour arrangement, by creating a situation whereby "... gangs {of Nyasaland migrants} {would} go round the corner and present themselves as Portuguese natives, ... {and arriving} with

¹⁰⁴Knipe to Major Pearce: January 11, 1908: in Correspondence Relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate ... p. 110.

¹⁰⁵Vide: Infra: Chapter 8.

fictitious names and Portuguese villages" before respective W.N.L.A. agents.¹⁰⁶ In their optimism, W.N.L.A. agents were convinced that however well-intentioned the Nyasaland authorities were in fulfilling their side of the bargain with Southern Rhodesia over labour supply, W.N.L.A. would still steal the show, on account of the "popularity" of the Rand mines amongst Nyasaland Africans and because of the improbability of policing the Nyasaland borders with the neighbouring Portuguese possession, through which W.N.L.A. hoped that "Nyasaland natives {would} swarm over {into Portuguese territory} and request to be engaged {by W.N.L.A. agents}."¹⁰⁷

Although all these various forms of opposition on Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia indicated above may have appeared somewhat ineffectual, especially in the early stages of the 1907-9 period when this labour migration was in progress, the mood of the Nyasaland authorities themselves was decidedly hardening towards the movement, either as a spontaneous phenomenon or as an officially approved arrangement, by the time 1909 came to an end. Already in this particular year, legislation was introduced in Nyasaland stream-lining the trend of labour emigration to labour markets outside the Protectorate on independent basis. Under the new Employment of Natives Ordinance 1909, it was becoming increasingly difficult for potential labour emigrants to leave Nyasaland, unless they had satisfied the Resident Magistrates of their respective districts that they had adequately discharged their financial responsibilities, in terms of the payment of hut tax or the maintenance of their families during the course of their absence from the Protectorate. In fact, it was only after satisfying these pre-conditions

¹⁰⁶ Knipe to Major Pearce: January 11, 1908: in Ibid: pp. 111-2.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

that potential labour migrants could obtain passes from their respective Magistrates for leaving the territory.

Conversely, any infringement of this legislation was severely dealt with in order to deter uncontrolled exodus from the Protectorate. For Nyasaland Africans who left the country to seek employment elsewhere by fraudulent means, for instance, the punishment they invoked onto themselves, in the process, was a fine of £1 or three months imprisonment and for unauthorized labour agents, carrying out labour recruiting activities by clandestine means, they were here liable to a £100 fine or a year's imprisonment. In the case of labour agents falling foul of official requirements, this 1909 Ordinance was quite explicit in its restrictive intentions. Under Part III (25) of this law, only the Governor of Nyasaland was authorized to give written permission to anybody for a licence to recruit labour for services outside the country and that after several conditions had been met to this official's satisfaction. Otherwise the 1909 Ordinance clearly stated that:

..... no person shall engage or take to be employed outside the {Nyasaland} Protectorate any native or cause or attempt to cause any native to leave the Protectorate by means of any inducement, promise, representation, suggestion or advice whatsoever.¹⁰⁸

In short, by 1909, the Nyasaland authorities were beginning to tighten their hold on Nyasaland labour migration to regions South of the Zambesi. Whilst the Nyasaland African had a right to seek employment wherever he liked, the 1909 Ordinance saw to it that the pass system, which it prescribed in the process, regulated and checked the exodus of labour from the territory. Through a legislative mechanism

¹⁰⁸ Report of the Committee Appointed to Enquire into Emigrant Labour: loc. cit.

like the 1909 Ordinance, Nyasaland authorities, who had hitherto been faced with two alternatives, that is, either to ignore the then established stream of labour emigration altogether or recognise the dimensions of the movement and accordingly control it, were thus forced here to resort to the second alternative. The concern of these authorities was, essentially, based on their fear that once independent labour migration was allowed to run amock, the problems it implied for the future of the Protectorate were too immense. In a Legislative Council debate on this matter in 1909, for instance, this official concern was certainly engendered by the state of affairs in the Tonga districts in the northern part of Nyasaland, where, it was alleged, "hardly any able bodied man could be found - only old men, women and children (having remained with) all the men having left for South Africa."¹⁰⁹

In theory, the measures prescribed by the 1909 Ordinance on Nyasaland labour emigration appeared to work, especially that between 1909 and 1934, the only permit granted by the Governor of Nyasaland to recruit labour for external use was that connected with construction work on the Trans-Zambesian Railway, connecting Nyasaland to Mozambique. But, in practice, independent labour migration from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia and other distant centres of employment proceeded unabated. Such a situation was precipitated by a number of varied factors. The authorities of neighbouring countries, for instance, never regarded the Nyasaland pass, in the first place, as a necessity for potential labourers from that territory, whilst, at the same time, they tended to pay a lot of attention to the state of the labour markets in their own countries. Moreover, the pre-conditions which required Nyasaland labour

¹⁰⁹ Ibid: pp. 11-2.

migrants to provide financial support to their families and meet other obligations before leaving the country, proved counter-productive in the end, especially as these migrants were, as a matter of fact, leaving their own country to look for the money they did not possess. In consequence, the volume of clandestine migration visibly increased between 1909 and 1934.¹¹⁰

In the final analysis, it could, therefore, be said that the government of Nyasaland had become, by 1909, less responsive and co-operative over Southern Rhodesia's labour demands. By its 1909 legislation, the Nyasaland government drew up a labour policy which, for the next two and a half decades, disengaged it from any commitments connected with the labour requirements of colonist employers in neighbouring territories. As far as Southern Rhodesia was concerned, the negative aspects of Nyasaland's labour policy, after Sharpe's departure from that territory in 1910, became even more pronounced than before. The new governor of Nyasaland, Sir William Manning, was even less sympathetic to Southern Rhodesia's cause than any of his predecessors and thus took bolder measures than those ever taken by any of his predecessors, to rectify the state of affairs. Of course, it might be said that Manning's restrictive labour policy may have been merely in keeping with the 1909 legislation. But this was only one aspect of the matter. The colonist employers of labour and officials in Southern Rhodesia too were themselves, in many ways, responsible for the outcome, which inexorably annulled all forms of governmental co-operation over the issue of Nyasaland labour supply for the Southern Rhodesia labour market.

During the years 1909 and 1911, for example, when the argument for and against labour migration to Southern Rhodesia was still in progress

¹¹⁰Ibid: pp. 12-3.

in the boardrooms of Nyasaland, it became apparent, to Zomba officials, that little attention was actually being paid to the welfare of Nyasaland labourers in Southern Rhodesia. In May 1909, for instance, Casson, the Superintendent of Native Affairs, had complained about the brutal treatment of Nyasaland labourers and the mortality rate amongst these workers engaged in Southern Rhodesia, with particular reference to conditions at the Battlefields mine near Bulawayo.¹¹¹ In August 1909, Sharpe had also expressed his concern to the Colonial Office over his discovery that, contrary to the misleading assurances by Southern Rhodesian officials and colonist employers asserting that the mortality rate amongst Nyasaland labourers in that territory was "only 55 per mille per annum," the real figure was "162 per mille ..."; a higher death toll than that of the Rand mines, averaging between 130 and 156 deaths per thousand labourers.¹¹²

This discovery by the Nyasaland authorities on the existing conditions of employment in Southern Rhodesia, particularly at a time when Zomba had put up a brave fight for Southern Rhodesia's sake against the Colonial Office decision to raise labour in Nyasaland for the Lake Magadi Railway in Uganda in February 1909,¹¹³ may have, obviously, signified the highest mark of betrayal. But for all its zeal, the Zomba government could only extract assertions and promises, from the Salisbury Administration, on future improvement, with regard to the lot of the Nyasaland labourer in Southern Rhodesia.¹¹⁴ These futile promises from Salisbury persisted up to the eve of the total ban on Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia in 1911. The complaints

¹¹¹C.O. 525/29: Casson to Sharpe: May 11, 1909.

¹¹²Ibid: Sharpe to C.O. August 10, 1909.

¹¹³C.O. 525/28: Sharpe to C.O.: Telegram: February 12, 1909.

¹¹⁴C.O. 525/29: Acting Administrator, Salisbury, to Sharpe, Zomba: Telegram: April 30, 1909.

of the Zomba authorities and the subsequent suspension of labour supply from Nyasaland to the Globe and Phoenix Mine in January 1911, due to the poor working conditions and the high mortality rate amongst Nyasaland labourers on this particular property,¹¹⁵ could not, however, induce active steps on the part of Southern Rhodesia to arrest the unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Whilst the Sharpe administration in Zomba may have been, to some extent, contented with Southern Rhodesia's promises of intent with regard to the welfare of Nyasaland labourers in that territory, that of Manning, his successor, was certainly not satisfied with empty assertions and rhetoric. Indeed, the unfavourable report by Casson in November 1910, on the employment of Nyasaland migrant labour in Southern Rhodesia and the Transvaal, appears to have set the stage for Manning's prohibitive measures of the succeeding year. In the new governor's opinion, the grounds for a restrictive labour policy, on the part of Nyasaland, were sufficiently evident to render any far-fetched rationalization unnecessary.

In the first place, it was felt that labour emigration from the Protectorate had, by 1911, become patently inimical to Nyasaland's interests. The 1907 assumptions that officially-sponsored labour recruitment and migration for markets below the Zambesi, would help Nyasaland by providing employment for excess domestic labour supply, whilst, at the same time, the protectorate also benefitted from the payment of deferred pay by the colonist employers of the Southern territories,¹¹⁶ were no longer relevant in the changed circumstances of 1911. Instead, during this period, as Governor Manning hinted, Nyasaland itself

¹¹⁵C.O. 417/495: Lord Gladstone to Milton: January 16, 1911.

¹¹⁶Vide: Supra: pp. 593-602

was alleged to be suffering from labour shortage to meet local demands, largely accentuated by the rapid development of the country's cotton industry.¹¹⁷ Given the massive character of labour emigration from the protectorate as it was by 1911, with special reference, for instance, to the Tonga country in the northern part of Nyasaland where this migration phenomenon had already caused some concern as early as 1909,¹¹⁸ Manning was obviously worried about not only the labour shortage in Nyasaland itself, but also by what he regarded, with a degree of exaggeration, of course, as the probable "extinction" of such ethnic groups as the Tonga.¹¹⁹

Secondly, the government of Nyasaland, in imposing its ban on labour emigration from the territory, was well aware of the attractions which labour markets South of the Zambesi held out to Nyasaland's potential labour migrants. The wage differentials between the domestic and the external labour markets were potent facts which could not be dismissed off-hand by one administrative fiat or another. Manning admitted as much in March 1911, when he indicated that "the higher wages obtainable in ~~(the)~~ South ... ~~(attracted)~~ the ~~(Nyasaland)~~ native," and that "the scale of pay ~~(was)~~ far beyond what Nyasaland at present ~~(could)~~ afford."¹²⁰

However, whilst administrative measures could not influence those economic conditions in the Protectorate, caused as much by the absence of a comparable mining industry as they were by the lack of an adequate transportation infrastructure and the improvident use of labour by local employers, the Nyasaland government was, at the same time, quite

¹¹⁷C.O. 525/36: Sir William Manning, Governor, Zomba to C.O.: March 11, 1911.

¹¹⁸C.O. 525/29: Sharpe to C.O.: October 30, 1909.

¹¹⁹C.O. 525/36: Manning to C.O.: March 11, 1911.

¹²⁰Ibid.

prepared to forestall any form of unnecessary competition from external economic interests to the disadvantage of the protectorate. Already it had become apparent and accepted by the Nyasaland authorities that labour agents representing the Rand, Southern Rhodesia and the Mopea and Chimbue Sugar Estates of Portuguese Zambesia were, by 1911, successfully poaching labour from Nyasaland, from their bases in the neighbouring territories of former North-Eastern Rhodesia and Mozambique, with impunity and undesirable consequences for this British Protectorate. The rise in local wages from 3/- or 4/- per month to 5/-¹²¹ and the progressive drainage of manpower from Nyasaland, with a large proportion of these able-bodied men preferring to settle permanently as machona in the destination countries, as had happened with "a colony of Nyasaland Natives ... already established in Southern Rhodesia" by November 1910, regrettably, "to the great benefit of Southern Rhodesia ...," as Manning accordingly observed,¹²² were hardly the prospects the Nyasaland government could cherish and look forward to.

With these views in mind, the governor of Nyasaland was, naturally, conclusive in his restrictive policy on labour emigration to both Southern Rhodesia and the Rand by 1911. The Rand employers, who had hitherto remained on better terms with these Nyasaland authorities and were previously spoken of in favourable language to the Colonial Office by no less an official than Manning himself,¹²³ may have been here also caught up in a trap initially intended for Southern Rhodesia, but whose mode of operation was such that it became rather difficult to discriminate between these two sets of colonist employers. In any case,

¹²¹C.O. 417/498: Quoted in Extract from the Rhodesia Herald: August 7, 1911.

¹²²C.O. 525/36: Manning to C.O.: March 11, 1911.

¹²³Manning, Acting Governor, to C.O.: November 15, 1907: in Correspondence to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate ... pp. 93-5.

the change in the attitude of the Nyasaland government towards Knipe's labour recruiting activities, was, to say the least, the most clear indication of the brazen and determined character of Manning's 1911 restrictive measures. This was particularly true, once this W.N.L.A. official in Nyasaland came to be seen as more of a threat than a blessing, especially after it had been reported that he no longer recruited "surplus labour", but was "engaging the men we (Nyasaland colonist employers) actually needed ourselves, thus damaging this Protectorate in its most vital part".¹²⁴

For these reasons, it is scarcely surprising that those efforts, in some official quarters in London and South Central Africa to try and persuade the Nyasaland government to adopt a less brittle attitude towards labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia, were doomed to fail. Even the compromise idea, whereby Nyasaland would have chosen its own official representative to oversee the welfare of Nyasaland labourers at work in Southern Rhodesia, was hardly tantalizing to Manning, who commented on the plan that:

... I should be in accord with the appointment of an experienced Officer in Southern Rhodesia conversant with the Nyasaland dialect provided that such Officer were detailed from this Protectorate (Nyasaland) and had its interests at heart. The officer selected would have to be a man of thoroughly independent character capable of resisting the influence which would be brought to bear upon him by the (Southern) Rhodesian settlers who would endeavour to enlist his sympathy in order to cajole these same labourers to send for their relations to join them or to persuade them to settle in Southern Rhodesia. The officer in question should be one who would point out that these same labourers (from Nyasaland) had deserted their wives and families, that in some instances - as among the Atonga - their very tribe was in danger of extinction. I am afraid that unless an officer of strong independent views could be found - the great pressure brought to bear

¹²⁴C.O. 525/36: Manning to C.O.: March 11, 1911.

on him by interested parties in {Southern} Rhodesia would be liable to undermine his determination to see first of all that the Nyasaland native was properly cared for in Southern Rhodesia and then that he was urged to return to his own country at the expiration of his term of employment.¹²⁵

In the light of these views, even a compromise solution between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia was difficult to arrange in 1911, once Zomba had decided to ban labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia. The support the planters of Nyasaland gave to their government on these measures, as one big cotton grower, A. Livingstone Bruce and his wife, did, though obviously out of "a certain amount of self-interest" and also a deference to their "family associations" {the Livingstone connection} with the Nyasaland African societies,¹²⁶ may have considerably strengthened the resolve of the Nyasaland authorities on their war-path against Southern Rhodesia. The same could, indeed, be said of the reported outbreak of new diseases like tuberculosis and chisindo (phthisis) amongst those labourers who had just returned from labour markets in the South, as was observed by the Medical Officer at Blantyre Mission in February 1910.¹²⁷ The cumulative effect of such evidence, from these various sections of the colonist population of Nyasaland, was, consequently, the tightening up of the ban on labour migration rather than anything else.

The reactions of those parties affected by the 1911 prohibition on labour migration from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia was varied and quite interesting. Employers of labour and officials in Southern Rhodesia, particularly the farming community of Mashonaland, were evidently shocked and could, initially, not accept the restrictive measures in question, for all they were worth. Of course, Southern

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶C.O. 525/32: Sharpe to C.O.: March 5, 1910.

¹²⁷Ibid: Dr. A.M. Caverhill, Blantyre Mission to Dr. H. Hearsey, Principal Medical Officer: February 22, 1910.

Rhodesia's farming industry, it should be pointed out, was one sector of the country's economy which had, by 1911, become very heavily dependent on Nyasaland labour supply, for all its intents and purposes. This development was brought about as much by the boom in Southern Rhodesia's commercial agriculture, since 1907, as it was precipitated by the subsequent high mortality rate amongst the Nyasaland mine labourers in the territory, immediately after the 1907/8 agreement between the two governments.¹²⁸ Indeed, between 1908 and 1911, Nyasaland labour supply had come to be regarded, somehow, as a preserve of the farming rather than the mining industry in Southern Rhodesia; a situation obviously regarded with favour by officials in Zomba and London, due to the relatively low mortality rate amongst Nyasaland migrant labourers engaged in this occupation.

It was, therefore, because of this special relationship between Southern Rhodesia's farming industry and Nyasaland labour supply, developed over a period, which, certainly, complicated matters during the 1911 ban on labour migration and recruitment for Southern Rhodesia by the Nyasaland authorities. Moreover, the years between 1906 and 1912 were not amongst the best ones in the history of the relationship between the R.N.I.B. and the farming community of Southern Rhodesia. The fiscal demands then being made by the Salisbury Administration on the farming community, in order to render adequate financial support to the Bureau, did not at all seem fair and commensurate to this labour organisation's policies on the distribution of labour between the country's farming and mining industries. From the farmers' point of view, the Bureau was primarily a lackey to mining companies and related mining interests and was, therefore, prejudiced against the farming industry.

¹²⁸Vide: Supra: pp. 600-2

For the reasons indicated above, the Southern Rhodesian colonist farmers were essentially at loggerheads with the B.S.A.Co. Administration, the Bureau and the mining industry, between 1906 and 1912, over what they viewed as the inequitable distribution of labour supply by an extravagantly extortionate and unrepresentative labour organisation.¹²⁹ On the other hand, the Salisbury Administration, however, tried to avoid all forms of overt confrontation with the farming community by adopting a quasi-liberal posture towards this group of colonist employers. Thus under the Labour Fees Ordinance (1906), the farmers were, consequently, exempted from the 1/- per capita levy imposed on all the employers of labour but, subsequently, borne solely by the mining industry to raise capital for the Bureau.¹³⁰ But it was the concessions of the Salisbury Administration to the colonist farmers, to recruit foreign labour independently of the semi-official R.N.L.B., which fundamentally contributed to the crystallization of the special relationship between the country's farming industry and Nyasaland labour supply and, in like manner, made the rupture of this relationship in 1911 more difficult to effect.

Between 1907 and 1911 for instance, the colonist farmers of Mashonaland, who were strategically better placed in their geographical position in relation to Nyasaland immigrant labour than their counterparts in Matabeleland, mounted various sorties to procure this commodity from the Central African protectorate. Of course, these farmers also largely benefitted from the 1907/8 inter-governmental labour arrangement between Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. But this official arrangement was meant not so much for the rank and file farmers as it was required

¹²⁹Vide: Supra: pp. 496-7

¹³⁰Burrell: The Native Problem in Africa: loc. cit.

to benefit the B.S.A.Co.'s agricultural commercial concerns. Indeed, as became apparent during the distribution of over 2,000 Nyasaland farm labour recruits who arrived in Southern Rhodesia in November 1909, for a year's term of service, as a sequel to the Hole/Wrey mission to Nyasaland earlier that year,¹³¹ most of these recruits, raised under official tutelage, were distributed to large-scale farming concerns, like the Hunyani Tobacco Plantations Limited or the Harrington Lochard Farms in which the B.S.A.Co., as an economic consortium, held shares. Such large-scale agricultural concerns, of course, received a greater proportion of this class of Nyasaland farm labour, averaging about 70 recruits per firm, whilst the rank and file colonist farmers could only procure amounts varying from 10 to 30 labourers at the peak of the farming season.¹³²

It was, therefore, through the independent efforts of either the Mashonaland Farmers' Association or the Rhodesia Agricultural Union to raise Nyasaland labour supply in Nyasaland, rather than through inter-governmental agreements, that the ordinary colonist farmer in Southern Rhodesia appears to have gained most on Nyasaland labour supply between 1907 and 1911. One such labour scheme, which was initiated with the aim of benefitting both the ordinary colonist farmer and the private labour agent, was the McCulloch venture of 1908, which, of course, failed dismally, due to the hostility of the Nyasaland government to private labour touting.¹³³ McCulloch had been engaged by the Mashonaland Farmers' Association through the medium of a private financial dealer, one William Smith of Salisbury, who, apparently, may have regarded the venture as a remarkable opportunity for promoting a

¹³¹Vide: Supra: pp. 611-21

¹³²C.O. 417/491: Hole to B.S.A.Co.; December 11, 1909.

¹³³Vide: Supra: pp. 604-11

personal business transaction and, at the same time, exploiting the labour shortage conditions within the country's farming industry, especially in the Salisbury district. In the event, the part played by Smith in providing the necessary backing to the McCulloch labour scheme, before and in 1911, was certainly a credible one; ranging from requests to the Salisbury Administration to negotiate with the Portuguese authorities, over the transit rights for McCulloch's prospective labour recruits from Nyasaland,¹³⁴ to pleading with the Imperial officials against the drastic measures of the Nyasaland government in prohibiting the McCulloch labour scheme altogether, with, obviously, serious economic implications for the whole venture.¹³⁵

Whilst the other Southern Rhodesian parties involved in Nyasaland labour importation were, obviously, concerned over the Nyasaland government prohibition in connection with the McCulloch scheme in 1911, they appear, however, to have kept themselves aloof, surmizing, perhaps, that the development was more or less a personal tragedy, whose adverse effects were, in this regard, nobody else's but McCulloch's affair. For the government of Southern Rhodesia, which had, for example, previously burnt its fingers in 1908 over the labour recruiting ventures of this ambitious and relentless agent, with the result that relations between Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland had suffered in the process,¹³⁶ McCulloch's second mission to Nyasaland in 1911, to procure more farm labour, may have, naturally, strengthened the once-beaten-twice-shy attitude amongst the Salisbury officials. That this cautious view may have been the dominant factor, in the attempts of the Salisbury Administration to distance itself from McCulloch's Nyasaland

¹³⁴A 3/18/30/15: W. Smith to Milton: June 22, 1911.

¹³⁵C.O. 417/498: W. Smith to Burns-Begg: July 17, 1911.

¹³⁶Vide: Supra: pp. 604-11

venture, is here vindicated quite clearly by the parallel reactions of the R.N.L.B. management to McCulloch's appeal from Zomba, through the government of Northern Rhodesia, for permission to establish a recruiting base at Fort Jameson in former North-Eastern Rhodesia and thereby raise about "one thousand Nyasaland natives for Mashonaland farmers", by waylaying those independent labour migrants from the Protectorate leaving the country via the Fort Manning route.¹³⁷

The Bureau management in Bulawayo was decidedly non-committal on the McCulloch request, concluding, in the process, that "it ~~was~~ not for the Bureau to raise any objections or opposition" on the McCulloch proposals.¹³⁸ Moreover, even the Mashonaland farmers, for whom McCulloch had evinced such special sympathy, if so it should be regarded, on their labour shortage problems, were also less enthusiastic over this agent's labour recruiting escapades in Nyasaland in 1911. Thus by September of that year, they withdrew their sponsorship of this labour agent and abruptly terminated his engagement with them.¹³⁹

From all appearances, it is, therefore, quite clear that the tinsel of personal tragedy, which embossed McCulloch's conflict with the Nyasaland government over labour recruitment in that country and the subsequent ejection of this labour agent from the Protectorate without any labour recruits or even carriers to convey his property to Salisbury in 1911,¹⁴⁰ may have misled some sections of the colonist employers of labour and their sympathizers in Southern Rhodesia, to assume an air of false security, with regard to their own position in

¹³⁷A 3/18/30/15: Worthington, Secretary for Native Affairs, Livingstone, to R.N.I.B., Bulawayo: Telegram: May 27, 1911.

¹³⁸Ibid. P. Jenkins, General Manager, R.N.L.B., Bulawayo to Secretary, Department of Administrator, Salisbury: May 27, 1911.

¹³⁹Ibid.: Hole, Secretary, Department of Administration to B.S.A.Co., September 30, 1911.

¹⁴⁰C.O. 417/500: McCulloch to C.O.: October 24, 1911.

connection with immigrant labour from Nyasaland. In essence, the ban on McCulloch's labour recruiting activities and the more rigorous implementation of those preconditions outlined by the 1909 legislation, under which all potential labour migrants to either Southern Rhodesia or the Rand could only leave after satisfying their respective District Residents that they had satisfactorily discharged their obligations in terms of hut-tax payment, provision of maintenance for families and relations as well as evidence that the potential migrants in question had sufficient cash for the overland journey to centres of employment below the Zambesi,¹⁴¹ were more fundamental in their implications than mere vindictiveness against an undesirable private labour tout. The McCulloch ban and the subsequent tightening of the pre-conditions to labour migration, in one sense, reflected a general hardening of the attitude of the Nyasaland government towards labour emigration as a phenomenon. But colonist employers of labour in Southern Rhodesia did not, at first, seem to appreciate the significance of these measures till the ban was, actually, applied against them as well by Manning, later in 1911.

For the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia, especially the farmers, the Nyasaland ban on labour migration to Southern Rhodesia in 1911 and its timing were, actually, more drastic in their consequences than the personal losses of McCulloch, as a professional labour agent. The year 1911 is, in fact, not particularly cherishable in the annals of the history of Southern Rhodesia's farming industry. The shortage of labour throughout Southern Rhodesia was so acute, in the second half

¹⁴¹It appears by 1911, a potential African labour migrant in Nyasaland was required to produce about 30/- before leaving the country; 6/- for hut tax, 12/- for family maintenance and 10/- or so for food and travel to Salisbury. Vide: C.O. 417/498: Statements of Ben Kiepa, Chikapa et. al. before McCulloch, Blantyre: August 10 and 11, 1911. Enclosed in McCulloch to Lord Gladstone: September 1, 1911.

of 1911, that the farmers and the small-workers, who could not effectively compete against the big mining companies on the labour market, were, consequently, forced onto their knees. The tobacco farmers of Mashonaland, particularly, who had, since 1907, become more patently dependent on Nyasaland labour for their enterprise, just as their counterparts in Matabeleland were also dependent on foreign labour supply from North-Western Rhodesia,¹⁴² were, in every way, more drastically affected by the Nyasaland labour ban of 1911. But their reactions, at first, reflected an admixture of shock, disbelief and desperation.

Thus whilst Nyasaland's restrictive measures on labour emigration were beginning to assume a tangible form by mid-1911, the farming community, and the Administration of Southern Rhodesia to some extent, still believed that they could successfully arrest this trend of Nyasaland labour policy by sending a powerful delegation to Zomba to plead their cause. Indeed, the strength of such a belief is, in fact, vindicated, in this case, by the perfervid enthusiasm amongst the colonist farmers of the Marandellas and Rusape districts of Mashonaland, for instance, who mounted a campaign to raise funds in July 1911, with which to finance those farmer-agents supposed to accompany the Southern Rhodesian official delegation to Nyasaland.

This Southern Rhodesian official delegation to Nyasaland, as a matter of fact, consisted of Hole, the Administrator's Secretary; F. Eyles, an elected member of the Legislative Council representing farming interests; T.W. Savory of the Rhodesia Agricultural Union and

¹⁴²C.O. 417/510: Memorandum of the Rhodesia Agricultural Union to Lord Gladstone by J. Reid Rowland, Secretary, and R.A. Fletcher, President, February 14, 1912: pp. 12-3.

D. Hawksley representing the R.N.I.B.¹⁴³ The extravagant claims amongst the Mashonaland farmers that the Southern Rhodesia delegation would succeed not only in reversing the decision of the Nyasaland government on labour migration, but also in enabling the colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia to procure Nyasaland labour even more cheaply than before, were here clearly indicative too of the fact that these colonist farmers were both grossly misinformed and naive, at first, about the 1911 labour crisis. In one respect, it was a demonstration of the degree to which the Mashonaland farmers had become conditioned to Nyasaland labour supply.

It was, therefore, against this background of both shock over the Nyasaland government's restrictive measures and the resilient faith in the value of Nyasaland labour supply amongst the colonist farmers of Mashonaland, in particular, that Hole, once more, led a delegation of Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba, in July and August 1911, to try and pave the way for the smooth flow of labour between the two territories. As far as these envoys were concerned, the case of the Southern Rhodesian colonist farmers was too cogent to be ignored, even by the government of Nyasaland itself. Firstly, it was concluded that the labour demand in Southern Rhodesia was far much higher and more urgent than that of the colonist employers of Nyasaland. Given the fact that, as Eyles pointed out, there were "ten times as many planters" in Southern Rhodesia as those of Nyasaland, whilst the mining industry of the former territory employed twice the total labour required for farming purposes, the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia, therefore, felt quite justified in augmenting their labour supply by relying on

¹⁴³A 3/18/30/15: J.S. Ioosley, R.N.I.B. Agent, Salisbury, to Hole; July 14, 1911.

external supply from Nyasaland where, they were convinced, the African population was much greater than that of Southern Rhodesia, whilst, at the same time, the rate of development was less pronounced.¹⁴⁴

Secondly and very much related to the belief amongst the Southern Rhodesian colonists that labour supply in Nyasaland was super-abundant, was the argument put forward by the Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba that the outcry on labour shortage amongst the planters of Nyasaland was superficial and unrealistic; caused as much by the wasteful usage of labour amongst these planters as it was invoked by the poor and unattractive labour conditions obtaining on the local market in the Protectorate. Hole, who had observed a similar situation during his previous mission to Zomba in 1909, expressed his regret over this practice of labour wastage, induced, particularly, by the absence of even simple agricultural machinery amongst Nyasaland's colonist planters, then reported to be "practically dependent on primitive methods for their cultivation." In his report, Hole, therefore, dwelt on this alleged labour wastage issue:

On several occasions I saw small parties of 'boys' sitting on tennis lawns and golf courses picking the grass short with their fingers - doing the work of a lawnmower in fact. A rough calculation enabled me to reckon that two natives with a mower could do as much of this kind of work as 16 natives with their hands.¹⁴⁵

This kind of labour wastage and under-employment, so bitterly complained of by Hole, appeared quite general and widespread amongst the Nyasaland planters, at least as far as the 1911 Southern Rhodesian

¹⁴⁴Ibid: Report of Meeting between Rhodesian Delegation and the Nyasa Associated Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce; August 16, 1911.

¹⁴⁵Ibid: Hole to Newton, Acting Administrator, Salisbury: August 29, 1911.

envoys to Zomba were concerned. Eyles, one of Hole's companions on the Zomba mission, also deplored the sight in Nyasaland, whereby "large gangs of natives, who might (have been) usefully employed by the planters, (were) putting their time day after day on the golf course 'nibbling the grass down their teeth' ..." ¹⁴⁶ Yet the sight of African labourers, loitering and lolling around golf courses, was by no means the end of the incidence of alleged labour abuse which irritated these Southern Rhodesian envoys to Nyasaland. In the field of agriculture, for instance, where the presence of tsetse-fly and the rough topography of the Southern portion of the Protectorate were said to have discouraged most planters from adopting a general use of draught or trek-oxen, the Southern Rhodesian envoys also blamed the inefficient use of cheap labour as the cause of the labour problems of the Nyasaland planters as well as those of employers in distant labour markets, like Southern Rhodesia. For this reason, Hole commented:

Again we (the Southern Rhodesian envoys) made many enquiries, but were unable to hear of more than two or three ploughs in use in the whole Protectorate (Nyasaland). All the ground for cotton plantations is prepared by natives with hoes. The fields are not stumped, but the trees are cut down to about three feet above the ground and the soil hoed between the stumps. Ploughs would not only immensely increase the value of each human labour unit, but (.....) would nearly double the capacity of any area in wooded country. ¹⁴⁷

What the Southern Rhodesian envoys were concerned with here was, of course, not the encouragement of increased production on the part of the Nyasaland agricultural sector. But they wanted to see the Protectorate planters maximise the use of labour to such a degree that

¹⁴⁶ Ibid: Report of the Meeting between the Rhodesian Delegation and the Nyasa Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

¹⁴⁷ Ibid: Hole to Newton: August 29, 1911.

a situation would be created whereby there would be adequate labour supply not only for domestic consumption in Nyasaland itself, but also for export to the South of the Zambesi. Thus Hole again reported to the Salisbury Administration on the local labour conditions inside Nyasaland, which were, from his own point of view, a manifestation of "the reckless way in which natives {were} employed ..." in the Protectorate. The Southern Rhodesian official envoy concluded:

If these conditions were remedied by the introduction of simple labour machinery and implements, there could be no talk of shortage of labour among the handful of planters at present engaged {in Nyasaland}, but it appears that they {the planters} have had such an abundance of cheap labour for so long that they have never bestirred themselves to obtain machinery.¹⁴⁸

In the opinion of the Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba, the cause and faith of the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers in Nyasaland labour could not be undermined simply by allegations and pretexts on labour shortage on the domestic market in the Protectorate, especially when such a situation was considered exaggerated and artificial. Perhaps the confidence of these envoys to Nyasaland may have been given a boost by the feeling that Nyasaland's restrictive labour measures of 1911 were, after all, an attempt to tinker with an economic situation over which no political solution could provide an effective remedy. The complaints of the Nyasaland authorities that labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia and the Rand was directly responsible for raising the wage tariff in Nyasaland from 3/- per month, during the dry season, and 4/-, over the wet periods of the year, to 5/- and 6/- per month respectively,¹⁴⁹ were clearly indicative of the

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹C.O. 417/498: Governor Manning's Speech, Zomba, August 7, 1911: Extract from the Rhodesia Herald: August 8, 1911.

effectiveness of the competition posed by the more favourable labour conditions on the Southern Rhodesian market, where Nyasaland labourers could earn as much as 10/- to 15/- per month, for farmwork in Mashonaland, and up to 25/- per month, for the same in Matabeleland.¹⁵⁰

Such evidence as this on differential wages may, obviously, have encouraged both the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers and their envoys to Zomba, that whatever happened, they would, in the end, outplay the Nyasaland authorities and their restrictions on labour migration from the Protectorate. Indeed, no effort seems to have even been made to disguise this streak of self-confidence on the part of the Southern Rhodesians as they confronted the Nyasaland authorities and the territory's Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce in mid-1911. As Eyles, one of the delegates, stated, the choice was a simple one; that is, whether the two territories were either to co-operate or compete over this phenomenon of Nyasaland labour migration. This delegate's view was portrayed by the Rhodesia Herald to the effect that:

Rhodesians were prepared to co-operate for their share of {Nyasaland} labour, and in self-defence they would be forced to compete for it. The shape this competition would take was mainly by further increases in the rate of wages, {and} as additional inducements to native labourers {from Nyasaland} to come and remain upon Rhodesian farms, land might be offered them by the farmers so that they might be encouraged to marry wives from local tribes and settle in the country {Southern Rhodesia}.¹⁵¹

From the preceding, it is evident that the colonists of Southern Rhodesia were not prepared to take the ban on Nyasaland labour migration on its face value without a fight. The conviction that the employment

¹⁵⁰C.O. 417/508: Discussion between Lord Gladstone and Deputation from the R.N.I.B.: September 1, 1911.

¹⁵¹C.O. 417/498: Eyles's Speech, Zomba: August 7, 1911, in Extract from the Rhodesia Herald: August 8, 1911.

centres in their country offered better opportunities to Nyasaland labour migrants was only one of the many factors, which strengthened the resolve and pugnacious spirit amongst these colonist employers below the Zambesi, even in those circumstances whereby humility would have been a more ideal weapon to resort to. Nonetheless, for those envoys despatched to Zomba in mid-1911, to plead the cause of the colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia, the feeling that whatever happened, Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, in general, could hold their own in the face of Nyasaland's restrictions was quite uppermost in their minds. In a way, it was certainly believed that the popularity of employment in Southern Rhodesia was so diffuse that even in those parts of Nyasaland, like the districts of Blantyre, South Nyasa, Upper Shire and Mlanje, where the government-backed Nyasaland Labour Bureau had failed to raise enough labour for the planters of the Shire Highlands, the R.N.L.B. could successfully recruit "10,000 'boys' at once", because, in the words of Eyles to the Nyasa Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce in Zomba in August 1911:

We {Rhodesian colonist employers} can get labour that you {Nyasaland planters} cannot get; we should be using labour you do not use; this labour refuses to sell itself in your own market, but it is ready and anxious to sell itself in our market; but you prohibit and prevent its natural movement to its best market; and this seems to us to be a 'dog in the manger policy'.¹⁵²

Of course, this show of confidence on the part of the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, even on a commodity which was not theirs by right, was largely reinforced by a number of factors that tended to operate, so it would appear, in their favour. In one respect, the con-

¹⁵²A 3/18/30/15: Report of Meeting between Rhodesian Delegation and the Nyasa Associated Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

fession by the Nyasaland authorities, that they had failed to raise adequate labour for the local planters in those districts to the North and West of Lake Nyasa, simply because the peoples of these areas were either considered as "not accustomed to work" or because they were not yet "ready to become labourers ...,"¹⁵³ was altogether an incredible story to the Southern Rhodesian envoys. The latter concluded that since the Tonga, the Angoni and other ethnic groups from these parts of Nyasaland had hitherto formed the dominant elements amongst Nyasaland labour migrants to the South of the Zambesi,¹⁵⁴ the failure of all efforts to induce these groups to work for the planters of the Shire Highlands was only a sign of protest against the restrictions imposed by their government on labour migration, especially as such people as the Mombera Ngoni of Central Angoniland were also said to prefer "to remain idle rather than work at the pitiful wages offered by the local planters".¹⁵⁵

Moreover, the Southern Rhodesian envoys and their sponsors evidently felt that their case against Nyasaland labour restrictions was more likely to capture the sympathy of a wider range of those officials concerned with the affairs of South Central Africa than that of the Nyasaland government. The arguments on which the Nyasaland government based its 1911 restrictions on labour migration to the South, apparently, did not seem to have convinced the colonist employers of these destination areas, of whom the Southern Rhodesian farming community appears to have been by far the most obdurate. For example, whilst these colonist employers would not accept the Nyasaland government's excuse that the local planters of the Protectorate were also suffering from the adverse

¹⁵³Ibid: Hole to Newton: August 29, 1911.

¹⁵⁴Vide: Supra: pp. 595-6

¹⁵⁵Ibid. Hole to Newton: August 29, 1911.

effects of labour shortage in very much the same manner as those below the Zambesi did, they could also not accept its corollary that Nyasaland labour supply was required for railway construction purposes on the projected line from Port Herald in Nyasaland to Villa Bécage, on the Zambesi river, in Portuguese territory. From the point of view of the Southern Rhodesian colonists, the railway construction plans advocated by the Nyasaland authorities were not only another typical example of the ineptitude of the Protectorate's employers with regard to proper utilisation of labour supply, but also presaged far more serious implications.

Thus whilst the envoys from Southern Rhodesia to Zomba pointed out that the restrictions on labour emigration from the Protectorate, for the sake of railway construction work, covering a distance of "only 70 miles" over which authorities anywhere else "could hardly employ more than four or five thousand boys for such an insignificant distance ...", were a clear example on how "native labour (was) recklessly used in Nyasaland ...",¹⁵⁶ it was also apparent to these anxious envoys and their sponsors that attempts of this kind, to canalize Nyasaland labour supply to the Portuguese territory, could only result in a large proportion of potential Nyasaland labour migrants proceeding to work on the sugar estates of Portuguese Zambesia, where the monthly wages of from 8/- to 10/- were far much better than those obtaining on the Nyasaland labour market itself.¹⁵⁷ In another sense, the chauvinistic employers of Southern Rhodesia felt, too, that for a British possession like Nyasaland to restrict labour migration to a sister colony, only to benefit a foreign territory, was, in every respect, tantamount to treachery.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid: Outline of Arguments to be used in connection with the visit of Messrs. Eyles and Savory to Nyasaland: n.d.: Enclosed in Hole to Newton: August 29, 1911.

¹⁵⁷ C.O. 417/508: Discussion between Lord Gladstone and Deputation from the R.N.L.B.

In this regard, the precedent on sleeping sickness restrictions of 1908/9, which had ultimately compelled labour migrants from the northern districts of Nyasaland to offer their services to the German employers of Tanganyika, following the closure of popular labour routes to the South,¹⁵⁸ was sufficient enough to arouse some measure of concern below the Zambesi.

To strengthen their argument and promote their cause against the Nyasaland labour restrictions of 1911, Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba made much play on the British imperial doctrines of free trade, free enterprise and unrestricted sale of labour. Even though the whole process of labour migration in a colonial setting, as the Nyasaland/Southern Rhodesian case actually was in 1911, was, in all respects, the very antithesis of the overall implications of these high-sounding but somewhat impracticable ideals, these envoys and their sponsors raised a lot of dust on the matter, in order to draw the attention of the Imperial authorities to the wrangle between the two opposing camps on the issue. Thus though the main objective of the Southern Rhodesian envoys' mission to Nyasaland was, ostensibly, to persuade the Nyasaland government to reverse its decision and allow organised recruitment of farm labour in Nyasaland by the R.N.L.B. for use in Southern Rhodesia,¹⁵⁹ it was also found necessary to champion the cause of the Nyasaland labour migrant, as a free agent within the framework of the whole regional economic system of South Central Africa. In this light, the Nyasaland labour restrictions were, therefore, seen not by any means as an attempt by the Protectorate government to discharge its functions as a trustee of the African peoples of Nyasaland, but rather as arbitrary and unfair administrative measures against subject peoples, who,

¹⁵⁸A 3/18/30/15: Outline of Arguments to be used in connection with the visit of Messrs. Eyles and Savory to Nyasaland, n.d.

¹⁵⁹C.O. 417/498: Hole's Speech, Zomba; August 7, 1911: in Extract from the Rhodesia Herald: August 8, 1911.

allegedly, were by nature and character "flabby, pulseless and invertebrate ..." and would, obviously, not persist with their demands for the right to proceed to the South, once they had been turned away by the capitaos from the bomas, whence they got the requisite passes for the journey.

In their attempt to convince their hosts on what they considered to be the negative repercussions of the 1911 restrictive measures of the Zomba authorities, the Southern Rhodesian envoys further emphasized the view that the measures in question were liable to exploitation by vested interests in Nyasaland, particularly so that such official action was, in many ways, parallel to the argument also commonly used by the colonist employers South of the Zambesi, concerning the much talked about empty aphorism on "teaching the native 'the dignity of labour' whereas", in Eyles' view, "all the time they (employers of the South) cared nothing whatever about the native, but merely wished to exploit him for their own benefit."¹⁶⁰ In short, Eyles concluded his homiletics to the Nyasaland Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce, on the alleged unfairness of restricting the free movement of labour, with an even bolder accusation:

Is it for the good of the native that you (Nyasaland authorities and planters) prohibit the sale of his labour in the best market? No, it is for the financial benefit of the whiteman that your labour is restrained and shut in. It is the planter who is 'protected' at the expense of the native.¹⁶¹

As far as Hole, the leader of these Southern Rhodesian envoys to Nyasaland was concerned, it was not enough to, simply, remind the Nyasaland authorities and employers on the evils of arbitrary restric-

¹⁶⁰ A 3/18/30/15: Report of Meeting between the Rhodesian Delegation and the Nyasa Associated Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

tions on labour migration and how these circumscribed, substantially, the potential of the Nyasaland labourer as a "free agent." What actually the circumstances called for, from Hole's point of view, were more positive actions to enable the Nyasaland labourer to break loose from the cocoon so imposed against him, and thus disabling this highly priced class of labour, by the Protectorate's restrictive measures. In the event, Hole's proposed solution to the problem, created by the Nyasaland restrictive measures, was threefold. In the first place, it was considered necessary to protest to the Colonial Office against the Nyasaland government's interference with the free flow of labour between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia and, at the same time, subvert all the attempts of the Protectorate government to achieve its objectives on this score. In simple terms, the design of the Southern Rhodesian envoys and their sponsors was, in the face of the intransigence of the Nyasaland officials, to "educate" potential African labour migrants from the Protectorate so that they should

... be made fully acquainted with the right possessed by all natives of working where they please and be asked to advise their friends who wish to come to (Southern) Rhodesia to go to the Boma and demand a pass to leave the country (Nyasaland).¹⁶²

Such a solution as this one suggested here by Hole was presumably to remedy a situation whereby, so it was alleged, Nyasaland labour migrants had become inevitably dejected and despondent on the probability of proceeding to the labour markets below the Zambesi without being obstructed by their District Residents, either on the pretext that they had not met the necessary arrangements required by the 1909 legislation or because labour was needed in Blantyre and the Shire Highlands. In Hole's own words, the Nyasaland potential labour migrants

¹⁶²Ibid: Hole to Newton: August 29, 1911.

... know the Government {of Nyasaland} are averse to their going out of the country, and like children, are afraid to press for permission. Could they be made to realise their legal rights in the matter ... the emigration would greatly increase.¹⁶³

Secondly, from Hole's point of view, it had become apparent that the government of Nyasaland could not eat its cake and have it back at the same time, as often occurred in the proverbial world of fairies. Nyasaland's restrictive measures on labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond deserved payment in kind. Here Hole, for instance, suggested that no further efforts be made by either the R.N.L.B. or the Southern Rhodesian employers to supply the government of Nyasaland with statistical returns on independent labour migrants from that country, as had been hitherto the case. Moreover, it was also suggested that employers of labour in Southern Rhodesia could adopt plans similar to those pursued by W.N.L.A. "with considerable success", whereby a fixed number of labour agents working for Southern Rhodesian interests, would be appointed and stationed in those parts of the Portuguese territory and Northern Rhodesia adjacent to the Nyasaland Protectorate, whence they would carry out clandestine activities and "snap up all {Nyasaland} natives coming over {to the South} independently."¹⁶⁴

It is obvious here that it was in pursuance of these sinister designs, that Hole later persuaded the Administration of Southern Rhodesia to approve the engagement of a private labour agent, based in the Portuguese territory, by the name of David Salmon. Salmon was a former employee of the Sena Sugar Company in Portuguese Zambesia, from which he had resigned to take up labour recruiting in those parts of the Portuguese possession near the Nyasaland border with the intention,

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

especially, "to sign on Nyasa boys who 'jump(ed) the border'." In Hole's reckoning, although in negotiating for permission on behalf of Salmon with the Portuguese authorities to implement these plans, it might have looked as if Southern Rhodesia was virtually recognising a private labour tout, there was certainly little harm in the matter, as W.N.L.A. too had a similar "understanding" with the Portuguese authorities on Nyasaland labour migrants.¹⁶⁵

On a more positive level, it may also be pointed out that the Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba and their sponsors did not, solely, want to promote the cause of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, primarily, by subterfuge and other dubious moves aimed at frustrating Nyasaland's restrictions on this desirable commodity. They were also prepared to offer some reasonable economic concessions on Nyasaland agricultural products, in return for permission for the R.N.I.B. to recruit labour and establish bases in Nyasaland. For this reason, Hole had informed Newton, the Acting Administrator in Salisbury, in August 1911, on the feasibility of Southern Rhodesia importing Nyasaland tobacco, coffee, cotton, rubber and tea, free from duties, if only to exchange such favours for Nyasaland labour supply. On Nyasaland tobacco in particular, though this product was lowly regarded and generally considered "a dull Virginian tobacco," fetching only $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 pence per lb and quite incomparable to the Southern Rhodesian leaf, for the sake of Nyasaland labour, however, some quid pro quo on the product was considered worth trying. In Hole's opinion, the desperation over Nyasaland farm labour in Southern Rhodesia was such that anything was worth risking, hence the candid confession that:

¹⁶⁵Ibid: Minute by Hole to Milton: September 9, 1911.

The Nyasaland tobacco does not appear to be of so good a quality as ours (Southern Rhodesian), but I think there would be a large demand for Nyasaland cigarettes at the mines and elsewhere among the natives who now smoke quantities of 'Flag' and other Virginian cigarettes retailed in cheap packets. Probably the Nyasaland product could be sold at a price which would compete favourably with these imported cigarettes and yet bring a fair profit to the exporters.¹⁶⁶

But in spite of these various approaches by the Southern Rhodesians, either to cajole, plead or even threaten the Nyasaland authorities and planters on the dire consequences of the 1911 labour restrictions to the South, the Zomba authorities were in no way sufficiently impressed to change their decisions on the phenomenon of labour migration and recruitment for foreign parts. Indeed, if anything, Governor Manning of Nyasaland was even said to have shown such "extreme discourtesy" to the Southern Rhodesian envoys, when they appeared before him in Zomba, that Hole later commented to his superiors in Salisbury, with unconcealed disappointment, in the following vein:

It is difficult to convey a description of His Excellency's (Governor Manning's) manner in a letter, but at the conclusion of the proceedings I felt exactly as if someone had said to us 'Right turn! Dismiss!'

Hole also continued:

I have had the honour of being entrusted on previous occasions with missions which have brought me into personal contact with several heads of Government both British and Portuguese, but in no case except the present have I experienced anything but the greatest consideration and politeness.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Ibid: Hole to Newton: August 29, 1911.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid: Hole to Newton: Confidential: August 29, 1911.

Governor Manning's treatment of the Southern Rhodesian envoys, which, as it was surmised in some official quarters, may have been simply well "studied, and intended to be summary and severe,"¹⁶⁸ was, however, in keeping with his lack of interest in the pleas of these weather-beaten envoys and the plight of their sponsors in Southern Rhodesia. Manning and his government were certainly more concerned with the increased agricultural activities in Nyasaland itself than in anything else; a fact signified in this instance by the rise in acreage from 12,000 acres under cultivation in 1909 to 23,500 in 1911, which, in the process, increased the labour demand amongst the planters of the Protectorate.¹⁶⁹

Given the fact that the Nyasaland African population was also reported to be getting more and more involved in cash crop production by 1911, the Nyasaland authorities could, therefore, hardly accept the truth of the accusations, raised by the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia, on labour wastage, underemployment and the overbearing activities of the District Residents in diverting potential labour migrants from the outside labour markets to those within the Protectorate. Thus on the charge that the administrative officials of Nyasaland were interfering with the rights of the Nyasaland African labour migrant as a free agent, it was contended in Zomba that the District Residents were, primarily, concerned with "the giving of counsel" or "friendly admonition and advice" to prospective labour migrants to the South as was "entirely in keeping with the quasi-parental position which they {occupied} towards the native population."

In short, the Nyasaland government would not agree to the charge that labour migration from the Protectorate to the labour markets below

¹⁶⁸Ibid: Newton to B.S.A.Co.: Confidential; September 9, 1911.

¹⁶⁹C.O. 417/498: Manning's Speech, August 7, 1911.

the Zambesi was, in any way, hindered by water-tight or outright prohibition. Rather they viewed the accusation levelled against them as arising from the "keen dissatisfaction among employers in other territories whose interests {lay} in the contrary direction {to those of Nyasaland}" as well as from "the native mind and its proneness to exaggeration", especially in cases where particular potential labour migrants had failed to satisfy the pre-conditions to labour migration and were, therefore, discouraged from doing so.¹⁷⁰

In Governor Manning's opinion, even the boasts by the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, on the efficacy of higher wages below the Zambesi as the cause of attraction to Nyasaland labour migrants, did not at all warrant a situation whereby uncontrolled labour migration had to be allowed to reign freely. Indeed, Manning appreciated the advantages the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, especially the farmers, enjoyed over their Nyasaland counterparts in relation to, for instance, a wealthy and ready local market on the mines, where the huge African labour force required consumption of agricultural produce on a larger scale, not to mention the more efficient Southern Rhodesian railway system, for the disposal of this agricultural produce, and the heavy protective duties these farmers also benefitted from, on the question of the importation of foreign produce, either from overseas suppliers or neighbouring territories, thus favourably affecting the wage rates of the African farm labourers. But, at the same time, the governor of Nyasaland did not consider these high wages as the universal panacea to everything, particularly on matters of inter-territorial relations. He summed up his views as follows:

¹⁷⁰C.O. 417/519: Manning to C.O.; December 22, 1911.

... the point of view of the Southern Rhodesian farmers seems to be that the interests of the natives are capable of definition in terms of money and that, because remuneration is there on a considerably higher scale than in Nyasaland, it must necessarily be to the advantage of Nyasaland natives to proceed to that country (Southern Rhodesia). The question of wages is but one factor among many, nor is it the most important.¹⁷¹

What appears to have been of greater consideration to the Nyasaland authorities were, therefore, not necessarily the pecuniary benefits, which labour migrants derived in the process, but the governance of the African communities, their social welfare and economic self-sufficiency within the confines of the Nyasaland protectorate. In accordance with this view, labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond was, therefore, not only bound to subvert the local African communities in Nyasaland, but was also likely to affect the nature of race relations in the Protectorate. In terms of this inexorable subversion of the African societies, bound to ensue from uncontrolled labour migration as forecast by Governor Manning, the economic, social and moral consequences of this movement on the entire fabric of African family life, an old dirge very much commonly used amongst quasi-humanitarians,¹⁷² were only one aspect of the woeful story.

The other patent disadvantage of uncontrolled labour migration was, according to the Nyasaland government, the danger posed by the unwelcome rise of a rudimentary class of machona (the lost ones), those migrant labourers who either left Nyasaland accompanied by wives or other women and then failed to return to their homeland at the end of their terms of service or formed "illicit connections with Mashona or other native

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²Vide: Supra: pp. 573-5

women in {Southern} Rhodesia" and thus residing permanently in the foreign territory. In this respect, the evidence from the West Nyasa district in 1911, that about 200 males had been away in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa "for periods varying from five to twenty years and {that their} relatives {were} in total ignorance as to whether they {would} return eventually to their homes or not," may have certainly added some fuel to the anxieties amongst those Nyasaland authorities, who were not at all confident that Southern Rhodesian colonist employers and officials would co-operate over the issue of repatriating Nyasaland labour migrants, with the result that Governor Manning was compelled to state:

It has occurred on more than one occasion that Nyasaland natives, enrolled for work in that country {Southern Rhodesia} under an agreement of service for one year, have been re-engaged at its expiration contrary to the conditions of service authorised by this {Nyasaland} Government and in opposition to its wishes, nor does it seem possible to prevent emigrants from remaining away indefinitely if they yield to the temptations which,, are held out to them on every side to abandon their homes,

A more interesting factor in the anxieties of the Nyasaland authorities over labour migration in 1911, dealt with the possible effects of the turbulent race relations situation below the Zambesi on the Nyasaland labour migrant, once he had completed his stint and returned to his own country. Instances like the beating to death of Nyasaland migrant labourers at the Battlefield mine in the Bubi district of Matabeleland in July 1908¹⁷⁴ and the alleged involvement of these same labourers in cases of assault and rape of white womenfolk as was implied in the Janetta Falconer affair in Umtali towards the end of 1908,¹⁷⁵ may

¹⁷³ Ibid: Manning to C.O.: December 22, 1911.

¹⁷⁴ Vide: C.O. 417/454: Rex Vs Macaulay et alii: July 15-18, 1908.

¹⁷⁵ Vide: C.O. 417/465: Petition of Miss Janetta Falconer to Lord Selborne, March 19, 1909: in Rex Vs Singana: November 1908 to March 1909.

have certainly influenced the attitude of the Nyasaland officials on the sorry state of race relations in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Though it is evident that Nyasaland may have had its own share of racial problems, especially from the viewpoint of the Chilembwe rising,¹⁷⁶ it is, at the same time, tempting to conclude that the Nyasaland government may not have been simply adopting a holier-than-thou attitude here, in comparison with its southern sister states, where the race problems had a sharper edge. On the contrary, Zomba authorities may have to some extent believed, though naively, that in the pre-1915 period, Nyasaland was a text-book example of harmonious race relations in South Central Africa; hence Manning's assertion to the Colonial Office in December 1911 that:

It is just a source of pride and satisfaction to the European inhabitants of this Protectorate that a very different state of affairs obtains here {in Nyasaland}, and that the relations which have hitherto existed and which still exist between them and the indigenous population are a pattern to other dependencies. By mere force and mutual good will which in this country unites the dominant and subject races, the persons and property of the former are secured more absolutely than could be effected by the most elaborate system of police protection¹⁷⁷

Pitted against this somewhat idyllic scenario of peace and harmony in Nyasaland depicted above, was, of course, the hurly-burly state of affairs below the Zambesi and the pernicious influence with which it was most likely to infect the Nyasaland labour migrants. This pernicious influence was, from the point of view of Zomba authorities, a reflection not only of the "highly objectionable and dangerous phases" of the

¹⁷⁶For some interesting aspects of race relations in early Nyasaland: Vide: George S. Mwase: Strike A Blow and Die: The Classic Story of the Chilembwe Rising: Heinemann Books: 1975: Passim.

¹⁷⁷C.O. 417/519: Manning to C.O.: December 22, 1911.

frontier and race attitudes obtaining in the states below the Zambesi, but also a product of "such vices as the existence of European prostitutes and the circulation of indecent photographs, especially imported ... by low class whites for sale to natives," thus ultimately influencing "the baser passions of the ~~latter~~"

For the Nyasaland government, its task was, therefore, to protect its subject peoples from falling into contact with these nefarious influences, in the course of labour migration, which, "~~by~~ the force of example or environment ~~tended~~ to undermine ~~the Nyasaland labourer's~~ simplicity" rather adversely. In a nutshell, the quasi-moralistic duty of the Nyasaland government to its subject peoples and its relevance to the restrictions on labour migration were aptly portrayed in the following language:

... it cannot be a matter for surprise that there should be a strong wish to discourage by every fair and legitimate means any indiscriminate intercourse on the part of the friendly contented and law-abiding natives of Nyasaland with countries where the relations between the white and black communities are less happy.¹⁷⁸

On the economic front, Governor Manning and his government were equally uncompromising over attempts to turn the Protectorate into a mere labour reserve for the benefit of economic development in countries below the Zambesi or elsewhere. To Manning, interacting with the Portuguese territory of Mozambique on labour matters, dubbed by Southern Rhodesian envoys as treacherous and unpatriotic, was far much better than sentimental but unproductive attachments to sister British possessions on inequitable basis. With regard to the Port Herald-Villa Beçage railway construction plan of 1911, so scathingly attacked by the

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

Southern Rhodesian colonists, Manning viewed it as a most vital need to Nyasaland and a necessary addition to the territory's transportation infrastructure, more so that, by 1911, this Protectorate could only boast of but "113 miles (of railway line) in length and a few ox-waggons"¹⁷⁹

Besides the issue of high mortality among Nyasaland mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia and at the Rand, the idea of Manning allowing the R.N.I.B. to establish recruiting bases in Nyasaland in 1911, as requested by Southern Rhodesian interests, was just out of the question altogether. The governor of Nyasaland could not accept the pretext that the R.N.I.B. would confine its activities to the recruitment of farm labour only, especially given the fact that it was the more highly paid mining work rather than anything else for which Nyasaland migrants went to Southern Rhodesia and the Rand. Moreover, in view of the characteristic shortage of labour of all classes on the Southern labour markets, the Nyasaland authorities were by no means convinced that labour initially recruited for farm work in Southern Rhodesia by the Bureau would not be diverted to other occupations. In any case, the whole issue of allowing the R.N.I.B. to operate in Nyasaland did not appeal to the Zomba officials as it smacked of the revival of the old system of labour touting, which preceding Nyasaland governments had already forbidden.¹⁸⁰

In short, Manning was, therefore, not easily amenable to a system of labour exploitation, whereby the Nyasaland protectorate served primarily as a periphery to the epi-centre of economic development below the Zambesi and, accordingly, informed the Colonial Office in a resentful tone that:

... this Government (of Nyasaland) is confronted with the position that certain neighbouring territories possessing greater resources than this country and an equally numerous native population as Nyasaland has,

¹⁷⁹C.O. 417/498: Governor Manning's Speech: August 7, 1911.

¹⁸⁰Vide: Supra: pp. 604-11

are now exhausting every means to tempt Nyasaland natives from their homes in order that labour which is urgently required for the development of the Protectorate and which can be happily and suitably employed here may be drained away to supply needs and solve difficulties for which Nyasaland is in no way responsible.

Nyasaland's assets are its labour and soil,
(but) it is called upon to face the determined and unremitting efforts on the part of Southern Rhodesia and the Transvaal to divert to those countries the labour required for its own development.¹⁸¹

The determination of the government of Nyasaland to persist in its restrictions over labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and the Rand in 1911, is evident from the facts portrayed above. What is, of course, particularly interesting here too is the manner in which the Southern Rhodesian colonists and the B.S.A.Co. officials were later able to come to terms with the reality of the 1911 Nyasaland labour ban, which they had, at first, found difficult to accept. As far as the Colonial Office was concerned, its reception of the Nyasaland labour ban to Southern Rhodesia, in particular, was initially less coherent. Whilst in some quarters in Number 12 Downing Street, it was readily admitted that the governor of Nyasaland was succumbing to the undue influence of the Nyasaland planters by restricting labour migration, simply to keep down the wage rates on the local labour market, and also by his unsympathetic treatment of the Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba, best described here by Sir G.V. Fiddes as tantamount to a 'You can go to the devil' attitude,¹⁸²

the rationale for the ban was, however, still credible enough to withstand the scrutiny of the Colonial Office. Indeed, even though the 1911 ban was likely to turn Nyasaland into, in Henry Lambert's own words, "a paradise for the (local) employers,"¹⁸³ the anxieties within the Colonial Office over the high mortality rate amongst those Nyasaland mine

¹⁸¹C.O. 417/519: Manning to C.O.: December 22, 1911.

¹⁸²C.O. 417/498: Minute by Sir G.V. Fiddes to Sir John Anderson: October 20, 1911.

¹⁸³Ibid: Minute by Henry Lambert: October 17, 1911.

labourers employed in Southern Rhodesia and the uncertainty as to whether Nyasaland labour offering for farm work in Southern Rhodesia would not be switched over to the mines, with disastrous consequences,¹⁸⁴ were sufficient reasons for the Colonial Office to adopt a more positive approach towards Governor Manning's actions. This, of course, was contrary to the recommendation of the High Commissioner for South Africa, Lord Gladstone, who had opposed the move as unreasonable and inimical to the interests of both Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.¹⁸⁵

In Southern Rhodesia itself, the ban on labour migration by the Nyasaland government had far-reaching consequences. In the first place, labour shortage in Southern Rhodesia was particularly pervasive towards the end of 1911 and at the beginning of 1912. For the disgruntled farming community, which was quite hard hit by these labour shortage conditions and the Nyasaland ban, the Administration of Southern Rhodesia had to intervene and raise labour by coercive means, notably in the Charter, Mazoe, Rusape and Inyanga districts of north-eastern and central Mashonaland.¹⁸⁶ Secondly, the restrictions on Nyasaland labour migration and the shortage of labour supply which this implied, also helped the farming community in Southern Rhodesia to take stock of its fragile position within the context of the country's economic system and, especially, in comparison with the more dominant role of the mining industry. Thus when the Labour Tax Ordinance of 1911 was introduced, imposing a labour tax on all the colonist employers, the farmers not excepted, for raising funds in order to meet the up-keep of the R.N.I.B., the existing dichotomy between the farming and mining industries was only further strengthened and entrenched.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid: Minute by Sir J. Anderson to Lewis Harcourt: October 26, 1911.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid: Lord Gladstone to Harcourt: September 18, 1911.

¹⁸⁶ C.O. 417/508: Hole, Secretary, Department of Administrator, to C/N/C, Salisbury: September 22, 1911 and to Civil Commissioner, Salisbury: September 21, 1911.

From the Southern Rhodesian colonist farmers' point of view, the 1911-12 labour crisis was not solely a product of the restrictive measures adopted by the Nyasaland government on labour migration to the South and the attendant poor labour and race relations obtaining at the various centres of employment in Southern Rhodesia. They interpreted the crisis rather as an inexorable climax to a situation, whereby a semi-official labour organisation, subservient to the influence of one section of employers in the country, had adversely affected the labour supply prospects through its unpopularity with the local and alien African labourers and also because of its general interference with independent immigrant labour.¹⁸⁷

In this light, the colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia were, therefore, bent onto a confrontation course with both the mining industry and the Bureau, particularly so that since 1906, this labour organisation had been more closely identified with the mining industry alone. The denial of either equal or any representation of farming interests at all, on the Management Board of the Bureau by the mining industry in June 1906, on the grounds that the farmers were not subject to the 1/- per head labour tax; the growing monopoly of the Bureau over labour recruitment and distribution since 1906 and the practice of this body over the allocation to the farmers of labour recruits rejected by the medical officers as unfit for mine work, were some aspects of the alliance between the Bureau and the mining industry, which did not, in any way, appeal to the colonist farmers in Southern Rhodesia.¹⁸⁸

In any case, the farmers felt that their demand for a fair share of labour supply, instead of living on the crumbs from the bounty of the

¹⁸⁷C.O. 417/510: Memorandum of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union to Lord Gladstone by J. Reid Rowland, Secretary and R.A. Fletcher, President: February 14, 1912. pp. 4-5.

¹⁸⁸Ibid: Memorandum of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union to Lord Gladstone February 14, 1912: pp. 7-12.

mining industry as they had done hitherto, was clearly justified by the growing importance of the tobacco industry and the fair amount of capital invested in the country's commercial agriculture since 1907. Indeed, the very fact that the B.S.A.Co. directorate had itself recognised these developments and, subsequently, allowed the colonist farmers of Matabeleland to recruit labour from North-Western Rhodesia, whilst their counterparts in Mashonaland did the same in Nyasaland, under the auspices of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union in 1907/8,¹⁸⁹ was a potent factor to the Southern Rhodesian farming community, in their struggle against the undue influence of the mining industry over labour supply and distribution.

In 1911, the move by the Salisbury Administration to impose a labour tax, when the colonist farmers were already dissatisfied with the labour situation and the role of the Bureau, in the process, could only lead to direct confrontation between the farming community and the Southern Rhodesian government; hence the farmers' revolt of 1912.¹⁹⁰ These farmers were, in every respect, prepared to defend their cause to the hilt, on either the question of equitable distribution of labour supply and representation on the Bureau machinery or on the call for separate recruiting facilities for the mining and farming industries. Thus the Rhodesian Agricultural Union informed the High Commissioner in Pretoria about its views on the matter in February 1912, in no uncertain terms, that:

It has been repeatedly urged by the farmers that the mining and farming industries cannot run together in the matter of labour. In no other part of South Africa has such a combination ever been tempted. In ~~(Southern)~~ Rhodesia it has been forced upon the

¹⁸⁹Ibid: pp. 13-4.

¹⁹⁰Out of 30 farmers' associations affiliated with the Rhodesian Agricultural Union and consisting of altogether 1,500 farmers, only about 6, with a membership of 234 farmers, were prepared to accept the

farmers and it is only a matter of time when either a serious crisis is reached or the weaker industry is strangled.¹⁹¹

From the preceding evidence, it is quite clear that the 1911/12 conflict between the farmers and the mining industry and between the Southern Rhodesian Administration and the farming community, centred on the question of inadequate labour supply and the need for the fair distribution of the little then at the disposal of the country's employers as a body. In view of the Nyasaland ban on labour migration to the South in 1911, it is, therefore, not improper to surmise that the action of the Nyasaland authorities vastly contributed, in one way or another, to the 1911/12 crisis in Southern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland measures created a temporary labour scarcity, which in turn necessitated serious competition amongst the various classes of employers, hence the conflict of claims and prerogatives over the few labourers offering on the labour market in Southern Rhodesia.

In one sense, this state of affairs, whereby an administrative fiat was brought into play in the source area of labour migration, with devastating effects in the destination centres of employment, as demonstrated in 1911, was fairly maintained between 1911 and 1918. In May 1912, when rumours on the impending veto by the government of South Africa, on all labourers from the tropical areas north of latitude 22 °S entering the Union, were beginning to arrive in Zomba,¹⁹² the authorities in the Protectorate welcomed the development, as a positive

labour tax of 1911/12. Vide: C.O. 417/510: Memorandum by the Sub-Committee of the Defence Committee of the Farmers to Burns-Begg: December 21, 1911: pp. 1-2.

¹⁹¹Ibid: Memorandum of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union to Lord Gladstone February 14, 1911: p. 5.

¹⁹²For the 1913 ban by the government of South Africa on "tropical labourers", Vide: I Schapera: Migrant Labour and Tribal Life: A Study of Conditions in Bechuanaland Protectorate: Oxford University Press: London: 1947: pp. 29-30.

step on the issue of checking and controlling the spread of diseases, like tuberculosis, then said to be quite rampant amongst repatriates from the Rand. But it would appear that the Zomba authorities were not simply satisfied by the prospective prohibition on "tropical natives" thus planned by South Africa. They actually wanted to see the government of Southern Rhodesia adopt the same stance on Nyasaland labour immigration into that country, more so that these Zomba officials were convinced that the death rate amongst Nyasaland mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia was "almost as high as that existing in the Transvaal."

Indeed, with the reported outbreak of phthisis amongst Nyasaland labourers returning from Southern Rhodesia at the time, it was only natural, therefore, that the clamour for an embargo on the engagement of all forms of Nyasaland labour for mine work in Southern Rhodesia, similar in effect to that already in the pipeline in South Africa, should rise to a crescendo, with Governor Manning, in this case, indicating that "for humane reasons the continued employment of (Nyasaland) natives underground in (Southern) Rhodesia should not be permitted by the Imperial Government."¹⁹³ Moreover, since this labour engaged by the Southern Rhodesian employers was not provided on inter-governmental basis, but was simply procured through independent migration, which obviously ruled out such benefits as deferred pay and other incidental charges, Zomba had nothing to lose, should the suggested veto by Southern Rhodesia materialise.

The wish of the Nyasaland authorities to see measures spontaneously introduced by Southern Rhodesia, banning Nyasaland immigrant labour into that territory, in order to avoid further agonies arising from the high mortality rate, as the South African government was about to do, however, remained a pipe-dream. If anything, official and colonist

¹⁹³C.O. 525/42: Manning to C.O.: May 25, 1912.

opinion in Southern Rhodesia was, as we have seen, very hostile towards Nyasaland over the 1911 ban on labour recruitment in the Protectorate for the farming and mining industries of Southern Rhodesia. In the words of Colonel Burns-Begg, the British Resident Commissioner in Salisbury, the ill-feeling towards Nyasaland was, by 1913, still profound in Southern Rhodesia. "The farmer and the miner in {Southern Rhodesia} thought then {in 1911}, and still think, that the Nyasaland {Government} pursued a selfish policy."¹⁹⁴ Indeed, it had to take the threat from the Colonial Office in 1913, to divert the stream of Nyasaland labour migration to East Africa, to work in places like the Juba Valley in Kenya, where "a small colony of Nyasa natives" had existed "for years,"¹⁹⁵ that colonists in Southern Rhodesia could be successfully convinced on the good intentions of the Nyasaland ban.

In fact, most of the embargoes and restrictions imposed by the Nyasaland and other trans-Zambesian governments on labour migration to Southern Rhodesia, between 1912 and 1918, were, in many respects, invoked by the dubious working conditions prevalent on a large proportion of the mining properties in that territory. For example, the poor labour conditions and the attendant high mortality rate amongst the trans-Zambesian labourers at such Southern Rhodesian mines as the Gaika, Cheshire Cat, Globe and Phoenix, Lonely and Mabel's Luck, to name only a few of these erring properties, were such that they caused a great deal of controversy between their Southern Rhodesian owners, on the one hand, and the Colonial Office and the Northern Rhodesian government on the other, especially between 1913 and 1914. In the event, even those Colonial Office advocates of the gradualist approach to the problems of

¹⁹⁴C.O. 417/524: Burns-Begg to Lord Gladstone: April 25, 1913.

¹⁹⁵Ibid: Minute by Robinson to Sir Fiddes: July 3, 1913.

reducing the mortality rate amongst trans-Zambesian labourers on these and other mines of Southern Rhodesia, who had, initially, feared that the restrictions on labour recruitment in Northern Rhodesia, for instance, were too drastic in that they involved "a loss of ... 12 per cent at least" of Southern Rhodesia's labour supply,¹⁹⁶ were, ultimately, persuaded to accept the inevitable; the total ban on future labour supply from Northern Rhodesia to those mines of Southern Rhodesia, where working conditions obtaining thereon had proved incorrigible.¹⁹⁷

Thus the Northern Rhodesia government, which had since 1913 actually embarked on a policy of developing more positive economic ties with Katanga,¹⁹⁸ was only too ready to wield its big stick against those mining properties of Southern Rhodesia, where the lot of the trans-Zambesian labourer was not the happiest. In July 1915, the Cam and Motor mine in the Hartley district sustained serious setbacks, when labourers from Northern Rhodesia were withdrawn, on short notice, due to the high morbidity rate there.¹⁹⁹ By June 1917, this embargo on Northern Rhodesian labour included in its net the newly opened Mashaba asbestos mining properties of Gath's and King's mines.²⁰⁰ The Nyasaland government also followed the example of Northern Rhodesia, in relation to the ban on its independent labour migrants to Southern Rhodesia. Indeed, in Nyasaland's case, her cause was well vindicated by the fact that since 1911, she had shown herself to have been not in the best of terms with Southern Rhodesia on the issue of labour migration.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶C.O. 417/526: Minute by Lambert to Just: December 13, 1913.

¹⁹⁷Ibid: Harcourt to Lord Gladstone: December 30, 1913: and also C.O. 417/540: Harcourt to Lord Gladstone: May 30, 1914.

¹⁹⁸Vide: Supra: Chapter 5: pp. 501-5

¹⁹⁹C.O. 417/561: F.D.P. Chaplin to Lord Buxton: Telegram: July 7, 1915.

²⁰⁰C.O. 417/589: H.J. Stanley to Lord Buxton: June 19, 1917.

²⁰¹Vide: Supra: pp. 642-66

Besides, it was recognized, even within the Colonial Office itself, that the mortality rate amongst Nyasaland mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia was quite a few shades higher than that of recruits from Northern Rhodesia.²⁰² In the process, the employment of Nyasaland labour at the Cam and Motor mine, Shamva, Lonely, King's Asbestos mine and a few other properties was, in consequence, heavily circumscribed between 1916 and 1917.²⁰³

These restrictions on labour migration to Southern Rhodesia by both the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian governments, between 1912 and 1918, were, however, less damaging for the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia than they were actually intended to be. In fact, the selective nature of the bans, especially those imposed by Northern Rhodesia, and the various loopholes, which the same restrictive measures provided, naturally, frustrated any efforts to control trans-Zambesian labour migration to the South, at the time. Moreover, these restrictions also, unfortunately, coincided with the war-time period, when labour immigration into Southern Rhodesia, particularly between 1914 and 1916, was at its highest.²⁰⁴ From the angle of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia in particular, it would appear that for the three successive years between 1914 and 1916, Nyasaland's restrictive labour policy was put to a severe test, as the Protectorate government called upon its subject peoples in order to raise "an unusually large amount of labour" for "the prosecution of the campaign against German East Africa and the maintenance of military transport and lines of communication ..."²⁰⁵

²⁰²C.O. 417/540: Minute by Lambert to Sir J. Anderson: May 23, 1914.

²⁰³C.O. 417/586: Report on the mortality on mines in Southern Rhodesia for the Quarter ended 30th September 1916 by Acting Medical Officer, Dr. W.M. Eaton, to Department of Administrator: December 22, 1916 and also: Ibid: Stanley to Lord Buxton: January 8, 1917.

²⁰⁴Vide: Supra: Chapter 5: pp. 522-5

²⁰⁵A 3/18/30/30: Smith, Zomba, to Chaplin, Salisbury: June, 1916.

The operation of these call-ups, mounted by the Zomba authorities, was clearly counter-productive. They only precipitated, it would appear, a global exodus of able-bodied men from the Protectorate to employment centres below the Zambesi, creating a situation in Southern Rhodesia best described by the R.N.L.B. management as one of "extraordinary influx of Nyasaland labour ..." into the country, during 1914 and 1915.²⁰⁶

Coupled with the fact that the increased rate of Nyasaland labour immigration up to early 1916 also coincided with a corresponding decrease in the Nyasaland labour repatriates from Southern Rhodesia, it is scarcely surprising therefore that till the close of 1916, there was an unprecedented glut of alien labour on the Southern Rhodesian labour market. It was only perhaps in 1917, that a noticeable decline in the volume of, especially, Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere was recorded; a process facilitated here not only by the tightening up of the control mechanisms on emigration, but also by the return of what were considered "the better-educated (Nyasaland) natives" from abroad²⁰⁷ to obtain clerical work ... available in the various military offices." This 1917 counter-stream to the usual Southward-bound labour migration, which in Southern Rhodesia itself tempted even the more famous Nyasaland Africans of diaspora like Clements Kadalie, who gave up his clerical post at the Falcon Mine near Umvuma for the purpose,²⁰⁸ might have, surely, influenced other rank and file Nyasaland labour migrants to do the same, especially, as their anxieties on the worst aspects of the war subsided.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ Ibid: Upton, Managing Director, R.N.L.B. to Secretary, Department of Administrator: August 4, 1916.

²⁰⁷ E.H./Box 1207: Nyasaland Annual Report for 1917/18: p. 10; in Central Africa File: Correspondence of the Conference of Missionary Societies of Great Britain and Ireland: Edinburgh House: London.

²⁰⁸ Kadalie: My Life and the I.C.U.: p. 35.

²⁰⁹ A 3/18/30/30: Upton, R.N.L.B., to Secretary, Department of Administrator: August 4, 1916.

In any case, notwithstanding the military situation, the trend of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia during the war years, demonstrated beyond doubt, the fact that this movement was less amenable to control and tended, not infrequently, to challenge even some of the strongest tenets of various administrative dicta designed to regulate it. Between 1912 and 1918, the ebb and flow of labour between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia was such that it denied the governments of the two territories any role in the process and, consequently, exposed the Bureau as irrelevant, in the circumstances. In the post-war years up to the end of 1923 and even beyond, when Bureau monopoly over trans-Zambesian labour recruitment, in general, could no longer stand its ground in the face of massive spontaneous African response to employment opportunities, due mainly to the changed economic situation of the period and the increasing integration of the African himself into the colonial economy of South Central Africa,²¹⁰ Nyasaland labour migrants proceeded to the labour markets below the Zambesi, with greater abandon and on an even larger scale than before.

Indeed, the heyday period of the professional connoisseurs on foreign labour supply in form of private agents and semi-official labour organisations, which had, as a matter of fact, never actually managed to effectively establish themselves in Nyasaland itself, but had resorted to purely clandestine operations from adjoining territories, was certainly over and done with, as far as Nyasaland labour migration was concerned in the post-World War I era. The irrelevance of the private labour agent, in this process of Nyasaland and general trans-Zambesian labour migration of the post-war years, is clearly demonstrated here in the refusal by the Southern Rhodesian Administration in 1920 to accept the offers of a group of London seamen, based in Aden, to come and take up jobs in the B.S.A.Co. territory as recruiters of trans-Zambesian

²¹⁰Vide: Supra: Chapter 5: pp. 555-6

labour.²¹¹ According to the leader of these seamen, Arthur E. Lockington, the Chief Officer of The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, the reports, these would-be labour recruiters had gathered during the war years, on this occupation from individuals formally connected with the Native Departments of Southern or South Central Africa, were, obviously, positive and encouraging for "steady young fellows as Recruiting Agents." Thus Lockington informed the Chief Native Commissioner in Salisbury in May 1920:

We are led to believe that any British gentleman, can, if he is approved by the (Chief Native) Commissioner, receive a Recruiting Agent's licence. There (he is) allowed to proceed into the interior for a period of from one to three months, returning together with the recruits recruited.

For every one (recruit), he (the agent) receives an average of about thirty shillings, paid by the Mining Companies after they (the recruits) have been registered by the authorities.

We are given to understand that this is not exactly an easy life, but if it appeals to one, there is much (money) to be made.²¹²

Whilst the traditional profit-motive was thus no longer tenable and indeed defensible in the process of trans-Zambesian labour migration after World War I, an even more striking development of this post-war period is the manner in which the once all-powerful R.N.I.B. was shoved into the sidelines of the mainstream of trans-Zambesian labour migration, thence degenerating into ultimate decadence and obscurity by degrees.²¹³ In the post-war years, the Bureau had become evidently unpopular with the trans-Zambesian labour migrants from either Northern Rhodesia or Nyasaland, mainly because of the general dislike amongst

²¹¹ N3/22/1/2: Taylor C/N/C, Salisbury: Arthur E. Lockington, Kensington, London: July 3, 1920.

²¹² Ibid: Arthur E. Lockington, Chief Officer, The Royal Steam Packet Co.; Aden, to C/N/C, Salisbury: May 5, 1920.

²¹³ Vide: Supra: Chapter 5: pp. 563-8

these migrants of the system of regimentation which the Bureau symbolized and also because of this labour organisation's closer association with the farming community rather than the mining industry, during this period. The colonist farmers in Southern Rhodesia were in the post-war years unable to offer wages compatible with the rising cost of living and were, therefore, frequently short of labour. In the Charter district of Mashonaland, for instance, labour shortage was so acute in 1919 that the Native Commissioner had to intervene by introducing a regimen of forced labour, whereby people of the district were "commandeered for the purpose of assisting at the inoculation of cattle at sixpence for the day's work" on private farms and other specious undertakings related to dipping tanks, survey-work and road-making in the district.²¹⁴

This kind of forced labour to bale out the farmers, ironically described by the Salisbury Administration as "educative",²¹⁵ whilst the outcry of the Rev. Cripps, the persistent Company critic who had exposed this state of affairs in the district, was curtly dismissed as "frivolous",²¹⁶ of course, resembled similar developments in the Charter and other districts of Mashonaland in 1912 when coercive measures were deployed to solve an equally profound labour crisis involving the country's colonist farming community.²¹⁷ In the post-war years, however, proceedings of this nature irreparably discredited the reputation of the colonist farmers as employers and that of the Bureau as the medium through which farm labour was supplied. Thus in the Bemba country of

²¹⁴C.O. 417/623: Rev. A. S. Cripps to Douglas-Jones; September 5, 1919.

²¹⁵Ibid: C.H. Tredgold, Acting Administrator to Douglas-Jones: October 25, 1919.

²¹⁶Ibid: Douglas-Jones to Lord Buxton: November 21, 1919.

²¹⁷Vide: Supra: pp. 666-9

Northern Rhodesia, where the Bureau was striving to raise farm labour supply for Southern Rhodesia at the close of 1921, potential labour migrants from this region were gradually driven to the Congo, where, unlike the working conditions on the Southern Rhodesian farms, wages were higher and no deductions were made on the labourer's wages in relation to items like jerseys and blankets. Ultimately, the Bureau management conceded defeat in its attempt to raise labour for the colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia from this region, indicating, at the same time, that:

... a large proportion of the few recruits that we {the Bureau} are now getting from these districts are natives who are not good enough for the Congo.

As long as the pay and treatment of natives employed in the Congo remain as good as at present, I fear that we cannot expect to obtain any large number of recruits from these districts unless we are able to offer them a considerable increase of our present rate of wages. This seems out of the question at present.²¹⁸

The state of affairs in which, by 1921, the low wage factor in Southern Rhodesia acted as a deterrent to potential labour migrants from Northern Rhodesia was also observed amongst Nyasaland labour migrants as well. Thus whereas in 1922 the Southern Rhodesian farmers had accused the deferred pay system as the cause of the unpopularity, amongst Nyasaland labourers, of both the Bureau and farmwork in Southern Rhodesia,²¹⁹

by 1926, it had become quite apparent, even within the administrative circles in Salisbury itself, that the working conditions in the country were not quite to the liking of this class of immigrants. In the Victoria district, for instance, a large proportion of Nyasaland

²¹⁸N3/22/11/12: R.N.L.B. Memorandum for the members of the Management Board by D. Hawksley: Salisbury: December 12, 1921.

²¹⁹C.O. 417/676: Report of the Annual Meeting of the R.N.L.B. for June, 1921.

labourers were, at the time, reported to be leaving for the Transvaal, where the wage rate of 22/- per month for farm-work compared quite favourably with the 12/-6d monthly tariff, then obtaining in Southern Rhodesia.²²⁰ Once more a paradoxical situation was emerging in Southern Rhodesia in the 1920's, whereby the labour demand was so patently high that the colonist farmers actually resorted to the use of juvenile and female labour, especially for tobacco picking.²²¹ Yet at the same time, the inherently poor labour conditions at the various centres of employment arising, especially, from those constraints imposed by the cost minimisation and cheap labour practices in general, for so long associated with the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, were actively militating against any positive labour response amongst both the local peoples and the alien labourers.

II The passage and vulnerability of Nyasaland African migrant "ulendos" through the Portuguese territory to the South

An even more interesting but fundamental aspect of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond, between 1903 and 1923 for instance, was the vulnerability of the Nyasaland labour migrants themselves between the source and the destination territories. In this respect, it is tempting to conclude that the problems faced by these migrant labourers en route to the South simulated, by all means, the phenomenon categorized by sociologists on migration as symbolising the theory of intervening obstacles and under which is included all those difficulties faced by the migrants, arising either out of the physical character of the migrant routes or other impedimenta of a general kind,

²²⁰D.O. 63/1: Chancellor to Amery: Secret: January 6, 1926.

²²¹D.O. 63/3: Chancellor to Amery: July 7, 1927.

which, in one way or another, make the actual process of migration harder to fulfill.²²² In the case of these particular migrants from Nyasaland during the early decades of the twentieth century, their problems were not unconnected with the complex diplomatic and historical background, associated with the various territories through which their labour routes passed to the labour markets below the Zambesi.

The political and diplomatic tussle between the British and the Portuguese, during the late 1880's, on the validity of their respective claims over Mozambique and Mashonaland, represented here by the conflicts between Rhodes', B.S.A.Co. and Carlos Paiva de Andrada, the Portuguese pioneer and company promoter, supported by the redoubtable Goanese adventurer, Manuel Antonio de Sousa (popularly known as Gouveia), over the Manyika territory;²²³ as well as the struggle over Portuguese Zambesia and the Shire Highlands of Southern Nyasaland,²²⁴ cannot be said to have been the best indications of the amicable relations between these two colonizing powers and their agents in South Central Africa. Indeed, such acts as the British ultimatum to Portugal in January 1890 over these African possessions and the humiliation it involved on the part of Lisbon, could only embitter Anglo-Portuguese relations, with adverse consequences either during the scramble for Africa or after.²²⁵

In the final analysis, the movement of peoples between British and Portuguese possessions, in this part of Africa, was largely influenced

²²²In spite of relevance of the migration theory of intervening obstacles to labour migration, sociologists however appear to have excluded this subject from their general schema on migration. Vide: E.S. Lee: "A Theory of Migration" in J.A. Jackson (e.d.): Migration: Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1969: pp. 285; 290-4.

²²³P.R. Warhurst: Anglo-Portuguese Relations in South Central Africa 1890-1900: pp. 26-31. Longmans, Green & Co., London: 1962: pp. 26-31.

²²⁴R. Oliver: Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa: Chatto & Windus: London: 1957: pp. 177-81.

²²⁵Newitt: op. cit. p. 312.

by not only those issues arising from the chequered diplomatic background of yester-year, but also by the character of political control and administration obtaining in the territories concerned. Thus whilst under the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of June 11, 1891 (Clause XI), it was assured that:

.... there shall be freedom for the passage of subjects and goods of both powers (Britain and Portugal) across the Zambesi, and through the districts adjoining the left bank of the river (Zambesi) situated above the confluence of the Shire, and those adjoining the right bank of the Zambesi above the confluence of the River Luenha (Ruenya), without hindrance of any description and without payment of transit dues ...²²⁶

these guarantees, so elaborately laid down on paper, were not infrequently frustrated by the realities of the situation obtaining, especially, in Portuguese Zambesia; the region separating North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland from Southern Rhodesia. The whims of the Portuguese functionaries based in this area and the general laxity of Portuguese political control over the region contributed, in every way, to the hazards faced by Nyasaland labour migrants to and from Southern Rhodesia.

To a large extent, these problems, which threatened the process of Nyasaland labour migration in the early decades of the present century, were intrinsically linked with the historical background of not only the Portuguese Zambesia region, but also that of Portuguese presence in Mozambique as a whole. Portugal's poverty and lack of manpower were certainly responsible for the birth of a neo-anarchical situation in its South-East African possession. The chaos and devastation let loose by the Portuguese muzungos and prazo senhors (land lords) and their

²²⁶C.O. 525/42: Quoted in Minute Made by the Superintendent of Native Affairs (J.C. Casson), Zomba, February 7, 1912.

chikunda (slave) followers in the middle Zambesi, during the early and later parts of the nineteenth century, and with the support of the Portuguese government in Lisbon itself, which chose to treat these escapades as empire-building activities rather than wanton destruction,²²⁷ did not augur well for Portuguese Zambesia either before or after 1891. Indeed, it could be said that the pre-1891 failure of the Portuguese authorities to stand up against the muzungos and prazo senhors was directly responsible for Lisbon's inability to influence the character of the prazo system in Mozambique up to fall of the republic in 1926.²²⁸

As far as trans-Zambesian labour migrants were concerned, this state of affairs in Portuguese Zambesia, in particular, at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, was considerably worsened by the issues of African "pacification" and resistance, which even the more imperially-committed and better equipped Britons on both sides of the Zambesi could not easily contend with. Thus the Maondera rising and the general state of war, existing on the north-eastern frontiers of Southern Rhodesia between 1898 and 1903,²²⁹ in many respects, symbolize the immensity of the problems faced by both the trans-Zambesian labour migrants and the governments bordering on Portuguese Zambesia.

An interesting development from either the inability of the Portuguese authorities to wield effective control over the Zambesia and other regions of Mozambique or rather the wanton manner in which the local Portuguese functionaries, in these parts, carried out their activities, without any censure or accountability to Lourenco Marques

²²⁷ Newitt: op. cit. pp. 304-5.

²²⁸ Ibid: pp. 374-5.

²²⁹ C.O. 417/319: E.T. Kenny, N/C North Mazoe to C/N/C Salisbury: October 8, 1900; and Taberer, C/N/C Mashonaland to Milton: October 24, 1900. For the treatment of the Maondera rising at length. Vide: T.O. Ranger: The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia 1898-1930: Heinemann: London: 1970: pp. 3-7; 7-8.

and Lisbon, is the protracted conflict between the Barwe Kingdom of Makombe and the Portuguese colonial forces. This conflict, which took on a patently more serious form, firstly, between 1900 and 1902 and finally between 1917 and 1920, greatly affected the trend of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond and also the welfare of the labour migrants involved in this process. Nyasaland and other trans-Zambesian migrant ulendos, plying such principal labour routes to the South as the Misale-Mtoko; Dedza-Mtoko via Tete and the Misale-Spolilo route via Feira, all passing through the Tete district of Mozambique in particular or Portuguese Zambesia in general,²³⁰ were, during these times, inexorably victimized by one or more of the contending parties in the conflict. Only those routes which relied on railway transport, like the Lundazi-Lusaka-Livingstone route to Bulawayo, from Northern Rhodesia, or the Salima-Port Herald-Umtali one, from Nyasaland, would, of course, have been safer, especially during the second phase of the Barwe/Portuguese tussle between 1917 and 1920, when railway transport had come into regular use.

In any case, the difficulties of the trans-Zambesian migrant labourers through the Portuguese territory, during these troublous times were quite considerable. Very few Nyasaland labour migrants, for instance, took to railway travel to the South even by the 1930's, due to the high transport costs which they were in no position to meet.²³¹ But whilst walking to and from the Southern labour markets remained the most popular and commonplace mode of travel even up to the more recent times,²³² the price demanded of the migrants, in the process, was by no

²³⁰For a map on trans-Zambesian labour routes: Vide: Supra: pp.

²³¹By 1935 it was estimated that about 90% of all the Nyasaland migrant labourers proceeding to the South travelled on foot. Vide: Report of the Committee Appointed to Enquire into Emigrant Labour: p. 24.

²³²Even by the 1950's, travelling on foot was more general amongst trans-Zambesian migrants. Vide: Niddrie: "The Road to Work:" pp. 36-7.

means inconsequential and the Barwe/Portuguese conflicts were only a fraction of those obstacles the migrants were to encounter.

During the pre-1903 conflict, for instance, the attacks against these migrants in Portuguese territory appear to have been less systematic and somewhat xenophobic and spontaneous. However, Nyasaland migrants and their colleagues learnt valuable lessons from these occurrences in the long run, especially given the increased post-1903 demand for trans-Zambesian labour and the rise in the volume of migration as well as the concomitant will-power, on the part of the migrants themselves, to sustain the momentum of the labour migration movement to Southern Rhodesia and other destination territories below the Zambesi, where their services were badly needed. Like the migrants from Tanganyika, Rwanda and Burundi to the Buganda province of the Uganda Protectorate between the 1920's and 1950's,²³³ Nyasaland migrants learnt through the hard way, that travelling in sizeable gangs, varying in numbers from about ten to thirty, was a sound security plan, particularly on those occasions when they were required to protect themselves against the ferocity of irate locals, residing along the main labour routes, whose goodwill and consideration could not be bought by either cash or limbo.²³⁴

In fact, during the Makombe rising between 1917 and 1920, the situation in the Portuguese territory was, certainly, far more serious than ever for any migrants passing, especially, through Portuguese Zambesia and the Barwe country, which constituted part of this whole region. The grievances of the Barwe and other insurgent African peoples

²³³Cf. A.I. Richards: "The Travel Routes and the Travellers:" A.I. Richards (ed.): Economic Development and Tribal Change: A Study of Immigrant Labour in Buganda: Heffer & Sons: Cambridge: 1954: pp. 63-4.

²³⁴C.O. 417/319: Statements of "Blantyre Boys" (Ishoni, Sidi and Jacob) before Ernest Morris, N/C Marandellas District, February 4, 1901.

of these areas against the Portuguese system of administration were quite cogent and concrete. The traditional Portuguese colonial industry of deploying coercive methods to procure cheap labour was, by 1916/17, greatly intensified by the demand for labourers either on road construction work in respective districts or as carriers on the war front, along the northern border of Mozambique and German East Africa, whither a large proportion of their kinsmen had already been conscripted as combatants.

Secondly, the people of the districts of Barwe, Massanga, Kachomba, Chioko and Tete principally involved in the rising, resented the manner and high rate of taxation as well as the arbitrary measures of their district authorities on this matter.²³⁵ Finally, the general resort by the Portuguese authorities to female labour, especially that of wives and young girls, supplemented by young boys, in the construction of the Tete-Massekesse route, passing through the heart of the Barwe country, did not, as a matter of fact, please those African societies involved in the process.²³⁶ It was obviously galling for the spouses, parents and guardians of these female labourers to accept the fact that their wards were neither paid nor fed by the Portuguese officials responsible for their recruitment, in the first place, whilst, at the same time, the younger girls were frequently exploited sexually against their will by their overseers and bricklayers, mostly of the African sepooy class, at these places of employment without any redress.²³⁷ From this point

²³⁵For the manner in which tax was collected by proxy and through a system of "tax-farming" in Portuguese Zambesia: Vide: C.O. 417/319: Extract from the Rhodesia Herald, October 31, 1900, and also J. Duffy: Portuguese Africa: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1959: Chapters IV-V and XII.

²³⁶C.O. 417/587: Major W.S. Spain, Makaha, to Chief Staff Officer, B.S.A.P. Salisbury: April 6, 1917: Vide: also: T.O. Ranger: "Revolt in Portuguese East Africa: The Makombe Rising of 1917: Number Two" in K. Kirkwood (ed): St. Anthony's Papers on African Affairs: No. 15; Southern Illinois University Press: Carbondale: 1963: pp. 64-5.

²³⁷C.O. 417/587: Statement of Chisciance Ismail before Major Spain, Makaha, April 3, 1917.

of view, it is, therefore, easier to appreciate the pleas of Shongorisho, the envoy of the Barwe leader Chief Makosa Makombe, before the Southern Rhodesian officials in the Mtoko district in August 1917, when he indicated that:

The Portuguese authorities ill-treat us shockingly. I hand in a string with knots on it. Each knot represents one of our young girls who has had her private parts cut so that she could be ravished.²³⁸

The Portuguese authorities and their sympathizers did not, of course, accept this version portrayed above, on the causes of the 1917 rising. Thus in the opinion of the Portuguese Curator of Natives in Salisbury, Dr. Mario Placido, the cause of the Makombe rising was, simply, the "immoral and material German influence" amongst the Barwe and their compatriots, to whom the German Kaiser was their "Grand-Chief", whilst Shongorisho, the envoy of Makombe to Southern Rhodesia, was daubed a "cheap edition of the Kaiser's aims (over Mozambique) translated into Kaffir"²³⁹ The Mozambique Company, which also refused to accept the doctrine of maladministration and ill-treatment of African subject peoples in the Portuguese territory as responsible for the rising, did not, however, embrace Placido's internationalist dimension on the matter. Perhaps the Mozambique Company's views on this regard were irretrievably coloured by its bitterness over its failure to control and exploit effectively, those areas like the Barwe country, which fell under its 1891 concession, but which had, especially between 1901 and 1917, hitherto defied all forms of subjection to a regimen of private economic interests.

²³⁸C.O. 417/590: Statement of Shongorisho before E.R. Morkel, Mtoko, August 8, 1917: Enclosed in Morkel, Acting N/C, Mtoko to C/N/C, Salisbury: August 8, 1917.

²³⁹C.O. 417/602: Mario Jorge Placido, Portuguese Curator of Natives, Salisbury, to Taylor, C/N/C, December 31, 1919.

In this connection, it is, therefore, quite natural that Albert Oury, an embittered London-based director of the Mozambique Company, should, by May 1917, contemplate to sue the Portuguese government for the losses to his Company, occasioned by the Makombe rising, in form of cattle and capital invested in agricultural projects, such as the cotton industry at Chemba and the sugar and sisal plantations along the Zambesi. Albert Oury also blamed, in the process, the African insurgents concerned over what was destined to resemble a virtual state of "prolonged paralysation which {would} inevitably come about in regard to the course of the Company's civilizing influence {and would} certainly cause it losses which {could} never be compensated."

The crime of the African insurgents, especially the Barwe of Makombe, according to the view of the Mozambique Company, was that since their country had, up to 1917, been closed to Company jurisdiction and economic activities, their district consequently became:

... the only one of the Territory where the civilising influence {was} limited to the collection of native taxes {and also became} the refuge where {congregated} recalcitrants and malcontents who {wished} to escape from the system of work and discipline, to which the natives of all the surrounding regions were subordinated little by little.

From Oury's standpoint, the consequences arising from a situation, whereby the Barwe people remained evidently isolated from most of the major forces of colonialism, were, certainly quite predictable, as:

Bad elements finished by constituting a ferment of discord and indiscipline which in normal circumstances could not cause other than slight complications but in the state in which the province of Mozambique {found} itself by reason of war, {it was feared that this inevitably caused} a grave perturbation of public order²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰C.O. 417/601: Memorandum on "Province of Barwe (Portuguese East Africa): Position Existing between the Mozambique Company and the Portuguese Government" by Albert Oury: Enclosed in Oury to C.T. Davies at the C.O.: May 10, 1917.

From the preceding facts, it is apparent that the perception of the Portuguese authorities on the nature of their colonial rule and the causes of the 1917 rising in Portuguese Zambesia and the neighbouring areas was diametrically opposed to that of their insurgent subject peoples. Both sides were clearly convinced, in their own different ways, as to earnestness of their respective motivation to fight, hence the public avowal by the Barwe combatants that "if the Portuguese did not leave the country they {the Barwe} would fight them until {all} the male natives were killed, then the Portuguese could have their {Barwe} women, as they only would be left."²⁴¹ The Portuguese, on their part, were equally committed to restoring and maintaining the status quo in Portuguese Zambesia and this commitment was quite manifest in the manner in which they prosecuted the war. In the Kachomba district for instance, it was reported in June 1917 that the Portuguese were literally "burning and laying waste" the villages, including the grain supplies of the African societies concerned.²⁴² Indeed, even their British neighbours in South-East Africa could only deplore what the Colonial Office succinctly described as "the barbarous rule of the Portuguese ...", though, of course, overt criticism was discouraged "to avoid offending our {British} ancient ally {Portugal}"²⁴³

It was, therefore, in the throes of this pyrrhic struggle between two determined contenders, that Nyasaland labour migrants, passing through the Portuguese territory to the Southern labour markets, found themselves inexorably enmeshed between 1917 and 1920. The problem of the Nyasaland labour migrants at this period must, however, be viewed

²⁴¹C.O. 417/587: Statement by Gabriel Osman {Yao} before Major Spain, Makaha: April 4, 1917.

²⁴²C.O. 417/589: Statement by Kanaventi {Chikunda} before J.G. Roberts, J.P. Mt. Darwin: June 26, 1917.

²⁴³C.O. 417/590: Minute by Lambert to W.B. Long: August 23, 1917.

also in terms of the tactics adopted by the Portuguese authorities to put down the rising. The moves by these officials to procure collaborators and allies, by setting one African ethnic group against another, which the R.N.L.B. management in Salisbury bitterly complained about as directly responsible for creating such a chaotic situation in Portuguese Zambesia that it ostensibly frustrated all the efforts of their labour organisation to procure its usual share of labour supply from this territory,²⁴⁴ certainly complicated matters even for Nyasaland labour migrants.

These labour migrants, either proceeding to or returning from Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, quite often found themselves forcibly conscripted into the Portuguese forces against the insurgents. The administrations in Zomba and Salisbury were, in fact, crudely reminded of this plight of the Nyasaland labour migrants, in June 1917, by the contents of a letter written by Homan Mackankhue, one of the Nyasaland labour migrants from the Rand detained by the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay, with the intention of coercing them to enlist with the Portuguese army. Informing his relations in Nyasaland, Mackankhue indicated:

... I am in prison here (by the order of) Europeans of Delagoa Bay. The reason is this: the Azungu (Portuguese) of this place do not allow we Blantyre boys to pass through this place, no. We are kept here but not in chains.

They (Portuguese) say we must return back again to Johannesburg and we are refusing (sic). So they do not allow us to come there (to Nyasaland), and our katundu (loads) we have not, we do not know when they will be returned to us.

Save the money which I sent you, perhaps we shall be allowed to go, when we have finished talking with these Azungu (Europeans) here, for they want us to go with them to war.

That's what happened to us, and I am just telling you that you may understand and report also at home. We are not afraid: even Europeans (prisoners) are

²⁴⁴Vide: Supra: Chapter 5: pp. 531-2

many. We are sorry for our loads (katundu) because they will not be given to us again, all are finished at this place of Delagoa Bay Portuguese Territory.

We came here (during) the month of February 1917, until up to date. You must not cry for us, we are still all right, but we shall not come with goods. Perhaps we will be back (in Nyasaland) at the end of this month or be released as we are not chained but only eyes (i.e. parole) be not anxious with us, we shall be back my friends, perhaps at the end of this month (June).

We are sorry to give you all good-morning (i.e. to say goodbye) my old friends. We sleep at the same place with Europeans, we are not allowed to sleep at our place alone, no, not a bit.²⁴⁵

Official reaction in Zomba and Salisbury, over the issues raised by the Mackankhue letter, was, to some extent, panicky. The two governments became more than ever aware of the gravity of the difficulties, which the Nyasaland labour migrants faced in the course of their transit through Portuguese East Africa. As the Department of the Superintendent of Native Affairs in Zomba confessed to their counterparts in Salisbury, in July 1917, the manner in which the Portuguese authorities treated labour migrants, passing through their territory, had evidently become "detrimental both to your (Southern Rhodesian) interests and those of this Protectorate (Nyasaland)."²⁴⁶ Accordingly, the solution adopted by these two governments, with the support of Pretoria as well, over the problem of Nyasaland labour migrants, then passing through Portuguese East Africa, was threefold in character.

Firstly, a more elaborate passport system was introduced, for Nyasaland migrant labourers returning from the South, under which it was, henceforth, clearly indicated to the Portuguese officials that

²⁴⁵N 3/22/5: K. Holman Mackankhue, Delagoa Bay, to Sachuruka, Nyasaland, (Translated from Nyanja); June 26, 1917.

²⁴⁶Ibid: E.C. White, Acting Superintendent of Native Affairs, Zomba to C/N/C, Salisbury: July 19, 1917.

"such natives (belonged) to a country under British Protection ..."²⁴⁷
Secondly, Southern Rhodesian officials enjoined that all Nyasaland migrant labourers intending to proceed to their homes, at the end of their terms of service in the country, should use the Sipolilo-Feira labour route via Northern Rhodesia, rather than the regular north-easterly ones through Portuguese Zambesia.²⁴⁸ Here these officials may have taken into consideration the fact that the Chikunda ruler, Kanyemba, whose Portuguese-controlled domain bordered on the Feira approaches of the Sipolilo-Feira route, did not come out in rebellion.²⁴⁹
Thirdly, all disabled Nyasaland labourers due for repatriation from Southern Rhodesia were forwarded "by rail to Beira and (by) boat to Chinde and (were also) provided with Southern Rhodesian passports."²⁵⁰

These 1917 inter-governmental measures to alleviate the problems of the migrant labourers via the Portuguese territory were somewhat belated and evidently ineffectual. Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond, it must be remembered, had remained predominantly independent since 1911. Between 1907 and 1911, in particular, most of the activities of the government of Nyasaland, for instance, in connection with labour emigration from the Protectorate, were designed, essentially, to either curtail the rate of or prohibit the movement altogether, as we have already seen.²⁵¹ Because of these restrictive inclinations on the part of the Nyasaland government, it is safe to surmise that for potential labour migrants who had become used

²⁴⁷Ibid: White, Zomba, to C/N/C, Salisbury, July 19, 1917.

²⁴⁸Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Salisbury, to Superintendent of Native Affairs, Zomba, August 6, 1917.

²⁴⁹C.O. 417/589: Statement of Samuel Chinteche (Tonga) before Roberts, J.P. Mt. Darwin: June 18, 1917.

²⁵⁰N 3/22/5: Taylor to White: August 6, 1917.

²⁵¹Vide: Supra: pp. 592-673

to leaving the country by surreptitious means and without due authority, they had obviously developed some degree of suspicion towards most of the moves of their government by 1917.

Thus on being advised to use the Sipolilo-Feira labour route via Northern Rhodesia, to avoid any risks involved in passing through Portuguese Zambesia, most Nyasaland labourers from Southern Rhodesia deliberately ignored this advice, as a party of Tonga labourers, formerly employed at the Gadzema mine in the Hartley district of Mashonaland, did in June 1917, arguing, at the same time, that they "could avoid any rebels and ~~(that)~~ they knew the road which was much shorter than going ~~(via)~~ Kanyemba."²⁵² It could, therefore, be argued that it was principally this kind of suspicious disposition and intransigence which further complicated matters for the Nyasaland labour migrants, more so as these migrants also attempted to defy even the wishes of the insurgents in those parts of Portuguese Zambesia where Portuguese officials had either been expelled or killed by May 1917.²⁵³

From another angle, it would appear that these Nyasaland labour migrants also hoped to overcome their characteristic vulnerability to attacks in Mozambique, by considerably increasing the sizes of their ulendos for the purpose of passing through those troubled parts of the Portuguese territory. Hence it is, therefore, not at all surprising to find that during the duration of the Makombe rising, the sizes of these Nyasaland labour ulendos increased in strength, quite often to an average of fifty travellers or more, especially in cases whereby the

²⁵²C.O. 417/589: Statement of Samuel Chinteche ...

²⁵³Note here the insistence of Nyasaland labour migrants in the Kachomba district (Portuguese territory) to have their passports "stamped" in spite of the assertion by the victorious insurgents that "the white men had nothing more to do with this country ~~(Portuguese Zambesia)~~." Vide: C.O. 417/588: Statement by Masingo ~~(Ngoni)~~ before 'Wiri' Edwards, N/C Mrewa: May 29, 1917.

ulendo in question also included migrant women and children.²⁵⁴ This idea of enlarged migrant labour ulendos was, of course, quite deliberate and well planned, serving as a survival device, as it did, for the travellers involved.

Moreover, for Nyasaland migrants returning from Southern Rhodesia by the Salisbury-Shamva-Mount Darwin labour route or its equivalent, the Salisbury-Mrewa-Mount Darwin one, their usual rendezvous was Rusambo's or the Mkumbura river on the borders of the Mount Darwin district of Mashonaland and the Portuguese territory.²⁵⁵ Similarly, those migrants from the eastern areas of Mashonaland, like Umtali and Penhalonga, often congregated at the Pungwe river before making their way through the heart of the Barwe country.²⁵⁶ For those parties travelling down from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia, on the other hand, during this period, their meeting ground was the Zambesi, where several small parties joined and formed fairly sizeable ulendos for their journey through the areas of conflict.²⁵⁷

Thus because of the confidence and sense of security they derived from these enlarged ulendos, it is hardly surprising that Nyasaland migrant labourers, especially those returning from Southern Rhodesia, ignored all forms of persuasion to take the safer Sipolilo-Feira labour route via Northern Rhodesia. In this respect, these migrant labourers obviously concluded, as a party of their Tonga compatriots did, that:

We were told by the Native Commissioner (at Mount Darwin) that there was trouble in Portuguese

²⁵⁴Ibid: Statement of Master (Ngoni) before Roberts J.P., Mt. Darwin: May 8, 1917.

²⁵⁵Ibid: Statement of Kamroza (Ngoni) before "Wiri" Edwards: May 29, 1917.

²⁵⁶Ibid: Statement of Chimalilo (Yao) before Assistant Sergeant Skeet; Mt. Darwin: May 14, 1917.

²⁵⁷Ibid: Statement of Machira (Chewa) before Roberts J.P.; Mt. Darwin: May 8, 1917.

Territory and we must go via Feira, but we thought
(that) as we were 22 we were strong enough to go
through and we went into Portuguese Territory ...²⁵⁸

Here the confidence of these Nyasaland migrant labourers must have been largely strengthened by the fact that once they reached Portuguese Zambesia, they generally "... left the path and kept to the veld (travelling) along in the night"²⁵⁹

In the final analysis, the air of complacence and self-confidence as well the sense of false security, which altogether characterized the disposition of labour migrants passing through the Portuguese territory from Nyasaland, in the period 1917 and 1920, were severely tested and found wanting. It is apparent that these Nyasaland labour migrants seriously underestimated both the sense of grievance, on the part of the African insurgents of Portuguese Zambesia, and the degree of loathing the latter also harboured for those Africans, who collaborated with the Portuguese, to frustrate the aims of the 1917-1920 rising. As far as the fate of these Nyasaland migrants was concerned, it would appear that their welfare was as much dependent on the manner in which the 1917/1920 conflict was prosecuted as it was influenced by the attitudes of both combatant parties towards these foreign people. With this view in mind, it could, therefore, be reasonably argued that once the intentions of the Barwe insurgents, for instance, to draw the attention of the superior Portuguese authorities to the plight of their people by sending the captive Portuguese administrator of Massanga, Maldonado, to Tete "to lay their grievances before the Governor there and to explain to the

²⁵⁸ Ibid: Statement of Julias (Tonga) before D.M. Powley, N/C Mt. Darwin: May 26, 1917.

²⁵⁹ Ibid: Statement of Motan (Tonga) before Powley: May 29, 1917.

Portuguese Government the reasons for {their} armed resistance,"²⁶⁰ had failed to materialize and, in the process, only managed to elicit brutality and vindictiveness from the opposite camp, the course of a bitter and bloody struggle was thenceforth well defined.

In the context of these bitter and unmitigated attacks and reprisals, the lot of those people, both black and white, who, from the insurgents' point of view, were either engaged in promoting the cause for Portuguese control of the country or were not otherwise actively involved on the side of those opposed to this Portuguese dominance, was not a pleasant one. Both Nyasaland migrant labourers passing through Portuguese Zambesia to the Southern labour markets and local African collaborators were here, inexorably, caught up in the midst of this conflict. In the case of the Nyasaland migrant labourers, for example, the reasons for the attacks they sustained from the Barwe and other insurgent African groups of Portuguese Zambesia, were legion. Though the two Makombe factions had given sufficient guarantees at the beginning and during the course of the rising, that no British subject or property would suffer any harm in those parts of the Portuguese territory where the insurgent forces operated,²⁶¹ this, unfortunately, did not include Nyasaland labour migrants; themselves subjects of a British Protectorate. Not even the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1891 could adequately guarantee the safety of these labour migrants.²⁶²

What appears to have gone wrong, insofar as the security of the

²⁶⁰C.O. 417/587: Statement of Chasuka (Mtwara) before Major Spain: Makaha: April 4, 1917.

²⁶¹For the guarantees on the safety of British subjects and property in the Barwe country, for instance, note the arrangements between the Barwe Shona and the Rhodesian officials in August 1917 through the medium of Shona Chiefs on the Rhodesian side like Tangwena. Vide: C.O. 417/590: Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Administrator's Dept: August 6, 1917 and Chaplin to Stanley, Secret, August 11, 1917.

²⁶²Vide: Supra: pp. 680-1

Nyasaland labour migrants was concerned here, was not simply the surfacing of the trigger-happy attitude of the insurgents in the Portuguese territory. As we have already indicated in the case of the Mackankhue letter of June 1917,²⁶³ the Portuguese authorities appear to have gone out of their way to enlist the services of Nyasaland labour migrants in the campaign against the 1917 rising and, in the process, detaining by force those who refused to do so. In so doing, these Portuguese tactics greatly resembled the manner in which these same authorities had previously press-ganged Zulu, Mfengu and Sotho labourers at the Rand mines in 1902/3, with the connivance of the Boers, to help fight the Makombe war.²⁶⁴ With the Nyasaland migrants in 1917, Portuguese effort does not seem to have been altogether fruitless as a number of Yaos, from both British and Portuguese Nyasaland, apparently enlisted with the Portuguese levies. Indeed, a surviving member of a party of Yao labour migrants, formerly employed in the Mtoko district of Mashonaland and, by April 1917, due to return to their homeland in the Nyasaland Protectorate, could not help deploring the stigma attached to the Yaos in the eyes of the Barwe insurgents, when he stated:

... I was attacked because of my tribe; so the natives told me, ~~{who}~~ worked for the Portuguese as Sepoys and in other positions of authority over other natives.²⁶⁵

In a more general way, the insurgents' vindictive drag-net was certainly far too wide for transient Nyasaland labour migrants or any other African group, suspected of collaborating with the Portuguese, to

²⁶³Vide: Supra: pp. 688-9

²⁶⁴Vide: Supra: Chapter 2: pp. 153-4

²⁶⁵C.O. 417/587: Statement of Gabriel Osman ~~{Yao}~~

escape the concomitant consequences. Indeed, in the words of one refugee, Assham Rostrum, a Punjabi (Indian) trader, formerly based at Kaponda's in the Portuguese territory opposite the Mount Darwin district of Mashonaland, the fate of the Nyasaland labour ulendos may have very well depended on the conviction of the insurgents that:

... those who were not with them {insurgents} were against them and if foreign natives were allowed to travel through the country unmolested - they would inform against the rebels.

In informing against them, the predominantly Shona insurgents felt that these foreign transient labour migrants would, consequently, frustrated the supreme command of Mwari that:

we {the insurgents} were to drive out the whites and have the country {Portuguese Zambesia} to ourselves.²⁶⁶

Against this sombre irredentist and fundamentalist background, it is more or less obvious to appreciate the seriousness of collaboration with the Portuguese as an act of transgression, by one African group or another, against the African insurgents of Portuguese Zambesia, between 1917 and 1920. The punishment against such African miscreants was not unnaturally heavy. Thus when a party of local labourers was caught by the insurgent army, clearing a road from Kachomba to Magute for the Portuguese patrol, in June 1917, they were killed and their bodies subsequently "placed ... across the road for the Portuguese to see."²⁶⁷ Even those Shona people, who decided to take advantage of the border situation and join their kinsmen on the Southern Rhodesian side of the frontier without carrying out their stint in the conflict, were

²⁶⁶C.O. 417/588: Statement of Assham Rostrum {Indian trader} before Roberts, J.P. Mt. Darwin: May 10, 1917.

²⁶⁷C.O. 417/589: Statement of Kanaventi {Chikunda}

not spared by their insurgent fellowmen. An interesting illustration in this regard, is the case of one loyalist by the name of Mavuragonya, who crossed from the Chioko district of the Portuguese territory into Southern Rhodesia's Mount Darwin area, where he placed himself and his followers under headman Madyirapanze in July 1917. The message delivered to Mavuragonya, sooner or later, accompanied, at the same time, by a live bullet, was quite clear in its overall implications, as the insurgents indicated:

Come with us to kill the Portuguese. It is not brotherly of you to leave us and go into English Territory (Southern Rhodesia). If you do not help us we shall come back and follow you into English Territory and kill you and all with you.²⁶⁸

Of course, the crime of Mavuragonya and other Shona loyalists, from the Portuguese territory during the 1917 rising, was one not merely of desertion, but also of insensitivity to the feelings and aspirations of their fellowmen. This crime on the part of the loyalists, was further magnified by the fact that in those border districts of Southern Rhodesia, whither these loyalists had fled, the Shona communities there were quite conversant with the trend of events amongst their kinsmen across the border. In a number of instances and, particularly in the case of the Chioko chieftaincy, cut a thwart between the two colonies, the border Shona crossed over in sizeable numbers to join the rising against the Portuguese.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸C.O. 417/590: Statement of Scout Chihota quoted in Trooper M.M. Walter, B.S.A.P. Patrol No. 1: Majirapanzis Kraal (sic), to Powley, N/C Mt. Darwin: August (?), 1917.

²⁶⁹In the Chioko district of P.E.A. on the Rwenya river, the leader of the insurgents purportedly came from the Mt. Darwin district of S. Rhodesia. Vide: C.O. 417/588: Report by N/C, Mt. Darwin (Powley) on Special Border Patrol, n.d.: Enclosed in Stanley to Lord Buxton: Secret: June 3, 1917.

On the level of traditional religion, the close connections and constant flow of information between the two mhondoros (spirit mediums) of the Mount Darwin district, Wanenzanga (female) and Tsigi (male), and Makombe's mhondoro Nemhuru (female), greatly facilitated some form of co-ordinated response to the 1917 rising between these artificially divided communities. For this reason, it is hardly surprising that the border Shona communities on the Southern Rhodesian side started to, systematically, kill their pigs because, so it was alleged, "when Mbuya, Makombe's head mhondoro (Nemhuru), came up the River Ruia (Rwenya) into British Territory after finishing (with) Tete, she did not want to see any pigs, ..." and, according to Mbuya's message, when Makombe's army came to deal with the British "where ever they found pigs the owners would get their throats cut."²⁷⁰ On a more sinister level, it was apparently through this close liaison, between the border Shona communities of these two neighbouring territories, that information on the movements of Nyasaland labour migrants returning to their homeland from Southern Rhodesia was exchanged; a fact which prompted D.M. Powley, the Native Commissioner of the Mount Darwin district, to comment in mid-1917 that:

... the natives living in Portuguese Territory, when they hear, from our (Southern Rhodesian) natives, that some Nyasa or Portuguese Chikunda natives are going through on their way home, come out of their kraals with their guns and waylay these people in the thick bush and murder them²⁷¹

In the process, unlike those Indian traders fleeing from the Portuguese territory into Southern Rhodesia for refuge, who were very often merely prevented from using protected water holes on the way²⁷² or

²⁷⁰Ibid: Report by N/C, Mt. Darwin (Powley) on Special Border Patrol; n.d.

²⁷¹Ibid:

²⁷²C.O. 417/587: Statement of Jacob (Indian trader) before Major Spain, Makaha: April 3, 1917.

were simply required to pay for this privilege as well as for the right of passage in insurgent territory,²⁷³ Nyasaland migrants were, because of the unfortunate association of some of their compatriots with the Portuguese establishment, rarely shown scant respect. Their insistence on using those labour routes, passing through Portuguese Zambesia to which they were wont, indeed complicated matters. Besides, the situation was also worsened by the reluctance of the government of Northern Rhodesia to allow increased use of its territory by these transient Nyasaland labourers to the South, either because of the complications likely to ensue in relation to sleeping sickness control regulations or because of some fear in Livingstone that such a development "might adversely affect the recruitment of Northern Rhodesian natives as carriers for the (military) forces if they saw Nyasaland natives passing through to seek work in the South while they themselves were not allowed to do so."²⁷⁴

In the final analysis, the price paid by Nyasaland migrants to Southern Rhodesia and beyond, during the Makombe rising, was certainly a heavy one, either in terms of lives or material goods, invariably, abandoned as their owners fled in one direction or another.²⁷⁵ To some extent, the casualty rate was, not infrequently, very high amongst small-scale labour ulendos²⁷⁶ as well as those ulendos, which included women and children often abandoned as the menfolk fled.²⁷⁷ Those Nyasaland migrant women captured in the mêlée were "not ill-treated in

²⁷³ Ibid: Statement of Musa (Indian trader)

²⁷⁴ C.O. 417/588: Lord Buxton to W.H. Long: Secret: June 15, 1917.

²⁷⁵ For the losses sustained by the Nyasaland migrants in material goods, Vide: Ibid: Statements of Munambo, Kasunga, Chibanda et. al. before Roberts, J.P., Mt. Darwin: May 29, 1917.

²⁷⁶ Vide: Statement of Sande Karuwa (Tonga) before Roberts, J.P., Mt. Darwin; May 8, 1917.

²⁷⁷ Vide: Ibid: Statement of Jobe Sule (Chewa)

any way," but were supposed "to be concubines of the (insurgent) army ..."²⁷⁸

When all is said, it could be argued here that perhaps the difficulties faced by the Nyasaland labour migrants to Southern labour markets during the Portuguese/Makombe conflict served to illustrate a number of points on Nyasaland labour migration as a phenomenon. For example, it could be said that the manifold problems encountered by these migrants to Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere, at this particular period, demonstrate, beyond doubt, that labour migration as a movement amongst Nyasaland African societies had given rise to a situation, whereby potential labour migrants in the Nyasaland Protectorate, significantly, over-valued the importance of their chosen destination areas below the Zambesi, in terms of economic gains or other benefits of specious nature, at the expense of the difficulties to be overcome. In another sense, the unwillingness of these migrants to change either their mode of travel or those specified labour routes to which they had become so much used, by 1917, was, to an extent, governed by the flow of information on several aspects of migration between Southern Rhodesia, as a destination territory, and Nyasaland, as a source area.

In any case, the Makombe rising did not, however, significantly alter either the nature and course of Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia or the gravity of those chronic difficulties faced by these labour migrants, especially arising from frequent unsolicited attacks from hostile communities residing along the main arteries of this form of migration. Whilst politically motivated attacks may be said to have, perhaps, ended with the termination of the Makombe rising, practically towards the end of 1917 but nominally in May 1920, random and unco-ordinated assaults did not cease so soon. Indeed, even up to

²⁷⁸ Ibid: Statement of Chizuza (Chewa woman) before Roberts, J.P., Mt. Darwin: May 15, 1917.

the close of B.S.A.Co. rule in the two Rhodesias, these random attacks on Nyasaland labour migrants in the Portuguese territory still formed a subject of serious concern in administrative circles in Zomba and Salisbury. Thus towards the end of 1923, the attacks against Ngoni labourers, returning from Salisbury to their homes in the Chiwere and Mtalimanja chiefdoms of the Dowa district and also the Mazengera chiefdom of Lilongwe district, necessitated heated exchanges between Zomba, Salisbury and Tete on the requirements of the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1891, in relation to "the safe passage of British subjects and their goods" and the compensation of the victims concerned, over the loss of their goods, money and other personal effects.²⁷⁹

But ironically, these attacks, which took place at Nyatsutso's, the Tawara leader, about 20 miles from the Anglo-Portuguese border along the Salisbury-Dowa labour route, and perpetrated mainly by both uniformed and non-uniformed ⁺Cipai⁺ (Portuguese African messengers), essentially, for material gain,²⁸⁰ were to have profound implications for both Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian migrant labourers passing through Portuguese territory. Together with the Gova raiders of Chief Kalandisa, who had, at the same time, also mounted a bow and arrow attack against Tonga labourers returning from Southern Rhodesia to the Chinteché and Mzimba districts of Nyasaland,²⁸¹ the punitive measures meted out by the Portuguese military authorities at Kachomba against those culprits, who had survived the axes of the Nyasaland migrant labourers defending their

²⁷⁹C.O. 767/1: Sir John Chancellor, Governor, Salisbury, to Governor, Zomba and also to Governor, Tete, November 13, 1923.

⁺⁺"Cipai" was the Africanised version of the Portuguese word "Sepoy" (messenger). Vide: C.O. 761/1: N.H. Wilson, Ass. Acting Magistrate, Mt. Darwin to C/N/C, Salisbury: October 10, 1923.

²⁸⁰Ibid: Statement of Sitolo, Waistcoat, Mukuyu et. al. (Ngoni) before Wilson: Mt. Darwin: October 18, 1923.

²⁸¹C.O. 767/3: Statement of Andrea, William Kamanga and Makangira (Tongas) before R.T. Chicken, J.P., N/C, Fort Jameson: October 27, 1923.

persons and property,²⁸² were somewhat counter-productive. The news, especially that "Headman Kalandira {had} been put in prison on account of trouble with strangers {Nyasaland migrants},"²⁸³ certainly infuriated even those, hitherto, friendly African communities along the Sipolilo-Kanyemba-Feira labour route, which, thenceforth, took to occasional bow and arrow sallies against migrant foreigners passing through their domain.²⁸⁴

To a large extent, all sorts of issues complicated and distorted this problem on the attacks sustained by Nyasaland and other trans-Zambesian labour migrants, passing through the Portuguese territory to Southern Rhodesia, and, naturally, conjoint Anglo-Portuguese efforts to solve it were equally affected, in the process. Firstly, in a number of instances, those Nyasaland migrant labourers and other trans-Zambesians so attacked by locals in the Portuguese territory were not the innocent souls that their defending government officials were given to understand. Indeed, both before and after 1917, these migrant labourers often played the role of villains amongst those roadside communities they came across, by openly raiding the villages in question and denuding them of goats, chicken or other supplies, either on their discovery that most of the menfolk were absent in distant labour markets²⁸⁵ or by feigning at night to mistake domestic stock for wild game.²⁸⁶

These labour migrants were evidently driven to desperate acts by

²⁸²C.O. 767/1: Governor, Tete, to Chancellor, Salisbury: November 11, 1923.

²⁸³Ibid: Statement of Chauzali {Bisa} before E. Knowles-Jordan, Ass. Magistrate, Fort Jameson: February 5, 1924.

²⁸⁴Ibid: Statements of Benjamin Nyirenda and James Zimba before Knowles-Jordan, Fort Jameson: February 5, 1924.

²⁸⁵N3/22/5: F.W. Andrews, Ass. Magistrate, Dowa, to C/N/C, Salisbury: May 26, 1910.

²⁸⁶Note the experiences of Chewa labour migrants from Northern to

the low stock of their provisions, either because they could not bear all the expenses required of them, in terms of payments for food and drinking water;²⁸⁷ the cost for guides from the local communities to lead the migrants away from both marauders and Portuguese police, for which payment was very often made in cash or limbo;²⁸⁸ or simply because the supplies of food for them to purchase were not available anywhere in sufficient quantities along the road, as was observed in 1922, when Africans from the neighbouring Portuguese territory were literally flocking into the Mazoe district of Mashonaland for "either purchasing food from the local natives, or more generally (for) working in the preparation of lands of the Mazoe natives and receiving food in exchange."²⁸⁹

Secondly, there does not seem to have been any proper control by the local Portuguese district administrators over the activities of their 'Cipai' and African police. In the event, this created a fluid situation whereby the fate of Nyasaland migrants to and from Southern Rhodesia became largely dependent on the whims of one or more unpredictable functionaries, then in charge of labour routes at specified points in the Portuguese territory. Thus in July 1923, officials of the Native Department in Southern Rhodesia complained bitterly about reports that Portuguese police turned back all labour migrants from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia either at the Zambesi river or in the Kachomba district.²⁹⁰ In addition, some of these migrants were, as had happened

Southern Rhodesia through P.E.A. in the 1950's, in evidence of David Mwanza: Vide: Marwick: "Some Labour Histories": in Heisler: op. cit. pp. 146-9.

²⁸⁷C.O. 767/2: Statement of Chauzali

²⁸⁸N3/22/5: Statement of Chiputula (Yao) before E.G. Howman, J.P., N/C, Harley: October 24, 1912.

²⁸⁹Ibid: W.A. Devine, N/C, Mazoe to S/O/N, Salisbury: December 1, 1922.

²⁹⁰N3/22/1/2: "Wiri" Edwards, N/C, Mrewa, to S/O/N, Salisbury: July 4, 1923.

at a place named Chipoto, required "to pay an ivory bracelet valued £1 and 2/- each in cash to the authorities there", for the right of passage or suffer indefinite detention.²⁹¹ Those who failed to pay for their passage rights and did not produce requisite passes, normally procured in Portuguese territory at 1/- cost, were, not infrequently, subjected to flogging and other forms of ill-treatment.²⁹²

Moreover, these labour migrants were often invariably detained and shipped by steamer to Tete or some other place in the Portuguese territory, when labour was required locally, as had occurred earlier in 1912, when a group of "Blantyre boys", proceeding to Southern Rhodesia, was forcibly press-ganged and sent to work at breaking stones at Tete.²⁹³ Finally, even as late as 1922, some individual labour touts still roamed Portuguese Zambesia, intercepting and generally interfering with the ebb and flow of independent Nyasaland labour migration to the South. The Reed Brothers, Frank S. Reed and Will Reed, together with their associate, Barthorp, who operated in the Tete area and usually assured individual independent labour migrants, for instance, that "you cannot get work in Southern Rhodesia unless you are sent by {us}",²⁹⁴ are a typical example of the residual influence of private recruiters, adversely, affecting the character of labour migration to Southern Rhodesia up to 1923, and, in this way, complicating the phenomenon of Nyasaland and general trans-Zambesian labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and other labour markets of the South.

From the preceding evidence, it is crystal clear that up to the end

²⁹¹Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Salisbury to Portuguese Curator, Salisbury, July 13, 1923.

²⁹²Ibid: Statement of Chizinga (Ngoni) before "Wiri" Edwards, J.P., N/C, Mrewa: July 19, 1923.

²⁹³N3/22/5: Statement of Gayiwa before Powley, J.P., N/C, Mt. Darwin: September 27, 1917.

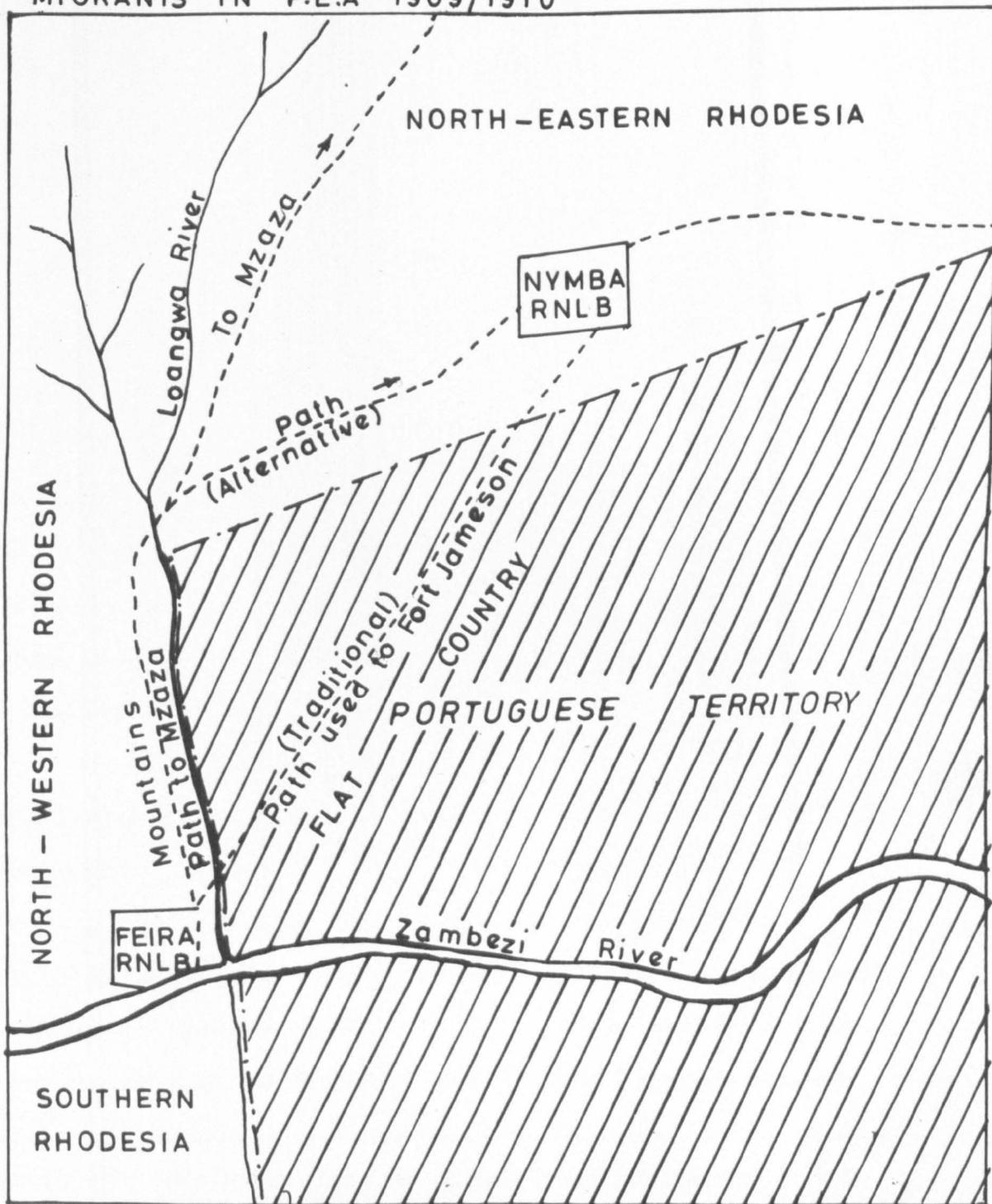
²⁹⁴N3/22/2: Statements of Robert, Chinandi and Kahurua before Powley: May 8, 1922.

of B.S.A.Co. political control in the Rhodesias in 1923, administrative officials in Zomba and Salisbury had still not found any means to alleviate the problems of transient Nyasaland labour migrants in the Portuguese territory and the longer they delayed to introduce a workable solution on the scene, the more complicated the matter became. The pre-1917 solutions adopted by the Nyasaland labour migrants and the Southern Rhodesian Native Department, for instance, do not seem to have achieved much by 1923. In this respect, the plans of the Nyasaland labour migrants themselves, to solve their own problems in the Portuguese territory, by resorting, as was observed in 1907, to the two Northern Rhodesian labour routes; the Fort Jameson-Broken Hill new mail route and the old mail route from Fort Jameson to Salisbury, via Feira, touching only on the western border of the Portuguese territory, apparently did not work as effectively as was anticipated. Though various Nyasaland African groups, like the Yaos from the South Nyasa district, the Chipeta from Central Angoniland, the Tonga of the West Nyasa district and the Ngoni of the Mombera district, were reported to have regularly used these Northern Rhodesian routes as well as the Sarare mines of the Zumbo district, which had then become a popular halting place for South-bound Nyasaland labour migrants and their families,²⁹⁵ the scheme, however, still failed to win popular support, due to the longer distances involved in comparison with those labour routes connecting Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland via Portuguese Zambesia.

For its part, the Administration of Southern Rhodesia had also attempted to come to some form of arrangement with the Portuguese authorities, notably in 1909/10, following a general interference with

²⁹⁵ Report and Suggestions relating to Nyasaland Natives, at work in, and proceeding to, Southern Rhodesia by Casson, November 1907: in Correspondence Relating to the Recruitment of Labour in the Nyasaland Protectorate: p. 80.

Appendix XI
**LABOUR ROUTES AND ATTACKS ON TRANS - ZAMBESIAN
 MIGRANTS IN P.E.A 1909/1910**



Sketch by Taylor in File: A3/18/30/37 Taylor C/N/C Bulawayo to
 Secretary, Dept. of Administration: December 2, 1909.

North-Eastern Rhodesian and Nyasaland labour recruits, under the auspices of the R.N.L.B., by the Portuguese military authorities at Zumbo. These developments had, in essence, not only set the Administration of Southern Rhodesia complaining to the Portuguese authorities against what it considered to be unnecessary hindrance to the practice whereby "the route across {the domain of the Zambesi Company} between the Loangwa River and the border of North-Eastern Rhodesia {had} been in use for many years, and that no objections {had} hitherto been made",²⁹⁶ but also led to plans on alternative westerly labour routes, connecting the two R.N.L.B. bases at Feira and Nymba, being suggested for consideration.²⁹⁷ Besides, moves were also made by both the Salisbury and Zomba governments to persuade the Portuguese authorities to establish bomas "at stages of one day's travelling along the Portuguese sections of the routes between Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia", in order to effect the understanding that labour migrants "arriving at one boma should not be allowed to go forward to the next unless they could reach it the same day,"²⁹⁸

Yet even these elaborate arrangements for the benefit of trans-Zambesian migrants, in general, through the Portuguese territory failed to materialize. A number of factors were here responsible for this failure. In the first place, the Zambesi Company, through whose territory the Feira/Nymba route passed, was not, in the least, disposed to these new arrangements and so were the Portuguese authorities. In the process, the Southern Rhodesia Administration, in particular, was

²⁹⁶A3/18/30/37: Draft Telegram from Administrator, Salisbury, to H.E. the Governor of Tete: December 3, 1909.

²⁹⁷Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Bulawayo, to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator; December 2, 1909: Vide also: Appendix XI: Labour Routes and Attacks on Trans-Zambesian Migrants in P.E.A. 1909/10.

²⁹⁸Ibid: Memorandum re: Interview with the Governor of Tete, by Hole, to Acting Administrator, Salisbury: September 10, 1909.

evidently chary about pushing these Portuguese authorities to a degree whereby such pressure "might prejudice {their} general consent to our {Southern Rhodesian} use of {this} Portuguese route."²⁹⁹ Secondly, the concessions offered to the Portuguese, whereby they were to derive financial gains through a tighter passport control system over labour migrants passing through their territory, did not please the Bureau management either, especially as the proposed transit tax of 2/- per labourer, for both independent and Bureau recruits, was bound to increase this labour organisations recruiting expenses. Indeed, even the stipulations by the Portuguese authorities that annual licences, for capitaos and messengers accompanying recruits, would have to be obtained at Tete, at a fixed deposit of £40 for each functionary and that whilst uniformed messengers were understandably forbidden to pass through the territory, the emphasis that none of these functionaries was also to pass the Portuguese territory at the head of more than 50 recruits,³⁰⁰ did not, certainly, appeal to the Bureau officials.

In the long run, the only solution, which ultimately satisfied the parties involved over the welfare of Nyasaland and other trans-Zambesian migrants passing through the Portuguese territory, was the appointment, by the Southern Rhodesian government, of a "supervisor of facilities for the passage of Northern Natives" in 1923.³⁰¹ With this official's powers to run ferries over the Zambesi; protect labour migrants against attacks and also to establish a medical post in the Mount Darwin district, it was considered that the problems of those Nyasaland labour migrants

²⁹⁹Ibid.

³⁰⁰Ibid.: P. Jenkins, General Manager, R.N.L.B., Bulawayo, to Secretary, Department of Administrator: June 27, 1910.

³⁰¹Vide: Report of the C/N/C for the Year 1924: pp. 5-6; and also: Gray: The Two Nations: p. 122.

passing through the Portuguese territory were, at last, solved.

Conclusion:

Notwithstanding the pin-pricks sustained by individual migrants during the course of their passage through the Portuguese territory, Nyasaland labour migration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond, between 1903 and 1923, became such an outstanding phenomenon that it overcame most of the artificial and physical obstacles threatening to overwhelm it. The resilience of these migrant labourers, in the face of several challenging impedimenta, served not only to bring out the determination with which they pursued the cause of migration, but, to a large measure, demonstrates the fact that ⁺Walale⁺ (Southern Rhodesia) had become as strong a source of attraction amongst the Nyasaland African societies as it was amongst their Chewa kinsmen of Northern Rhodesia up to the 1950's.³⁰² Together with their fellow trans-Zambesian migrants from Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland labourers became one of the strongest forces in the story of economic development as well as general black/white interaction in Southern Rhodesia, as Table IX below, demonstrates.

⁺"Walale" is a general trans-Zambesian corruption of "Harare" the Shona name for Salisbury.

³⁰²Marwick: Sorcery in Its Setting: pp. 60-1.

Table IX

Trans-Zambesian and Other African Migrants
in Southern Rhodesia 1913 - 1923:³⁰³

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
1913	5,300	13,563	187,874	23,308	137,652	41,827	30,110	-
1914	4,300	9,508	221,045	25,120	130,794	33,235	43,242	-
1915	5,550	-	211,387	17,290	115,976	-	44,462	-
1916	2,250	6,681	214,250	21,287	125,945	-	34,500	-
1917	7,968	10,207	216,324	19,187	125,529	-	29,062	-
1918	7,428	7,428	184,324	19,585	117,329	-	-	-
1919	10,334	10,334	189,593	24,538	111,615	-	-	-
1920	16,960	16,960	245,210	30,885	148,542	-	-	-
1921	9,938	9,938	230,425	-	-	26,220	-	90,000
1922	4,976	4,676	192,123	-	-	33,534	-	89,000
1923	6,030	6,030	179,203	-	-	36,216	-	92,800

	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV
1913	-	73,189	33,416	39,773	-	-
1914	-	81,429	36,363	45,064	-	-
1915	-	81,660	37,916	43,247	-	-
1916	-	80,180	40,214	39,633	-	-
1917	-	83,355	38,407	44,948	-	-
1918	-	79,361	32,784	46,477	-	-
1919	-	79,932	29,812	50,120	-	-
1920	-	95,162	37,890	57,272	-	-
1921	43,000	114,000	37,427	76,573	27,000	10,000
1922	49,000	133,000	37,000	96,573	27,800	10,300
1923	49,000	139,000	38,100	101,000	30,300	11,100

	XV	XVI	XVII	XVIII	XIX	XX
1913	-	-	65	35	29	71
1914	-	-	68	32	35	65
1915	15,800	23,800	69	31	35	65
1916	19,280	25,668	69	31	40	60
1917	19,658	26,819	63	37	43	57
1918	22,856	27,264	66	34	42	68
1919	27,150	30,122	67	33	46	54
1920	42,806	33,767	75	25	47	53
1921	63,000	33,000	79	21	56	54
1922	62,000	39,000	74	26	66	34
1923	62,000	38,700	72	28	61	39

³⁰³These statistics are based on the following sources:
(a) Reports of the C/N/C (Southern Rhodesia) 1913-1924; and
(b) B.S.A.Co. Directors' Reports and Accounts 1913-1924.

KEY:

I	= Labourers recruited from external sources by the R.N.L.B.	XI	= Total mine labourers
II	= Total labourers distributed by the R.N.L.B.	XII	= Total farm and general labourers
III	= Total African travellers by train in and outside S. Rhodesia	XIII	= Total alien mine labourers
IV	= African passengers on the Beira-Salisbury railway line	XIV	= Total local mine labourers
V	= African passengers on the Kalomo-Salisbury line	XV	= Total alien labourers on farms and general work
VI	= Aliens registered in S. Rhodesia	XVI	= Total local labourers on farms and general work
VII	= Passes to aliens seeking work in S. Rhodesia	XVII	= Percentage of aliens on mines
VIII	= Total alien labourers in S. Rhodesia	XVIII	= Percentage of locals on mines
IX	= Total local labourers	XIX	= Percentage of aliens in farm and general work
X	= Total labourers altogether	XX	= Percentage of locals in farm and general work

To some extent, the Nyasaland or trans-Zambesian migrant in general came not only to represent, in the eyes of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia, the ideal labourers always at the beck and call of his master, but in various ways also filled up the gap which other foreign labourers would have been expected to occupy in the country, had they succeeded as their promoters anticipated. In this respect, trans-Zambesian migrants naturally took over the roles of not only those foreign groups, like the Abyssinians, Somalis, Arabs, Indians and Chinese, whom, as we have already seen,³⁰⁴ could not be successfully introduced into Southern Rhodesia for one reason or another, but also those of a host of other still-born foreign labour schemes, which never attained as much publicity as their Abyssinian, Arab and Asiatic counterparts. Thus it is quite pertinent, for example, to view trans-Zambesian labour immigration into Southern Rhodesia in juxtaposition, firstly, to the Tswana immigrant scheme, adopted as early as 1895, by the B.S.A.Co.,

³⁰⁴Vide: Supra: Chapter 3.

essentially, to exploit the family dispute between Chief Khama of the Ngwato in the Bechuanaland Protectorate and his brothers Mphoeng and Raditladi and, consequently, destabilize a domain then still largely under African control.³⁰⁵

Although, of course, the Tswana immigrant scheme may be regarded as one primarily motivated by political considerations then generally in keeping with Rhodes's expansionist designs,³⁰⁶ its labour value cannot be summarily dismissed. If any pretexts should be looked for to justify the failure of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia to exploit this scheme, one can hardly ignore here the diametrically opposed perceptions of the two camps, the Southern Rhodesian white colonists, on the one hand, and the Tswana settlers, on the other, in terms of their respective attitudes and modicum of group interaction. The Southern Rhodesian colonists, for instance, do not appear to have been enthusiastic over Tswana labour, except in times of stress.³⁰⁷

On their part, the Tswana immigrants were not, in the least, amenable to Southern Rhodesian colonist labour demands ostensibly because, with their huge herds of cattle, they were sufficiently independent, economically, to stand their ground against unsolicited overtures from the white colonist society. Thus when the Chief Native Commissioner for Matabeleland visited the Tswana immigrant community in the Mangwe district of that province in September 1900, with the intention of stationing thither a labour agent to recruit mine labour from amongst these followers of Raditladi, Mphoeng and Banaame, their leaders rejected the idea off-hand, arguing, as they did, that their people had "plenty of

³⁰⁵C.O. 417/160: Herbert Canning, Secretary, B.S.A.Co. to C.O.: November 22, 1895 and Minute by Graham to Fairfield: November 22, 1895: Vide also: A. Sillery: The Bechuanaland Protectorate: Oxford University Press: Cape Town: 1952; pp. 124-5.

³⁰⁶Vide: A.J. Dachs: "Rhodes's Grasp for Bechuanaland 1889-189:" Rhodesian History: Vol. 2, 1971: pp. 1-9.

³⁰⁷Vide: Supra: pp. 528-9

work to do on their gardens and those wishing to earn money outside {the reserve} did so by riding transport with their {own} wagons."³⁰⁸ Indeed, even the cheap flattery of the B.S.A.Co. Administration, that since the Tswana immigrants were allegedly "further advanced in civilisation than the Matabele", they should, therefore, "set the latter an example" by heeding more positively the demands of the Southern Rhodesian colonial society, does not appear to have impressed these people at all. In fact, some of them actually began to trickle back into the Bechuanaland Protectorate; starting with the Kwena clients of Chief Raditladi, led by Yakobe, the brother of Banaame, who returned to Palapye in early 1902;³⁰⁹ Phethu Mphoeng, the son of Chief Mphoeng, who took back his followers to Serowe in mid-1903³¹⁰ and finally, Chief Mphoeng himself who also declared his intention to return to his fatherland in 1913, following a reconciliation with his brother Chief Khama.³¹¹ In short, Tswana immigrants in Southern Rhodesia found it more difficult to cope with the demands of the colonial regimen in that territory than the trans-Zambesia labour migrants of the later period.

Other immigrant pilot schemes into Southern Rhodesia, with the exception of the Mfengu and related African communities from South Africa,³¹² either ended up more or less moribund or remained at best something akin to pipe-dreams rather than anything realistic. In this case, the proposal to introduce black West Indian labour, at the close

³⁰⁸NB 1/1/11: Report of an Official Visit by the Chief Native Commissioner {Matabeleland} to Empandeni, Mphoeng's Location on the Inkwesi River and Tegwani: September, 1900.

³⁰⁹NB 1/1/17: Chief Raditladi, Ramokwebana, to N.C., Thomas, January 2, 1902 and W.E. Thomas, N.C., Bulalima-Mangwe to C/N/C, Bulawayo; January 22, 1902.

³¹⁰NB 1/1/20: Chief Mphoeng Sekgoma to N/C, Tegwani: June 23, 1903: and Major F.W. Panzera, Acting Commissioner, Francistown, to N/C, Bulalima-Mangwe: June 10, 1903.

³¹¹C.O. 417/523: Milton to Burns-Begg: March 4, 1913 and Major Panzera, Mafeking, to Lord Gladstone: April 8, 1913.

³¹²Vide: Supra: Chapter 4.

of 1899, for the benefit of the Southern Rhodesian and Tati mining concerns, might here be regarded as one typical example. This black West Indian labour plan, suggested by Dr. William Johnson Calder, a medical practitioner as well as a sugar-estate owner of twenty-one years standing in Jamaica, certainly appeared quite enchanting. For example, much play was made on the suitability of the black West Indian labourer in terms of his race and origin, whereupon it was concluded that his introduction into Southern Africa would, simply, be "his return to his native soil, after the absence of about two hundred years from it, with ~~the~~ difference, that whilst he ~~the black West Indian~~ left it ~~Africa~~ in slavery he ~~would return~~ a civilized and able-bodied workman."³¹³

Even in terms of labour value and work capacity, the black West Indian, as an immigrant labourer to Southern Africa, was also highly regarded not only in terms of his, allegedly, wide experiences as a worker in the mines of British Guyana, Central America and Cuba as well as the railways, canals and public works of Panama and Central America,³¹⁴ but also because of the fact that, unlike his African kinsman generally looked upon as "~~a~~ detriment of many of the mines ~~in his capacity as a labourer~~," the black West Indian was considered quite an asset in that respect, and, as Dr. Calder put it, this was obvious in the sense that:

He ~~the black West Indian~~ is endowed with no mean order of intelligence, is stalwart and reliable, speaks and understands the English language thoroughly and would be found most useful in instructing and teaching common boys of this country ~~Southern Rhodesia~~ how to work.³¹⁵

³¹³C.O. 879/68: W. Johnson Calder, Bulawayo, to C.O.: December 27, 1899.

³¹⁴Ibid: Calder, Francistown, to C. Arnold, Secretary, Rhodesia Chamber of Mines, Bulawayo: September 4, 1899.

³¹⁵Ibid.

Given, however, the intensity of labour demand in the West Indies and the dependence of the sugar planters there on indentured "coolie" labour from India, right up to the early decades of the twentieth century, it was indeed mere fantasy to even contemplate, as Calder and his fellow speculators did, that it could ever be possible to recruit "many thousands of able-bodied negroes in the British West Indies ...", in order "to ameliorate the labour question" in Southern Africa.³¹⁶ In the end, this black West Indian labour scheme, as so often happened to many alternative foreign labour projects designed initially for, but in the long run supplanted by trans-Zambesian immigration into Southern Rhodesia, died a natural death.

Similarly, the same could be said of other, no less grandiose and equally impracticable, designs on foreign labour importation like, for instance, the 1911 proposal, by Frank Richards of Johannesburg, to recruit, for Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, labourers "of the same race as those on the East Coast of Africa (but) with a slight mixture of Arab blood" from Le Grande Comore (the Great Comoro Islands) in the Indian Ocean, delivered at Beira at a cost of £12 in transportation and capitulation expenses and for two-year contracts;³¹⁷ or the suggestion of the Bureau management, between 1919 and 1920, to import recruits from the adjacent territories of Zanzibar and Tanganyika to augment labour supply on farms, mines and railways in Southern Rhodesia.³¹⁸

In both these cases quoted above, the respective authorities concerned with the administration of these potential source areas, namely the French and the British, would not agree to what they outrightly

³¹⁶Ibid: Calder to C.O.: December 27, 1899.

³¹⁷N 3/22/11/1: R.N.I.B. Draft Report of the Management and Finance Committee, by Jenkins, General Manager, February 16, 1911.

³¹⁸A 3/18/30/20: Hawksley, Managing Director, R.N.L.B. to Secretary, Department of Administrator, November, 1919.

regarded as unacceptable speculative ventures; though in the case of Tanganyika, independent labour migrants, however, managed to thread their way from the southern districts of that territory, especially from the Mbeya, Rungwe and Songea districts, to Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, in sizeable numbers up to the 1950's,³¹⁹ with the result that Nyakyusa labourers from this region, for example, became quite commonplace at employment centres like the Wankie Colliery of Southern Rhodesia.³²⁰

In short, it is argued here that it was, essentially, the ill-fated nature and the unsuccessful outcome of other comparable immigrant schemes into Southern Rhodesia, up to the third decade of the twentieth century, which, inexorably, pre-determined the fruition of trans-Zambesian immigration into that territory. With the exception of the Mfengu and other black settlers from South Africa and, to some extent, patchy politically motivated immigrant communities like the Venda refugees of Mpefu from the northern Transvaal, settled in the Belingwe district between 1898 and 1899,³²¹ and the Barwe and other Shona societies from the neighbouring territory of Mozambique also settled in the Mtoko and Inyanga districts of Mashonaland, in the wake of the Makombe rising between 1917 and 1920,³²² the trans-Zambesians came to form a sizeable force of foreign African presence in Southern Rhodesia up to and beyond

³¹⁹P.H. Gulliver: "Nyakyusa Labour Migration:" Rhodes-Livingstone Journal: No. 21, 1957: pp. 32-9.

³²⁰Mitchell: "Wage Labour and African Population Movements in Central Africa:" p. 221.

³²¹C.O. 879/57: Meeting between Lawley, Administrator, Matabeleland, and Mpefu: January 3-6 and 17, 1899; and also NB 1/1/6: A.T. Pullen, Ass. N/C, Tuli, to C/N/C, Bulawayo: December 6, 1898 and S.N.G. Jackson, N/C, Belingwe to C/N/C, Bulawayo, March 22, 1899.

³²²C.O. 767/2: Chancellor to J.H. Thomas, M.P.; April 22, 1924.

1930.

Such trans-Zambesian presence in Southern Rhodesia had a variety of implications. For instance, unlike the plantation economies of the Ivory Coast and Gold Coast (Ghana) in West Africa, which exceedingly benefitted from the phenomenon of labour migration during the colonial period and after,³²³ the economies of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia did not enjoy similar benefits from the movement. Indeed, within the context of the regional economic system of South Central Africa as a whole, trans-Zambesian labour migration turned out to be a great advantage for the "dualist" economy of Southern Rhodesia, based largely on this territory's mining and capitalist agricultural sectors, as it was, and more strongly linked to the world economic system, of which it was an integral part.

Of course, as far as Northern Rhodesia was concerned, the trend of development whereby, up to the 1920's, it was reduced to a status very much simulating that of a dependency of Southern Rhodesia, can be easily rationalized in terms of the indivisible character of B.S.A.Co. control on both sides of the big river. But in the case of the Nyasaland Protectorate, where no comparable B.S.A.Co. control existed, the progressive institutionalisation of labour emigration to markets below the Zambesi could only mean extremely heavy social and economic costs. In the first place, it was labour migration which gave rise to a situation of general economic stagnation and underdevelopment in the Central African protectorate. It inhibited not only the speedy development of a colonist plantation economy in the protectorate, based on the relatively few but articulate planters, but also discouraged the emergence of an embryonic indigenous bourgeoisie of the planter class, consisting mainly

³²³Vide: S. Amin: Neo-Colonialism in West Africa: Penguin Books: Harmondsworth (London): 1973: Chapters 2-5.

of the African traditional landowners and that mission-educated social stratum which may have desired to turn its attention to cash-cropping, specializing in tea, coffee and tobacco growing, and thus playing a rather active role in modern capitalist forms of economic pursuits.

Secondly, it may also be argued that it was labour emigration from Nyasaland in particular, which, in every respect, discouraged the appearance of capital intensive techniques in the plantation economy of this protectorate in the 1910's and 1920's. Indeed, the aspersions of the Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba in 1911, in relation to the absence of both draught animals and machinisation amongst Nyasaland's colonist planters,³²⁴ are very revealing on this matter. In fact, what the Southern Rhodesian envoys to Zomba failed to realize in 1911, is the fact that the colonist planters of Nyasaland had become victims of those adverse economic effects of labour emigration they could not willy-nilly escape. Because of such pre-requisites as specialization, heavy expenditure and extensive acreage which capital intensive techniques demanded to transform Nyasaland's plantation economy into a booming capitalist agricultural sector,³²⁵ the planters of the protectorate may be excused for taking unkindly to such uncalled for demands on them in a regional economic system whereby colonist employers everywhere were greatly benefitting from the ultra-cheap labour guaranteed by the incidence of labour migration.

Thirdly, from the point of view of the government of Nyasaland and the protectorate's African societies, labour emigration placed severe strains on the territory's human resources and social structures, in the

³²⁴Vide: Supra: pp. 645-7

³²⁵Cf. G. Arrighi: "International Corporations, Labor Aristocracies, and Economic Development in Tropical Africa": in G. Arrighi and J.S. Saul: Essays on the Political Economy of Africa: Monthly Review Press: New York and London: 1973: p.120.

sense that it restricted population growth and distorted the age and sex patterns of the territory's African population, particularly so because it tended to encourage mainly young men and, at a later date, young couples to leave the country for labour centres below the Zambesi.

But as far as Southern Rhodesia was concerned, the losses sustained by the trans-Zambesian territories were, naturally, its gains. In fact, trans-Zambesian immigration had this advantage that it strengthened the faith of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia in the efficacy of the phenomenon of labour migration, on which they had come to depend so much. Because skilled and semi-skilled stable labour generally implied high costs in wages and training, whilst migrant labour, with its high turnover and accepted low productivity, at least guaranteed consistently low wages, the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia stuck to the latter. For this and other reasons already examined in detail, trans-Zambesian and other foreign African labour schemes in Southern Rhodesia came to stay. In spite of the fact that they encouraged the development of a poorly paid and unskilled labour force as well as restricting the full proletarianization of the African worker, the Southern Rhodesian colonist employer found in these foreign African labourers, a worthy solution to his labour problems. For their part, these African immigrants widely interacted with both the white colonist society and the indigenous African peoples in various ways, which, qualitatively, changed the whole course of economic and political development as well as the tone of human dynamics in the territory of Southern Rhodesia during the colonial period; an assessment of which is here left for the next chapters.

CHAPTER 7

The Cumulative Impact of the "Foreign African Factor" in Southern Rhodesian Affairs, 1898-1930

I The Conflict between the B.S.A. Co. and John Hlazo's "Black Pioneers" over the Land Issue, 1898-1923.

Introduction

In the previous chapters of this study, we have examined at length the attempts of the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia, and, to some extent, those of its successor, the colonist-dominated Responsible government after 1923, to import into the country various foreign Africans and other non-European communities. In this way was, therefore, created a veritable plural society in Southern Rhodesia, with its characteristic heterogeneous population and other manifest forms of pluralism like dissensus and conflict between respective colonial segmental groups, either along racial, ethnic, religious or other structural lines. The type of plural society created in this instance was, therefore, one which could only be held together through sheer domination, regulation and force, since the centrifugal factors underlying this particular societal structure were more dominant than the centripetal ones.¹

The diversity of the Southern Rhodesian colonial society by 1930, in terms of the racial and ethnic composition of its population, was thus quite obvious. Indeed, this phenomenon became even more pronounced once areal diversification was also induced by the economic, social and political development of the territory, especially in this regard given the then characteristic but somewhat illogical assumptions of colonial societies that specific African ethnic groups, rather like the

¹Vide: "Introduction" in Kuper and Smith: op. cit. pp 3-4; and also Rex's notion of colonial societies and conflict situations, in Rex: op. cit. Chapter 2.

Jewish merchants, Greek restaurant owners and Irish and Chinese labourers and laundry operators of the American Western frontier,² were endowed with special aptitudes for specific occupations.³ Yet at the same time, it is pertinent to observe here that these foreign African immigrant groups, together with the indigenous peoples, were also required to fit themselves into an axis of subordination/superordination on which the colonial society of Southern Rhodesia was organised and, like water, find their own level within the context of this highly stratified society. In the circumstances, the modicum of interaction between the foreign African groups and the indigenous societies, on the one hand, and that between the foreign Africans and the white colonists, on the other, was obviously quite complex. In this caste-like restrictive Southern Rhodesian colonial society, the African immigrants from neighbouring states, who were hitherto sufficiently integrated into the continuum of white colonist values and patterns of behaviour, as this chapter will show, formed a small, but significant category of their own which provided some kind of intermediary tier between the dominant white colonist group and the subordinate African subject peoples.

But it is not solely in terms of class formation and the structure of white domination that foreign African immigrants featured prominently. Indeed, foreign Africans came to play a significant part, along with the early indigenous African middle class, in shaping the genesis of quasi-political associations and other amorphous pressure groups which, however ineffectual and ill-conceived at first, somehow provided a channel for ventilating African grievances and discontent against colonial rule. The rest of this chapter will, therefore, dwell

²Vide: Lee: "A Theory of Migration": pp 289-90.

³Vide Supra: pp 395-400.

on the relationship between the African immigrants and the governments of Southern Rhodesia up to 1930; the general course of interaction between these foreign Africans and the white colonists as well as the indigenous African peoples and finally, the total contribution of the African immigrants to the historical development of Southern Rhodesia in various spheres.

John Hlazo versus the B.S.A. Co. Administration

In his book The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia, Ranger vividly portrays the part played by black émigrés from South Africa in the early history of this B.S.A. Co. territory.⁴ But because the Ranger analysis is set primarily within a combative framework between these immigrants and the Southern Rhodesian authorities, it, therefore, perhaps unwittingly, creates the impression to the reader that these black émigrés from the South necessarily represented a monolithic group, united in their battles and objectives to see those wrongs committed against them set right. Of course, it cannot be denied that the campaign of, for instance, the "Black pioneers", whom we shall call the Hlazo group, at one stage or another coincided with that of the "Black settlers", at first led by Chief Garner Sojini. Yet, at the same time, it should be noted that these two groups of foreign Africans were arguing on two different levels of discourse with the Southern Rhodesian authorities; a fact which obviously had very much to do with the historical connections of these respective factions of African immigrants with the founding of Southern Rhodesia both as a British colony and a South African satellite. It was, therefore, the particularistic perspective from which these foreign African groups viewed their respective grievances against the Southern Rhodesian authorities, which,

⁴Vide: Ranger: The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia: Chapter 3.

in the end, sustained the momentum of their campaigns, with diverse results in the process. The manner in which the campaigns in question were prosecuted and the leverage either group was prepared to apply to effect its cause were, in the long run, not altogether unimportant.

In a previous chapter,⁵ we have discussed at length the origins of the Mfengu community of Southern Rhodesia and the character of its relationship with that country's Administration between 1898 and 1905. In the proceeding part of this analysis we shall deal, to a large extent, with the activities of John Hlazo and his followers; a group consisting largely of those black émigrés from South Africa who preceded the Mfengu pilot scheme of 1898.

As has already been hinted severally, John Hlazo and his followers were, like their white counterparts, pioneers in every sense of the word and, for this reason, it is, therefore, more than justified to designate this group of African immigrants to Southern Rhodesia, "black pioneers". Indeed, the story of John Hlazo himself is quite significant insofar as it demonstrates some of the features of the history of these "black pioneers" in Southern Rhodesia. Hlazo had frequented Southern Rhodesia after the 1893 war as a transport rider, conducting his own business between the new territory and the Cape. His decision to settle permanently in Southern Rhodesia was apparently interrupted by the 1896/7 risings and it was only in 1898 that he managed to bring up his family from Cala in the Transkei to join him in Matabeleland.⁶ Here he took up duties with the Methodist mission station at Tegwani near Plumtree in the Mangwe district, serving under

⁵Vide Supra: Chapter 4.

⁶Commentary of Col. A. S. Hickman on the Written Evidence of Titus John Hlazo: Salisbury: January 28, 1960: in Report of the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1960: Vol. I: p 12.

Rev. Isaac Shimmin as both a teacher and an evangelist, together with a fellow Mfengu, David Magunya,⁷ till he was summoned to serve as the leader of the settlement of "black pioneers" at Ntabazinduna near Bulawayo in early 1899.⁸

From the very beginning, Hlazo and his followers viewed their relationship with the B.S.A. Co. Administration and the white colonist society in Southern Rhodesia as a special one and, naturally, they were determined to exploit this fact. Hlazo, Magunya and other African teachers at Tegwani, for example, had, at the close of the 1896/7 risings, demanded and secured privileges to possess firearms on the grounds that they had fought on the side of the white military forces. In fact, it was the sale of a gun by one white colonist called Temple to Hlazo in 1898, by virtue of Hlazo's special permit, which later led the dismissed Native Commissioner of Mangwe, Bonner W. Armstrong, to ascribe the charges on maladministration made against him to what he termed the problem of gun-running between the white colonists and the Africans of the district.⁹ Sooner or later, the demands of the "black pioneers" could no longer be confined to permits to carry firearms only. They began to demand for substantive concessions from their patrons, especially in form of land grants.

In relation to these demands for land grants, the "black pioneers" were, of course, influenced by a number of precedents which characterized the history of land expropriation in Southern Africa during the nineteenth century. As has been amply demonstrated with regard to the history of colonization in the Cape colony, the Mfengu, as a group, had

⁷Vide Supra: pp 354-5.

⁸NB1/1/7: W. E. Thomas, N/C Bulalima-Mangwe to C/N/C Bulawayo: April 15, 1899 and also Interview with Mr Paul Hlazo: November 18, 1975.

⁹Ibid: B. W. Armstrong, Plumtree Siding, to Milner: March 15, 1899.

greatly benefitted from the generous land awards made to them by the Cape authorities at the conclusion of each of the several wars that characterized the course of black/white interaction in that part of the sub-continent.¹⁰ Nearer home, it is quite probable that John Hlazo and his followers were also aware of the land concessions made to those "Cape Boys" who participated in the Anglo-Ndebele war of 1893. In this instance, it may be observed that land, to the amount of 100 acres each, had been granted to John Grootboom and seven other "Cape Boys"¹¹ in 1893 in the area adjoining the Bulawayo commonage; a fact which the Administrator's Office in Salisbury readily reminded the residents of Matabeleland in September 1897, lest they undertook the prospecting and pegging of claims on this privately owned land.¹²

From another angle, it could be argued that the practice of granting land freely and generously to individuals, for one reason or another, had become quite established in early Southern Rhodesia by the close of the nineteenth century. In some ways, this practice was somewhat comparable to the habits of the Boer governments in the two republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State before the mineral revolution. But whilst in these Boer republics land awards were made either to civil servants in lieu of monthly salaries or to bankers and other creditors to whom the Boer authorities had no cash to give due to the chronic shortage of this tender,¹³ in early Southern Rhodesia, on the other hand, land was regarded as a source of attraction for both

¹⁰Vide Supra: Chapter 1.

¹¹The other seven "Cape Boys" who received land near the Bulawayo Commonage in 1893 were John Zulu, "Sourenju", Fajadola, Lenks, Henry Mangesana, April and Shirt.

¹²C.O.455/1: Government Notice No. 174 of 1897 by the Administrator's Office: Salisbury: September 26, 1897.

¹³Vide: Stanley Trapido: "The South African Republic: Class Formation and the State, 1850-1900:" in (University of London) Institute of Commonwealth Studies Collected Seminar Papers: October 1971-June 1972: Vol. 3: No. 16: pp 53-6.

permanent white settlers and capital. Thus from the onset, the members of the Pioneer Column, which occupied Mashonaland in 1890, were promised a free farm each of about 1,500 morgen (over 3,000 acres) as an inducement to their cultivating a stake in the new territory.¹⁴

By 1893 however, with the depreciation in the Pioneer farm rights from about £100 per farm in 1890 to about £55 or £60 and a noticeable agricultural stagnation in Mashonaland with the result that by the beginning of that year only six colonists were reported as actively engaged in farming as opposed to 300 farmers previously recorded in 1892,¹⁵ it became necessary for the fortune-hunting colonists to turn their eyes towards Matabeleland in order to satiate their passion for wealth. The "gold fever" and the hopes of the B.S.A. Co. to boost its mining shares on the London Stock Exchange and, therefore, attract capital, in the process, all not excepted,¹⁶ land was once more dangled before the eyes of the 948 white volunteers who signed on with the B.S.A. Co. against the Ndebele state. The agency through which white colonist participation was procured was the famous "Victoria Agreement", under the terms of which the colonist volunteers were bound to receive, in reward, a free farm of 3,000 morgen (over 6,350 acres) each anywhere in Matabeleland, with no obligation to occupy the land; 15 reef and 5 alluvial gold claims as well as a share in the Ndebele cattle looted in the war, half of which belonged to the B.S.A. Co. itself.¹⁷

¹⁴R. H. Palmer: "Johnston and Jameson: A comparative study in the imposition of colonial rule" in Pachai (ed.): op. cit. p 310.

¹⁵P. Stigger: "Volunteers and the Profit Motive in the Anglo-Ndebele War 1893": Rhodesian History: Vol. 2: 1971: p 12.

¹⁶Stigger mentions that an official was even detailed by Rhodes to follow in the footsteps of the Company's military forces in 1893, accompanied by a geologist, to report on mineral deposits in Matabeleland. Vide: Stigger: "Volunteers and the Profit Motive....": loc. cit.

¹⁷R. H. Palmer: Land & Racial Domination in Rhodesia: Heinemann: London: 1977: p 29.

The rapidity with which farms were pegged and sold off in Matabeleland by the colonist volunteers, between December 1893 and May 1894, is clearly indicative of the spirit of adventurism which characterized Company rule in early Southern Rhodesia.¹⁸ The same could also be said of the disposal of the cattle "loot" which found a ready market beyond the Limpopo, especially at Kimberley and the Rand where the demand for meat was obviously high.¹⁹ In the end, a situation emerged in early Southern Rhodesia whereby land barons and mining magnates emerged as a cogent class not simply because of their contribution in the conquest of the Ndebele state, but also because of the excessive generosity of the B.S.A. Co. A few of these individuals who thus emerged as a distinctive class, with superabundant holdings in stock, land and mining claims in Southern Rhodesia, by the close of the nineteenth century, included such stalwarts as Sir John Willoughby, Captain A. L. Lawley, Dr. Hans Sauer and a small fry of nondescript personalities whose fortune depended solely on some dubious connections or even whims of the B.S.A. Co. leadership at the time.

Sir John Willoughby had come to Southern Rhodesia in 1890 with the Pioneer Column which occupied Mashonaland that year. He had been seconded from the Royal Horse Guards to act as chief of staff to the Column and was to become a very close military confidant of Dr. Jameson. It was obviously through this close association with B.S.A. Co. leaders that Major Willoughby, in the process, secured for himself some 600,000 acres of land in Mashonaland and another 1.3 million acres in Matabeleland, in addition to 8,850 Ndebele cattle, which later formed the basis of his consortium, the Willoughby's Consolidated

¹⁸By May 1894, about 850 farms were said to have been pegged in Matabeleland, selling at prices ranging between £75 and £100 each. Vide: Stigger: op. cit. p 14.

¹⁹Ibid: pp 18-21.

Company.²⁰ Indeed, the speculation activities of Sir John Willoughby were so extensive that he apparently cornered all the land claims in the districts of Gwelo, Selukwe and the Umzingwane in particular.

In the Umzingwane district, for instance, where over half the district was owned by Willoughby's Consolidated, when the Native Department wanted to establish native reserves in 1913 in order to accommodate the landless Ndebele people, it was discovered by the B.S.A. Co. Administration that there was actually room for only one small reserve of 5,000 acres in size.²¹ In the Selukwe district, as early as 1897 Native Commissioner Driver confessed his inability to provide land for Chief Nhema and his people because "Willoughby's (had) land between the two Tebekwe rivers....",²² much to the disadvantage of the indigenous communities and other white colonists. Driver's successor, Francis John Wane, also faced the same problem with regard to the stranglehold of Willoughby's Consolidated Company over the Selukwe urban area and the whole district and thus informed the Morris Carter Land Commission in 1925 that:

The land round Selukwe (town) is more or less the property of Willoughby's, and even for grazing a beast in the vicinity of Selukwe one has to pay. There is a so-called township reserve, but that seems to come in Willoughby's too, just the same as any other land. 23

Major Willoughby's gains on land accumulation and speculation in early Southern Rhodesia were, of course, not the only distinctive ones.

²⁰Palmer: Land & Racial Domination in Rhodesia: pp 35-6.

²¹Palmer: op. cit. pp 68-9.

²²Entry for May 11, 1897: Driver's Diary: Vol. II.

²³S96/2: Evidence of F. J. Wane, N/C Selukwe; Gwelo: April 4, 1925: in Land Commission (1925): Oral Evidence.

In a number of ways, Major Willoughby's success is, in every way, comparable to similar gains made by rival syndicates such as the Matabele Gold Reefs and Estates Company Ltd. directed by Major Maurice Heany and Selous and, to some extent, the Mashonaland Development and Exploration Syndicate Ltd. managed by Rhodes's Boer friend, Dr. Sauer. By the close of the nineteenth century, the Matabele Gold Reefs and Estates Company for example, owned about 48 farms, covering a total area of 295,538 acres or 462 square miles in Matabeleland, on which lived a vast population of African squatters, paying rent to the tune of £745. 10s. 0d. at 10^s per hut in 1899 alone.²⁴ These landholdings of Selous and Heany's company were only additional to the 1,200 head of cattle and the 773 gold claims procured by these speculators in the course of the 1893 war. Dr. Sauer appears to have been contented, at first, by the acquisition of " 'four large blocks (of land) running into very many thousands of acres' " and several mining claims as well as cattle.²⁵

As has already been hinted, in creating this land-owning gentry, the B.S.A. Co., like the Administration of the East African Protectorate (Kenya) under Sir Charles Eliot between 1901 and 1904,²⁶ hoped to promote permanent white settlement and facilitate capital investment in the new territory of Southern Rhodesia. Some land grants were, however, made by the Company simply on the basis of over-zealous acts by an all-too-generous host. Grants of this nature included the offer of land to

²⁴C.O.468/2: Report of Major M. Heany, Managing Director of the Matabele Gold Reefs and Estates Co. Ltd. for the year ended December 1899: in B.S.A. Co. Reports on Mining....: pp 215-6.

²⁵Stigger: op. cit. p 21.

²⁶Vide: M. P. K. Sorrenson: Origins of European Settlement in Kenya: Oxford University Press: London: 1968: pp 62-6.

Captain A. L. Lawley²⁷ in the Mazoe district, where this lucky individual was given in 1898 land to the amount of 75 square miles "for services rendered".²⁸ On a rather sentimental level, the B.S.A. Co. also offered land to various individuals associated with the British nobility, in order to establish good relations between London Wall and the upper echelons of the British society. The land grants to Robert and Henry White, the two sons of one Lord Annaly, at the close of the Anglo-Ndebele war,²⁹ must, therefore, necessarily be viewed in this light.

Moreover, these sentimental feelings, along with the patriotic innuendoes which obviously underlied them, may have also accounted for the 1,500 morgen farms proffered in 1900 to those soldiers of Australian, New Zealander and British origin who were then serving with the Rhodesia Field Force in the Anglo-Boer war.³⁰ In the long run, the only group of white colonists, who were not flattered in any way by the B.S.A. Co. land offers, were the 1896 Volunteers. This group of white immigrants, who had participated in the Ndebele rising on the understanding that they would receive, like the 1893 volunteers under the "Victoria Agreement", 3,000 morgen farms per man, was not pleased, in the least, by the land so granted them in the Gwaai region "over a hundred miles outside any civilised (centre) of the country.... and in the middle of the largest mass of rebels, (and) stipulating.... immediate occupation for 5 years....". These 1896 volunteers considered the Gwaai region in which their land grants were located so "unfit for white colonists" that it was alleged that out of an unspecified total of those Boer farmers who had ventured to occupy the land in question,

²⁷It is not known whether Captain A. L. Lawley was in any way related to Sir Arthur Lawley, the Administrator of Matabeleland, 1898-1901.

²⁸Cape Argus: February, 17, 1898.

²⁹Vide: Palmer: Land & Racial Domination....: p 36.

³⁰C.O.417/284: Milton to the General Commanding Officer, Rhodesia Field Force, July 19, 1900.

immediately after 1896, "only one came out in two or three years, an invalid for life".³¹

From the foregoing, it could be said that Hlazo and his followers were not unaware of the generous proclivities of the B.S.A. Co. and the general trend of its land policy by the end of the nineteenth century. Just as some of their compatriots, the Grootboom group of "Cape Boys" had been given land in reward at the end of the 1893 war,³² the Hlazo group of black immigrants was also quite prepared to make the most out of their alliance with the white forces of colonialism in early Southern Rhodesia. To this end, those "black pioneers" residing in the Bulawayo Location (nowadays called Makokoba Township) held a meeting in January 1898, under David Magunya, the Acting Chairman and George P. Mpondo, the Acting Secretary, to address themselves to the B.S.A. Co. Administration on the question of land grants.³³ This January 1898 meeting was apparently a sequel to a similar one which had been convened in 1897 by these same people. However, as the participants themselves emphasized, the purpose of the two meetings remained essentially the same, since all what these "black pioneers" intended to do was "to petition.... the Authorities of Bulawayo with reference to the rights (the black pioneers) ought to enjoy as loyal subjects of Her Majesty (Queen Victoria)." ³⁴

In a nutshell, the gist of the January 1898 meeting of the "black pioneers" was well captured by the veteran Henry Mangesana, when he reminded his compatriots that:

³¹C.O.417/558: Memorial of the 1896 Volunteers Committee to Lord Buxton signed by Angus MacDonald (Chairman), C. E. Hale Helps (Hon. Secretary), Geo. Gibbs (Acting Hon. Secretary) et alii; Bulawayo: October 5, 1914.

³²Vide Supra: p 726

³³The "black pioneers" who attended the 1898 meeting in the Bulawayo Location included among them Henry R. Mangesana, William Makiwane, John Nqcoza, Samuel Gida, Bill Tile, Friday Saxu, Charlie Abram, Piet Gwetyana, Petros Gwetyana, Collin Gwetyana, David Makena, James Mkiza, Jack Ncumata, Harry Maseti and David Magunya.

³⁴NB1/1/3: Petition of Colonial Natives of Bulawayo Native Location:

This is not the first meeting held by people of this Location (the 'black pioneers') to discuss the question of the privileges they ought to enjoy as British subjects. It is well known that there are large tracts of country given to people in the colony of the Cape during Kaffir (Xhosa) Wars. And although we have done the same for the Chartered Company (B.S.A. Co.), yet we are deprived of the privileges we, as loyal subjects of Her Majesty, ought to enjoy. In the Cape colony we are allowed to trade in cattle, sheep and goats: we are allowed to keep stores provided we can only pay License. Why not here (in Southern Rhodesia)? This is a very painful matter especially when we think of the services we rendered during the late crisis (the 1896/7 risings): but now it seems as if we are forgotten. 35

Although Mangesana had already benefitted from the post-1893 land awards in which he gained a 100 acre plot near the Bulawayo commonage,³⁶ his 1898 activities seem to have been primarily concerned with rewards pertaining to the services of the "black pioneers" in the Ndebele rising, more so that very few of these people had also served in the 1893 war as well. In the final analysis, whilst these "black pioneers", like any other "Cape Boys", could not be granted trading licences by the Administration of Southern Rhodesia on the pretext that they would "generally go amongst the (indigenous) natives and incite them to mischievous acts....", their complaints with regard to land allocation were quite favourably received by the Company authorities. In consequence, the "black pioneers" were granted land in Matabeleland on a number of conditions. Firstly, they were to be placed under the control of a man chosen by themselves and approved by the Company Administration. Secondly, their stay on the land allocated to them by the Administration was, to a large extent, governed by their sense of

Enclosed in George P. Mpondo, Acting Secretary, to C/N/C, Bulawayo:
January 31, 1898.

³⁵Ibid: Henry Mangesana's Speech quoted in Petition of Colonial Natives of Bulawayo Native Location....

³⁶Vide Supra: p724 Footnote No. 11.

behaviour and were, apparently, also liable to eviction for any form of misbehaviour. Thirdly, these "black pioneers" were expected to pay hut tax like any other African. Finally, they were not to be subjected to the stringent pass laws which normally controlled the movement of other African groups and were thus to be allowed to leave their abode without any pass from their administrative official.³⁷

In the light of this preceding evidence, the settlement of Hlazo and his followers on Government Farm No. 3 in the Ntabazinduna area was thus clouded by a variety of conditions which naturally restricted the activities of these "black pioneers". Besides, the fact that the Company Administration regarded the grant of land to the "black pioneers", in 1898 in the Ntabazinduna area, as an exception rather than a rule and a privilege, which no other "Cape Boys" could expect to enjoy at will, only further made Hlazo and his followers' position more vulnerable, particularly so when it has to be considered that these grantees had also to produce "certificates of good behaviour" from magistrates in the territories of their origin below the Limpopo.³⁸ Of special interest here too is the manner and timing under which the "black pioneers" occupied their Ntabazinduna land, which unfortunately happened to adjoin the Fingo Location and was also incidentally occupied in the midst of Mfengu immigration into Southern Rhodesia. Indeed, the fact that since the arrival of Hlazo at Ntabazinduna in the middle of 1899 till 1901, he had to wrangle with the officials of the Fingo Location with regard to the applicability of the "Fingo Labour Clause" to him and his followers,³⁹ was by itself a strong foreboding on the

³⁷Ibid: W. E. Thomas, Acting C/N/C, Bulawayo to Deputy Administrator's Secretary; Bulawayo: February 5, 1898.

³⁸Ibid: Lawley, Deputy Administrator to C/N/C, Bulawayo: February 28, 1898.

³⁹NB1/1/16: Griffith, Bembesi, to C/N/C, Bulawayo: August 14, 1899 and NB1/1/14: Griffith, Bembesi, to C/N/C, Bulawayo: September 27, 1901.

subsequent numerous battles this group of immigrants had to fight against the B.S.A. Co. Administration up to the very eve of its demise in 1923.

Yet it was not until 1905 that the seeds of conflict between the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia and the Hlazo group of immigrants began to sprout. The bone of contention, at this period between 1905 and 1909, so it would appear, centred on such issues as the grant of titles to Hlazo and his people for their land at Ntabazinduna; the shortage of water supply on this particular location and how best to deal with the situation. On the question of land titles, Jeremiah Hlazo, the eldest son of John Hlazo, who was working as a messenger for Willoughby's in Bulawayo, had written to the Company authorities in Salisbury, at the behest of his father, in October 1905, expressing outright disappointment that no positive response had hitherto been received from the Administration and, at the same time, taking the liberty to emphasize that he (Jeremiah) too had fought in the 1896 Ndebele rising in which he had done "...all (his) best.... fighting for the (B.S.A. Co.) Government (and) was wounded on the left arm and on the left leg...." in the process.⁴⁰

At first, the Company Administration did not seem altogether opposed to granting land titles to Hlazo and his followers. But all that appeared amiss, in this instance, was the question of debts, which Hlazo himself and most of his people owed the B.S.A. Co., whilst the latter, naturally, wanted to see these debts liquidated before any move could be taken.⁴¹ At this point in our study, it must be pointed out

⁴⁰S.924/G.125/1: Jeremiah Hlazo, Willoughby's Consolidated Company, Bulawayo, to Chief Secretary, Salisbury: October 23, 1905: R/N/A, Salisbury.

⁴¹Ibid: C. L. Carbutt for C/N/C, Bulawayo to Chief Secretary, Salisbury: November 13, 1905.

that up to 1898, most of the "black pioneers" still had their families in the South, especially in the Cape colony. They had actually lacked both the nerve and the means to bring up these families to face the hazards of a frontier life in Southern Rhodesia, till "Matabele" Thompson came forward with his plan on subsidized Mfengu immigration, at the beginning of 1898.⁴² Indeed, it might even be safe to assume in this connection, that most of these hitherto lonely pioneers were quite eager to take advantage of the services provided under the Mfengu immigration scheme in general. David Magunya, who had been, for instance, one of the pioneer African teachers, together with Hlazo, at Tegwani till his resignation immediately after the risings,⁴³ definitely welcomed the Company scheme on Mfengu immigration, hence the cause of his subsequent troubles, as has already been demonstrated.⁴⁴ Hlazo also availed himself of the facilities offered by this subsidized immigration scheme and eventually brought into Southern Rhodesia his family and the rest of his property; the latter being particularly essential to make up for what had been destroyed by the Ndebele insurgents during the risings.⁴⁵

The issue of land titles, which the "black pioneers" were desperately in need of in 1905, was one thing. But the question of the shortage of water and the allied demand of Hlazo and his followers in 1909, to have the boundary of their location extended in order to include a number of permanent water reservoirs on the Ingwenya stream

⁴²Vide Supra: Chapter 5.

⁴³Magunya is said to have been driven by despair from his teaching job due to the slow progress made by his local pupils to learn. Vide: Interview with Mr. Paul Hlazo: November 18, 1975.

⁴⁴Vide Supra: pp 354-5.

⁴⁵Ibid: Angus Fletcher, Bulawayo, to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: October 26, 1909.

further north,⁴⁶ was a different matter altogether, from the Company's point of view. Nor would the alternative request of these "black pioneers" to be granted land in the Insiza district of Matabeleland, "which (they could) permanently occupy and (would) be sufficiently watered for the purpose",⁴⁷ appeal to the Company Administration either. In simple terms, the B.S.A. Co. authorities viewed the whole problem of water shortage on land granted to the "black pioneers" at Ntabazinduna in a different light altogether. Hlazo and his followers had to be moved into the Fingo Location and occupy land on the eastern side of the Bulawayo-Gwelo railway line which passed via Bembesi.⁴⁸

This decision, to have Hlazo and his followers moved into the Fingo Location, was obviously based on the grounds that most of these "black pioneers" were ethnically related to the inmates of the Location and that the land in this Location was already superfluous to the needs of the residents thereon. Thus it was, accordingly, pointed out by C/N/C Taylor of Bulawayo that "Hlazo is,....., a man deserving of some consideration at the hands of the Government...." and that he was "himself a Fingo by birth,...." Besides, Taylor was quite confident of the capacity of the Fingo Location to accommodate the "black pioneers" as well, since "...there (was) ample land available for (Hlazo) and his followers" and since "... the Fingoes (of the Location had) not proved as progressive as was anticipated, added to which they did not immigrate to Southern Rhodesia in the numbers for which provision was originally made," with the result that "a large extent of excellent arable and pasture land (was then) lying idle at the Location."⁴⁹

⁴⁶Ibid: R. Lanning, N/C Bubi to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: November 17, 1909.

⁴⁷Ibid: Angus Fletcher, Bulawayo, to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator, Salisbury: October 26, 1909.

⁴⁸Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Bulawayo, to N/C, Bubi: November 10, 1909.

⁴⁹Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Bulawayo, to the Secretary, Dept. of the Administrator, Salisbury: October 29, 1909.

Evidently, from the point of view of the B.S.A. Co. Administration, the solution to the chronic water shortage on the Ntabazinduna location of the "black pioneers" was quite simple and straightforward. But for Hlazo and his followers, the case was different. In spite of official efforts by the Native Department of Matabeleland to transfer these "black pioneers" into the Fingo Location, which, in the process, included the taking down of all the particulars of these immigrants and their families, who numbered altogether 99 people (including 26 men, 16 women, 26 male children and 31 female ones),⁵⁰ the immigrants in question were by no means enthused by the plan. Instead, they preferred to remain on their Ntabazinduna land, notwithstanding the water shortage problem. Indeed, as Hlazo explained to R. Lanning, the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district, in an interview in November 1909, he and his people were quite convinced that there was not sufficient land in the Fingo Location to meet their requirements and those of the "black settlers" residing therein. For this reason, Hlazo and his entourage, therefore, preferred to remain on their holdings at Ntabazinduna, where they believed that "once the water question (was) settled many more natives who fought for (the B.S.A. Co.) in the rebellion (would) come and join (Hlazo), (since) he (had) ample

⁵⁰The "black pioneers" whose particulars were taken down by the Native Department at Ntabazinduna in November 1909, included such people as John Hlazo himself and his sons Jeremiah (with 4 children) and Stephen (with 2 children); Patrick Mzamo (with 2 children); Harry Sobantu (a widower with 5 children); David Ntuli (with 4 children) and his brothers Solomon (no family) and Moses Ntuli (also no family); David Magunya (no family recorded), his brother S. Magunya (no family) and their widowed mother and 2 sisters; David Djwili (no children) and his brother A. Djwili (1 child); Mini Hlazo (a widow with 3 children); J. C. Makunga (with 5 children); Henry Mangesana (with 3 children); Moses Mfazi (with 6 children) and his brother H. Mfazi (no family) and finally Hlazo's son-in-law, the Rev. J. B. Radasi (with one daughter), to mention only a few. Vide: S.924/G.125/1: R. Lanning, N/C Bubi to C/N/C Bulawayo: November 17, 1909.

lands..... for them all and that apart from the question of water he
(was) quite satisfied."⁵¹

This stance taken by Hlazo and his followers on the Ntabazinduna land issue was, at first, sympathetically treated by Lanning, who was also of the opinion that there was no room for these people in the Fingo Location and was, therefore, rather anxious to avoid any plan which could only interfere with the Mfengu residents on the Location.⁵² Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district put forward an alternative proposal whereby a well was to be dug "in a suitable spot for the purpose of (supplying) drinking water...." to Hlazo and his people "but not their stock". As far as water for these people's stock was concerned, Lanning suggested that a gate be provided in the fence demarcating the northern border of the location, so as to allow this stock access to "ample water (at the Ingwenya stream) within two miles of (Hlazo's) kraal...."⁵³ The Lanning proposal was evidently a compromise between the Hlazo demand for an additional land grant, involving the shifting back of the northern boundary of his site some 1½ miles or so in order to include the Ingwenya stream, on the one hand, and the forthright refusal of the B.S.A. Co. to alienate any more land to meet the wishes of these "black pioneers", on the other.

The generally negative attitude of the Southern Rhodesian Administration towards the demands of Hlazo and his following between 1905 and 1909 was certainly not unconnected with the hardening attitude of the B.S.A. Co. towards its foreign African clients from the South at

⁵¹Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: November 17, 1909.

⁵²Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: Telegram: November 23, 1909.

⁵³Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: November 17, 1909.

the time. In a previous analysis on the genesis of Mfengu immigration and settlement in Southern Rhodesia, we have observed how, after the death of Rhodes in 1902, the Company began to adopt an increasingly frigid attitude towards black émigrés from the South; a situation which inexorably deteriorated by 1905, as the expulsion of Ginya from the Fingo Location aptly demonstrates.⁵⁴ Yet at the same time, it would be unrealistic to assume that it was only those factors of sentimental nature that were solely responsible for such changes, which so qualitatively revolutionized the order of relations between the Company and its erstwhile black clients. Economic considerations have to be taken into account here too, especially with regard to the question of free land grants which had hitherto characterized B.S.A. Co. policy since 1890.

From the point of view indicated above, it is obviously interesting and quite pertinent to observe that after 1905, various non-European individuals and groups of people who had hoped to procure land from the Company in Southern Rhodesia were greatly disappointed by this new attitude of the B.S.A. Co. In this connection might naturally be mentioned the issue concerning the settlement of the Tawana regent, Sekgoma Letsholathebe, during the course of the Tawana chieftainship crisis between 1906 and 1910, when it was feared that this regent's presence in Ngamiland, might lead to armed conflict between his followers and those of the heir apparent, Mathibe. In the process, Southern Rhodesia was proposed as one of the possible territories to which Letsholathebe and his followers could be transferred.⁵⁵ This decision was obviously influenced by the nineteenth century precedent, whereby

⁵⁴Vide Supra: pp 365-85.

⁵⁵C.O.417/465: Barry May, Res/Com., Mafeking, to Lord Selborne: March 9, 1909 and Lord Selborne, Johannesburg, to Milton, Salisbury: March 23, 1909.

the B.S.A. Co. had, for political reasons, given asylum to Khama's fugitive brothers, Mphoeng and Raditladi.⁵⁶ But after 1905, the situation in Southern Rhodesia, with regard to land grants, had radically changed and the Tswana regent would, therefore, not be accepted. Thus after trying several alternatives, such as Barotseland, Seychelles, Nyasaland, the Transvaal and Basutoland, but without much success,⁵⁷ Letsholathebe had to be finally settled amongst his Tswana kinsmen in British Bechuanaland.⁵⁸

The Letsholathebe case is by no means the only example of futile attempts to settle foreign African groups in Southern Rhodesia after 1905, either through administrative fiat or by direct application for land by the potential immigrants themselves. In 1906/7, a Johannesburg-based law firm, Messrs. Douglas Wilson & Rusk, for instance, made overtures to the B.S.A. Co. to purchase "a tract of country of from 50 to 100 square miles" on the basis of "unencumbered freehold" in a preferably "well watered and timbered ground suitable for agriculture". The purchase of the land in question was, apparently, designed to settle "certain Native Tribes - which (then had) no fixed domicile" in South Africa and whose Chiefs and headmen were alleged to be solidly behind the scheme. As a further bait to the Southern Rhodesian Administration, Messrs. Douglas Wilson & Rusk also emphasized that their land purchase scheme had "the hearty support of a very large number of natives of the better class who (desired) to have an opportunity of taking part in the advancement of the country (Southern Rhodesia)." To highlight this rather altruistic motive of its clients, the Johannesburg law firm

⁵⁶Vide Supra: pp 710-14.

⁵⁷Lewanika of Barotseland for instance also refused to accept Letsholathebe. Vide: C.O.417/483: F. Z. S. Peregrino to Lord Gladstone, August 19, 1910.

⁵⁸C.O. 417/465: Lord Selborne to Earl of Crewe: Telegram: April 16, 1909.

concluded its application on a very optimistic tone, indicating as it did, that:

The scheme has large possibilities in the interests of both white and black races. It is the intention of our clients that technical aid be given to the natives who take up land (in Southern Rhodesia) in order that they may be taught properly the advantage of agriculture and the breeding of stock, and the proposed Company (to be formed by the immigrants) would supply teachers and keep stock farms. There are other projects connected with the scheme, and we feel sure if it should be successful, as we have little doubt it will, it will greatly benefit South Africa in general and particularly that part of the country in and around the locality selected.....

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In the end, the application of Messrs. Douglas Wilson & Rusk was turned down at the instigation of the High Commissioner who, it should be observed, had previously frustrated the efforts of this same firm to also settle alleged "native tribes" from South Africa proper in "Swaziland and other territories...."⁶⁰ In one respect, Messrs Douglas Wilson & Rusk's attempt to purchase land in Southern Rhodesia for their African clients shared the same fate as a similar move by Chief Moroka of the Rolong in 1914/15. This Rolong ruler had been banished from the Boer republic of the Orange Free State to the Bechuanaland Protectorate at the close of the nineteenth century.⁶¹ From his temporary base near Francistown, he had made several efforts to procure a permanent abode for himself and his people, either by appealing to the colonial authorities concerned to be returned to Thaba Nchu as he did in 1904,⁶²

⁵⁹C.O.417/444: Douglas Wilson & Rusk, Johannesburg, to B.S.A. Co: November 8, 1906.

⁶⁰Ibid: C. H. Rodwell, Imperial Secretary (High/Com.) to Chester-Master: January 3, 1907.

⁶¹Vide: Makambe: Missionary Influence and its Impact on Africans below the Limpopo before 1900: p 11.

⁶²C.O.417/452: Petition of Samuel L. Moroka to Acting Lt-Governor, H. F. Wilson, Orange River Colony: February 6, 1904.

or by purchasing land in the Tati district from the Tati Company: a move which, apparently, did not succeed in 1913/14.⁶³ The final effort of the Rolong leader in the process was, with the help of the resident Anglican priest, Rev. W. Lack, of Francistown (formerly of Salisbury) and the Bulawayo law firm of Messrs. Cecil Roberts & Letts, therefore to look for this desired permanent home in Southern Rhodesia for his 40,000 followers, scattered all over the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, Bechuanaland and other parts of Southern Africa. The area Chief Moroka and his people actually had in mind was the land near the Shashi and Ramaquabane rivers bordering on the Protectorate.⁶⁴

Chief Moroka and his followers had a number of points in their favour, such as the traditional colonial assumption that the Sotho, to whom the Rolong are related, were presumably "an intelligent people" and that "many of (Moroka's followers were) trained mechanics, etc..." But the disadvantages these Rolong applicants faced must also be emphasized. In addition to the mediocre results of the Mfengu immigration scheme of 1898-1901,⁶⁵ B.S.A. Co. policy since 1905 was decidedly "against the grant of title to natives, even though it might be legal to do so in Rhodesia", as W. Olive, the Company's Acting Commercial Representative, pointed out in November 1914. The same point was even more bluntly expressed by Frank Inskipp, the Director of Land Settlement, when he stated that:

As one of our (B.S.A. Co.'s) principal objects in the disposing of land is to secure the settlement thereon of Europeans, I do not see how the alienation of 100,000 to 150,000 acres to Basutos could be recommended.....

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⁶³C.O.417/558: F. W. Panzera to Lord Buxton: Telegram: February 3, 1915.

⁶⁴L.2/1/170: W. Olive, Acting Commercial Representative, Bulawayo, to Director of Land Settlement, Salisbury: November 2, 1914: R/N/A: Salisbury.

⁶⁵Vide Supra: Chapter 5.

⁶⁶Ibid: Frank W. Inskipp, Director of Land Settlement to Commercial Representative: November 9, 1914.

Besides, it was also considered politically unwise to grant the request of Chief Moroka since, in C/N/C Taylor's view, "the importation of 40,000 alien natives into Matabeleland would cause considerable feeling amongst the Matabele."⁶⁷

The case of Letsholathebe; the futile overtures of Messrs. Douglas Wilson & Rusk to purchase land for its African clients from the South as well as the equally fruitless efforts of Chief Moroka of the Rolong to achieve the same end, altogether demonstrate, beyond any doubt, the changed attitude of the B.S.A. Co. towards land since 1905; a change which the "black pioneers" under John Hlazo had to contend with to successfully hold their own against very strong odds. From another angle, this changed attitude of the Company towards land alienation and utilization in Southern Rhodesia since 1905 may be seen in terms of the tangible measures through which this commercial consortium-cum-political power in the territory tried to husband this indispensable asset during the period in question.

It has been indicated in several studies, that after the Anglo-Boer war and the 1903/4 economic recession which it precipitated, there was a noticeable shift in the economic policies of the B.S.A. Co.⁶⁸ In the face of the 1903/4 crisis which drastically affected the country's gold mining industry in particular, there was certainly no more justification for the Company to place all its eggs in one basket, as had been hitherto the case. A radical change in the direction of the Company's economic policies was called for and, in the event, land began to assume a new-found importance in Southern Rhodesia's economic

⁶⁷Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Salisbury, to Director of Land Settlement: November 21, 1914.

⁶⁸Vide: Van Onselen: Chibaro: pp 17-20; and Arrighi's works The Political Economy of Rhodesia: pp 19-20, 23-4 and "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective..." p 200.

life. This shift in the B.S.A. Co.'s economic emphasis is evident in the aggressive agricultural policy prescribed for Southern Rhodesia since 1905, with the intention of promoting both commercial agriculture and increased white settlement. Before this date, commercial or capitalist agriculture had been hampered by a number of factors, such as grain surpluses delivered onto the produce market by the African peasant farmer; shortage of cheap labour supply; lack of capital on the part of aspirant white colonist farmers; the smallness of the produce market and the high transportation costs the farmer had to contend with. For this reason, most white colonists in Southern Rhodesia during the pre-1905 period had, therefore, preferred to take up such occupations as trading, transport riding, mining work, construction, commerce and speculation.⁶⁹ From 1905 onwards, state power was actually brought to bear in the agricultural field not only for the sake of increasing the competitiveness of the white farmer against the African peasant, but also to make capitalist agriculture more viable than before and thus attract more white immigrants.

Thus with the intention of effecting a total change in Southern Rhodesia's economy, the B.S.A. Co. appointed C. D. Wise, in October 1905, to occupy the newly-created post of "Agricultural Adviser" and boost both agricultural progress and white settlement;⁷⁰ an assignment which Wise appears to have dutifully effected. According to this official's report of 1906, the number of land holdings alienated annually, which had been previously estimated at 948 or 32,000 in total acreage in 1904, had increased by about 25 per cent by 1906.⁷¹ On the

⁶⁹Arrighi: "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective...." pp 209-10.

⁷⁰B.S.A. Co. Report on Land Settlement in Southern Rhodesia by C. D. Wise, 1906: p 4.

⁷¹B.S.A. Co. Report on Land Settlement....: p 18.

question of land settlement and white colonist immigration, this Company official was more than ever convinced that assistance should be given to those white settlers, who took to farming on arrival in the country, "as far as possible in reason (but) without spoon-feeding (them)...". The success of white settlement was apparently a matter of primary importance since it was correlated to "the development of the country".

The only requirement, on the part of the white immigrants themselves, was perhaps the stipulation that they had to be "the right class of men---- who (had) been born on the land, and who (understood) their business". As Wise himself commented on the type of white settler needed in Southern Rhodesia, it was assumed that Company policy should focus on the man "who can plough, reap, mow, milk, and do the work of the farm himself (to) succeed; if he is short of capital, assist him otherwise than by direct advances in cash, and control him until he can pay his own way. Make men successful by their own industry, and they will bring others."⁷² Whilst Wise's strategy to achieve global white settlement in Southern Rhodesia was somewhat dastardly, his recommendations, especially those pertaining to the establishment of central farms where new arrivals could be initiated "into the customs of the country...." and the peculiarities of its farming industry till they had settled on their own holdings,⁷³ were certainly quite appealing to the B.S.A. Co. Board and other Company officials.

In the final analysis, the Wise recommendations inevitably produced far-reaching results. The general frontier assumption that

⁷²Ibid: p 18.

⁷³Ibid: pp 19-21.

"any member of the family who could not make good in any other trade or profession could be planted on the land to make his fortune", which had led to a situation whereby nearly "every train from the South disgorged some of these (trial-and-error farmers)" in early Southern Rhodesia,⁷⁴ was obviously giving room to a more organized way of farming. This change in approach to agriculture in the country was also vindicated by the reduced sizes of farms set aside for allocation to colonist farmers since 1905/6, which in some cases totalled as little as "500 to 600 acres".⁷⁵ Secondly, the central farms and the immigrant camps for new colonist arrivals assumed a proverbial character in Southern Rhodesian history even up to the more recent times.⁷⁶

On an even more significant level, the appointment of Wise led to other more fundamental innovations in the organisation of commercial agriculture and the utilization of land. The visit of B.S.A. Co. Directors to Southern Rhodesia in 1907 and their recommendation to provide some form of distinction between the administrative and commercial activities of the Company, in order to deal more efficiently with the commercial and administrative revenue and expenditure of the consortium in the territory, had a profound effect on the subsequent course of capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia. In particular, the assertion by the Company's Visiting Directors that land, just like railways, fell under the category of the Company's commercial interests was a significant one, since it was land which was henceforth to form the backbone of the Company's policies and attitude towards commercial agriculture from 1907 onwards. In this fateful year, 1907, the Lands

⁷⁴Tredgold: The Rhodesia That Was My Life: p 27.

⁷⁵B.S.A. Co. Report on Land Settlement...: p 22.

⁷⁶For the role of the "immigrants' camp" for white settlers in Southern Rhodesia, Vide: Doris Lessing: "A Home for the Highland Cattle" in her collection This Was The Old Chief's Country: Vol. I: Michael Joseph: London: 1976: pp 204-5.

Department, which had been under the charge of Wise as its director, was, in fact, reconstituted into the Estates Department under the same official. New policy directives were also issued by the Visiting Directors in relation to the terms and conditions on land holdings; provision of expert advice and assistance to farmers, especially the new arrivals settling on virgin properties, and the organisation of agricultural production and distribution along with adequate transport facilities for the benefit of the country's products on both local and overseas markets. In addition, a campaign was mounted abroad to advertise Southern Rhodesia's favourable assets and the opportunities of settlement in the territory. To make the whole programme more or less viable, a subscription of £1,000,000 was called for by these Visiting Directors.⁷⁷

The innovations of the B.S.A. Co. mentioned above, meant, in a nutshell, that since 1907, an administrative system had to be established whereby the promotion of agricultural development became a primary goal for not only the B.S.A. Co. Administration, but also for the white settlers whose government succeeded after 1923. This system also meant that since 1907, agricultural progress in Southern Rhodesia was to be achieved through private enterprise, whilst the government was content to play a restricted role merely as an adjunct to the efforts of these individuals and private companies (the latter incidentally including also the B.S.A. Co. in its commercial capacity). In the end, this evidently created a situation whereby the colonist farming community was willy-nilly excessively pampered and, by the 1930's, managed to establish a veritable alliance between itself and any government in power.⁷⁸ In the circumstances, the influence which the

⁷⁷"Declaration of Policy by the Visiting Commission, Bulawayo: October 19, 1907": in B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts: pp 24-5.

⁷⁸Vide: D. J. Murray: The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia: Clarendon Press: Oxford: 1970: pp 58; 60-2.

farming community in Southern Rhodesia came to wield was very much similar to that of the so-called "gold and maize alliance" in South Africa since 1910.⁷⁹

For the immediate concern of this analysis however, this trend of developments, towards a strong capitalist agricultural sector in Southern Rhodesia since 1907, was further vindicated by the reorganisation of the Agricultural Department in 1908, with Dr. E. A. Nobbs, a trained scientist and former Agricultural Assistant to the Cape government, as its Director⁸⁰ and later Secretary for Agriculture, when he succeeded Ross Townshend the following year.⁸¹ In 1910 an experimental research farm was founded at Gwebi near Salisbury with the intention of providing solutions to a number of problems which hampered the course of agricultural development in the country.⁸² In the same year was also established the 1,000,000 acre Rhodesdale estate, a property of the B.S.A. Co. situated in the Gwelo district, designed to strengthen the owners' commercial farming activities in conjunction with sister central farms, such as the Marandellas farm near Salisbury, where the Company carried out tobacco farming, and the Premier estate in the Inyanga district together with the Mazoe farm, which specialized in the growing of citrus fruit.⁸³

⁷⁹Vide: M. Legassick: "Gold, Agriculture, and Secondary Industry in South Africa, 1885-1970: from Periphery to Sub-Metropole as a Forced Labour System": in R. H. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds.): The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa: Heinemann: London: 1977: pp 180-2.

⁸⁰B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts for the Year Ended March 31, 1908: p 6.

⁸¹"Southern Rhodesia: Report of the Administrator (Sir W. Milton), 1908-9": in B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts for the Year Ended March 31, 1909: p 47.

⁸²B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts for the Year Ended March 31, 1910: p 15.

⁸³Report of the Acting Commercial Representative of the B.S.A. Co. Commercial Branch (P. S. Inskipp) for the Period 1st January to 30th September, 1910: p 59.

The Rhodesdale estate was reserved for cattle ranching; a business enterprise that may have been probably stimulated by the current efforts of another consortium, Liebig's Extract of Meat Company (Lemco and Oxo Co.), which had, by 1910, bought some 800,000 acres of ranching land in the Tuli district⁸⁴ and was running a herd of cattle estimated at 4,000, under the charge of 30 European employees by 1911.⁸⁵ With the creation of the 100,000 acre Tokwe estate in the Victoria district and the gigantic Nuanetsi estate (3,590,000 acres) in the southern portion of the Chibi district in 1914 for ranching purposes,⁸⁶ it could be said that the B.S.A. Co. was at last endeavouring, in every way, to outplay its rival consortia on meat production in Southern Rhodesia.

Parallel developments in other branches of commercial agriculture, as initiated by the Company in 1907, were equally phenomenal. Perhaps encouraged by the favourable report of R. J. Hannon, Superintendent of Agriculture in the Cape colony who had been invited to assess the agricultural prospects of the country in 1907, emphasizing the all-round promising future of this economic sector in Southern Rhodesia,⁸⁷ the growing of maize and tobacco evidently made a sudden leap henceforth. After the initial handicaps in the form of locust invasions and a slump in maize prices,⁸⁸ by 1909, Southern Rhodesia began to produce maize for export purposes and the Salisbury Farmers' Co-operative Association was the first group of colonist maize producers

⁸⁴Report of the Acting Commercial Representative....: p 58.

⁸⁵B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts for the Year Ended March 31, 1911: p 16.

⁸⁶B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts for the Years Ended March 31, 1913 and March 31, 1914: p 26

⁸⁷B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts.... March 31, 1907: pp 14-6.

⁸⁸B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts.... March 31, 1908: p 40.

to share this honour, when in the same year they exported 10,857 bags of maize at about "8~~f~~ per bag of 200 lbs".⁸⁹

Tobacco farming too was not at all lagging behind. Although this particular branch of agriculture was, at first, hindered by the futile but characteristic attempts, on the part of white colonist enterprise, to penetrate African peasant production as symbolized, in this case, by the activities of Frank Johnson's Company, the Inyoka Rhodesia Tobacco Company, in the Inyoka country (Sebungwe district) between 1906 and 1914, where tobacco growing had been hitherto an established traditional industry among the Shangwe people,⁹⁰ it too began to make headway sooner or later. Even as early as 1907, tobacco growing was fastly becoming a prominent feature of colonist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia. With the construction of tobacco warehouses at first in Salisbury and later in Bulawayo during this period, there emerged a characteristic pattern whereby the colonist tobacco farmers of Mashonaland began to specialize in the production of Virginia tobacco, whilst their counterparts in Matabeleland tended to prefer the Turkish leaf instead: both types of tobacco then said to be in great demand on the South African market at the time.⁹¹

In one sense, tobacco farming, just like maize growing in a number of respects, greatly benefitted from direct governmental involvement in the processes of production and marketing of agricultural produce. In this instance, the establishment of a Land Bank in

⁸⁹B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts.... March 31, 1909: p 17.

⁹⁰Barry Kosmin: "The Inyoka Tobacco Industry of the Shangwe People: the Displacement of a Pre-Colonial Economy in Southern Rhodesia, 1898-1938": in Palmer and Parsons (eds.): The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa: pp 276-8.

⁹¹"Southern Rhodesia: Report of the Administrator (Milton): 1906/7" in B.S.A. Co. Reports and Accounts.... March 31, 1907: pp 44-5.

Southern Rhodesia in 1911 under Olive, the former Acting Commercial Representative of the Company,⁹² as its first Acting Manager and detailed, as it was, to mainly provide credit facilities to needy colonist farmers,⁹³ not to mention here the takeover in 1913 by the B.S.A. Co. of one private consortium then operating in the country, the Tobacco Company of Rhodesia and South Africa, along with the total reorganisation of the local and overseas marketing facilities subsequently effected for the benefit of the country's tobacco farmers,⁹⁴ were some of the factors which inexorably boosted tobacco production in early Southern Rhodesia.

On the white immigration front, progress in the colonist agricultural sector generally tallied with the increase in the rate of white immigration. Indeed, since the appointment of one G. N. Savage in 1908, as the Superintendent of Emigration from Britain to Southern Rhodesia, with main offices in London and Glasgow for the purpose,⁹⁵ frantic efforts were henceforth mounted to promote colonist settlement in this Company territory and the fact that the programme was not altogether a failure may be deducted from the statistical returns for the period 1911 to 1914, in Table X below:

⁹²Vide: Supra: p 743.

⁹³Report of the Commercial Representative (Inskipp) of the B.S.A. Co. Commercial Branch for the Period April 1, 1911 to March 31, 1912:
p 12.

⁹⁴B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts.... March 31, 1913, and March 31, 1914: pp 22-3.

⁹⁵B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts.... March 31, 1908: p 13.

Table X⁹⁶

Immigration of White Farmers, into Southern Rhodesia,
1911 - 1914

<u>Year Ended</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>VII</u>
March 1911	759	-	-	-	920,924 acres	£274,800	-
March 1912	768	218	66	284	961,325 acres	£283,399	£ 970
March to September 1912	356	64	29	93	366,478 acres	£126,154	£1,433
March 1913	373	125	45	170	574,774 acres	£190,696	£1,240
March 1914	464	170	36	206	493,182 acres	£166,345	£ 956

Key

- I = Total annual arrivals amongst white colonist farmers.
 II = Total annual farm sales in Mashonaland.
 III = Total annual farm sales in Matabeleland.
 IV = Total Annual farm sales throughout the whole country.
 V = Total acreage sold annually throughout the whole country.
 VI = Total capital brought by farmer-arrivals in the country.
 VII = Capital brought into the country per family.

For the African societies of Southern Rhodesia in general and the "black pioneers" led by Hlazo in particular, the progressive consolidation of the white colonist hold on land throughout the country since 1907 was certainly very ominous. For the African peoples as a whole, this development and especially the rise of European commercial agriculture,

⁹⁶These figures are based on material derived from (a) B.S.A. Co. Directors' Reports and Accounts, 1911-1915, and (b) Reports of the Commercial Representative of the B.S.A. Co. Commercial Branch, 1911-1915.

inevitably led to the gradual squeezing out of the African peasant producer from the produce market as the large-scale state-aided colonist farmer cornered the whole market for his sole benefit. In this way, capitalist agriculture, therefore, emasculated the African peasant sector and helped to speed up rural under-development, as Phimister has amply demonstrated with regard to contemporary developments in the Victoria district.⁹⁷ In the end, what capitalist agriculture along with other official measures were able to achieve was the veritable proletarianization of the African peasantry, as the increasingly impoverished African rural areas could no longer stand their own ground in the face of the growing potency of this state-backed economic sector. A greater degree of commitment to wage employment therefore emerged on a scale quite different from, especially, the pre-1904 period.⁹⁸

With special reference to Hlazo and the "black pioneers", the B.S.A. Co's "white agricultural policy" could only mean a reappraisal of their position as a privileged black middle class in a restrictive colonial society. Perhaps stung by the refusal of the British Treasury and the Colonial Office to grant them some form of financial assistance to meet the administrative expenditure on Southern Rhodesia in July 1908⁹⁹ as well as by the strident and increasingly frequent calls amongst its shareholders for profits from their capital investments,¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷I. Phimister: "Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914, with Particular Reference to the Victoria District": in Palmer and Parsons (eds.): op. cit. pp 259-60.

⁹⁸Arrighi: "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective": pp 206-7.

⁹⁹Vide: "Memorandum Submitted to His Majesty's Government by the B.S.A. Co., July 6, 1908": in B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts March 31, 1909: pp 53-8.

¹⁰⁰Vide: B.S.A. Co. Report on the Fifteenth Ordinary General Meeting held at Canon Street Hotel, London, on February 28, 1910: pp 17-9.

the whole attitude of the Company towards land changed totally since 1907. In fact, more frequently than usual, London Wall began to regret the errors of commission perpetrated by its local functionaries, in the bygone era in Southern Rhodesia, in making unwarranted extensive land offers to nearly everybody.¹⁰¹ From this point of view, it is certainly easier to understand the progressively stiffer land policy of the Company, especially as the outbreak of World War I approached.

This new attitude of the Company towards land was clearly spelt out by one of its Directors, Sir Henry Birchenough, in a speech in Bulawayo in December 1912 in which he confessed: "When we started Land Settlement we (the B.S.A. Co.) were selling prairie land to prairie farmers who applied to it prairie methods, and the land was in fact only worth prairie prices to those who bought it." But circumstances had changed by 1912, as Sir Birchenough once more observed: "The new factor in the situation is that land in Rhodesia has greatly increased in selling value. This in itself compels a change in both our methods of preparing land for sale and the terms upon which we sell it."¹⁰² Finally, the errors of the past, with regards to land alienation in Southern Rhodesia, were evidently still goading London Wall, hence a new zest to reverse the situation. The realization that by 1913 out of the country's total acreage of about 96,000,000 acres, an estimated 23,104,727 acres had already been alienated (about 9,667,617 acres being held by private companies; 12,561,356 having been sold to individuals and the remainder, then amounting to 875,754 acres only, passing for Company estates),¹⁰³ was definitely disconcerting to the

¹⁰¹Vide: B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts... March 31, 1912: p 34.

¹⁰²"Extracts from Report on Rhodesia by Henry Birchenough, Bulawayo: December, 1912": in B.S.A. Co. Directors' Report and Accounts.... March 31, 1913 and March 31, 1914: p 107.

¹⁰³"B.S.A. Co. Proposals for the Encouragement of Land Settlement and Immigration": Annexure V: in Ibid: p 77.

Company Board of Directors.

In this realization of its over-generous attitude in the past, therefore, lay the roots of closer white settlement and smaller land holdings, which characterized the Company's land policy, especially in 1912, when Sir Birchenough attacked the old Company practice of granting 3,000 or 6,000 acre farms to individual colonists stating, as he did, that "It is distressing to go through many districts (in Southern Rhodesia) and to see great areas of land, with a large proportion fit for the plough, in the hands of two or three men, when they would easily support and find a good living for treble or quadruple the number. Even if the old large unit of a 3,000 acre farm was necessary in the days of 'prairie farming', it is no longer necessary today."¹⁰⁴ The standard farms contemplated for colonist farmers henceforth totalled between 800 and 1,000 acres only.

As far as the African subject peoples in general were concerned, the new commercial attitude of the Company towards land had profound consequences all told. Since 1905, the problems of land shortage and African squatters on European-owned land had become increasingly evident. Even in the province of Mashonaland where land alienation by white colonists was, on the whole, not so extensive in comparison with proceedings in post-1893 Matabeleland, this problem of land shortage was already rearing its head rather unpleasantly in some administrative quarters. In the Inyanga district for instance, global land alienation to private syndicates had taken place, with the result that only "poor and unsuitable" and "badly watered" land situated in the "precipitous and inaccessible slope of the Inyanga Range" was left for "native cultivation,"¹⁰⁵ even before this period. By 1905-7, the problem had,

¹⁰⁴"Extracts from Report on Rhodesia....": loc. cit.

¹⁰⁵C.O.417/407: Clarke to Milton: March 10, 1905.

in fact, considerably worsened, as the African squatter communities of the Inyanga district complained bitterly against "double taxes"; that is taxation by the private land companies represented by their agent, Charles Bullock, and the Company Administration. As D. H. Moodie, the Native Commissioner of the district, was to learn from his messengers, the people of the Inyanga district complained that "We have always lived here and held the ground. The Government has taken our money in the form of tax and promised us protection. We remained loyal in the rebellion. Those who rebelled have taken possession of their ground and ours has been sold." The protests of the Inyanga people continued "We have too many chiefs - we know you (N/C Moodie) and we know Mzwiti (C/N/C Mashonaland), but we (also) pay taxes to Stereki (Bullock). How can one man hold all the ground?" The Inyanga people further queried "Why does (the) Government sell all the land and yet take our taxes? What are we being punished for?"¹⁰⁶

The problem of "double taxes", at the rate of £1 per adult for absentee landlords and £1 and extra 10/- for each wife after the first one in polygamous households, to the government¹⁰⁷ was definitely too much for the people of the Inyanga district, who began to avow by 1906 that "We don't want to go to (the) Portuguese Territory (Mozambique) but we are not going to stay here and be eaten up."¹⁰⁸ This threatened exodus from Inyanga was perhaps also facilitated by the fact that a greater proportion of these Shona people of the area were Barwe of Makombe, some of whom still lived in Mozambique across the border. The Company Administration in Salisbury only became aware of the seriousness of the

¹⁰⁶C.O.417/451: D. H. Moodie, N/C Inyanga to Acting C/N/C Taberer, Salisbury: Confidential: October 18, 1906.

¹⁰⁷C.O.417/408: Minute by Grindle to Harris: May 20, 1905.

¹⁰⁸C.O.417/451: Moodie, N/C Inyanga to Acting C/N/C Taberer: Confidential: October 18, 1906.

Inyanga situation, when about 1,000 families had packed out of the district by the end of 1906, causing a loss of over £2,000 in administrative revenue,¹⁰⁹ and when, ultimately, alternative land was provided in the neighbouring Makoni district to accommodate the Inyanga people.¹¹⁰

But the Inyanga case was by no means exceptional in terms of African land shortage during the period, when the B.S.A. Co. embarked on its aggressive land policy. In the Victoria district, also in Mashonaland, the people of the Chikwanda reserve were just as equally affected. In this case, the problem of the indigenous African population of this area was not unconnected with intention of the Company Administration to effect such land exchanges as would guarantee the security of the white farmers in the district.¹¹¹ In the province of Matabeleland too, this problem of land shortage at this particular time was just as bad.¹¹² Towards the end of 1907 for instance, when a general assessment of the African squatter situation was carried out in preparation for the subsequent Private Locations Ordinance of 1908, it was discovered that nearly all the districts in Matabeleland had African squatters living on European-owned land on the basis of agreements of one kind or another. On this score, the highest number of locations and agreements on European farms in Matabeleland were recorded in the Bubi, Matobo, Insiza and Selukwe districts.¹¹³

However, the most extreme demonstration of the post-1907 Company attitude towards land was manifested by the activities of the Native Reserves Commission of 1914-15. The Native Reserves Commission,

¹⁰⁹Ibid:

¹¹⁰C.O.417/408: Milton to Clarke: March 10, 1905.

¹¹¹C.O.417/451: Chester-Master to Lord Selborne: January 8, 1908.

¹¹²Vide Supra: pp 727-30.

¹¹³Ibid: Milton to Chester-Master, December 17, 1907.

through its extensive reductions of African land holdings (the reserves) and the repeated land exchanges in various districts, which in the process left Africans in possession of generally infertile, remote and dry areas,¹¹⁴ in essence validated, beyond any doubt, the B.S.A. Co's determination to squeeze the African off the land onto the labour market, where his services were in great demand for promoting colonist economic enterprise. In the final analysis, the African people of Southern Rhodesia on the whole were to be grievously affected by the work of this Commission, though the effects resulting therefrom may not have been immediate and uniform.

In formulating a credible synopsis on the activities of the B.S.A. Co. with regard to land in Southern Rhodesia up to 1914, it is evident that this company, in its capacity as the political force in the country, started off as an extremely generous host, distributing land with great abandon to both its black and white clientele; thereby benefitting even the "black pioneers" as well. Sooner or later, the force of economic circumstances operated in such a manner as to necessitate a re-orientation of the Company's economic policy, especially after 1907 when land became the main fulcrum of its economic activities. This new economic policy, along with its corollary on increased white colonist immigration and the related "white agricultural policy", unfortunately coincided with the changing relationship for the worse between the Company Administration and its foreign black clientele in Southern Rhodesia; a change which had by 1905 assumed an almost concrete form.

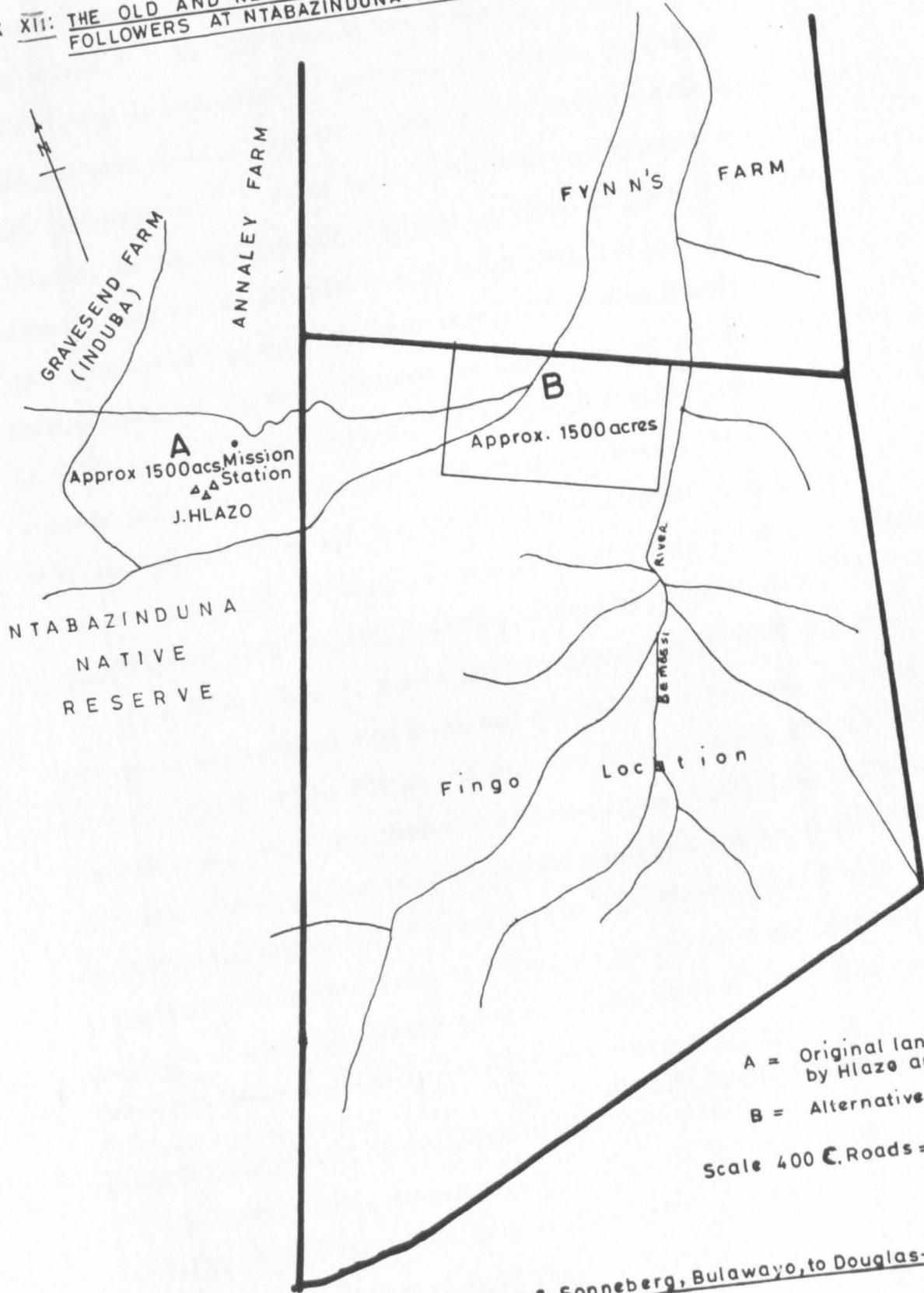
¹¹⁴For the detail on the Native Reserves Commission 1914-15, Vide: C.O.417/564: Report of the Native Reserves Commission to Lord Buxton, December, 1915 (and Summary of Witnesses and Evidence; Appendix A). For a systematic analysis of the Commission's proceedings, Vide: Palmer: Land & Racial Domination in Rhodesia: Chapter 5: pp 104-30.

Throughout this whole period of changes and shifting in official direction, attitudes and policies on land, the African subject peoples in Southern Rhodesia, except the "black pioneers" and their kinsfolk the "black settlers" at first, were irrevocably on the receiving end, as efforts were repeatedly mounted to squeeze the African off the land. But as far as John Hlazo and his followers were concerned, they were apparently too deluded by the gradualist character of the changes in B.S.A. Co. policies and attitudes to note anything at all. Indeed, it is the tragedy of the relationship between these former allies, the white forces of colonialism and the "black pioneers", that the latter were either too slow to grasp the implications of post-1907 developments or were altogether completely unaware of the writing on the wall. Thus all the debacles between the two camps, with regard to land rights and ownership up to 1923, effectively concentrate on either making the other side realize the dimensions of the changed situation or resisting the changes in question altogether. This actually is what the rest of this part of our chapter is all about.

We have already observed how Hlazo and his followers, at first, interacted with the B.S.A. Co. Administration between 1905 and 1909. This initial interaction was however peripheral and did not seem to touch on the fundamental issues governing the relationship between these "black pioneers" and the Southern Rhodesian Administration.^{114a} But after 1909, the situation had changed noticeably and graver issues confronted these two sides, naturally due to pressures generated by the new aggressive land policy of the Company. When Hlazo and his followers were settled at Ntabazinduna, next to the newly created Fingo Location, in 1898, there had been no native reserve till the following year, when the Ntabazinduna reserve was established adjacent to

^{114a}Vide Supra: pp735-9

APPENDIX XII: THE OLD AND NEW AREAS ASSIGNED TO HLAZO AND FOLLOWERS AT NTABAZINDUNA AS IN 1916



(Sketch enclosed in S.924/125/1: Coghlan & Sonneberg, Bulawayo, to Douglas-Jones, Salisbury: January 25, 1916: R/N/A Salisbury)

Government Farm No 3, as the location of these "black pioneers" was then called.¹¹⁵ By 1907 however, the pressures on land were increasing and with the introduction of the Private Locations Ordinance in 1908, more and more Ndebele squatters began to move away from European farms into the reserves.¹¹⁶ Under these circumstances, it, therefore, became necessary to accommodate the Hlambabaloyi group of Ndebele who had hitherto been living on private land which they had just vacated.¹¹⁷ This Hlambabaloyi group of Ndebele were, in fact, descendants of the famous Nsukamini regiment, founded and controlled by Tambo Ndiweni, one of Mzilikazi's military generals and the great grandfather of the present incumbent Chief Kayisa Tambo Ndiweni. During the period of conflict between Hlazo and the B.S.A. Co., this Ndebele group was under the leadership of Mhangwa; a regent who merely ruled as a locum tenens for the heir apparent, Nkulunyelwa Ndiweni, then a minor.¹¹⁸

In a wider context, therefore, the years between 1908 and 1914 were quite inauspicious for Hlazo and his followers not only in terms of the attempts of the Company to push the African people off the land through such legislative mechanisms as the Private Locations Ordinance of 1908; the imposition of rent on Africans living on unalienated land in 1909; the imposition of grazing fees on Africans squatting on private land in 1912 and the introduction of various laws governing the movement of stock on account of the outbreak of East Coast Fever also

¹¹⁵Vide: Appendix XII: (Map): The Old and New Areas Assigned to John Hlazo and his Followers at Ntabazinduna as in 1916.

¹¹⁶Vide Palmer: .op. cit. pp.96-8

¹¹⁷C.O.417/526: Burns-Begg to Lord Gladstone: September 30, 1913.

¹¹⁸Report on the Ntabazinduna Community, Bubi District, by A. D. Elliott, District/Delineation Officer: October, 1961: in Delineation Reports, Internal Affairs Department. (This material is in private possession of Professor Marshall Murphree of the Centre for Inter-racial Studies, University of Rhodesia, Salisbury, and I am grateful to Professor Murphree for granting me access to these reports.)

in 1912,¹¹⁹ but also with regard to the increasing aggressiveness of the Company's commercial attitude towards land. In 1912, a group of Mfengu immigrants who had been living outside the Fingo Location and therefore illegally squatting on the Ntabazinduna reserve were threatened with eviction on the pretext that it was "highly undesirable that (foreign Africans) should be allowed to live among the indigenous Matabele natives for whose occupation the Tabas Induna Reserve was set apart (sic)."¹²⁰ Thus this group of Mfengu, who had converged at Bembesi from various parts of Southern Rhodesia and the Cape and consisted of Sifuba Magdala, Jamani Ginya, Malusi, Stinta, Bois, William Mabeka and Xegetwani, was finally ejected from their temporary abode into the Fingo Location with the approval of both the High Commissioner and the Colonial Office by 1914.¹²¹

On the economic front, the B.S.A. Co. was obviously quite prepared to demonstrate to anybody concerned, how much value it placed on land at the time as well as how best it had to deal with this asset. In this case, the deal between the B.S.A. Co. and Liebig Extract of Meat Company in 1913, whereby the former sold to the latter ranching land to the amount of 1,200,000 acres, at the cost of 1£ an acre, for the benefit of its shareholders,¹²² was naturally a clear indication of the commercial character the land policy in Southern Rhodesia had assumed at the time, notwithstanding the scathing attacks from B.S.A. Co. opponents in the British Parliament.¹²³

¹¹⁹Palmer: loc. cit.

¹²⁰A3/18/24: Milton to Lord Gladstone: March 29, 1912.

¹²¹C.O.417/539: Lord Gladstone to Lewis Harcourt: March 7, 1914 and Harcourt to Lord Gladstone: March 31, 1914.

¹²²C.O.417/534: B.S.A. Co. to C.O: July 4, 1913.

¹²³Ibid: Question by Swift MacNeil, M.P., to Harcourt: House of Commons: June 26, 1913: Enclosed in Just to B.S.A. Co: June 27, 1913.

In view of the proceedings indicated above, it is certainly tempting to conclude that when John Hlazo undertook to challenge the B.S.A. Co. Administration over his land rights in the Ntabazinduna area between 1912 and 1919, he was apparently fighting a lost battle. The issues involved in the Ntabazinduna land controversy were quite complicated. In the first place, there was the demand by Hlazo for land titles to be granted to him and his followers, a request which had been previously forestalled in 1905, because most of these "black pioneers" owed the Company some money in connection with the transportation of their families and property to Southern Rhodesia towards the end of the nineteenth century. By 1912, however, when Hlazo and his followers had paid off their debts to the Company, still no titles were forthcoming, as these people were alleged to be living on a native reserve where titles were both inapplicable and out of the question altogether.¹²⁴

Secondly, there was the whole issue concerning the status of the Ntabazinduna land given to the "black pioneers". From Hlazo's point of view, the land in question was given to him and his followers as a reward for their services and was, therefore, theirs. For this reason, Hlazo informed Colonel Burns-Begg, the Resident Commissioner in Salisbury in September 1913, that "...this land was given to me and my people without any conditions whatever long before Mhangwa (the Ndebele chief) came here". Accordingly, Hlazo could only conclude that as far as he was concerned, the Ntabazinduna land remained "reserved for the Fingoes and their heirs".¹²⁵ Nor could this leader of the "black pioneers" be persuaded either to accept the presence of

¹²⁴A3/18/24: Summary of History of Fingo Immigration by C/N/C Taylor to Secretary, Department of Administrator: July 15, 1918.

¹²⁵S.924/G.125/1: John Hlazo to Burns-Begg: September 24, 1913.

the Ndebele community as his neighbours and the establishment of a native reserve which such a move implied. Thus he argued that "I have been about 15 years living here and Mhangwa (the Ndebele Chief) came here 2 or 3 years ago." Hlazo continued "A plan was given to me demarcating my part of the Territory (Ntabazinduna and) that plan included all my lands..... The splitting of the land reserved for the Fingoes into Ntabas Nduna Reserve is quite a new thing now...."¹²⁶

Hlazo's son, Stephen, who accompanied his father to Salisbury to attend an interview with the Resident Commissioner in May 1913, was even more emphatic on why the Ntabazinduna land should not be divided to provide for a native reserve, in order to accommodate both the Mfengu and the Ndebele residents. In his own opinion, Stephen Hlazo concluded by making an unfavourable comparison between the two groups of people in question: "These people (the Ndebele) have been fighting against the Government (in the 1896 rising). The Fingoes made an application in 1898 to remain here (in Southern Rhodesia as) they did not want to go back to the (Cape) Colony. The Government said they must choose a Head man and they chose my father."¹²⁷

From the proceeding, it is quite obvious that the Hlazos were bent on entrenching the position of the "black pioneers" with regard to land-ownership at Ntabazinduna. Unfortunately however, the views of the Hlazos and their interpretation of events, totally differed from those of the country's Administration. On the position of Hlazo and his followers and their status at Ntabazinduna, Taylor, the Chief

¹²⁶C.O.417/526: John Hlazo to Burns-Begg: September 24, 1913.

¹²⁷S.924/G.125/1: Statement of Stephen Hlazo quoted in Interview between His Honour the Resident Commissioner and John Hlazo: Salisbury: May 13, 1913. (This material is also contained in File C.O.417/526: P/R/O: London)

Native Commissioner, who also attended the May 1913 interview between Hlazo and the Resident Commissioner, presented a different picture altogether. In recognition of the services rendered by these "black pioneers", Hlazo and his people had apparently received "permission to stay on certain four farms which (were later) converted into a Reserve," and, at the same time, it was stipulated that their stay was "on sufferance" or "till further notice".¹²⁸ The second contentious issue between the two parties as seen by the Administration, was the question of Hlazo's relationship with the Ndebele Chief Mhangwa. Ntabazinduna was the traditional home of Mhangwa's people and therefore they were just as entitled to live there as Hlazo and his people also were. Moreover, as Taylor pointed out, Mhangwa and his people, like the "black pioneers", had also remained loyal during the 1896 rising and thus there was certainly no reason why the Administration should impose unwarranted difficulties on this Ndebele leader and his following only to please the "black pioneers".

Yet Hlazo saw the matter differently and remained adamant that he could not be placed in a subordinate position to Mhangwa. The "black pioneers" of Ntabazinduna found it quite intolerable to accept this official arrangement because, as Stephen Hlazo indicated, "We have been under the British Empire; we have never been under chiefs who have been fighting against the Government."¹²⁹ Moreover, it was not only this simple question of differences in loyalty to the Administration which worried the "black pioneers". There was also the question of ideological differences and the social and cultural gap between the "black pioneers" themselves and the indigenous Ndebele people, which the former felt could not be very easily reconciled.

¹²⁸ Ibid: Statement of C/N/C Taylor in Interview.....; Salisbury: May 13, 1913.

¹²⁹ Ibid: Statement of Stephen Hlazo in Interview.....; Salisbury: May 13, 1913.

From the point of view of these "black pioneers", the Ndebele were essentially too backward and untutored for anybody's liking and thus these immigrants protested to the Salisbury authorities that "....they did not like the idea of being placed under a heathen Chief who held different ideas from the Christian Fingoes (and) that John Hlazo was a gospel preacher and had always behaved himself."¹³⁰ For John Hlazo himself, the official ruling that he should henceforth be regarded as Mhangwa's subordinate was perhaps more infuriating, because he considered that he had lived "(long) enough in the British Empire..." and was well acquainted with "what the Cape Government (was) doing there (in the Cape) for their people". Hlazo felt that he was "recognised down (in) the Cape as somebody, and... (did) not wish to lose (this position) here (in Southern Rhodesia)."¹³¹

The preceding impasse on the relationship between the Ndebele Chief Mhangwa and John Hlazo within the same area of Ntabazinduna, clearly had some interesting overtones. In fact, one aspect of the whole issue is evident here. The "black pioneers", like the Creoles in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century, were, it would appear, psychologically ill-prepared to accept the changing situation along with its corollary, whereby their traditional role within the context of British imperialism and colonial rule would be forgotten altogether. For too long, these "black pioneers", who were predominantly of Mfengu origin, had prided themselves over their self-image as "an important and privileged arm of British penetration and 'civilization' into the interior of the continent, and as the living examples of successful British ideas and actions in Africa."¹³² Obviously, these

¹³⁰ Ibid:

¹³¹ Ibid: Statement of C/N/C Taylor in Interview: Salisbury: May 13, 1913.

¹³² Vide: Spitzer: loc. cit.

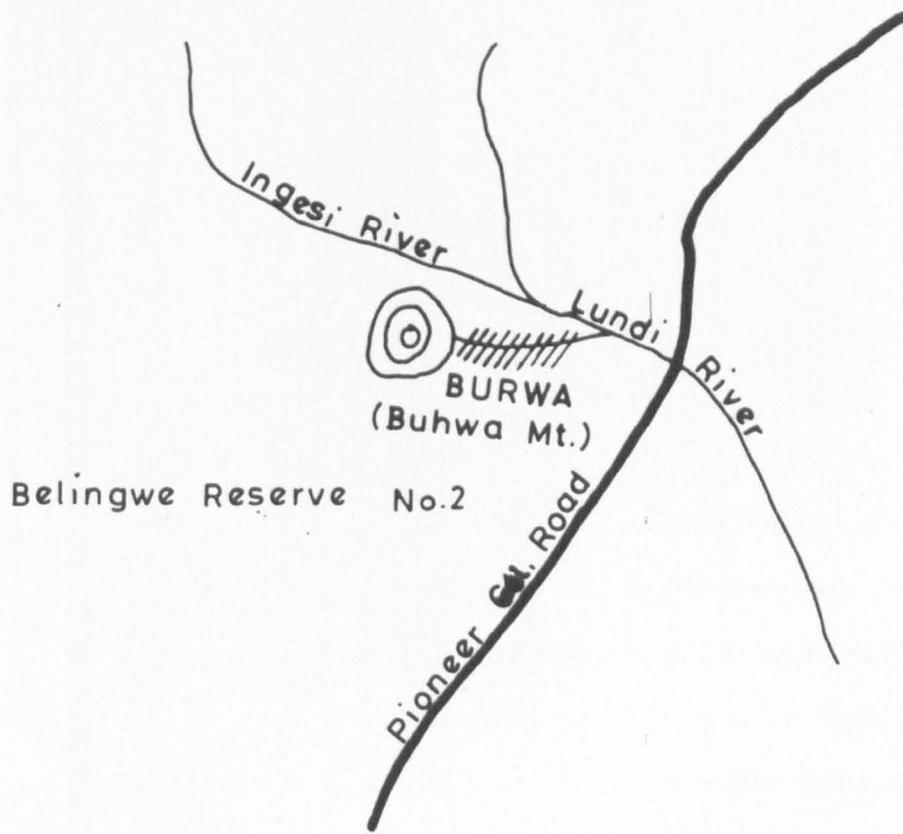
black immigrants were more interested in consolidating their privileged position by making use of those opportunities for achievement, which the situation provided, than in having themselves dragged downwards and to the back of the queue. And it was partly because of this perspective of longstanding that the "black pioneers" conflicted with a B.S.A. Co. Administration, already set in its own decision to avoid parting with any more of its land.

As far as the "black pioneers" of Ntabazinduna were concerned, one of the solutions they had in mind, for the 1912/13 impasse over their position in relation to this particular land, was to quit the area altogether. Thus for this reason, Hlazo, with the advice of his lawyers, Messrs Fletcher and Harsant of Bulawayo, had visited the Belingwe district at the end of October 1912, with the intention of transferring to that part of the country. In the opinion of his lawyer, Angus Fletcher, the brother of R. A. Fletcher a former Government Surveyor and later on of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union fame, the Hlazo transfer to Belingwe was the best way "whereby it was hoped that the present difficulties existing in relation to his (Hlazo's) position in the Ntabazinduna Reserve, might be overcome,...."¹³³ Indeed, as far as Fletcher and his client were concerned, they expected no difficulty over this new development more so that Hlazo had surveyed the land in question and shown keen interest in it. In Hlazo's own words on the Belingwe venture, he stated:

My lawyer (Fletcher) told me that I must go to live in the Reserve I like to go. When my lawyer said so, the Chief Native Commissioner (Taylor) told me I must get a pass from my Native Commissioner (Lanning) to see the land at Belingwe. I went to the office and got the pass and went to Belingwe. I asked about the Reserves and the Native Commissioner (Farrer)

¹³³ Ibid: Angus S. Fletcher, Bulawayo, to C/N/C Taylor: Bulawayo: November 6, 1912.

APPENDIX XIII: PROPOSED SITE FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF
HLAZO AND HIS FOLLOWERS IN RESERVE
No.2, BELINGWE DISTRICT, 1912/13



Locality shaded as the
part desired for location

(Sketch enclosed in S. 924/G125/1: Angus ● Fletcher,
Bulawayo to C/N/C Taylor: November, 6, 1912
R/N/A: Salisbury)

told me (about) all the Reserves. I asked about the Guhwa (Buhwa) Mountain. The Native Commissioner told me that the Guhwa is a very good place, (with) plenty of water. I (said) I wanted to go to stay there. I went to look and was satisfied with the Guhwa. When I came back from Guhwa I told my lawyer that I was satisfied with it.....

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Hlazo and his lawyer were evidently quite optimistic over the proposed voluntary transfer of the "black pioneers". But in the grip of this optimism, it would appear that the Hlazo side of the Ntabazinduna land dispute grossly underestimated the problems involved, especially with regard to procuring the consent of the Southern Rhodesian Administration on the matter. In a nutshell, Angus Fletcher himself unwittingly dropped some hints on these difficulties involved in this new move, during the course of his request for permission from the Native Department of Matabeleland to effect the transfer at the end of 1912. Firstly, there was the question of land rights which these "black pioneers" wanted recognized and entrenched and over which they had fallen out with the Administration in connection with the Ntabazinduna Reserve. As Fletcher readily pointed out, in applying for his client's transfer, Hlazo also wished "to have his position in respect of status clearly defined, and in addition, to receive your (Chief Native Commissioner's) assurance that, subject to good behaviour, he will not be disturbed in his occupation of the land he settles upon."

Secondly, there was the position of Hlazo as the leader of the "black pioneers" and how he was to interact with the hierarchy of African traditional leaders of the Belingwe district. In this instance, even Fletcher himself recognized the complications likely to arise in the process, when he indicated in a statement worth quoting at length that:

¹³⁴Ibid: Statement of John Hlazo in Interview.....: Salisbury: May 13, 1913. Vide: Appendix XIII (Map): Proposed Site for the Settlement of Hlazo and His Followers in Reserve No. 2, Belingwe District, 1912/13.

.....the positions of headmen or chiefs are of course entirely the gift of the Government, and in John Hlazo's case I understand that you consider his following (30 adult males) to be too small to justify his elevation to either position. You will remember, however, that this man and his people are considerably in advance of the local raw Native in point of education and civilization generally (and) in addition they have been for years converts of Christianity with strong religious beliefs and it is these very facts that make his relationship with a raw heathen chief extremely difficult if not impossible. 135

For reasons stated above, Fletcher, therefore, pleaded with the Native Department of Matabeleland that Hlazo and his followers be placed "under the direct control of the Native Commissioner of the (Belingwe) District and not indirectly through a local Native Chief". This request was further justified when Fletcher also indicated, for the benefit of the Chief Native Commissioner of Matabeleland, that "Knowing as you do the differences in customs and civilisation and in tradition between these Natives (Hlazo and his followers) and the local tribes you will readily appreciate the reasonableness of John Hlazo's request,...."¹³⁶

In a way, it could therefore be argued, with a great deal of justification, that Fletcher greatly helped the officials of the Matabeleland Native Department by thus providing them with some of the material facts to wriggle out of the dilemma the Hlazo request to transfer to Belingwe had given rise to. Of course, it may be pertinent to observe too that these Native Departmental officials had never, in the first place, cherished the idea of Hlazo's transfer to a new district. Thus when Hlazo arrived at the Belingwe district office from Bembesi, the Native Commissioner of the district, W. E. Farrer, who was ironically to take charge over the Mfengu immigrants sooner or later, was clearly unenthusiastic over the prospective transfer.

¹³⁵ Ibid: Angus Fletcher to C/N/C Taylor: November 6, 1912.

¹³⁶ Ibid:

Accordingly, Farrer immediately contacted his counterpart, Lanning, the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district, stating: "This man (Hlazo) duly reported here (at Belingwe) and he was given leave to go out and inspect the two Reserves (Nos. 1 and 2)." Farrer then enquired "Where is he (Hlazo) at present living? If he is not on private property I am not in favour of permission being granted to him to move into (either) Reserve as I think his presence amongst the local natives would only lead to strife and friction".¹³⁷ To his immediate superior, S. N. G. Jackson, the Superintendent of Natives for the Gwelo division, Farrer gave, as his reasons for objecting to the presence of Hlazo and his followers, that the land selected by Hlazo at the Buhwa mountain was "suitable for settlement by indigenous natives and.... that Hlazo's occupation (of the said land) would interfere with this (plan)". Moreover, it was considered that the question of granting Hlazo "more permanent tenure than that accorded to natives of this country (Southern Rhodesia)" could only "give rise to considerable jealousy and dissatisfaction among the natives of this reserve (Belingwe No. 2)".¹³⁸

At the Matabeleland Native Department headquarters in Bulawayo, much play was apparently made, with regard to exactly those issues previously raised by Fletcher, on the probable eruption of structural rivalry between the two groups of Africans the indigenous peoples versus the "black pioneers". In the first place, it was concluded that for the very reasons that Hlazo was refusing to stay at Ntabazinduna under Mhangwa, the objection was even stronger in connection with Reserve No. 2 in the Belingwe district; a view which was

¹³⁷S.924/G.125/3: W. E. Farrer, N/C Belingwe to Lanning, N/C Bubi: October 28, 1912.

¹³⁸Ibid: Farrer, N/C Belingwe to S/O/N, Gwelo: December 5, 1912.

obviously strengthened by the instructions of the Resident Commissioner that "it (was) undesirable that a Fingo Headman, however small the following, should be placed in a position where he (would be) subordinate to a Matabele Chief".¹³⁹

Secondly, there was the problem of land shortage, which during this period, was becoming more widespread, especially in Matabeleland. As Taylor, the Chief Native Commissioner, aptly observed, there was a growing movement amongst the European landowners throughout the province to drive off their African tenants into the reserves by making increased demands on them.¹⁴⁰ In the Insiza district where Ndebele and Shona squatters had been ensconced for some time on such privately-owned land as the De Beers and the Insanku Blocks as well as other extensive properties of Willoughby's Consolidated, as early as 1910, it had been reported that some Ndebele chiefs had approached Campbell, their Native Commissioner, with the intention of moving off to the Belingwe district to occupy the very land chosen by Hlazo in 1912 - that is around the Buhwa Mountain.¹⁴¹ Thirdly, it was strongly felt within administrative circles that "land in the Reserves (was) set aside,....., for indigenous natives only,"¹⁴² and as such the government was not prepared to contend with any complications arising from objections of the indigenous African communities "to (the) making of individual allotments in native reserves to persons who are not indigenous natives".¹⁴³

¹³⁹Ibid: Minute by H. M. Hole to Milton: December 17, 1912.

¹⁴⁰Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Hole: Secretary, Department of Administrator: December 11, 1912.

¹⁴¹Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Hole: February 25, 1913.

¹⁴²Ibid: Hole to Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo: January 3, 1913.

¹⁴³Ibid: Minute by Hole to Milton: December 17, 1912.

For a government which was well known for its lack of scruples over matters of general African concern as symbolized by its current systematic squeeze on the Africans from the land already mentioned,¹⁴⁴ this sudden show of consideration over African feelings, with regard to Hlazo's movement to the Belingwe district, can only be described as out of the ordinary. Yet on the other hand, it must be mentioned here that the local African mood had to be taken into account on this occasion, since the Buhwa Mountain was associated with Shona traditional religious beliefs or what Taylor portrayed, in the crudest of terms, when he stated in February 1913, as the fact that "The Belingwe natives, who are mainly Mashonas do regard the Buhwa Mountain with superstition, but this does not apply to the Matabele."¹⁴⁵ The officials of the Matabeleland Native Department, on their part, may have had sufficient time by 1913 to reckon with Shona sensitivities with regard to the Buhwa Mountain and its environs. Indeed, as far back as 1899, when the Venda refugees of Mpefu, along with this ruler's mother, arrived in the Belingwe district from the Transvaal to settle on land around this mountain, the Ngowa Chief, Mataruse, who commanded the largest group of Shona following in the region, was said to be openly hostile to the whole plan.¹⁴⁶

In the final analysis, the Hlazo design to transfer to the Belingwe district was overtly frustrated by a Company Administration that was totally opposed to the move. Thus Hlazo found himself in a rather unenviable position, which was later well summed up by Colonel Burns-Begg, the Resident Commissioner, during the May 1913 interview,

¹⁴⁴Vide Supra: pp 753-4; 756-9.

¹⁴⁵Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Hole: February 25, 1913.

¹⁴⁶NB1/1/6: Jackson, N/C Belingwe to C/N/C Bulawayo: March 22, 1899.

when this Imperial official pointed out to Stephen Hlazo that:

You see your father (John Hlazo) is in a difficulty. He is not in the Fingo location. If he wants land allotted to him where he won't be under a Matabele chief the only place he can get it is the Fingo location. ----- Where he is now (at Ntabazinduna) he is nominally under the Matabele chief, that is what he complains of, but really he gets on very well with the Matabele chief, and Mhangwa does not seem to interfere with him at all. It seems to me he has a choice of two things. One is to remain where he is if he likes the land, the other, if he does not like even having the name of the Matabele chief on his pass, it seems he must go into the Fingo location.

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It was the second alternative suggested by Colonel Burns-Begg to Hlazo, which seemed generally popular in administrative quarters throughout the country. From the official point of view, the measure to move Hlazo into the Fingo location was necessary not only because the officials themselves were convinced that this location was "sparsely populated and (therefore) there (was) ample room for John Hlazo, his people and stock", but also because, according to official opinion, "it (was) desirable in his own interests that Hlazo should occupy land among his own people, the Fingoes, rather than among strangers where friction (was) likely to follow".¹⁴⁸ The idea here, of course, was to kill two birds with one stone by providing the "black pioneers" with the type of land where they could, in the long run, procure the land titles they were so desirous of, whilst, at the same time, forestalling any kind of structural rivalry and inter-group conflict between these immigrants and the indigenous African communities.

The deal involving the transfer of the "black pioneers" into the Fingo location was not, however, as water-tight as the officials of the

¹⁴⁷S.924/G.125/1: Statement of Resident Commissioner in Interview....: Salisbury: May 13, 1913.

¹⁴⁸S.924/G.125/3: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Hole: February 25, 1913.

Company Administration would have liked to think it was, since Hlazo would not accept it. From the point of view of this Mfengu leader, the Fingo location was by no means the ideal place for him and his followers, because "there ~~(was)~~ no place there that ~~(his)~~ people ~~(could)~~ go ~~(to)~~," particularly so since Hlazo himself already had "two sons in the Fingo location ~~(who could not)~~ find ~~(a)~~ place to plough there".¹⁴⁹ In the end, the only arrangement the two parties concerned could come to was the proposal that Hlazo be granted "not the whole land but sufficient for himself and his people" at Ntabazinduna, where he would also be placed under the Mfengu ruler, Chief Nzimende Mbulawa, the head of the Mfengu residents of the Fingo location.¹⁵⁰

The 1912/13 proceedings between Hlazo, the Company Administration and the Resident Commissioner demonstrated, with stark clarity, that the leader of the "black pioneers" was not the kind of man who could be brow-beaten and hoodwinked to accept a dubious deal without any fight. Obviously Hlazo and his followers believed that because of the services they had in the past rendered to the white forces of colonialism in the country, the Southern Rhodesian Administration owed them a debt which could not be paid by a bad coin. In the process, Hlazo appears to have found great comfort in adopting an extremely uncompromising attitude during the course of all his dealings with the country's authorities. From this point of view, it is, therefore, not surprising that in spite of the official assumptions that the Ntabazinduna land dispute had been resolved by the end of 1913, the Administration had still not put out the fires altogether. They obviously underrated the fact that Hlazo had only accepted the arrangement, to remain at

¹⁴⁹S.924/G.125/1: Statement of Stephen Hlazo in Interview.....: Salisbury: May 13, 1913.

¹⁵⁰Ibid: Statement of Resident Commissioner in Interview.....: Salisbury: May 13, 1913.

Ntabazinduna, but answerable to Chief Nzimende of the Fingo location, under "protest".¹⁵¹ Sooner or later, the Ntabazinduna land dispute was to erupt again in one form or another.

Whilst B.S.A. Co. officials may have deluded themselves, and indeed indulged into some degree of self-congratulation, over their "successful" dealing with Hlazo up to the close of 1913, the fact remains that, in practice, Hlazo never really accepted the so-called official solution over his position at Ntabazinduna. Indeed, once official attention was no longer closely focused on him and his people, Hlazo, who still regarded himself as the big cock in the Ntabazinduna area, began to take it out on his Ndebele neighbours, apparently, as a form of vengeance over the Administration's lukewarm attitude towards these indigenous people. Perhaps this state of relations between the "black pioneers" and the Ndebele residents of the Ntabazinduna reserve may have been even worsened by the decision of the Chief Native Commissioner in March 1914, to revert to a situation whereby the Ndebele Chief Mhangwa wielded power over the whole of the Ntabazinduna area, with the result that Hlazo could only be regarded as Mhangwa's Headman.¹⁵² In any case, whatever the situation might have implied with regard to the Hlazo/Mhangwa relationship at Ntabazinduna by the beginning of 1914, Hlazo was not prepared to stand idle by and see his ideals trampled down and tarnished.

The nature of events which characterized relations between Hlazo's "black pioneers" and the Ndebele of Mhangwa at Ntabazinduna, during the first half of 1914, constitute a very clear demonstration on

¹⁵¹Ibid: John Hlazo to Burns-Begg: September 24, 1913.

¹⁵²Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Salisbury, to Messrs. Fletcher & Harsant, Bulawayo: March 12, 1914.

how one influential section of the subject African society was able to exploit its knowledge on the operation of colonial institutions to arrogantly harass another. In his bitterness over the futility of his long struggle against the Company Administration to entrench the privileged position of his own people, Hlazo obviously lost all traces of respect for the rights and welfare of his Ndebele neighbours. Thus whilst this Mfengu leader had never accepted the land adjoining the Fingo location allocated to him towards the end of 1913, he was, at the same time, not also prepared to tolerate the presence of Ndebele residents on this very land. By May 1914, the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district, accordingly, complained on how Hlazo had ordered those few Ndebele residents "residing within, or whose lands (were) wholly (sic) or partly within the (disputed) area" to move and was also said to be "annoying them in the possession of their lands".¹⁵³

On a more sinister level, Hlazo evidently found it more effective to overrun the unharvested lands of the Ndebele residents in question, by letting loose his stock at random. In this regard, the case of Madhlelonyeni, an Ndebele resident whose crops were systematically savaged by Hlazo's stock, also in May 1914, provides a very good illustration on the progressive deterioration of relations between the "black pioneers" and the Ndebele community of Ntabazinduna, during the height of the area's land dispute. For five successive days, Hlazo's stock (22 donkeys and 30 heads of cattle) had repeatedly broken into Madhlelonyeni's fields, causing some damage estimated at about "10 sacks of corn...". But when the victim in question remonstrated with Hlazo on the matter, the Mfengu leader told him off, indicating that "This place is mine. It is your fault as you are ploughing on my land."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to H. M. Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: May 26, 1914.

¹⁵⁴Ibid: Statement of Madhlelonyeni before R. Lanning, N/C Bubi: June 4, 1914: Enclosed in Lanning to S/O/N, Bulawayo: June 6, 1914.

In the circumstances, the Hlazo/Madhlelonyeni affair had obviously ceased to be a simple matter of complaints and adequate reparations in return and was, therefore, definitely beyond the competence of this particular Ndebele complainant.

Yet at the same time, it should be observed too that even the Ndebele Chief of the area, Mhangwa, could not himself handle the Hlazo/Madhlelonyeni dispute as Hlazo did not recognize his authority at all. Moreover, the advice of Lanning, the Native Commissioner of the district, that the aggrieved Ndebele party should, in future, impound the stock in question and send them to the nearby Inyati pound,¹⁵⁵ only succeeded in causing further problems to those Ndebele residents concerned, as Hlazo, through his lawyers, Messrs. Coghlan and Sonneberg of Bulawayo, immediately issued writs not only against Madhlelonyeni, but also against Chief Mhangwa and Sinene, allegedly for abetting the impounding of this Mfengu's stock. The writ against Madhlelonyeni in this instance demanded damages for "the illegal impounding" of Hlazo's stock, which had involved the payment of £16 16^s on the part of the owner at the Inyati pound and for which £20 was now demanded in compensation.¹⁵⁶ Chief Mhangwa's crime, on the other hand, included not only the fact that he was trespassing on Hlazo's land at Bembesi, but also the charge that this Ndebele chief was "grazing (his) cattle and doing other acts of trespass on such land" and, in so doing, causing damage to the Mfengu leader.¹⁵⁷

As the officials of the Matabeleland Native Department readily observed, the issuing of writs and the threat of legal proceedings by

¹⁵⁵ Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to H. M. G. Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: May 26, 1914.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid: John C. Coghlan, Bulawayo, to Madhlelonyeni, Bembesi: May 5, 1915.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid: John C. Coghlan to Chief Mhangwa: May 5, 1915.

Hlazo against Chief Mhangwa and two of his followers were together a clear indication that the Ntabazinduna land dispute, along with the relations between the "black pioneers" and the indigenous Ndebele community of the area, had certainly "taken on a definite character" and a new departure.¹⁵⁸ In the circumstances, even the previous assumptions of the Bulawayo and Salisbury officials that the Ndebele community of Ntabazinduna should mount civil action against Hlazo "as a deterrent to ~~(further)~~ annoyances ~~(by him)~~ in the future",¹⁵⁹ had by 1915 become hopelessly irrelevant. What the new developments actually called for was some form of stronghanded action against Hlazo and his people to put to an end a state of affairs, whereby this Mfengu leader had, from the point of view of the Native Department officials, assumed the attitude that once the Ntabazinduna area in which he was then living was apportioned to him "the rights of ~~(other)~~ individuals would cease and that his stock could damage crops, etc. with impunity."¹⁶⁰

The very fact that Hlazo had refused to accept the land offer made to him adjoining the Fingo location and had remained on his old Ntabazinduna site in a quieta non movere form of posture, had apparently deluded some officials to conclude that this Mfengu would, ultimately, accept and come to terms with his position as "a native occupant of the ~~(Ntabazinduna)~~ Reserve under Chief Mhangwa, subject to his ~~(Hlazo's)~~ acceptance of the fact of Mhangwa's chieftainship...."¹⁶¹ Such a delusion, on the part of those government officials who had lent credence to this idea, was, however, ruthlessly shattered by Hlazo's

¹⁵⁸Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: May (?), 1915.

¹⁵⁹Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: June 16, 1914.

¹⁶⁰Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: May (?), 1915.

¹⁶¹Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to Taylor, C/N/C, Salisbury: May 17, 1915.

writ and threat to institute legal proceedings against Mhangwa for trespass on his alleged land. If anything, it was, by mid-1915, even feared, in some official circles, that if positive action should not be taken promptly "to prevent friction which (had) arisen between the two sections (the 'black pioneers' and the Ndebele)", events might sooner or later assume "serious proportions".¹⁶²

It was naturally for such reasons as those given above, that junior officials of the Native Department at Bembesi and Bulawayo called for more drastic action against Hlazo. In Native Commissioner Lanning's view, the time had arrived "for a sharp rebuke to be administered to Hlazo and that he and his people (ought to) be moved off the (Ntabazinduna) Reserve once and for all,.... before (the) next sowing season (i.e. October 1915)".¹⁶³ Yet, paradoxically, the Chief Native Commissioner in Salisbury was, for his part, quite conciliatory.¹⁶⁴ Taylor obviously still lived in the past and had apparently not changed his views on the positive qualities of Hlazo whom he still regarded as "a progressive native, (who) rendered good service in the early days of the occupation of this country and (was therefore) entitled to some consideration".¹⁶⁵ For the sake of this consideration, the head of the Native Department of Southern Rhodesia was, at least, prepared to see Hlazo provided with alternative land, "suitable for his requirements" either in the Nata or Selukwe Reserve or even on some unalienated land south-west of the Selukwe Reserve. But even Taylor's belated conciliatory gestures to the "black pioneers" do not seem to have had any marked degree of success at all as Hlazo braced himself for a further fight.

¹⁶²Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C to A. H. Holland, Secretary, Dept. of Administrator, Salisbury: May 19, 1915.

¹⁶³Ibid: Lanning, N/C Bubi to Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: May (?), 1915.

¹⁶⁴Taylor's attitude here is quite contrary to the general view the Mfengu had of him.

¹⁶⁵Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Holland, Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: Salisbury: May 19, 1915.

A number of factors may have been responsible for Hlazo's renewal of his battle once more against the B.S.A. Co. in 1915. In the first place, with the appointment of the Native Reserves Commission in 1914, Hlazo may have apparently hoped that this body might probably also deal with his land case and, in the end, bring about a reasonable solution to the on-going conflict between him and the B.S.A. Co. Thus in June 1914, Hlazo's old firm of lawyers, Messrs Fletcher and Harsant, had, accordingly, informed the country's Administration that their client regarded recourse to the Native Reserves Commission as the only life-line for survival left to him.¹⁶⁶ From another angle, it should be remembered too that Hlazo had, in 1914, seized the opportunity to exploit the situation in Southern Rhodesia and Britain, whereby the question of land ownership in the Company territory had acquired significant publicity in a four-cornered battle between the B.S.A. Co., the British Crown, the white colonist settlers and the indigenous African peoples of Southern Rhodesia. For his own part, Hlazo quite successfully established a bridge between himself and the London-based Aborigines Protection Society (A.P.S.) and was obviously determined to exploit the new alliance to his advantage.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, with the change of his set of lawyers by 1915, when he began to deal with Messrs Coghlan and Sonneberg, also of Bulawayo, Hlazo may be excused for being somewhat unrealistic to assume, as he did, that the battle over the Ntabazinduna land had not yet been totally lost.

It was, perhaps, the "black pioneers'" weakness, in particular, and that of the black immigrants from the South, in general, that, because they considered themselves so successfully integrated into the

¹⁶⁶S.924/G.125/3: Fletcher and Harsant, Bulawayo, to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator, Salisbury: June 29, 1914.

¹⁶⁷Vide: Infra: pp 795-802.

colonist system of values and its co-related ideology, they had become so convinced in the fairness of colonial institutions that they appeared to have had no critical reservations, whatsoever, about the problem of race in a colonial situation. Indeed, in view of the Ntabazinduna land dispute as it unfolds, one has to marvel at the manner in which Hlazo and his people completely ignored the realities of the colonial setting in which they were operating and, especially, its implications with regard to the arbitrary limitations imposed by the dominant colonial group over the rights and freedoms of the subject peoples of the same composite colonial society. In fact, for colonial society to function and maintain its status quo on the inequitable relationship between the "colonizers" and the "colonized", it is obvious that a degree of repression, restriction and regulation was found necessary and frequently resorted to now and again. Even in terms of clientage, which seems to have characterized the relationship between the "black pioneers" and the white colonial society in Southern Rhodesia, the fact that the former were not integrated into the dominant group and that some form of territorial segregation was instituted to keep the two groups of people apart is sufficient indication that John Hlazo and his followers could only be tolerated insofar as they respected the etiquette that governed the host society. Apparently, the Administration of Southern Rhodesia felt by 1915, in the case of the Ntabazinduna land issue, that they had stepped beyond the limits of acceptable tolerance.

Following the Hlazo writ and threat on possible legal proceedings against the Ndebele Chief, Mhangwa, in May 1915, the Administration of Southern Rhodesia was galvanised into taking more definite measures to solve the Ntabazinduna land dispute. What seems to have worried the Company officials most was apparently the fact that by threatening to

take action against Chief Mhangwa, Hlazo was obviously undermining the foundation upon which the bureaucratic structure, governing the affairs of the subject African societies in the country, was based. As F. D. Chaplin, the Administrator, was quick to point out to Rev. Radasi, Hlazo's interpreter, during an interview at Bembesi at the beginning of June 1915, in the course of which a proposal for a new land grant for Hlazo and his followers was put forward, the situation in simple terms was that:

.....the rights of other Natives must be considered and {that} if it were decided that this land {offered} could not be altered Hlazo must accept the decision, and in any case must discontinue the writing of letters which called in question the authority of the Chief Mhangwa and which, moreover, were disturbing to the peace of the community.

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In the event, having taken into account Hlazo's often repeated protests that "as a Christian man, {he} objected to being put under a heathen {chief} of an alien tribe"¹⁶⁹ and that the land previously offered him in 1913 was either unsuitable and insufficient for ploughing purposes or that it had excluded some of his followers altogether,¹⁷⁰ a new arrangement was once more decided upon whereby Hlazo was to get some 1500 acres of land within the Fingo location.¹⁷¹ On this new land, granted on the assumption that the Mfengu residents of the location were too few and the land therein superfluous for their immediate needs,¹⁷² Hlazo and his 32 male followers (John Makunga,

¹⁶⁸S.924/G.125/1: Statement of Chaplin quoted in Interview between His Honour the Administrator, and John Hlazo at Bembesi on June 4, 1915.

¹⁶⁹Ibid: Statement of Coghlan in Interview....: Bembesi: June 4, 1915.

¹⁷⁰Ibid: Statement of John Hlazo in Interview....: Bembesi: June 4, 1915.

¹⁷¹Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: June 11, 1915. Vide also Appendix XI (Map).

¹⁷²Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: June 30, 1915.

H. Mfazi and two of Hlazo's sons Titus and Paul, then attending school at Lovedale in the Cape, all excluded) were to have not only an adequate average acreage of nearly 47 acres per capita, quite favourably contrasted by the Company officials with the 10 acres per capita under the Glen Grey system of land tenure in the Cape,¹⁷³ but would also come under the jurisdiction of Chief Nzimende like every other Mfengu immigrant at Bembesi.¹⁷⁴

As usual, Hlazo accepted the second land offer under "protest",¹⁷⁵ and, in the final analysis, did not even make any effort to occupy it, thus leading to a state of affairs whereby the Chief Native Commissioner in Salisbury ruefully complained to the Administrator, towards the end of 1915, that Hlazo had refused to move into the Fingo location to live under Chief Nzimende and, on the contrary, "...{continued} to reside and cultivate land on the Tabas Nduna Reserve, and {maintained} his aggressive attitude towards Chief Mrangwa, {then} in charge of the Reserve".¹⁷⁶ In Taylor's opinion, a situation of this nature could no longer be ignored, since it was creating a dangerous precedent to the Ndebele residents at Ntabazinduna, who had apparently also attended all the interviews between the "black pioneers" and the government officials and were, therefore, it was feared, "fully aware of Hlazo's true position, and {viewed} his behaviour as an act of defiance of the Government". Chief Native Commissioner Taylor, who had also become increasingly convinced that it would be "a political error to permit the continuance of this state of affairs", accordingly requested that

¹⁷³Ibid: Notes by N/C Bubi, Enclosed in Lanning to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: September 9, 1915.

¹⁷⁴Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: June 30, 1915.

¹⁷⁵Ibid: Coghlan, Bulawayo, to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: July 8, 1915.

¹⁷⁶Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: September 21, 1915.

an appeal be made by the Southern Rhodesian Administration to the High Commissioner for South Africa on the forcible ejection of Hlazo and his people from the disputed land, under the terms of the Southern Rhodesia Order-in-Council of 1898 and The Settlement of Colonial Natives Continuing Ordinance of 1901.

The call by the Chief Native Commissioner, towards the end of 1915, for the forcible ejection of Hlazo and his followers from the Ntabazinduna reserve was not unexpected, as an up-shot of the Ntabazinduna land dispute. Indeed, if there is one thing which Hlazo had effectively succeeded in achieving during the course of his conflict with the B.S.A. Co. over land, it is the manner in which, through his truculence and uncompromising stance as well as his indecision, he had alienated all shades of official opinion in Southern Africa. Both Company and Imperial officials were by 1915/16, generally united in their attitude towards Hlazo and their approbrium was also liberally expressed in the letters that passed from one office to another in the thick of the Ntabazinduna land tussle.

In Southern Rhodesia itself, junior and intermediate officials, especially within the Native Department, had been amongst the first people to call for Hlazo's removal. Even when the head of the Native Department in Salisbury had tried to play down what general official view regarded as Hlazo's transgressions, by either justifying the actions of this Mfengu leader on the grounds that the land granted to him was both insufficient and badly watered,¹⁷⁷ or by proposing that Hlazo's removal from Ntabazinduna be made optional with, some provision for him to be settled on alternative land elsewhere in the country, because Taylor himself wanted to assist Hlazo "by every possible means

¹⁷⁷Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: October 2, 1915.

to settle elsewhere...",¹⁷⁸ such magnanimity, however superficial, was totally lacking amongst Taylor's juniors. Instead, these officials frankly considered Hlazo a rather "unreasonable" man,¹⁷⁹ and this view was, sooner or later, also shared by the Imperial officials in Salisbury and Cape Town.

Indeed, Stanley, who had just replaced Colonel Burns-Begg as Resident Commissioner in Salisbury, was quite emphatic on Hlazo's truculence, when he informed Lord Buxton, the High Commissioner, in November 1915 to the effect that "All possible consideration has been shown to Hlazo, not only by my predecessor (Burns-Begg), but also by the (Southern Rhodesian) Administration. He has behaved in so hopelessly unreasonable a manner that any further display of forbearance on the part of the (Southern Rhodesian) authorities would,.... strike the native mind as a sign of weakness."¹⁸⁰ Stanley was to uphold this attitude towards Hlazo and his followers up to the very eve of the eviction of the "black pioneers" from the Ntabazinduna reserve, when he further indicated, in no uncertain terms, "I am satisfied that John Hlazo has no legitimate ground for complaint, and in these circumstances I regard it as undesirable in his own ultimate interests, as well as in the interests of sound native administration, that he should be humoured still further."¹⁸¹

Against this evidently sympathetic background, it is, therefore, not at all surprising that once the permission of the High Commissioner, to effect the removal of the "black pioneers" from Ntabazinduna, was procured,¹⁸² junior officials in Southern Rhodesia were obviously

¹⁷⁸Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C, Salisbury, to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: November 11, 1915.

¹⁷⁹Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury: Telegram: July 5, 1915.

¹⁸⁰C.O.417/564: H. J. Stanley, Res/Com. to Lord Buxton: November 16, 1915.

¹⁸¹C.O.417/575: Stanley to Lord Buxton: May 8, 1916.

¹⁸²C.O.417/574: Lord Buxton to Stanley: March 1, 1916.

elated and unrepentant over the matter. The carte blanche issued to the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district in August 1916, to "resume occupation of lands formerly cultivated by John Hlazo and order the removal of his (Hlazo's) stock from the (Ntabazinduna) Reserve to the Fingo Location" failing which the stock in question was to be impounded,¹⁸³ is a clear indication that the Southern Rhodesian Administration was, at this juncture, more than before quite determined to flex its muscles, in relation to the Ntabazinduna land dispute. Thus not even the belated pleas of Hlazo's lawyers for restraint, due "the great danger (then) threatening him and his followers on account of the shortage of water",¹⁸⁴ could be heeded any more, especially so that this scarcity of water was considered general throughout the country, not to mention also the fact that government officials in Southern Rhodesia were obviously suspicious of this Mfengu leader's intentions.

Indeed, the fact that Hlazo had been informed "eight months (before) that it was incumbent upon him to seek a new home" and also the rumour allegedly circulating within African quarters in the Bubi district, at the time, that the Mfengu leader had "given it out generally among the Natives that he (would) not remove, despite the Government's order",¹⁸⁵ could only strengthen official resolve on the ejection of the "black pioneers" from Ntabazinduna. By the same token, the A.P.S., which had also taken up cudgels on Hlazo's behalf, was informed of this government decision by the Chief Native Commissioner, adding in the process, that:

¹⁸³S.924/G.125/1: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: August 16, 1916.

¹⁸⁴Ibid: Messrs Coghlan and Sonneberg to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: August 17, 1916.

¹⁸⁵Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: August 8, 1916.

There was no desire to disturb John Hlazo; he is solely to blame for the conditions which have arisen on account of the aggressive attitude adopted by him towards Chief Mhangwa, which for political reasons could not be tolerated.

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Given the characteristic features of colonial societies in general, as commonly restrictive, repressive and even disrespectful of the subject peoples' welfare for the sake of their own survival and continuance, the outcome of the Ntabazinduna land dispute between Hlazo and the B.S.A. Co. was perhaps obvious and predictable. But what, in the process, appears rather fascinating is the manner in which Hlazo was able, with dexterity, to externalize an issue which was, in essence, both parochial and personal, in every sense of the description. Between 1914 and his death in 1919 for instance, Hlazo had evidently succeeded in winning over support not only on the local Southern African scene, but also abroad, which, in due course, inexorably popularized the cause of the "black pioneers" in connection with the Ntabazinduna land question. On the Southern African front, support for the Hlazo case came from a variety of sources. There was, for instance, the case of Hlazo's compatriots, the "black settlers", mostly of Mfengu origin who had been simultaneously settled at Bembesi in the Fingo location by the beginning of the twentieth century, as has been amply demonstrated,¹⁸⁷ but some of whom began gradually to move away in dribblets to other areas of Southern Rhodesia. Though these "black settlers" also had their axe to grind with the B.S.A. Co. with regard to the boundary of the Fingo location,¹⁸⁸ they could perhaps not

¹⁸⁶Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary, A.P.S: April 12, 1916.

¹⁸⁷Vide Supra: Chapter 4.

¹⁸⁸Vide Infra: Chapter 8.

help feeling, in the face of the imminent forcible removal from the Ntabazinduna reserve, that there compatriots had been, to some extent, unfairly treated, especially in view of the fact that the principles and objectives governing the land grants to the "black pioneers" were, in every respect, similar to those on which the "black settlers" themselves were also located at Bembesi nearby.

For the reasons given above, Chief Garner Sojini, who had left the Fingo location in 1906 and had taken up residence in the Selukwe district on several private properties on successive occasions such as Willoughby's Consolidated (1906-13); Mrs. Cowan's farm "Little Impala" (1913-16) and the 3,000 acre Rockford farm, a property of the B.S.A. Co. which he rented since 1916 at an annual fee of £50 for both ploughing purposes and the grazing rights of his cattle amounting to between 200 and 300 in all,¹⁸⁹ decided to take sides with Hlazo between 1917 and 1919. Sojini's move, which included in the process an appeal for an interview with Lord Buxton, the High Commissioner for South Africa, in Cape Town,¹⁹⁰ had significant results in the long run, especially with regard to the establishment of bridges between those various groups of black immigrants from the South then living in Southern Rhodesia and sympathetic quarters below the Limpopo.

Of course, it might be mentioned here that this rapprochement had already been effected, as early as 1914, by such organisations as the A.P.S. and the South African Native National Congress on account of their concern with the wider issues of land ownership in Southern Rhodesia,¹⁹¹ which also consequently led to the involvement of Congress

¹⁸⁹S.96/2: Evidence of Garner Sojini, Gwelo: April 7, 1925: in Land Commission (1925): Oral Evidence.

¹⁹⁰S.924/G.125/3: Chief Sojini, Selukwe, to Lord Buxton: Telegram: November 24, 1919.

¹⁹¹Vide Infra: pp 795-802.

stalwarts like Alfred Mangena, a Zulu lawyer based in Johannesburg and co-founder of this African organisation, with the Hlazo group of immigrants at Ntabazinduna.¹⁹² But, at the same time, the role of individuals in the whole story of black solidarity on both sides of the Limpopo cannot be over-emphasized. Just as the Rev. Henry R. Nqacayiya, the Chaplain of the South African Native National Congress, was able to exploit his personal influence in this party and his kinship to Rev. Radasi, a follower of Hlazo, in order to establish ties between the "black pioneers" of Southern Rhodesia and the general African public below the Limpopo,^{192a} so also could it be said of Chief Sojini, who played a leading role to coalesce the interests of the "black pioneers" and the "black settlers" in Southern Rhodesia and, in the end, enabled them to interact with the relevant circles below the Limpopo, as a united front and thus made their pressure on the Company Administration in Salisbury more meaningful.¹⁹³

The coalition of interests between Hlazo's "black pioneers" and Sojini's "black settlers" as well as the involvement of the Congress lawyer, Mangena, in the land controversies of Southern Rhodesia had very interesting results, however negative these may have been from all appearances. As the legal adviser to the black immigrant community, Mangena's arguments to have the Hlazo case reconsidered apparently failed to convince both the Company and Imperial officials in every way.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹²Ibid: Alfred Mangena, Johannesburg, to Acting Administrator, Salisbury: December 6, 1917. For more information on Mangena, Vide: Benson: The Struggle for a Birthright: loc. cit.

^{192a}Vide: Ranger: The African Voice: p 59.

¹⁹³It is significant that it was a combined ten-men Mfengu delegation which visited Mangena at his Johannesburg home and later accompanied him during his interview with Chaplin in Salisbury in June 1918, consisting of Chief Sojini, Mbanga Kona, Fayo Mniki, Samuel Gida, Peacock Ngono, Sefuba Magadlele, Stewart Munge, Wesley Sojini and Albert Kona. Vide: A3/18/24: Alfred Mangena, Salisbury, to C/N/C Taylor: June 10, 1918.

¹⁹⁴Ibid: Mangena, Johannesburg, to Chaplin, Salisbury: December 23, 1913 and Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Mangena: October 25, 1918.

However, his presence and its impact in Southern Rhodesia were felt in other ways. Whilst those Mfengu immigrants who had invited Mangena into the country, for instance, viewed his presence as an occasion for demonstrating their unity of purpose, as symbolized here by the widespread contributions towards this lawyer's expenses in form of £200 worth of cattle from Bembesi and 10 heads from the Mfengu community of the Selukwe district,¹⁹⁵ other African circles reacted very differently to the proceedings. The Ndebele community of the Ntabazinduna Reserve, which had been for a long time inexorably involved in the Hlazo land dispute, and an ultra-loyalist faction of the Bembesi Mfengu under Chief Nzimende Ndondo provide, in this instance, an interesting contrast to Mangena's Mfengu supporters.

As far as the Ntabazinduna Ndebele of Mhangwa were concerned, it might, of course, be readily admitted that there was never any love lost between them and the "black pioneers", since the Ntabazinduna land dispute started earnestly in 1912.¹⁹⁶ Actually what may be regarded as the only new factor in the relationship between the Ntabazinduna Ndebele and the "black pioneers" in 1918, is, in fact, the manner in which the latter seized upon the Mangena visit to the country, as an opportunity to drive their Ndebele neighbours into a state of despair and despondence: an objective which these Mfengu in question quite successfully achieved. Indeed, as the Ndebele leaders admitted, during the course of an interview with the Native Department officials at Inyati in August 1918:

¹⁹⁵N3/10/6: Statement of Chief Nzimende in Notes of Interview held at Nzimende's Kraal on August 9, 1918.

¹⁹⁶Vide Supra: pp 763-6.

...there was uneasiness among the (Ndebele) people who were told by the Fingoes that Mangena had come from the authorities in Johannesburg armed with power from the King (George) to enquire into and redress the land grievances of the Fingoes; as a result of his (Mangena's) intervention the Matabele were to be turned off the Ntabazinduna Reserve which was to become part of the Fingo Location. The boundaries of this location were to be revised so as to include all (white colonists') farms for many miles distant: Inyati would fall within these boundaries which would extend to Mvutshwa. The Chief Native Commissioner was to be dismissed for having stolen all these farms from the Fingoes.

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With such shocking news for the Ndebele community, it is hardly surprising, therefore, that when Mangena, the alleged agent of these misfortunes, later on asked for a horse from Mhangwa to enable him to visit Ntabazinduna from the Fingo location, this Ndebele leader flatly turned down the request and told the messenger that "...if Mangena wished to visit him (Mhangwa) he could come on his feet..."¹⁹⁸

Chief Nzimende Ndondo was, in every sense of the word, a loyal functionary of the Southern Rhodesian Administration, either in terms of the manner in which he was appointed to head the Mfengu immigrants at Bembesi or how he was to carry out his duties thereafter.¹⁹⁹

Because of his sense of loyalty to the authorities, Nzimende's views during the Ntabazinduna land dispute were decidedly in favour of the government and openly against Hlazo. Indeed, Chief Nzimende was, in one sense, so incensed by the Hlazos that he was even prepared to see the government isolate the Hlazo family in the dispute, in order to ameliorate the difficulties of the rank and file "black pioneers". For this reason, when Hlazo was given eviction orders by the Administration at the end of 1916 to remove from Ntabazinduna, Nzimende

¹⁹⁷ Ibid: Statement of Chief Mhangwa in Notes of Interview held at Inyati on August 8, 1918.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid:

¹⁹⁹ Vide Infra: pp 836-43.

actively pursued this line of approach towards the matter. Accordingly, he pleaded with J. W. Greer, the Acting Native Commissioner of the Bubi district, in January 1917, "I saw John Hlazo saying that you have expelled them (the 'black pioneers') from their kraal and taken their gardens. I am afraid to interfere (with) what (the) government has done to Hlazo. I humbly beg to plead for them to (the) government to allow them to reap their gardens. I do not (complain on) what (the) government did to Hlazo, (because) he deserved that. It is only petty for children (to behave like this), (and) it is why I plead on their behalf." Chief Nzimende emphasized once more: "I humbly beg you Sir to consider this matter because children are like cattle grazing. They cannot do anything when Hlazo leads them to destruction. I do not plead at all for Hlazo."²⁰⁰ Nzimende's intervention and isolation tactic somehow influenced the Native Department officials and the removal of Hlazo and the "black pioneers" from Ntabazinduna was consequently postponed for a time.²⁰¹

But Nzimende's intervention, on behalf of the rank and file "black pioneers", did not, however, imply that he had been suddenly converted to their cause. Thus when Mangena appeared at Bembesi in 1918, in connection with the land issues of both the "black pioneers" and the "black settlers", Chief Nzimende; his two sons, Samuel and Cronje Ndondo; his kinsman Nqcadini Nkala (later a regent to the Mfengu chieftainship at Bembesi in the 1930's) and 66 (out of 269) adult Mfengu males quickly dissociated themselves from the subsequent proceedings not only because they considered that "this matter of land (was) unfair (since) there (was) no title that was given to them

²⁰⁰ N3/10/1: Chief Nzimende, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati, January 22, 1917.

²⁰¹ Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: January 26, 1917.

(the Mfengu) that they may use it today",²⁰² but also because they detested the malignant influence of Mangena and his supporters at Bembesi and on these grounds, the ultra-loyalist Mfengu faction had, therefore, refused to subscribe to the Mangena fund. On an individual basis, the ultra-loyalist Mfengu did not like Hlazo for two reasons: that he was not a "black settler" like them, but a "pioneer" and that "there would be no peace until he was removed" from Bembesi. Mbanga Kona, Nzimende's predecessor, who had been deposed by the government in 1906 and was by 1917/18 a supporter of Hlazo, was also seen as "a danger to the peace of the (Mfengu) community";²⁰³ whilst the Rev. Radasi, Hlazo's former son-in-law²⁰⁴ and erstwhile interpreter, was also denounced as a fellow traveller in the Hlazo crusade. In Nzimende's view, Rev. Radasi's crime was that he "had settled (at Ntabazinduna) with the purpose of teaching the Matabele", but instead was "now siding with and abetting a movement for the eviction of the Matabele" which was sufficient reason for the demand on his removal from Bembesi.²⁰⁵

Whilst the differences between Nzimende's ultra-loyalist group and the rest of the Mfengu immigrant community, which surfaced more sharply during the Mangena visit, may be treated as a mere act of fragmentation of one front on trivial personal grounds, the conflict between this Mfengu leader and Mangena appears to have been deeper and more profound. It was, in fact, evidently based on a clash in both

²⁰²N3/10/6: Chief Nzimende Ndondo, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: June 8, 1918.

²⁰³Ibid: Statement of Chief Nzimende in Notes of Interview.....: August 9, 1918.

²⁰⁴Rev. Radasi married Annie Hlazo (daughter of John Hlazo) in 1906 who died in 1910, leaving a two year old baby daughter, Mabel Radasi. Vide: M. Macpherson (ed.): The Life and Labours of a Native African Missionary: Herald Offices: Gisborne: New Zealand: 1966: pp 57-8.

²⁰⁵N3/10/6: Statement of Chief Nzimende in Notes of Interview.....: August 9, 1918.

principles and personalities and was, therefore, more serious. Thus whilst Nzimende smarted under the threats issued to him, since the arrival of Mangena at Bembesi from Johannesburg, that "he (Nzimende) would be burned in his kraal for standing aloof from the Fingo intrigues,"²⁰⁶ Mangena, on the other hand, resented the Mfengu ruler's duplicity which in the end led to this lawyer's deportation from Southern Rhodesia. Accordingly, Mangena set out his views on Nzimende and the latter's character in a long letter which the former wrote on the eve of his departure for Johannesburg, in the wake of his expulsion, as follows:

My dear Nzimende,

I am now living (Southern) Rhodesia for Johannesburg having been found by the Administrator to be a prohibited immigrant.

Having been in terms of friendship with you during my stay here (at Bembesi), I feel, that I must thank you for all your kindnesses and valuable advices freely rendered. And on the other hand, I am sure, you have appreciated my warning you against concealment of true character, especially in matters of great importance, even in small things. You are placed as I said before in a position of implicit trust by the authorities and, that I am sure you will, I hope, never abuse. One thing I have heard (among other things) which I think as a friend I must tell you. It may not be true, but at all events you must know it. It is said that you are going about telling the (white) farmers that you are against the Fingo Land Claim, if that is the case, knowing as well as I do, it would be putting them (farmers) in a false position. I am told that even the white police (I heard nothing about the Government) you are making them to understand that you are opposing the movement of the Fingoes: that is feigning to be what one is not: I do not think for a moment my friend, if the Government find you as such would tolerate you a bit. Speak out, as a man considering the implicit trust imposed upon you by those who hired your services. Dangling between two stools to my opinion is a fallacy,

²⁰⁶Ibid:

and (an) incurable disease. Your kind information as to the boundaries of the Fingo land given to them by Cecil Rhodes and your acknowledgement of the quarantine (line 1906), these are very valuable to me. Lastly the way in which you were so candid in explaining to the people their legitimate claim. The only drawback is you personally, you are behind the bush. However diplomacy is useful sometimes.

Yours truly

Alfred Mangena.

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With the expulsion of Mangena as an undesirable element in Southern Rhodesia, Chief Nzimende may have won his day, but his victory was short-lived and the ripples which such developments produced on the Mfengu community of Southern Rhodesia were very profound. The rift which these land disputes created was so concrete that, in the long run, Nzimende himself lost all credibility within his own community, as was demonstrated later in August 1921 during the occasion of the visit of the High Commissioner, Prince Arthur of Connaught, to Southern Rhodesia. Rather than leaving their chief to do it, the Mfengu community chose its own delegates, namely Garner Sojini and Mkotami Kona, to seek an interview with this Imperial official, only to be obstructed by the Native Affairs Department which preferred to see Nzimende involved.²⁰⁸

Mangena's involvement with the Ntabazinduna and the Fingo location disputes was only one aspect of Hlazo's attempt to externalize the cause of the "black pioneers" of Southern Rhodesia. Another equally interesting dimension which Hlazo introduced into the Ntabazinduna land dispute is the humanitarian factor. Since 1915, the role played by the

²⁰⁷Ibid: Mangena, Bembesi, to Chief Nzimende: August 5, 1918.

²⁰⁸Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: August 5, 1921.

A.P.S. in the Hlazo case, however unsuccessful this turned out to be in the long run, demonstrates the dexterity with which the Hlazo pressure group elicited support from diverse quarters by playing on the right keys to produce the required tunes. The alliance between Hlazo's "black pioneers" and the A.P.S. may also have been largely strengthened, so it would appear, by the affinity of ideological interests between these two groups, especially given, in this instance, the total historical commitment of the Mfengu society as a whole, to Christianity and a whole range of white colonist thought and values, as it were,²⁰⁹ which evidently tallied with the A.P.S. view of colonialism in Southern Africa, that highly prized both white settlement and missionary influence as the appropriate agents for "civilizing" the sub-continent.²¹⁰ From this point of view therefore, Africans who, like the Hlazos, professed to subscribe to those ideals of Christianity and "civilization", which met the requirements of the A.P.S., naturally won the support of this humanitarian body in turn.

The failure of the A.P.S. organisation in London to make use of either Rev. John Langalibalele Dube and his South African Native National Congress²¹¹ or Arnold Wynne's quasi-liberal group, the Cape-town based South African Society,²¹² to gather the required material for the African side of the Southern Rhodesian land case, scheduled for the consideration of the Privy Council at first in January 1915, for one reason or another, was perhaps a blessing in disguise for Hlazo and

²⁰⁹Wide Supra: pp 15-7.

²¹⁰R. Whitehead: "The Aborigines' Protection Society and White Settlers in Rhodesia, 1889-1930": In University of London (Institute of Commonwealth Studies) Collected Seminar Papers: pp 96-7.

²¹¹C.O.417/542: John L. Dube, Johannesburg to Lord Buxton, Cape Town: October 16, 1914.

²¹²Ibid: Arnold Wynne, Hon. Secretary, The South African Society, Cape Town, to Stanley, Imperial Secretary, Pretoria: October 2, 1914.

his "black pioneers". Indeed, the accreditation of Rev. John H. Harris, the A.P.S. Organizing Secretary, to Southern Africa, towards the end of 1914, as this humanitarian group's righthand man to collect affidavits, sworn statements and authorisation from the Southern Rhodesian African chiefs on the landownership controversy,²¹³ was to prove a temporary boon for the cause of the "black pioneers". Contact between the "black pioneers" of Ntabazinduna and the A.P.S. representative was apparently effected by Alick D. Brade, a Bulawayo white colonist who sympathized with the A.P.S. views and was, consequently, actively involved with Rev. Harris' work throughout Southern Rhodesia, between November 1914 and February 1915.

In February 1915, Brade, for instance, held an interview in Bulawayo with the Hlazos over the latter's land dispute and allied matters, with the intention of introducing these black immigrants to the A.P.S. For this Bulawayo colonist, there were good reasons for carrying out this task, particularly so as he personally appeared, in every way, sympathetic to the cause of these people. Thus he condemned the official arrangement to place Hlazo and his followers under Chief Mhangwa on the grounds that it was "in opposition to native tribal custom" and that "the Cape Native has always been antagonistic to the Zulus, from which the Matabele come". For their part, the Hlazos, led by John and Jeremiah Hlazo, were said "to be acting in their personal interest" in approaching the A.P.S. Moreover, they apparently did not seem to trust the whole business to begin with; a fact which obviously compelled Brade to comment that "The native nature is a very suspicious one, and I am afraid that they (the Hlazos) do not understand that anyone can honestly intend to try and act for their benefit. By the questions

²¹³C.O.417/543: Rev. J. H. Harris, Pretoria, to Lord Buxton: November 9, 1914.

they put and the manner of putting them I could plainly see they have doubts as to your (Rev. Harris') bona fides."²¹⁴ This reaction of the Hlazos was only natural and expected in the early phase of their rapprochement with the A.P.S. and Rev. Harris. In the end, intimacy between the two sides grew and intensified to such a degree that by the end of 1916, Jeremiah Hlazo was even writing Rev. Harris requesting to subscribe to A.P.S. papers and other publications in Britain, sympathetic to the Mfengu cause, not to mention this resilient Mfengu's enquiries whether "there (was) any good friend there in England who can help me (since) after this great war (World War I)" he wanted "to (send) my son there if there is a (person) who can educate a poor man's child..."²¹⁵

Adverting to the Ntabazinduna land dispute itself once more, it is interesting to observe that even after the confidence of the "black pioneers" in the A.P.S. had grown, they were, however, careful to appeal to this body in a language easily conceivable to its membership. Thus after laying out all the detail concerning the Ntabazinduna land dispute since 1898 when the "black pioneers" were settled in the area, Hlazo went on to inform the A.P.S. on his immediate confrontation with the B.S.A. Co. officials in January 1916 as follows:

I went to the Native Commissioner (Inyati).....
I told him that a Native policeman (had) come to my kraal, and he said he was to ask me when am I removing? I showed him (the Native Commissioner) the sketch and the boundaries of the land that belongs to me, and the land that they told me to go it is also within my boundaries. His answer was this: 'What help did you get by writing the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, for Mr. Harris has written to your Solicitors and your Solicitors have sent us the copy of that letter which says you must remove.' When I asked my Solicitors (Messrs. Coghlan and Sonneberg) they told me that they never received a single letter from you.²¹⁶

²¹⁴Mss. Brit. Emp. S22/G.159/1: Alick D. Brade to Rev. Harris: February 14, 1915: A.P.S. Papers: Rhodes House: Oxford.

²¹⁵Mss. Brit. Emp. S22/G.173: Jeremiah Hlazo to Rev. Harris: November 28, 1916.

²¹⁶Ibid: John Hlazo to Harris: January 3, 1916: Also quoted in extenso in Ranger: The African Voice: pp 53-5.

The intimidating attitude of the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district notwithstanding, Hlazo proceeded to reveal the story of his travails in language very much appropriate to the consumption of the recipients of his letter:

I showed him (the Native Commissioner) the sketch that was given to me by the (Southern Rhodesian) Government, and I said, At the beginning God created heaven and the earth and created one man. God gave the sketch the Garden of Eden. He fixed a law that this man should not break. This man broke the law of God. When God came he removed him from the Garden that he gave him. Adam went away for he found that (it) was true that he (had) broken the law of God.

I would like to know which law did I break under the Government? Because when this land was given to me I was told that nothing would trouble me unless I rebel against the Government. The only answer from the Native Commissioner was this: I have not heard anything and I have searched all the records and I did not find a single crime that you did against the Government.

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Hlazo went on to comment on his tale of woe: "I am an old man (of) 70 years of age and I was born under the British Government (in the Cape). The British Government gives land to a man as God did to Adam." But as far as the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia was concerned, it was apparently not at all enamoured by this practice, which was certainly commonplace to the Cape colony in the nineteenth century, during the course of chronic black/which conflicts along the colonist frontier,²¹⁸ and, as Hlazo was soon to discover, Salisbury also never abided by the rules of the game. For this reason, the Mfengu veteran concluded, for the benefit of his A.P.S. sympathizers, "I also said to the Native Commissioner (that) my crime must be very very great (if not) more (serious) than Adam's because the Government

²¹⁷Ibid:

²¹⁸Vide Supra: pp 15-7.

does not tell me what it is, all (it) says is I must leave (Ntabazinduna reserve) and yet God told Adam his crime."²¹⁹

By such well-chosen language and allegories as well as an array of substantive facts on his side of the Ntabazinduna land dispute, it appeared, for some time, that Hlazo had won the day, as far as A.P.S. support was concerned. And with A.P.S. support, Hlazo's group was also conveniently placed in a better position whereby access to the Colonial Office became easier and, in this sense, allowed the "black pioneers" to adequately meet the obstructive tactics of the Imperial officials in Southern Africa. One set of arguments, which Hlazo skilfully presented before the A.P.S. and the Colonial Office in December 1915 for example, dealt with the refusal of the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia to grant title deeds to the "black pioneers" since 1905. By this measure, it, of course, became virtually impossible for Hlazo and his followers to have any legal claims over the land given to them by their patrons, since all they could show on the deal were simply moral claims given on the basis of the part played by these immigrants in the early wars of "pacification" and conquest.

To prevent a state of affairs in which the B.S.A. Co. could seize land arbitrarily from the country's African subject communities and related special interest groups without any means of redress in the law courts, Hlazo, therefore, advocated in 1915, that "something should be done to ensure the security of Native Reserves and (any other) land belonging to natives", since "no Deeds of grant (were) given to (them)".²²⁰ Indeed, it was to Hlazo's credit, concerning the forcefulness of his

²¹⁹Ibid: John Hlazo to Harris: January 3, 1916.

²²⁰C.O.417/582: Petition of John Hlazo et al. to Harris: December 6, 1915.

arguments on the denial of "Deeds of Grant" to African landholders by the Company in Southern Rhodesia, that even in some quarters of No. 12 Downing Street, it was furtively admitted that "...it is difficult not to sympathise with a semi-civilised Christian who, having settled down where he was told and having enjoyed "independence for 12 years, is moved...because he objects to make a choice between two heathen savages (Mhangwa and Nzimende) as master."²²¹

But whilst covert moral support, as that indicated above, may have sustained Hlazo's spirit and optimism in the land saga, it was however, at the same time, ineffectual and, to some extent, irrelevant. Both the A.P.S. and the Colonial Office had, by the end of 1915, evidently been converted and eventually taken sides with those officials based in Southern Africa, some of whom these "black pioneers" would not see eye to eye with, in every sense of the word. In fact, as far as the A.P.S. was concerned, the course it took in siding with the Company Administration against Hlazo in the Ntabazinduna land dispute was predictable and Rev. Harris may have been largely instrumental in shaping this organisation's decision. During the course of his tour in Southern Rhodesia in 1914/15 collecting material for the Southern Rhodesian land case, Rev. Harris had actually become progressively convinced about the various "positive" aspects of the country's Administration in general and of the Native Department in particular.

Thus in the final analysis, the A.P.S. ended up not only apportioning blame to Hlazo, for his alleged stubbornness and rude behaviour towards the Ndebele Chief Mhangwa,²²² but also praising, in the same breath, the Native Commissioners of Southern Rhodesia, whom this society

²²¹Ibid: Minute by J.N.T.G. (sic) to Lambert: January 19, 1916.

²²²Mss. Brit. Emp. S.22/G.173: Harris to John Hlazo: September 27, 1916.

considered were "most anxious to compose difficulties in the truest interest of the natives" if only Hlazo and his followers could appreciate "the difficulties with which the Native Affairs (Department) had to contend."²²³ Not unexpectedly, the Colonial Office also decided, in the end, against Hlazo's pleas on the Ntabazinduna land issue.²²⁴ Such a decision within the Colonial Office circles was, of course, not unconnected with the need to support similar conclusions already arrived at by the High Commissioner for South Africa and the Resident Commissioner in Salisbury - the two Imperial officials in Southern Africa closely involved with the Ntabazinduna affair.

From the preceding analysis, it is clear that up to the very eve of his death in 1919, John Hlazo tried his best to uphold the unique position of the "black pioneers" within the context of the composite colonial society of Southern Rhodesia. His protracted battle against the B.S.A. Co. Administration over the Ntabazinduna land grant was, in every sense, a pyrrhic struggle to maintain the rights of a community which prided itself in playing the role of an interpolating segment within the context of a highly stratified society such as Southern Rhodesia's colonial society then was. Thus though towards the penultimate phase of the Hlazo struggle, the movement was beginning to assume some universalistic features, in essence, the whole affair remained particularistic. The emphasis of these "black pioneers" to see their position clearly differentiated from either that of their indigenous Ndebele neighbours of Mhangwa or that of their kinsmen, the "black settlers" of the adjacent Fingo location, was perhaps the cause of their undoing. The failure of this group to grasp the changing situation and

²²³Ibid: Harris to C.O.: September 18, 1916 and also Harris to Hlazo: March 10, 1916.

²²⁴C.O.417/582: Memorandum on the Hlazo case by Lambert to Fiddes: September 19, 1916.

its implications was certainly a major drawback, whilst their tendency to hanker for the "golden age" of Rhodes and the wars of conquest and "pacification", along with its attendant practices of generous gifts in form of land grants, was also yet another stumbling block, by the end of the second decade of the twentieth century.

In the final analysis, only crude methods could successfully influence these "black pioneers" to accept the changed circumstances and it was these measures that Hlazo and his followers had to face, once their effort to enlist the support of the A.P.S., the Colonial Office and Mangena and the South African Native National Congress had proved fruitless. Thus towards the end of 1917, the British South Africa Police was engaged by the Native Department in Bulawayo for systematic physical removal of the "black pioneers" from Ntabazinduna reserve into the Fingo location, starting with the demolition of the Hlazo homestead itself at the end of November 1917. Yet even in the midst of these proceedings, the "black settlers" remained essentially defiant to the very end, demanding from the police troopers so involved warrants and other official papers authorising their action, whilst, at the same time, refusing to give these troopers in question any form of assistance at all in the proceedings.²²⁵ In fact, in some instances, as occurred during the removal of another batch of "black pioneers" which included the Djwili brothers (David, Sidumo and Moses Djwili) in December 1918, the menfolk deliberately absented themselves at the appearance of the police, leaving their women behind to explain to the incredulous officers that these particular men were away 'Looking for lost Goats'. Alternatively, some of these Mfengu men, allegedly absent

²²⁵N3/10/1: Report re: Eviction of Chief John Hlazo and followers, Ntabasinduna Reserve, by Lieutenant Hough, to District Superintendent, B.S.A.P., Bulawayo: November 29, 1917.

Stephen Hlazo (c. 1893-1973) as a Farmer and Community Leader at Makwiro in the 1940's (Plate XV*)

* Stephen Hlazo, who did much to establish the Gospel witness at Makwiro, where a school was built, also to be used as a church.



Extract from A. McPherson: James Fraser: A Record of Missionary Endeavour in the Twentieth Century: (The Banner of Truth Trust: London 1968).

'Looking for lost Goats', reappeared in the midst of the demolition of their homes to register their protests, as Mayibila, a member of the Djwili group of evacuees, did, when he returned to wrench his axes from the hands of the police, stressing that "You must not use my axes to demolish my own House".²²⁶

But neither the removal by force of the "black pioneers" from the Ntabazinduna reserve nor the death of their redoubtable leader, John Hlazo, meant the end of this group's endeavour to see their land rights restored. Even before 1919 was out, Stephen Hlazo, the second eldest son of John Hlazo, had already taken over control of his late father's affairs on both the domestic and political fronts.²²⁷ Indeed, although on the domestic side of affairs, Stephen Hlazo's leadership may have been perhaps treated as a mere temporary expedient in the absence of his imprisoned elder brother Jeremiah Hlazo,²²⁸ this was, however, not the case on the political front. As was, sooner or later, to become evident, the Southern Rhodesian Administration was apparently not prepared to forgive Jeremiah over the purported theft of a gold amalgam, for which he was imprisoned in the first place, and for this reason, the Native Department, accordingly, refused to grant him a permit to carry a gun, when Jeremiah applied for the same, along with two of his brothers,

²²⁶ Ibid: Report on Removal of John Hlazo's Followers from Ntabazinduna Reserve by Sergeant-Major Rockester, Bubi Sub-District (B.S.A.P.) to District Superintendent, B.S.A.P., Bulawayo: December 23, 1918.

²²⁷ Vide: Plate XV (Picture): Stephen Hlazo (c. 1893-1973) as a Farmer and Community Leader at Makwiro in the 1940's.

²²⁸ Lena Ntuli (née Hlazo), for instance, indicated in the course of her legal battle against her estranged husband, David Ntuli, in 1920, that whilst she temporarily stayed with her brother Stephen, she was, at the same time, awaiting the release of Jeremiah from prison in order to start her divorce proceedings. Vide: Evidence of Lena Ntuli before Col. Carbutt, N/C Bubi, June 15, 1920, in NBB3/1/1: Civil Record Case No. 3/1920: David Ntuli vs Lena Ntuli: R/N/A: Salisbury.

Stephen and Titus Hlazo, in May 1921.²²⁹ In a colonial society which highly priced "good behaviour" and "loyalty" from its subjects peoples as that of Southern Rhodesia then did, it is logical, therefore, that Stephen rather than Jeremiah, his elder brother, consequently took over his father's mantle and, once having done so, wasted no time in making his presence felt by the authorities concerned.

The first step Stephen Hlazo took, with regard to the case of the "black pioneers", was to seek an interview, in October 1919, with Douglas-Jones, the Resident Commissioner, in order to examine for himself and for the sake of his followers, the final decisions of the High Commissioner for South Africa and the Secretary of State for the Colonies on their eviction from Ntabazinduna.²³⁰ But the Stephen Hlazo request, which was primarily meant for effecting the psychological satisfaction of the "black pioneers" and was, therefore, in every sense very harmless, was rejected, in spite of the delay with which the **Mfengu** delegates had to contend with as they waited in the Salisbury location (Harare) for the Imperial Official's response and the assistance of John McChlery, a colonist member of the Legislative Council who was well known for his anti-Charter views.²³¹ In this instance, Stephen Hlazo was obviously confronted by concerted official opinion that no move should be made to re-open the Ntabazinduna controversy unless the land to which the "black pioneers" were supposed to go was considered unsuitable for cultivation.²³²

²²⁹NBB1/1/1: Col. Carbutt, N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: May 8, 1921.

²³⁰S.924/G.125/3: Stephen Hlazo, Bembesi, to O. Dalby, Secretary for Res/Com., Salisbury: October 20, 1919.

²³¹Ibid: S. Hlazo, Salisbury Location to Dalby: October 22, 1919.

²³²Ibid: Lord Buxton to Douglas-Jones: December 17, 1919.

Moreover, it was also felt in the official circles that the activities of the Hlazos over the Ntabazinduna land dispute had to be checked rather than allowing them to run out of hand. Accordingly, the Resident Commissioner concluded that the High Commissioner, Lord Buxton, had to be informed that "John Hlazo is dead and that his sons, who are carrying on the agitation (over the Ntabazinduna land dispute), have no reason to be dissatisfied with the steps which are being taken to find suitable land for their occupation."²³³ Douglas-Jones' view on the Stephen Hlazo affair was certainly shared by Chaplin, the Administrator, who also gave it to be understood that John Hlazo's sons and followers had "no cause for complaint".²³⁴ This hardline attitude on the part of the Company and Imperial officials persisted even after Stephen Hlazo had by 1920 engaged the services of another Zulu lawyer, Richard Msimang, also based in Johannesburg.²³⁵

Besides official intransigence, the younger Hlazo had to contend with a recurrent factor which also emerged at the beginning of his crusade and somewhat threatened to frustrate even the acceptance by the "black pioneers" of the arrangement which the officials had hitherto stressed required to be honoured. This other factor in the Hlazo saga was none other than the overt hostility of Chief Nzimende of the Fingo location, who apparently felt that his position would be challenged by the presence of Hlazo's followers in the location, unless they were settled on his own terms. Indeed, for his own sake, Chief Nzimende had actually tried to admit the "black pioneers" into the location, at first, as mere temporary residents with land for planting purposes, as he did in November 1919,²³⁶ but his offer failed to arouse any positive response

²³³Ibid: Douglas-Jones to Chaplin: December 29, 1919.

²³⁴Ibid: Chaplin to Douglas-Jones: December 30, 1919.

²³⁵Ibid: R. W. Msimang, Johannesburg, to Lord Buxton: Cape Town: January 21, 1920.

²³⁶Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury: January 13, 1920.

from Hlazo and his people and thus led to the conclusion in official circles that these people were still bent on returning to the Ntabazinduna reserve some day,²³⁷ and were, therefore, not prepared to accept any assistance from either the Mfengu chief or the government.²³⁸ Such conclusions as the Company officials in Bulawayo and Salisbury had initially arrived at on the Hlazo/Nzimende tussle, at the beginning of 1920, were, however, proved false and untenable in the long run.

By 1921 Stephen Hlazo and his followers were at last prepared to accept the 1,500 acres of land offered to them by the Company Administration as far back as 1915 and it was, at this stage, that new complications began to surface in the history of the Hlazo land crusade. The assumption by the Native Department officials that their ultra-loyalist functionary, Chief Nzimende of the Fingo location, could be counted upon to allocate the land in question to Hlazo's "black pioneers",²³⁹ was obviously a very simplistic overview on intra-Mfengu relations. As Nzimende himself pointed out to Farrer, the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district at Inyati in September 1921, he was not prepared to grant the Hlazo party the 1,500 acres they had been promised, as this meant preferential treatment for these people, whilst their landholdings would inevitably contrast with the 4 morgen each Mfengu man had received, as a standard holding from the Administration. In emphatic language, Nzimende went on to clarify his views, "I am tired of the troubles always made by these people (Hlazo's followers) complaining about the lands which they say they were given as (a)

²³⁷Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury: January 24, 1920.

²³⁸Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to H. J. Nanson, Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: January 27, 1920.

²³⁹S.924/G.125/2: S. N. G. Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to H. M. G. Jackson, Acting C/N/C Salisbury: August 20, 1921.

present. If they are going to be given a present as they say they were promised they cannot be given (this) in the Fingo Location and also I wish you (Farrer) to know that these people have always misled many people to be always complaining about the land boundaries."²⁴⁰

The Nzimende view of the land grant to the "black pioneers" in the Fingo location was just the opposite of Stephen Hlazo's. And, indeed, when the Acting Assistant Native Commissioner for the Bubi district, J. W. Richards, called at Bembesi, a few days after receiving Chief Nzimende's letter of protest, it was discovered, during a meeting with the Mfengu community, that the differences between the Nzimende and Hlazo parties were much more profound than appeared to strike the eye. Thus whilst Chief Nzimende insisted on the fact that "he and the Fingoes residing on the location would not agree, under any consideration, to Hlazo being granted 1,500 acres of (Fingo) Location ground", Hlazo, on the other hand, would not accept the "10 acres per man", along with common grazing rights, suggested by his Mfengu rival. In the words of the Acting Assistant Native Commissioner, Hlazo demanded the 1,500 acres promised him by the Administration and, whilst he was prepared to recognise Nzimende as his chief, was, at the same time, emphatic that "he (Hlazo) would have absolute control (over the land granted) and in respect of which Chief Nzimende would not be able to interfere in any form whatsoever."²⁴¹ From these proceedings, Richards' despair over his inability to solve the Nzimende/Hlazo deadlock can at least be appreciated; hence the call for the intervention of the Administration's superior officials.

²⁴⁰Ibid: Chief Nzimende Ndong, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: September 9, 1921.

²⁴¹Ibid: J. W. Richards, Acting Assistant N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: September 11, 1921.

Top officials in the Southern Rhodesian Native Department were, at first, quite prepared to side with Chief Nzimende against Stephen Hlazo. This was particularly true of H. M. G. Jackson, the then Acting Chief Native Commissioner in Salisbury, who had, for a long time past as the Superintendent of Natives for the Bulawayo division, consistently adopted a decidedly hardline attitude towards Stephen Hlazo's father, contrary to the restraint Taylor, the Chief Native Commissioner, preferred to see pursued in the matter.²⁴² Accordingly, Jackson, the Acting Chief Native Commissioner, was quick to point out what he viewed as the tortuous history of the Hlazo affair during the course of which a number of measures had been taken to try and meet the demands of the "black pioneers". Even at the family level, it was indicated that "Plots of ten acres each were offered to the late John Hlazo and his son Jeremiah (and) were refused. At a later date a plot was offered to Stephen Hlazo. He refused it."²⁴³ However, some compromise had to be arrived at in order to avoid a situation whereby the government had to be forced to either let down its ultra-loyalist functionary, Nzimende, or withdraw its 1913 and 1915 land offers to the Hlazo group.

Under these circumstances, the second alternative would have been the more tempting one, given Jackson's views, already clarified above, on the Hlazo affair. But fortunately for the "black pioneers", Stephen Hlazo, like his no less tireless father, had by 1921, successfully, managed to externalize his cause by wooing the support of overseas sympathizers, whom the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia could not browbeat so easily. In this particular instance, the new

²⁴²Vide Supra: pp 777-9 and also Footnote No. 164.

²⁴³Ibid: H. M. G. Jackson, Acting C/N/C Salisbury to S. N. G. Jackson, Bulawayo: October 13, 1921.

factor in the Hlazo affair was the Glasgow-based Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, whose agent, the Rev. Radasi, had been working amongst the Mfengu at Bembesi since 1904.²⁴⁴ In due course, Rev. Radasi not only became himself a member of the Hlazo family circle and an unflinching supporter of the "black pioneer" cause, but also successfully managed to extend the influence of his missionary society amongst a greater proportion of the Mfengu immigrants throughout Southern Rhodesia.²⁴⁵ The result of these developments was that most leading Mfengu, including Stephen Hlazo himself,²⁴⁶ became members of Radasi's church, which was known locally as Isabe Yase Scotland.²⁴⁷

Against this background, it is scarcely surprising, therefore, that when the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland sent its deputies to Southern Rhodesia in the persons of Rev. Neil Cameron of Glasgow and Angus Fraser of London in early 1921,²⁴⁸ Hlazo and his followers, who were members of this particular church, should have seized the opportunity to bring their land problems before them, not forgetting, at the same time, to, of course, emphasize the fact that the action of the Administration of Southern Rhodesia was bent on deliberately interfering with the work of the church and to starve the families of its constituents, by depriving them of the land previously given to them even before the Burns-Begg award of 1913.²⁴⁹ Moreover, to further strengthen

²⁴⁴C.O.417/406: Rev. John R. Mackay to Sir Robert Finlay: November 4, 1904 and also C.O.417/416: Milner to Clarke, December 14 and 22, 1904.

²⁴⁵Vide Infra: pp 815-23.

²⁴⁶It was actually Stephen Hlazo who acted as the interpreter to Rev. John Tallach, a new arrival immediately after the death of Rev. Radasi in 1924. Vide: Rev. J. Tallach, Ingwenya Mission, to Rev. Cameron: November (?), 1924: in Macpherson (ed.): The Life and Labours: pp 125-7.

²⁴⁷Vide: Rev. Radasi to Rev. Cameron: March 28, 1919: in Macpherson (ed.): op. cit. pp 101-2.

²⁴⁸NBB1/2/1: Rev. Radasi, Ingwenya Mission, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: February 1 and March 8 and 14, 1921.

²⁴⁹C.O.417/675: Memorandum by Rev. Neil Cameron on John Hlazo and Followers, enclosed in Cameron to C. T. Davies at C.O.: December 7, 1921.

the support for the cause of Hlazo and his followers, Rev. Cameron also enlisted the services of the Liberal Party member of Parliament for Glasgow, Hugh Duncan Grant, in order to draw the attention of the Colonial Office to this protracted land dispute, which they successfully did,²⁵⁰ and to also revive the interest of the A.P.S. once more, especially that Grant and Rev. Harris of the A.P.S. were acquainted with each other already through the National Liberal Club, which both of them often frequented.²⁵¹

Whilst this external support, placed at the disposal of Stephen Hlazo and his people in 1921, may not have fundamentally changed the decisions of top-level officials in London and Southern Africa with regard to their previous ruling on the Ntabazinduna land dispute, it cannot, however, be denied that it was this same external factor, which played a decisive role in influencing the allocation of the 1,500 acre grant to Stephen Hlazo and his followers in the Fingo location during the course of the same year. Given the overt sympathies of the junior officials of the Southern Rhodesian Native Department for Nzimende, the fact that Stephen Hlazo had with him a letter from Rev. Cameron in which Chief Native Commissioner Taylor had promised to see that the "black pioneers" would receive their 1,500 acres as of old,²⁵² was not altogether insignificant. If anything, it could be said that it was because of this evidence, that even Jackson, the Acting Chief Native Commissioner, accepted a compromise arrangement between Hlazo and Nzimende, whereby the same 1,500 acres, promised to Hlazo and his followers, was still to be given to them in the Fingo location, whilst, at the same time, it was stipulated that:

²⁵⁰ Ibid: H. D. Grant to E. F. L. Wood at C.O: November 14, 1921.

²⁵¹ Mss. Brit. Emp. S.22/G.173: Grant to Rev. Harris: October 14, 1921.

²⁵² S.924/G.125/2: Richards, Acting Assistant N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: September 11, 1921.

Any apprehension existing in Nzimende's mind of more favoured treatment of the Hlazos by title being granted to them should be removed: and at the same time it should be made clear to him (Nzimende) that he is not in a position to sustain any objection to the area of 1,500 acres being allowed to S. Hlazo and his followers. As he was aware, it was available and offered to J. Hlazo in 1915, and must be regarded as still available.

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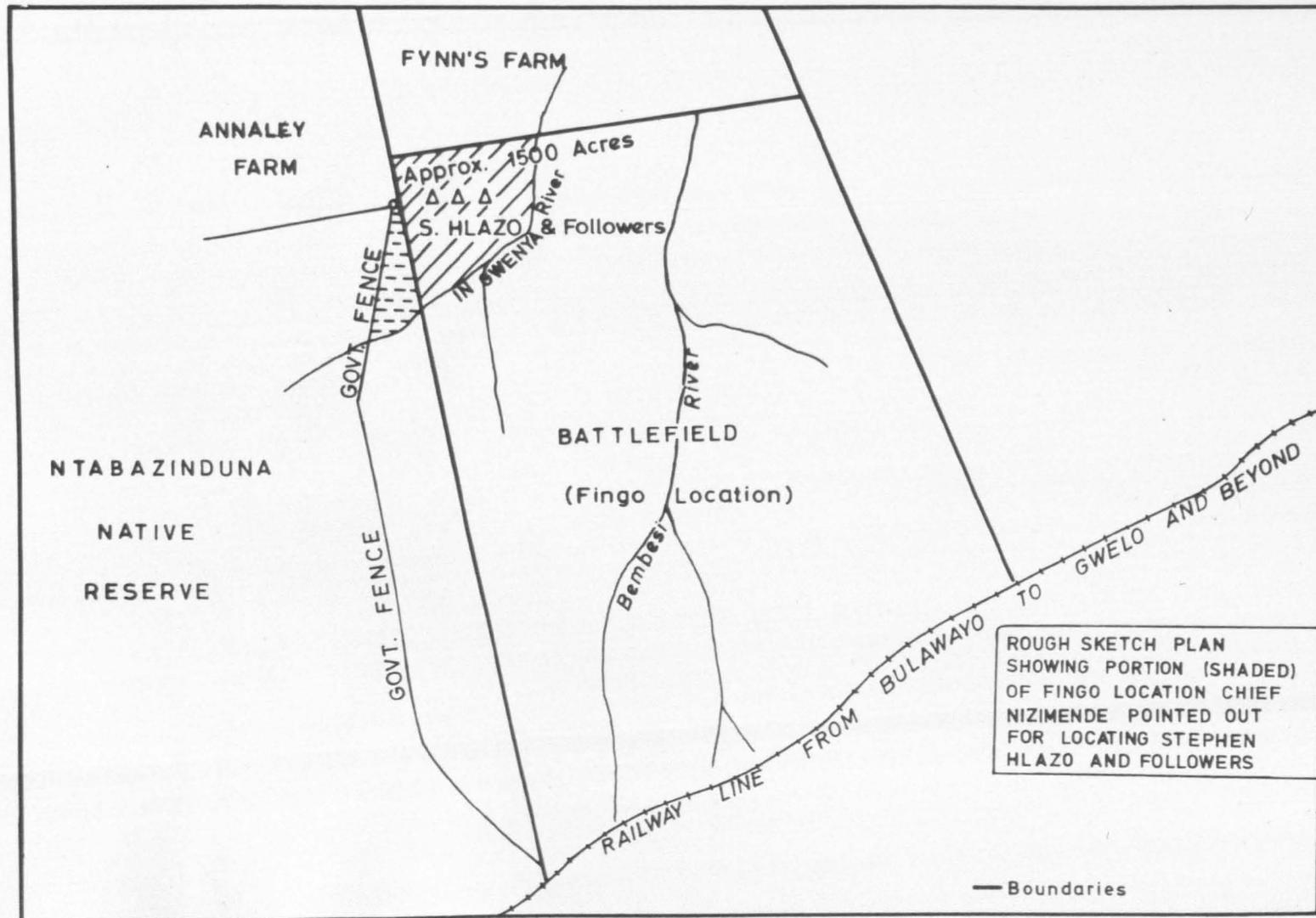
Thus in the final analysis, Stephen Hlazo and his followers accepted land in the Fingo location on the basis of the ordinary "Fingo title" like the rest of their compatriots, though the average acreage of these "black pioneers" was obviously larger.²⁵⁴ This settlement, thus effected by February 1922, was to finally put a seal to a long and arduous battle that had started as soon as the "black pioneers" received promises on land grants far back in 1898. Henceforth, the "black pioneers" and their descendants were to preoccupy themselves with matters other than the dispute over land grants; a process of readjustment which may have obviously been eased by the demise of Company rule a year after.

For their part, the Hlazo brothers in particular, became more and more involved, especially after 1923, with the question of land purchase, more so that most of these Bembesi immigrants were dispersing to areas spread all over the country. Stephen Hlazo was, for instance, settled in the Que Que region, by the time the Land Apportionment Act was introduced in 1930, whilst Titus Hlazo had also become a permanent resident of the Goromonzi district, since his appointment to teach at Domboshava in 1922. If anything, it would appear that Stephen and Titus Hlazo were more concerned, since 1925, with the question of how

²⁵³Ibid: H. M. G. Jackson, Acting C/N/C Salisbury to S. N. G. Jackson, S/O/N, Bulawayo: February 4, 1922.

²⁵⁴Vide: Appendix XIV (Map): Land Granted to Stephen Hlazo and Followers in the Fingo Location in 1922.

APPENDIX XIV LAND GRANTED TO STEPHEN HLAZO AND FOLLOWERS IN THE FINGO LOCATION IN 1922



(Sketch enclosed in S. 924/G. 125/2: Farrer N/C Inyati to Jackson S/O/N Bulawayo: January 24, 1922: R/N/A: Salisbury.)

Scale: 400 C. roods = 1 inch

best to utilise their land rights in the Fingo location, in order to supplement their funds to purchase their own farms; a problem which was apparently solved by the offer of the Native Land Board to write off £10 each from Titus' land purchase price in the Shangure division of the Salisbury district as well as from Stephen's deal in the Marirangwe division of the Hartley district.²⁵⁵

Thus it could be said that after 1923, the Hlazo movement gradually dissipated and died down. Indeed, with the introduction of the Land Apportionment Act (1930) which temporarily declared the Fingo location a European area, only Paul Hlazo, who was teaching at Ingwenya School at Bembesi, had remained to raise a voice of protest over a situation which he considered had turned the Mfengu community into "a people whose spirits ~~(had)~~ sunk; whose expressions ~~(were)~~ gloomy ~~(and)~~ whose minds ~~(were)~~ depressed as to what the future ~~(would)~~ bring them."²⁵⁶ But even Paul was curtly dismissed by the Native Department as having "no mandate to speak for the ~~(Mfengu)~~" on the issue;²⁵⁷ an obvious attempt by this branch of government to prevent a resurgence of a movement that had plagued the country for a long time.

²⁵⁵ Ibid: Memorandum by A. C. Jennings, Assistant Director of Native Lands on Interview between C/N/C Carbutt, himself, and Stephen and Titus Hlazo: Salisbury: July 24, 1933.

²⁵⁶ Ibid: Paul Hlazo, Ngwenya School to N/C Inyati: September 25, 1931.

²⁵⁷ Ibid: Col. Carbutt, C/N/C to Premier's Secretary: October 8, 1931.

CHAPTER 8

The Cumulative Impact of the "Foreign African Factor" in Southern Rhodesian Affairs, 1898-1930

(ii) The Activities and Influence of Other African Immigrant Communities up to 1930

I The Influence of the Black Emigres from the South in Matabeleland:

The Hlazo movement of the "black pioneers" and the epic struggle put up by these black immigrants to recover and entrench their rights and privileges over land, right up to the end of Company rule in 1923, inevitably impressed other African communities in Southern Rhodesia. Indeed, the contagion arising from the relentless agitation of the Hlazos may be said to have been felt more strongly in Matabeleland, where the indigenous Ndebele and other African immigrants, to wit the "black settlers" at Bembesi, found themselves inexorably drawn into the vortex of the political process of lobbying and agitation, in the Hlazo style, to draw the attention of the various authorities concerned to their problems and, possibly, have these rectified. As far as the influence of the "black pioneers" and their activities on the Ndebele society was concerned, a number of factors may have, both directly and indirectly, aided the process.

In spite of their differences in social and political outlook within the context of colonial rule, there was, however, much play made on the historical and cultural links between the Mfengu and the Ndebele; and hence on the indivisibility of Nguni cultural identity.¹ Secondly, the geographical location of Hlazo's "black pioneers" in the heart of Matabeleland was not altogether insignificant. Finally, the main

¹Vide: S.96/2: Evidence of John Pidcock (alias Peacock) Ngono and Moses Mfazi: Gwelo: April 4, 1925, in Land Commission (1925).

concern of the "black pioneers", during the course of their agitation against the Southern Rhodesian Administration, was the diminution of the land previously promised them and the consequent flouting of those rights and privileges attendant thereto. As the B.S.A. Co's aggressive land policy began to take a more tangible shape, especially after 1905,² the Ndebele nation was also to face problems of land shortage more grievous in character than those of the "black pioneers" and it was, essentially, because of this state of affairs that the Ndebele were, therefore, readier to emulate some of the methods and tactics hitherto popularized by the Hlazo movement.

With regard to the "black settlers" of Bembesi and other African immigrants from the South, their vulnerability to the influence of their compatriots and kinsmen in the "black pioneer" camp was certainly more evident. The fact that, for administrative convenience, these immigrants from below the Limpopo were classified into different categories did not seem to interfere very seriously with their modicum of cross-sectional interaction. Both groups were not only bound by kinship, but they were also strangers together in a foreign environment and had, therefore, to develop some common strategy in order to adequately meet the various impedimenta arising in their land of adoption, as they tried to adjust to the situation. Indeed, as far as the Mfengu immigrants in early Southern Rhodesia are concerned, this tendency to ignore all forms of artificial or administrative lines of demarcation, is, for instance, very well demonstrated by the manner in which both Hlazo's "black pioneers" and Sojini's "black settlers" were mutually attracted and revolved around Rev. Radasi's Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland based at Bembesi since 1905.

²Vide Supra: pp 744-52.

Like a greater proportion of the Bembesi immigrants, John Boyane Radasi was himself a Mfengu of the Cape colony, where his father worked for a long time in government service as a constable and interpreter and later became a landowner and government postal contractor, after his retirement at Seymour. As a youth, Radasi had proceeded to America with a band of musicians, only to re-cross the Atlantic Ocean later to undergo theological training in Scotland between 1896 and 1904, when he finally left Glasgow to undertake his church's missionary work in Matabeleland.³ Radasi's arrival at Bembesi in 1905 may be said to have greatly precipitated a process of Mfengu cross-sectional communication, which was, in every sense, responsible for the later exchange of influences and experiences between the two rival camps. In the course of his work at Bembesi, Radasi came to interact with all groups of Mfengu, either at his base or anywhere else in Southern Rhodesia. But it must, however, be said that it was the Hlazo group of immigrants with which he became first acquainted. Indeed, it was John Hlazo himself who provided Radasi, at the very beginning of the latter's career, with the support he required, including such facilities as accommodation and a house for worshipping purposes. It was also Hlazo who introduced the new missionary to the neighbouring Ndebele communities, amongst whom he was destined to work.⁴ Perhaps as acts of appreciation of this empathy and co-operation, Radasi was to become not only one of the unflinching supporters of the "black pioneer" leader, as has been indicated elsewhere, but he also married Hlazo's daughter, Annie, in December 1906, to seal up the friendship in a more practical manner.⁵

³Vide: Macpherson (ed.): op. cit. pp 3-10; 85.

⁴Rev. Radasi, Bembesi, to Rev. Cameron, Glasgow; September 30, 1905: in Macpherson (ed.): op. cit. p 18.

⁵Vide Supra: p 793 and also Footnote No. 204. Chapter 7.

But just as he was in good terms with the "black pioneers", the same could also be said of Radasi's relationship with the other group of Mfengu immigrants, the "black settlers" of Garner Sojini. By 1906, when Sojini left Bembesi for the Selukwe district where he was to live for the next twenty years or so, he had become such a fervent admirer of Radasi's that he even bequeathed his buildings to be used for religious worship by the Mfengu minister.⁶ Moreover, Sojini and those Mfengu who emigrated to the Selukwe district, constituted themselves into a very viable branch of Radasi's Isabe Yase Scotland and frequently exchanged visits with their Bembesi colleagues in spite of the distance, as occurred during the visit to Bembesi, in October 1909, by Rev. John R. Mackay, a deputy from Scotland.⁷ For his part, Radasi not only reciprocated these visits by proceeding to Selukwe himself on occasional calls, to provide spiritual consolation to his compatriots and followers, predominantly living on European-owned land as tenants,⁸ but in the end, when his first wife died in 1910, he also married Sojini's daughter, Julia, in 1915,⁹ who was to become the mother of his no less prominent son, the present Rev. Edwin Radasi of Line Mission, Bembesi.¹⁰

In one sense, it could be argued that by forging a network of social relations with the top leadership of the two factions of the Mfengu immigrants, the Hlazo and Sojini families, the Rev. Radasi acted

⁶Ibid: p 46.

⁷Garner Sojini, Selukwe, to Rev. J. R. Mackay, Bembesi: October 26, 1909, in Ibid: pp 50-1.

⁸Rev. Radasi to Rev. Mackay: July 12, 1910: in Ibid: pp 59-60.

⁹Ibid: p 88 and Personal Communication from Mrs T. Bhebhe (Mfengu), Brentford, Middlesex: November 18, 1973.

¹⁰Rev. Edwin Radasi, like his father, was educated in Scotland (1932-1946), but by 1949 was at odds with the white establishment of the Free Presbyterian Church in Southern Rhodesia leading to the founding of his own church in the 1950's. Vide: A. McPherson: James Fraser: A Record of Missionary Endeavour in Rhodesia in the Twentieth Century: The Banner of Truth Trust: London: 1968: pp 121; 168-9.

as a veritable linkman in the process of intra-Mfengu co-operation.¹¹ But it was not only in terms of communication within the Mfengu leadership circles that Radasi came to function as an agent of intra-Mfengu co-operation in Southern Rhodesia. In fact, it could be said that Rev. Radasi's medial role was more pronounced in the wider context of Mfengu religious and educational affairs, as they affected this immigrant community as a whole. Radasi became a focal point of Mfengu religious and educational life, as both young and old members of this community joined ranks with him in quest of his guidance, for which they were apparently prepared to even sever their old denominational links in the process, as the Hlazos, who were for a long time past members of the Methodist Church, for instance, did.¹²

In the long run, it was, essentially, because of this Mfengu base that Radasi was able to expand and hold the defences of his missionary society in Southern Rhodesia. Mfengu individuals like David Ntuli, Patrick Mzamo and several students and young teachers became important ingredients in the expansionist activities of Radasi's mini-religious empire. David Ntuli, Radasi's brother-in-law, for example, was quite outstanding in this respect. His activities consisted of not only his work as a lay missionary at Ingwenya, but also included the establishment of a chain of sub-stations, ranging from the one at Florida Mine near Bembesi in 1910 to tentative ones in Mashonaland, where this Mfengu preacher tried to found bases in 1911 at Chief Chirumanzu's in the

¹¹There were other links, of course, amongst the Mfengu themselves. For instance, the Hlazos and the Sojinis had such social links of their own as the marriage of Stephen Hlazo to one of Garner Sojini's daughters. Vide: Written Evidence of Rev. Sojini: December 11, 1975.

¹²Vide Supra: pp 724-5. Note that Jeremiah and Stephen Hlazo were a steward and a lay preacher with the Methodist Church, respectively, by the time Radasi arrived at Bembesi. Vide: Notes supplied by Miss Buckley.....

Chilimanzi district; at Serima in the Victoria district and at Chief Maromo's, near Enkeldoorn, in the Charter district, though, of course, without much success.¹³

On the education front, Rev. Radasi was certainly more successful in captivating the attention of both Mfengu parents and youths. The absence of higher education for the Africans in Southern Rhodesia¹⁴ made it increasingly necessary for those African students, desirous to proceed with their education, to rely on external institutions such as those in South Africa. On this score, the effort of Radasi and his church to send Mfengu and other non-Mfengu children to institutions of higher education in the Cape colony like Lovedale and St. Matthew's College, between 1913 and 1924, when he died, was by far the strongest single source of attraction he ever had the opportunity to wield. Already most of the children from leading Mfengu families, like the Hlazos, the Sojinis, the Mzamos, the Ntulis and others¹⁵ were beginning to gather around him at the Ingwenya mission since 1905, for their elementary education which even up to the early 1920's only ran up to Standard IV. Indeed, as a measure of Radasi's growing popularity within the circles of black émigrés from South Africa, it may be noted here that as early as 1907, pupils were even sent from as far away as Mashonaland to benefit from his tutelage at Bembesi in Matabeleland.

¹³Rev. Radasi to Rev. Cameron: May 30, 1911: in Macpherson (ed.): op. cit.: pp 63-5. (David Ntuli was also a Methodist lay preacher before Radasi's arrival. Vide: Miss Buckley's Notes.....)

¹⁴In 1906, the B.S.A. Co. of course refused to contribute to the Lovedale fund on African higher education. Vide: C.O.417/432: Milton to Lord Selborne: Telegram: April 3, 1906.

¹⁵It should however be noted that children of non-Mfengu groups like those of the Tswana immigrant Chief Raditladi, the Kalanga and Ndebele chiefs were also welcome to Radasi's school as long as they had the means to maintain themselves. Vide: Macpherson (ed.): op. cit. pp 26-7; 54; 87-8.

This is quite clearly demonstrated by, for instance, the case of the Yafele children - two boys (Babane and Boyizi Yafele) and a girl (Tandiwe Yafele) - who were sent down all the way from the Goromonzi district, on the other side of Salisbury, to Bembesi.¹⁶

Starting with Titus Hlazo, John Wesley Sojini and Harriett Mzamo sent down to Lovedale near Alice in 1913, and Paul Hlazo a year later,¹⁷ Radasi's Ingwenya School became an important agency for those Mfengu and non-Mfengu students desirous to pursue further education below the Limpopo. Moreover, some of these students were sponsored by Radasi's church, notably Harriett Mzamo and Paul Hlazo. Harriett was, for example, the daughter of Patrick Mzamo, a prominent member of the Hlazo group of immigrants¹⁸ and a deacon of Radasi's church, in charge of the Koco out-station near Ingwenya.¹⁹ By 1915, Patrick Mzamo had begun to falter in meeting the expenses on his daughter's fees, just one year before the completion of her course at Lovedale, when Radasi's church stepped in.²⁰ In Paul Hlazo's case, his father had borne his expenses at Lovedale from 1914 up to 1917, when a grant formerly placed by Radasi's church at the disposal of Kiwa Mhlahlo, the son of the late Ndebele Chief Ngeenge, the patron of the Gravesend (Induba) out-station, became vacant, due to this youth's ill-health. In consequence, the young Paul Hlazo, therefore, became a protégé of Radasi's church at Lovedale and St. Matthew's College, near Grahamstown, between

¹⁶Rev. Radasi to Rev. Sinclair: June 7, 1907: in Ibid: p 32. Vide also J. H. Beck: "Yafele's Kraal: A Sample Study of African Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia": Geography: Vol. XLV: No. 45: 1960: pp 68-78.

¹⁷Rev. Radasi to Rev. Cameron: May 4, 1913: in Ibid: pp 71-2; and also: Written Evidence of Rev. Sojini.....

¹⁸In fact Patrick Mzamo was so closely associated with the Hlazos that when the Hlazo family was evicted from Bembesi in December 1917, he was classified as one of Hlazo's sons. Vide: N3/10/1: Report re: Eviction of Chief John Hlazo and followers, Ntabazinduna Reserve by Lieutenant Hough to District Superintendent, Bulawayo: December 29, 1917.

¹⁹Rev. Radasi to Rev. Cameron: May 30, 1911: in Ibid: p 63.

²⁰Rev. Radasi to Rev. Cameron: August 16, 1915: in Ibid: pp 87-8.



Miss Adelaide Ntuli

(died 1954)

married and, unfortunately, died the same year as Mrs. Ngonyama.²⁶

The success of Rev. Radasi in achieving, at least, a superficial degree of Mfengu integration in social affairs, between 1905 and 1923, was quite plausible but not exceedingly remarkable. Given the long-standing historical association between these people and missionary enterprise, especially below the Limpopo, it is obvious that they should have naturally become a porous ground for Radasi's work. Yet at the same time, other factors have also to be taken into consideration on the matter. For instance, it is not at all outrageous in any way to argue that amongst these black immigrants in Southern Rhodesia, just as amongst their contemporary Creole compeers in Sierra Leone,²⁷ religious societies were not merely organisations for worship, but were veritable foci of social life for their communities and as such provided an arena of activity in which these immigrants could exercise leadership and, to some extent, provided, especially for those of them who were ambitious enough, an easy opportunity for status enhancement. Indeed, the enthusiasm with which John P. Ngonzo, another Mfengu evangelist of Rev. Mzimba's Presbyterian Church of Africa, had previously been welcomed at Bembesi, towards the end of 1902, and readily supplied with land for the purpose of erecting a church and school amongst Sojini's followers,²⁸ also clearly demonstrates this supreme importance of religious organisations within the Mfengu immigrant society in Southern Rhodesia. Thus

²⁶Clinton: Hope Fountain Story: pp 80-1. Vide also: Plate XVI (Picture): Miss Adelaide Ntuli (Mfengu): A Pioneer Female Educationist. (N.B. A hall of residence, the Adelaide Ntuli Hall, at the United College of Education, Bulawayo, is named after her.)

²⁷Cf. A. T. Porter: Creodom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society: Oxford University Press: London: 1963: pp 78-9, and also Cohen who has analysed the manipulation of Freemasonry among the Sierra Leone Creoles to institute a "cousinhood" network for protecting their increasingly threatened privileged position. Vide: Abner Cohen: Two-Dimensional Man: An essay on the anthropology of power and symbolism in complex society: Routledge & Kegan Paul: London: 1974: pp 15-7; 106-14.

²⁸NB1/1/18: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Acting Superintendent, Bembesi: October 23, 1902; and John Ngonzo's Testimonial by P. J. Mzimba, Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Africa: December 30, 1901.

it could, therefore, be indicated that it was essentially because of such reasons as these given above that Mfengu immigrants with ability and force of personality from both camps, the "black settlers" and the "black pioneers", like John Hlazo and his son Stephen; Patrick Mzamo, David Ntuli, Garner Sojini and many others, came to feature so prominently in the history of the genesis of the Mfengu society of Southern Rhodesia, during the period of our study. With this whole range of social interaction amongst the Mfengu and related black immigrants from the South, it is certainly unrealistic to imagine that they did not share their political anxieties and aspirations as well. In the circumstances, the activities of John Hlazo's "black pioneers" may naturally have won the empathy of their kinsmen and compatriots with ease.

Against this background indicated above, the impact of John Hlazo's conflict with the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia over land on the Mfengu community of the Fingo location must, therefore, be seen as part and parcel of intra-Mfengu communication. In due course, the "black settlers" at Bembesi and elsewhere came to mount a movement very much similar to that of the "black pioneers", with land as its main bone of contention, particularly with regard to the boundaries of the Fingo location. In essence, the issue of the boundaries of the Fingo location, which appears to have gathered momentum during the 1910's, was, in every respect, quite straightforward and clear. In the first place, the "Battlefields Block", on which the Fingo location was located, had originally consisted of over 18,240 morgen of land, surveyed in September 1894 as constituting six Matabeleland Farm Rights of 3,000 morgen each, won in this case by Cecil Rhodes' brother, Arthur Rhodes, under the "Victoria Agreement" of 1893.²⁹ Five out of these six

²⁹ Arthur Rhodes had actually gained, under the "Victoria Agreement", about 50,000 acres of land altogether and 1,600 cattle in Matabeleland in 1894. Vide: Stigger: op. cit. p 21.

farms had been immediately transferred to Cecil Rhodes, but the sixth one went to W. D. W. Fynn. The five farms transferred to Cecil Rhodes were in turn also transferred by him to the B.S.A. Co. and out of this, slightly over 15,199 morgen in extent was later purchased for use, along with others, as the Fingo location in 1898, whilst the other Fynn brothers, Herbert P. and Hugh T. Fynn, in October 1900, applied for about 3,000 morgen of land in the northern portion of the "Battlefield Block" (later known as the Annaley Farm) to be granted to them under lease, with option for purchase; a deal which was finally effected in December 1913.³⁰

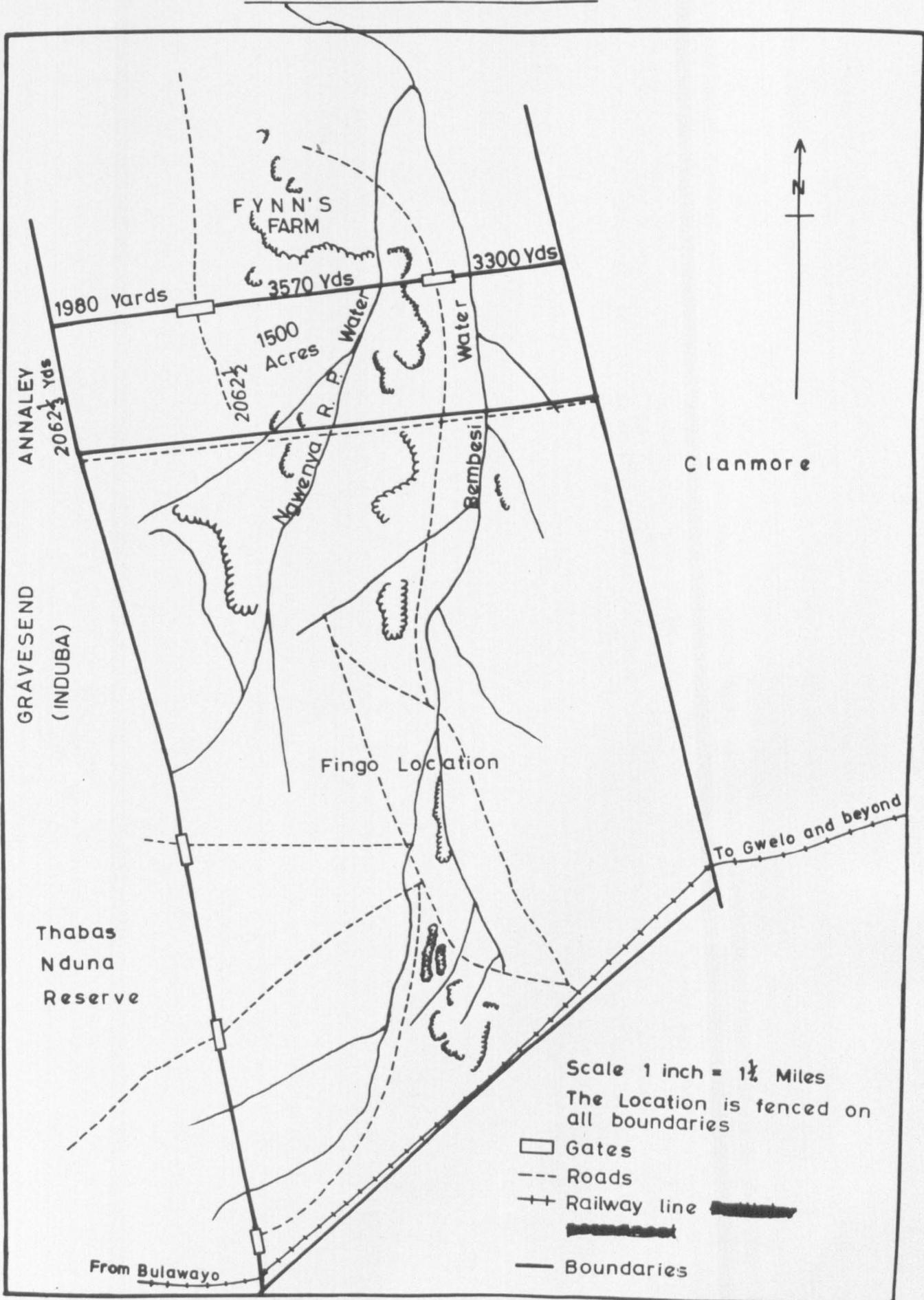
Secondly, under the "Fingo Agreement", "Matabele" Thompson, Rhodes's agent in charge of the Mfengu immigration scheme, had clearly promised potential Mfengu migrants at Butterworth in April 1898, that in Southern Rhodesia, these "black settlers" would be granted land in three areas of Matabeleland, namely Bembesi, Nyamandhlovu and Matopo,³¹ yet, in the final analysis, it was only the Bembesi land grant that was placed at the disposal of the Mfengu immigrants, when they actually arrived in Southern Rhodesia. Thirdly, there was the question of the 1906 western boundary dividing the Fingo location from the Ntabazinduna Reserve. The fact that this location had not been fenced in, as originally promised, from 1898 up to 1905, perhaps on account of the burden of expense, and that the fencing provided in 1906 was only in response to the outbreak of the dreaded cattle disease, African East Coast Fever,³² must have surely confused the Mfengu immigrants as to

³⁰A3/18/24: F. W. Inskipp, Director of Land Settlement to Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury: July 23, 1918.

³¹C.O.417/512: "Matabele" Thompson's Address.....: April (?), 1898.

³²A3/18/24: Summary of History of Fingo Immigration by C/N/C Taylor to Secretary, Department of Administrator: July 15, 1918.

APPENDIX XV: THE FINGO LOCATION, BEMBESI, AND ITS BOUNDARIES AS IN 1915



(Sketch enclosed in S. 924/G. 125/1: Lanning, N/C Bubi to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: October 8, 1915: R/N/A: Salisbury.)

where the limits of their new abode stood. Finally but not by any means least important, there was also the question of the presence of the Ndebele community under Chief Ngege, living in the north-western corner of the "Battlefield Block" on a property later called Gravesend Farm (Induba),³³ which, to the Mfengu immigrants, represented deliberate and systematic diminution of their location.³⁴ In their campaign, the section of Mfengu immigrants called the "black settlers" were to exploit all these issues to their advantage, with diverse results.

As the main body of "black settlers" at Bembesi led by Sojini indicated to the A.P.S. in April 1916,³⁵ these immigrants resented very strongly their deprivation of the use of all the three pieces of land bought for them at Bembesi, Nyamandhlovu and Matopo by Rhodes with what they called "his (Rhodes') own private money",³⁶ and also the manner in which the B.S.A. Co. Administration systematically swindled them once Rhodes had died. In this vein, Sojini accordingly narrated his story on Mfengu woes to Rev. Harris, pointing out, as he did, that "After we had arrived in (Southern) Rhodesia the Boer War (1899-1902) then broke out and the Chief Native Commissioner said to us 'you better remain here (at) Bembesi and not go to the other lands (Nyamandhlovu and Matopo) at present. You are still few' and so we remained according to his word."³⁷

³³ Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: July 27, 1918.

³⁴ Vide: Appendix X V (Map): The Fingo Location, Bembesi, and its Boundaries as in 1915.

³⁵ Garner Sojini headed a list of 100 Mfengu signatories to his letter.

³⁶ Mss. Brit. Emp. S.22/G.173: Joseph Scwebu, for Chief Garner Sojini, to Rev. Harris: Private: April 26, 1916. (N.B. Scwebu was not a paid Secretary of Sojini's as Ranger implies in African Voice: p 52. Instead, Scwebu was an Anglican Cathecist and a teacher at Bede School, Bembesi, whose services Sojini and other Mfengu often deployed, just as they also did with Rev. Radasi and the like for official correspondence.)

³⁷ Ibid: Petition of Chief Garner Sojini and a hundred other Mfengu to Rev. Harris: April 26, 1916.

Immediately after the Anglo-Boer War ended, the Mfengu immigrants once more confronted the Southern Rhodesia authorities with regard to the land promised them and as Sojini indicated: "We then asked for the three lands that were shown us and also given (to us). The Chief Native Commissioner (Taylor) said that we were knocking our heads against a stone and said that even the land we occupy at Bembesi would be made smaller. That was done and it was given to European farmers." Sojini then continued "We were six (Mfengu) Chiefs (at first but) after a time the other Chiefs were dismissed. One chief was appointed and the only land that was given to him was part of the land which was fenced during the outbreak of the East Coast fever (and) set apart as a quarantine and the rest of the land (was) confiscated. All our people were placed under him against their will."³⁸

But apparently it was not only the quantity of the land which exercised the minds of these immigrants. They were, in fact, just as concerned about the quality of the land in question as they were about its size. For this reason, Sojini gave an account of his own personal experiences on the matter, "I Chief Garner Sojini am here at Selukwe through scarcity of land which was given to us. I had to hire a farm at Selukwe and I pay £70 rent a year, some Fingoes £50 down (to) £15 a year rent." Because of this disadvantageous position they found themselves in, Sojini and his followers wanted some form of restitution of their land rights and, therefore, demanded, "We.... want all our lands as we forfeited all our lands at the Cape Colony and Mr Rhodes had told us that these lands would never be taken from us and that they would be the inheritance of our children." The Mfengu petitioner also indicated that "We left our lands and privileges (in the) Cape Colony as it was

³⁸Ibid:

said we were purchased lands here in (Southern) Rhodesia by the late Mr. Rhodes."³⁹

For such reasons as these given here, it is certainly understandable why these immigrants should have felt bitter over what they naturally regarded as the raw deal they had sustained at the hands of the B.S.A. Co. in Southern Rhodesia. This development must have been particularly painful, especially in view of the expenses Sojini and his colleagues had incurred in pursuing their cause through legal channels. According to Joseph Scwebu the scribe of Sojini's letters, before Angus Fletcher of the law firm, Messrs. Fletcher & Harsant, left Southern Rhodesia for Europe at the beginning of 1916, he had demanded a fee of £40 from the Mfengu petitioners in order to see their matter presented to the High Commissioner for South Africa. J. C. Coghlan, of Messrs. Coghlan & Sonneberg, who took over the same question of the Fingo boundary dispute, was in turn expected to demand something between £40 and £50.⁴⁰

Whilst the raison d'etre of the agitation of the "black settlers" over the boundaries of the Fingo location and related issues may not be subject to askance, their approach and general modus operandi are, however, questionable. In fact, it might not be far off the mark to acknowledge that, unlike the contemporaneous Hlazo movement of the "black pioneers" associated with the Ntabazinduna Reserve dispute, that of the "black settlers" was, in every sense of the word, less coherent and, generally, lacked a strong midrib to co-ordinate the whole nexus of major and minor issues raised in the course of this immigrant group's controversy with the B.S.A. Co. Administration. As a result of this fact, it is, therefore, not surprising to find that at the height of

³⁹Ibid:

⁴⁰Ibid: Scwebu to Rev. Harris: Private: April 26, 1916.

the Fingo location boundary dispute, about three main Mfengu pressure groups were discernible. These were, firstly, the group led by Sojini himself, operating from his Selukwe base; secondly, that consisting of Mfengu dissidents led by Sifuba Magadlela, who had squatted outside the Fingo location boundaries without due authority, and finally, the case of ex-Chief Mbanga Kona and his admirers, who took advantage of the generally confused situation to press for some re-consideration on the part of the Administration in favour of their leader..

But whilst this lack of coherence within the ranks of the Mfengu immigrants of the class called the "black settlers" was a significant drawback by itself and, therefore, likely to retard the whole movement, it was evidently not as decisive in its impact on the Southern Rhodesian Administration as the question of the bona fides of this group's leadership was. Starting with the least influential leaders of these Mfengu immigrants based at Bembesi, the Company Administration was, in a way, able to readily deliver a stunning blow to the whole movement over the Fingo location boundary by, firstly, undermining the credibility of the movement's leaders and ipso facto ultimately trivializing their purported cause. The case of Sifuba Magadlela is quite pertinent on this score. Apparently this Mfengu worthy and his colleagues, who, up to the 1910's, had lived as unauthorized squatters on the Ntabazinduna Reserve side of the Fingo location boundary, had very tenuous links with Mfengu immigrants of the so-called " 'Matabele' Thompson Trek" of 1898 to 1901. Within this Sifuba group for example, a number of individuals had evidently taken advantage to masquerade as members of the " 'Matabele' Thompson Trek" to which they never originally belonged. Bill Stinta, for instance, was said to have been a recent arrival from the Gwanda district where he had been living till he was invited by Sifuba, a relation of his, to come down to Bembesi.

The same applied to William Mabeka, another relation of Sifuba's, who had arrived at Bembesi only in 1909. Bois, a third member of the Sifuba group of squatters, had initially settled on the Ntabazinduna side of the Fingo location boundary, ostensibly as a catechist of the Anglican Church and in which capacity he had been sent by his superior, Rev. Leary, to take charge of a mission station in the area. But, sooner or later, the mission station in question became moribund and Bois consequently joined the band of Mfengu squatters already living in the area.⁴¹

The Sifuba group of Mfengu squatters had apparently allowed themselves to remain and develop a dubious stake in the Ntabazinduna Reserve because of the absence of a definitive boundary between this location and the reserve in question before 1905. But even after the boundary had been defined accordingly in 1906, these Mfengu immigrants still claimed the right to live where they were on the grounds that the 1906 boundary fence had served merely as a quarantine fence against East Coast Fever and they would, therefore, not easily be moved from what they considered land originally granted to Mfengu immigrants.⁴² But by 1912, however, Sifuba and his fellow squatters were forcibly ejected, as we have already indicated elsewhere in this study,⁴³ though not without some pecuniary compensation.⁴⁴ By 1916, this group of immigrants had actually joined ranks with that of Sojini to make the tour de force of their cause against the B.S.A. Co. obviously more viable. Mbanga Kona and his followers, on the other hand, were perhaps not as lucky as their counterparts in the Sifuba camp.

⁴¹A3/18/24: Milton to Lord Gladstone: March 29, 1912.

⁴²Mss. Brit. Emp. S.22/G.173: Petition of Sifuba Magadlela and others to Rev. Harris: April 26, 1915.

⁴³Vide Supra: p 762.

⁴⁴C.O.417/557: Minute by R. V. Vernon to Lambert: February 7, 1914.

As we have already seen in an earlier part of this study, Mbanga Kona had strongly featured in the Ginya/Elsie Kona case between 1903 and 1905, as, ironically, the Company Administration's favourite claimant to the Kona succession dispute.⁴⁵ But by November 1905, he too fell out with his Company patrons and was removed from office; an event which led to his immediate departure for the Cape colony, only to reappear at Bembesi towards the end of 1917 and team up, firstly, with Hlazo's "black pioneers" and, later on, with the "black settlers" of Sojini, especially when by 1918, the forced eviction of Hlazo gave Mbanga the impression that the cause of the "black pioneers" had been totally lost. Perhaps it was because of the combined weight of all these adverse factors that Mbanga Kona was, in 1917/18, destined to prove a spent-force, insofar as his part in the movement of the "black settlers" was concerned. Indeed, as the Southern Rhodesia authorities indicated, Mbanga's activities and his presence in the Fingo location were altogether anathema and quite unwelcome in 1918. The ultra-loyalist Mfengu Chief, Nzimende Ndongdo, was certainly in agreement with this official view of Mbanga Kona and, accordingly, wrote the Chief Native Commissioner in Salisbury in January 1918, pointing out the risks involved:

I have.... to inform you that Mbanga Kona is here (at Bembesi). While he came (as a visitor) now he is making (some) trouble. I heard they are (holding) meetings with Hlazo by the night (and) I wish you Sir to write to Inyati (ordering that Mbanga) be sent home (to the Cape colony) again. He is one of the headmen who were (deposed) with Mtyagisana and Nqakala (in 1905). They want to complain about the land which is occupied by Mranqwa. That is (what) I don't like.... myself because Mranqwa (was) given (the land) by the Government to stay there too like ourselves (the Mfengu). I wish you Sir...

⁴⁵Vide Supra: Chapter 4.

to tell our Native Commissioner (at Inyati) to tell him (Mbanga) to go at once back to the (Cape) colony (because) there is going to be trouble (in the long run). He is trying to make trouble even here (in the Fingo location) with five men that have joined him and Hlazo. One of them is Sifuba. I (am) always hearing that they have meetings to complain about the land in their homes.

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The proceedings revealed above by Chief Nzimende, were, it would seem, not the only ones the Company Administration could rely on to nail Mbanga Kona. This ex-Mfengu chief was apparently so involved in the land affairs of the Mfengu communities, regarding both the Ntabazinduna Reserve and the Fingo location, that it was even indicated that he and John Hlazo had together been instrumental in engaging the services of Alfred Mangena in Johannesburg and had already collected about ten head of cattle in subscription to this lawyer's expenses by February 1918.⁴⁷ And what, moreover, seemed to have been the highest degree of impudence, from the official point of view, was the fact that Mbanga Kona was carrying out all these activities without due authority to stay in the country. In fact, all that he had were only a "Blue Registration Certificate" (for foreigners) and a pass, issued to him in the Cape province, to visit Southern Rhodesia, instead of a Southern Rhodesian one authorising him either to stay or seek work in the territory.⁴⁸ Given, in this instance, the ruling of the superior officials of the Native Department that Mbanga Kona had to have his papers in order first and then later on apply for permission to both enter and acquire land in the Fingo location,⁴⁹ the discovery that this Mfengu leader's

⁴⁶N3/10/2: Chief Nzimende Ndonga, Bembesi, to C/N/C Salisbury: June 4, 1918.

⁴⁷Ibid: Greer, Acting N/C Inyati to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: February 18, 1918.

⁴⁸Ibid: Greer, Acting N/C Inyati to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: April 5, 1918.

⁴⁹Ibid: W. S. Taberer, Acting C/N/C Salisbury to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: February 26, 1918.

affairs were not in accordance with official requirements after all, provided a very good pretext for apprehending and prosecuting him, allegedly for contravening the Native Pass Ordinance.⁵⁰ Indeed, in the final analysis, even more drastic action was resorted to and Mbanga Kona was deported to South Africa in August 1918, since he was regarded by the Southern Rhodesian authorities as "a disturbing factor in the Fingo Location (who had).... no colour of right in the land (at Bembesi)".⁵¹ This expulsion order was actually effected in spite of a petition from his Mfengu supporters to the authorities to annul the decision, since Mbanga was, from the petitioners' point of view, "our chief who brought us here (to Southern) Rhodesia."⁵²

Thus in Mbanga Kona's case, deportation served as an effective weapon, on the part of the Southern Rhodesian authorities, to silence one faction of the "black settlers", who felt that they had one score or another to settle with the Company Administration. In the case of Garner Sojini and his followers, other means were employed which also turned out to be just as effective as anything else. Indeed, with regard to this third group of Mfengu settlers, the cause of its undoing was obviously Sojini himself. The concentration of the fire-power of the Company officials on this leader of the Fingo location boundary movement began to pay dividends, once Sojini's shortcomings became evident. Systematically, the very basis of the movement that he led was also undermined and exposed as both ill-founded and ill-conceived. In the course of this official attack on Sojini and his

⁵⁰ Ibid: Greer, Acting N/C Inyati to Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: April 4, 1918.

⁵¹ Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: August 8, 1918.

⁵² Ibid: Petition of Fayo Mfundisi, James Sifuba and others to N/C Inyati: May 11, 1918.

claims over the disputed boundaries of the Fingo location, it was, for instance, pointed out that he actually had no right to parade himself as the leader of the Mfengu communities of Bembesi and the Selukwe district or elsewhere, since he was not one at all.

In Chaplin's view, Garner Sojini was "not a chief but.... a Fingo headman (who had been) living at Vryburg (in British Bechuanaland) and was granted permission to occupy land on the Fingo location on same terms as the (other) Fingo immigrants."⁵³ This view was also supported by the Chief Native Commissioner, Taylor, who denied that Sojini was ever a member of Rhodes's original Mfengu immigration scheme, generally known as the 'Thompson Trek'. The 1898 application of Sojini from Bechuanaland, to join the other Mfengu immigrants at Bembesi, at the head of "three women, six children and thirty goats",⁵⁴ was in 1919 being exploited by Southern Rhodesian authorities, obviously, to Sojini's disadvantage.

Under these circumstances, even Sojini's appeal to the A.P.S. in London in 1916,⁵⁵ and in 1919 to Theo Schreiner, a Cape Town lawyer and a member of a well known liberal family, over scarcity of land in the Fingo location as the cause of his self-imposed exile from Bembesi,⁵⁶ could hardly impress the authorities in Salisbury. In fact, they dismissed these allegations with contempt, pointing out a number of facts in Sojini's personal activities which apparently were, in one way or another, inconsistent with his claims. On the question of land shortage as the cause of Sojini's voluntary transfer from Bembesi to

⁵³N3/10/5: Chaplin to B.S.A. Co., Cape Town: Telegram: March 29, 1919.

⁵⁴Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Schreiner: April 16, 1919.

⁵⁵Vide Supra: pp 825-7.

⁵⁶Ibid: Theo L. Schreiner, Cape Town, to C/N/C Salisbury: April 10, 1919.

the Selukwe district since 1906, three things were stressed on the matter. Firstly, it was indicated, for example, that Sojini had undertaken to renting land on private European farms in the Selukwe district simply as a form of private venture, whilst retaining his land rights in the Fingo location.⁵⁷ Secondly, because of his prolonged absence from Bembesi, Sojini's title on land in the location was cancelled in 1914, on the grounds of failure by the title-holder to occupy and cultivate the land in accordance with the conditions of the original grant.⁵⁸ Thirdly, it would also appear that Sojini himself, once he had lived in the Selukwe district for a fairly long time, was no longer very enthusiastic over his plot at Bembesi. Thus in May 1914, he forwarded, for cancellation, his "Provisional Title No. 2099 to Plot No. 106 in the Fingo Location, Bubi District" through the Native Commissioner for the Selukwe district. The reasons for taking this step, as given by Sojini to Native Commissioner, L. C. Meredith, were mainly the scarcity of water; the difficulties involved to effect immediate re-occupation of the plot on short notice and the desire to look for alternative land for purchase elsewhere.⁵⁹

Indeed, in this instance, the desire to look elsewhere for alternative land may have proved the most important in Sojini's reckoning, since he had been trying to procure a place of his own as early as 1912, when he approached the Selukwe officials and the other Company authorities concerned over the lease of 1,500 morgen of land at Marume's village, about three miles from the Lundi river in the

⁵⁷A3/18/24: Taylor C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: July 27, 1918.

⁵⁸N3/10/5: Chaplin to B.S.A. Co: Capetown: Telegram: March 29, 1919.

⁵⁹Ibid: L. C. Meredith, Acting N/C Selukwe to S/O/N Gwelo: May 14, 1914.

Belingwe direction.⁶⁰ With the 200 head of cattle and the various farm implements that he owned at the Adare Farm, a property of Willoughby's Consolidated, the Native Department officials at Selukwe and Bulawayo were, to some extent, prepared to allow Sojini to procure the land in question.⁶¹ But the top officials of the Company Administration in Salisbury, however, frustrated the plan because of their opposition.⁶²

In the long run, Sojini was to encounter further frustration from the same authorities, who did not seem to take kindly to his efforts to widen the scope of his quest for more land by not only involving the residents of the Fingo location, where he had given up his rights, but also by bringing into the tussle externally based supporters like Mangena in Johannesburg, Schreiner in Cape Town and the A.P.S. in London. Thus in response to Schreiner's demands over Sojini's grievances on the Fingo location boundary dispute and related land issues in 1919, the Salisbury Administration was, in every sense, opposed and hostile to the matter, as the Chief Native Commissioner clearly pointed out in April 1919, when he stated that:

Every effort has been made to satisfy these malcontents (Sojini and followers), but without avail, I regret to say; they are either incapable of seeing or will not see the position in the true light of the facts of the case. This is a matter for regret, as the land originally set aside for Fingo occupation, some of the best in the territory, is to some extent lying waste owing to the attitude of Garner Sojini and a few others.

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Official opinion in Salisbury was generally in line with the Attorney-General's view, a year before, that since the "black settlers"

⁶⁰Ibid: Francis S. Clarke, Agent-at-Law, Selukwe, to Ass. Magistrate, Selukwe: November 8, 1912.

⁶¹Ibid: C. T. Stuart, N/C Selukwe to S/O/N Gwelo: November 9, 1912 and Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Secretary, B.S.A. Co: Bulawayo: November 20, 1912.

⁶²Ibid: Holland, Secretary, Department of Administrator to C/N/C Bulawayo: January 24, 1913.

⁶³Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C to Schreiner: April 16, 1919.

at Bembesi had never been promised any specific amount of land and that since these immigrants had been expected to come into the country in greater numbers than those who eventually did arrive, the progressive reduction of the Fingo location itself had caused no suffering to them, whilst the Nyamandhlovu and the Matopo grants were out of the question altogether.⁶⁴ On a more extreme level, other officials did not even consider it necessary to examine the Mfengu land issue any further. Frank Inskipp, the Director of Land Settlement, was quite clear on this point when he declared: "In view of the generally worthless character of the Fingo community, and the fact that they are not making complete use of the valuable tract of country which has been allotted to them at Bembesi, it is to be regretted that the necessity of setting aside further land in this connection should have to be considered."⁶⁵ For these and other reasons, the cause of the "black settlers" over the Fingo location boundaries was just as hopelessly lost as that of the "black pioneers" with regard to the Ntabazinduna Reserve.

In surmising over this whole saga concerning the conflict of the Mfengu immigrants of one persuasion or another against the Southern Rhodesian Administration, it is tempting to argue that only one character may have gained, either directly or indirectly, from this fracas. The individual in question was none other than the ultra-loyalist Mfengu leader, Chief Nzimende Ndongdo. Nzimende Mbulawa Ndongdo was one of the original Mfengu delegates who came to Southern Rhodesia to survey the land offers promised to potential Mfengu immigrants by Rhodes, through "Matabele" Thompson. It was obviously after this visit

⁶⁴A3/18/24: C. H. Tredgold, Attorney-General, to Chaplin, Salisbury: August 21, 1918.

⁶⁵Ibid: F. W. Inskipp, Director of Land Settlement to Secretary, Department of Administrator: July 23, 1918.

that he later wrote the Chief Native Commissioner for Matabeleland apologising that "... we (Mfengu delegates) left (Matabeleland) without bidding you goodbye as you were busy with the meeting of your Ndunas.... Sir you must excuse us for not bidding you goodbye. We thank you for allowing us to look at the Matobo, Nyamandhlovu (and) Tshisa (Bembesi) (land grants)." ⁶⁶

By occupation, Nzimende was then still a sergeant with the police force in the Cape and this was actually one of the factors that was to cause him immediate concern, before emigrating to Southern Rhodesia in 1899. Accordingly, he informed Chief Native Commissioner Taylor in June 1899 why he did not immediately come along with the first batch of Mfengu arrivals, stating "... the reason I am not (coming) over (soon) is this (that) I am 17 years in the service (of the Cape police) but do please get (a vacancy) for me there in your office because if I got (a) place there it will be better for me, (and).... I shall come over (to Matabeleland) at once." ⁶⁷

Nzimende's June letter, which is, in every sense, a tentative application for a job with the Matabeleland Native Department, was apparently a sequel to his resignation in April 1899, confirmed here by the Assistant Resident Magistrate of Nqamakwe, in preparation for his eventual emigration from the Transkei. In the opinion of the Nqamakwe official, Nzimende's resignation and imminent departure were deeply regretted, since he was a "thoroughly trustworthy" man who had "given up a good position here (in the Cape) to enable him to migrate North." ⁶⁸ For the Southern Rhodesian colonial society which placed a high premium

⁶⁶NB1/1/7: Nzimende Mbulawa, Nqamakwe, Transkei to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: December 16, 1898.

⁶⁷Ibid: Nzimende Mbulawa to C/N/C Taylor: June 3, 1899.

⁶⁸Ibid: Ass. Resident Magistrate, Nqamakwe, Blythwood, Transkei, to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: April 11, 1899.

on the "loyalty" of the subject peoples, it would have been surprising if the presence at Bembesi of a man, considered to be as "thoroughly trustworthy" as Nzimende obviously was, had been ignored by the official quarters concerned. Thus the fact that this pensioned ex-Cape police sergeant was declared the sole chief of the Fingo location towards the end of 1905, whilst the other five claimants were systematically deposed,⁶⁹ and also that he succeeded in gaining priority over his elder brother,⁷⁰ can only be viewed as covert acts, on the part of the Southern Rhodesian authorities, to adequately compensate this controversial Mfengu character, which, inadvertently, set him on the path to an extravagant degree of obeissance and submissiveness to the B.S.A. Co. and other authorities in Southern Rhodesia.

In fact, the whole story of Nzimende's relations with Southern Rhodesian and other authorities as well as with his white colonist neighbours at Bembesi, during his long reign from 1905 to 1923, to a large extent, clearly betrays his peculiar sense of loyalty to his superiors, very much in accord with the domination/subordination syndrome as then prescribed and obtaining in the Southern Rhodesian colonial setting. Thus following the occasion of the High Commissioner's visit to Southern Rhodesia towards the end of 1909 and the subsequent complaint of this Imperial official with regard to the reluctance of the Ndebele to accord him, as a representative of the King of England,

⁶⁹The deposition of other Mfengu chiefs viz: Mtyakisana, Kona, Nqakala, Sojini and Mpahleni in favour of Nzimende was one of the major grievances of the "black settlers" by 1916. Vide: Mss. Brit. Emp. S.22/G.173: Scwebu to Rev. Harris: Private: April 26, 1916.

⁷⁰Within the context of Mfengu internal politics, Nzimende's brother, Mbelwana Ndongdo, should have succeeded their father, Mbulawa Ndongdo, as one of the chiefs in the location. Vide: Written Evidence of Rev. Sojini.....

the "Bayete" salute - an Nguni traditional royal greeting,⁷¹ it was Nzimende himself who, in a gesture which also greatly embarrassed a number of his superiors, proffered his services to shame the unco-operative Ndebele. Consequently, Nzimende wrote Lord Selborne in December 1909 to profess his loyalty and that of his Mfengu community as follows:

Bayete Nkosi,

..... we (the Mfengu) feel very ashamed that at the meeting in Bulawayo the Matabele refused to salute you in the proper way. We were amazed at this that the High Commissioner was not saluted in the usual order as is done to every person of his rank.

We Fingoes are not in the same spirit as they (the Ndebele). Our desire is that we should be let free from Pass Regulations.

The Fingoes are very small in number in this country (Southern Rhodesia) and are not friends of the natives of this country although we have never quarrelled with them or they with us.

Our only friend is the British Government who kept our Grandfathers and still looks after us, and treats us with good hands and whose mouth is full of love to us its children.

We beg to ask to be allowed to have guns that is every person of us whom his Magistrate trusts.

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This spirit of abject submission, ultra-loyalty and collaboration with the administrative machinery, albeit in return for favours of one kind or another as shown above, was, certainly, to emerge and remain as one unmistakable element in the whole tedium of Nzimende's subsequent years in command at Bembesi. Thus as has already been demonstrated in our study of the struggle of the "black pioneers" against the B.S.A. Co.

⁷¹C.O.417/491: Lord Selborne to Major Fair: November 16, 1909.

⁷²C.O.417/483: Chief Nzimende Nondo to Lord Selborne: December 3, 1909. For a slightly different version of Nzimende's petition: Vide: Ranger: The African Voice: p 46.

Administration, Nzimende came out quite openly as one of the most outspoken critics of the Hlazos and their followers, especially during the period between 1917 and 1923.⁷³ Subsequently, all the other activities and responses of his to official orders were, indeed, to confirm the conclusion that this Mfengu leader had virtually become the proverbial old dog that could not accept to be taught new tricks any more.

For the reasons indicated above, Nzimende maintained his tradition by, for instance, expressing, as he did in April 1923, in extravagant terms, the gratitude of himself and his followers over government relief during the widespread and devastating 1922 famine,⁷⁴ indicating in the same old tone that "We give many thanks to the Government who have taken the liberty of sending us food and saved our children from dying (of starvation). What has been done to us by the Government of (Southern) Rhodesia let it be not forgotten even by the new generation to come." To round up his vote of thanks, Nzimende also requested the Native Department to publish his request in the Bulawayo Chronicle so that "it might be seen by all (to) whom we give thanks..... (for having) taken one spirit of keeping us (supplied) with food;"⁷⁵ a proposal politely turned down by the Native Department officials concerned.⁷⁶ Shortly after, Nzimende was asking, in addition, for authority for the Mfengu at Bembesi to form a district council to take charge of minor administrative matters in the location, much to the pleasure of the Native Department officials,⁷⁷ as we may rightly guess. Indeed, he was very highly praised over this as "a most intelligent, loyal and able chief.."⁷⁸

⁷³Vide Supra: pp 791-5.

⁷⁴Vide: Report of the C/N/C for the Year 1922: pp 3-7.

⁷⁵NBB1/2/1: Chief Nzimende Ndongo to N/C Inyati: April 9, 1923.

⁷⁶Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C to Chaplin: May 8, 1923.

⁷⁷NB1/1/1: Farrer, N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: April 3, 1923.

⁷⁸Ibid: Richards, Ass. N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: June 15, 1921.

with each day that passed.

But to his own credit, it should be mentioned here too that whilst he tried, in every respect, to ingratiate himself with the authorities, Nzimende did not, however, forget the general interests of his Mfengu followers altogether. For instance, in 1917/18, he took up cudgels with the neighbouring white farmers on the charges made against his people regarding veld fires, hunting on private lands and other acts of trespassing.⁷⁹ In 1920, when the Fingo location has been re-fenced as a measure to guarantee the security of fuming white farmers on neighbouring properties against Mfengu trespassers, Nzimende would not agree to the payment of the £21 cost involved by his people, on the grounds that the fencing of the Fingo location was a government responsibility as laid down by the "Matabele" Thompson agreement of 1898.⁸⁰ With the imminent change of government in 1923, Nzimende and the Mfengu community at Bembesi were, to some extent, rather worried about their land rights. Thus although he was himself later to enjoy the change-over at a personal level, on account of the invitation extended to him and other African chiefs to welcome the new Governor, Sir John Chancellor, in Salisbury in October 1923,⁸¹ a few months before this momentous event, he had requested the outgoing Company Administration to point out quite clearly to the new government, the boundaries of the Fingo location to avoid future problems.⁸²

On a somewhat lighter level, it is rather interesting to note how this quasi-traditional Mfengu leader resorted to the historical pattern of Mfengu interaction with the Cape government during the nineteenth

⁷⁹A3/18/24: Petition to O'Keeffe and other white farmers, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: September 3, 1917; and Greer, Acting N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: February 20, 1918.

⁸⁰N3/10/3: Petition to Fingo Location Residents to C/N/C Salisbury: April 19, 1920.

⁸¹S.607/1923: Chief Nzimende Ndong, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: October 4, 1923: R/N/A: Salisbury.

⁸²NBB1/2/1: Chief Nzimende Ndong, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: April 9, 1923.

century, in order to procure land rewards for those of his people who had offered their services in East Africa during the World War I. Apparently it was Nzimende himself who had forwarded some two batches of Mfengu volunteers to Major Tomlinson of the British South Africa Police in Bulawayo in May 1915, for service in German East Africa (Tanganyika). These volunteers, who included some well-known Mfengu veterans like the Ntuli brothers (David, Solomon and Ben), David Magunya, Reuben Stinta and many others, may have perhaps offered their services as wagon drivers in the war front, in anticipation of rewards in form of land grants as of old. The assertion by Nzimende himself to Major Tomlinson, on the occasion of their delivery, that "I know the Government (because I have) been working with (it) for a long time" and that "men who helped... our government (could) get presents,"⁸³ was thus, obviously, intended to solicit a promise on rewards in one form or another.

In any case, it was because of the services they had rendered in German East Africa as wagon drivers and in other non-combatant roles that the ex-Mfengu volunteers began to clamour for land grants in 1923, from the out-going Company Administration in Southern Rhodesia as rewards. In true Mfengu tradition, Nzimende pointed out, as precedents, the granting to the Mfengu of the Cape, for their help to the Cape government, of such places as Fort Peddie after the 1835 Xhosa War; Herschell after the War of the Axe (1846-7); Fort Beaufort after the Umlangeni War (1850-3); Fingoland in the Transkei following the Xhosa cattle-killing deluge (1857) and Willowvale, Ketani, after the Nqayecibi war (1877).⁸⁴ Unfortunately, however, the World War I offered little

⁸³Ibid: Chief Nzimende, Bembesi, to N/C Inyati: May 20, 1923.

⁸⁴Ibid:

promise to the Mfengu volunteers. Officials in Salisbury and Bulawayo were actually quite agreed that no such grants as these Mfengu demanded could be made, because the volunteers in question had been well paid during the course of their service and that since no African combatants in the war had been granted land rewards either, there was, therefore, no justification at all, to extend this favour to non-combatants only.⁸⁵ In the final analysis, it would appear that Nzimende and his Mfengu World War I volunteers had to content themselves with such poor substitutes as medals, like the 1914-15 Star and the British and Victory medals every African participant was apparently entitled to,⁸⁶ since no land rewards were forthcoming.

In this preceding analysis, the impact of the black immigrants from South Africa has been hitherto treated in terms of internal developments within the immigrant communities concerned and, to a greater extent, in relation to interaction with the successive Administrations of Southern Rhodesia. From the content of the analysis up to this point, a false conclusion might be arrived at that Mfengu and related immigrant African impact was limited in scope and dimension, hence less effective either on the provincial or territorial level. In fact, the activities and presence of Mfengu and other African immigrants from across the Limpopo had very wide-ranging impact and consequences throughout Southern Rhodesia and, especially, in the province of Matabeleland during the period covered by this study.

A variety of factors were particularly responsible for the decisive character of Mfengu influence in Matabeleland. Firstly, there

⁸⁵Ibid: Major A. J. Tomlinson, District Superintendent, B.S.A.P. Bulawayo to S/O/N Bulawayo: August 21, 1923.

⁸⁶Ibid: Major Pascoe, D.S.O., Defence Dept., Salisbury, to C/N/C Salisbury: August 27, 1923.

was the Nguni cultural and historical connection which the Mfengu immigrants often stressed to suit their own requirements, when circumstances indicated that claiming affinity with the Ndebele had everything to offer as, for instance, Rev. Radasi did in 1904/5, when he chose to carry out his missionary work in Matabeleland.⁸⁷ Moreover, the fact that some Mfengu individuals had managed to make their way to Matabeleland long before 1893 and had succeeded in playing an important part in pre-colonial Ndebele affairs, as is well demonstrated by the careers of the Mfengu war-doctor, Mbulali and his son Hlegisane, who were responsible for the revival of Ndebele martial tradition instead of allowing the newly-installed Lobengula to succumb to L.M.S. pacifism in the 1870's,⁸⁸ did not escape attention. Later generations of Mfengu immigrants were to assert, as John Peacock Ngono did in 1925, that "some of our (Mfengu) natives did come up (to Matabeleland) with Mzilikazi",⁸⁹ to emphasize this aspect of Ndebele/Mfengu historical connection.

Secondly, there was the socio-political factor underlying the aspirations of the black emigres from South Africa, who, because of their earlier contact with white forces of colonialism, tended to generally view themselves as a veritable African middle class within the larger context of the Southern Rhodesian colonial society. Because of the fact that colonialism everywhere tended to set in motion an unwarranted process of social, economic and political transformation and, in this way, inevitably created, within the context of African

⁸⁷Rev. Radasi to Rev. Mackay: May 31, 1901; in Macpherson (ed.): op. cit. p 16.

⁸⁸It was, for instance, to satisfy the initiation rites of Hlegisane, a successor to his father as war-doctor for the Ndebele impis that the Mhari captive ruler, Chief Chibi Mazorodze, was ritually mutilated at Bulawayo towards the end of 1879. Vide: Bhebhe: Christian Missions in Matabeleland: pp 103-4.

⁸⁹S.96/2: Evidence of John P. Ngono and Moses Mfazi: Gwelo: April 4, 1925.

colonized societies, a new social order, altogether divorced from the pre-colonial traditional societies and their allied peasant economies, but rather orientated towards foreign trade, industry and capitalist agriculture, it was, therefore, quite predictable that, sooner or later, the same trend of events should manifest itself in Southern Rhodesia under colonial domination. In Matabeleland for example, this process of social, economic and political transformation was quicker to take root than it did in Mashonaland not only because of the piecemeal manner in which the Ndebele state and its economic assets were seized and the people bamboozled into colonial rule between 1893 and 1896,⁹⁰ but also because of the paternalistic form of control adopted by the Company Administration towards the Ndebele society following the Matopo peace settlement with the Ndebele leaders in 1896.⁹¹ This paternalistic form of control pursued by Taylor and the Matabeleland Native Department, most of whose officials were recruited from Natal and, therefore, claimed some form of special association with the Ndebele people who were after all Zulu in origin, was, in every way, enhanced by parallel administrative efforts to create a neo-traditional elite out of the former Ndebele traditional leadership and aristocracy, by encouraging the Ndebele chiefs to send their children to South African institutions for education purposes, as the province's Chief Native Commissioner often did.⁹²

Official attempts to create a neo-traditional Ndebele elite were, of course, based on the awareness that since the introduction of colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia, the Ndebele ruling class had lost its traditional sanctions, in form of the well-organised pre-1893 politico-military machinery from which it had derived its power and

⁹⁰Vide Supra: pp 77-83.

⁹¹Vide: Makambe: "Colonialism and Racism....."

⁹²Vide: Report of the C/N/C, Matabeleland, for the Year 1906: pp 3-5.

legitimacy. For administrative purposes, the Company Administration was apparently bent on introducing new sanctions of its own to the different African traditional political systems then obtaining in the country, by insisting on competence, efficiency and loyalty as the basis of recruitment to chieftainship. In the process, these official designs were inevitably bent on transforming what had previously been a hierarchy of hereditary rulers and their client-chiefs into a hierarchy of civil service bureaucrats, recruited on the basis of competence and backed by such new sanctions as formal education, salaries, promotion and pensions on retirement. These innovations, as was proven in the cases of Uganda and Barotseland for instance, tended, to some extent, to favour sons of chiefs and other members of the royal circle who at first steadfastly held some form of monopoly over education at the expense of anybody else.⁹³

In Southern Rhodesia where this tendency to favour the African traditional ruling class would not have naturally surfaced, due to the fact that direct colonial rule rather than indirect political administration prevailed, it was essentially administrative paternalism on the part of the Matabeleland Native Department, combined with Rhodes's personal patronage over the Ndebele aristocracy, which together went a long way to mould a sizeable neo-traditional Ndebele elite of the 1910's and the 1930's. The idea was, of course, to intensify the process of acculturation within the Ndebele aristocratic class: strip this class of its pretensions to traditional sanctions of power within the Ndebele society and, therefore, isolate it from those forces and environment which tended to favour Ndebele irredentism in one form or another.

⁹³Cf. Caplan: *op. cit.* pp 91-4 and 120-2; and L. Fallers: "The Predicament of the Modern African Chief: An Instance from Uganda:" in I. Wallerstein (ed.): Social Change: The Colonial Situation: John Wiley & Sons Ltd: New York: 1966: pp 242-3.

The methods employed by both Rhodes and the B.S.A. Co. in culturally isolating the Ndebele aristocracy were, at least, very effective, but, nonetheless, not too successful. Thus in accordance with official conclusions and machinations in respective B.S.A. Co. circles, those three out of the seven sons of Lobengula, who were officially eligible to succession to the Ndebele throne, had been sent down to the Cape for education, soon after the demise of the Ndebele state in 1893. These included Njube, the heir apparent, and his brothers Mpezeni and Nguboyenja who were sent to Zonnebloem College in the Cape colony, where Mpezeni subsequently died in 1899 as a student.⁹⁴ The other Ndebele prince, Sidotjwa, was educated locally, being placed by the Company as he was, under the care of the Anglican missionaries at St. Augustine's Mission in the Umtali district of Mashonaland. Sidotjwa's alleged "low birth" on the mother's side, which obviously vitiated his claim to succession to the Ndebele throne, may, of course, have accounted for the manner in which the Southern Rhodesian Administration suffered him to remain in the country not only as a student, but also as a progressive farmer, firstly, in the Insiza district in Matabeleland and, later, in the Marirangwe African Purchase area near Salisbury.⁹⁵ In this respect, Sidotjwa was apparently in the same position as Nyamanda and Tjakalisa, whose potential as a threat to Company interests was grossly underestimated in official circles in Salisbury and Bulawayo.

In any case, as we have already hinted earlier on, the whole idea of educating the sons of Lobengula outside the country was a deliberate

⁹⁴C.O.417/484: Taylor, C/N/C to Milton: October 20, 1910. (The seven sons of Lobengula had included Mhlambi the eldest, who disappeared before 1893, and Nyamanda and his full brother, Tjakalisa, all three of whom were born before Lobengula became king in 1870. Those who were born after 1870 were Njube, Mpeseni, Nguboyenja and Sidotjwa).

⁹⁵Sidotjwa died in 1961 in Salisbury leaving behind four wives and 30 children. Vide: N.A.D.A.: No. 38: 1961: p 105.

design to alienate them from those forces and environment in Matabeleland which challenged the authority and interests of the B.S.A. Co., whilst, at the same time, the personal patronage of Rhodes over these scions of the Khumalo royal house was also expected to effect a much greater degree of control than the Administration of Southern Rhodesia would have been able to achieve over the Ndebele aristocratic class under normal circumstances. The plans of the B.S.A. Co. seemed to work at first, especially with regard to the formative years of the heir apparent, Njube, at Zonnebloem College.

Rhodes's personal involvement in the affairs of Njube and his brothers, reinforced by the acquiescence and co-operation of Lobengula's wives to persuade their sons to treat Rhodes as "their present father..." and that these sons should not be allowed to come back for holidays to Matabeleland lest they refused to return to their studies in the Cape,⁹⁶ temporarily produced the desired effect, from the point of view of the Southern Rhodesian officials. Thus during the course of the Ndebele heir apparent's studies at Zonnebloem College in 1898, the relationship between Rhodes and Njube greatly resembled that between a father and his son. It was, for instance, to the former that the latter appealed, in the manner of a good and well-behaved boy, for pocket money, as he did in September 1898 to buy picture frames.⁹⁷ It was also to Rhodes that Njube appealed for permission to proceed to Matabeleland for holidays, pleading as he did in October 1898:

Please Sir (Rhodes) will you let me go home
(to Matabeleland) for (a) holiday only? I
will not ask you any more when I have been
home. Will you please have mercy on me?

⁹⁶NBL/1/3: J. C. Makunga, Native Reserve, Bulawayo, to C/N/C, Bulawayo: January 5, 1898.

⁹⁷Mss. Afr. S.228/C.27: Njube Lobengula to Rhodes: September 23, 1898.

Please Sir, I tell you do not think that I will rebel against you. How can I do such a wicked thing against you because you are so kind to me, and you have been so careful to me, and giving me what I want? You can tell me how many days or weeks I may stay at home.... You can tell me to stay two or three weeks.

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This kind of harmonious relationship between the Ndebele crown prince and his conquerors, as portrayed above, was good for the B.S.A. Co. Administration whilst it lasted. But the situation was to change sooner or later.

The other son of Lobengula, Nguboyenja, apparently had a quieter but more brilliant spell at Zonnebloem. It was only after he had been sent to England in 1907 to read law, that Nguboyenja began to emerge as a force the B.S.A. Co. directorate in London and the Administration in Salisbury had to reckon with. The ambition of Nguboyenja to become a barrister, surely, did not augur well for the Company whose shabby deals in effecting the occupation and conquest of Southern Rhodesia lay outside the general ambit of ordinary legal ethics and were to be denounced accordingly before the Privy Council in 1919. In the circumstances, it is not surprising that the same Company tried to persuade young Nguboyenja to study for an alternative career either as a veterinary surgeon or a farmer, if not as a teacher or minister of religion, once he returned to South Africa.⁹⁹ The whole argument that it was "impossible" for the young Ndebele nobleman to become a barrister in Southern Africa, during the first decade of the twentieth century, on the grounds that "coloured men" had to wait for some time "in the distant future" in order to take up the legal profession, did not

⁹⁸ Ibid: Njube Lobengula to Rhodes: October 24, 1898.

⁹⁹ C.O.417/461: Memorandum by P. S. Inskipp on the Education of C. N. Lobengula, April 1, 1908.

certainly convince Nguboyenja, who was by then, as he himself indicated, quite aware of "two or three" Africans already in this profession in South Africa at the time.¹⁰⁰ Nor would Nguboyenja accept the Inskipp proposal that he could still pursue his legal studies only to end up practising either in West Africa, the West Indies or some other part of the world rather than in Southern Africa; a suggestion obviously put forward by the B.S.A. Co. official after a visit to Denstone College, where he had observed that some of Nguboyenja's co-students came from such diverse foreign countries as Burma, Jamaica and so forth.

The differences of opinion between Nguboyenja and the B.S.A. Co., regarding his career, were to lead to conflict and bitterness. In the course of this conflict Nguboyenja could not help feeling a sense of betrayal by his sponsors headed by Dr. Jameson, who had brought him to England from South Africa on the specific understanding that he would read for the bar.¹⁰¹ Thus with the passage of time and the change of heart on the part of London Wall, which finally allowed their protege to study law under a private firm in London by July 1908,¹⁰² Nguboyenja had already made up his mind to return home to Southern Africa. This departure was, to Nguboyenja himself, quite necessary as his senses of frustration and bitterness were rapidly giving way to depression.¹⁰³ This deteriorating relationship was, by no means, helped by the official stance and its lack of sympathy towards Nguboyenja's problems.

¹⁰⁰Note the role of the four lawyers (Pixley Ka Seme, Alfred Mangena, Richard Msimang and George Montsioa) who were involved in the founding of the A.N.C. (South Africa) in 1912. Vide: Benson: op. cit. pp 23-4.

¹⁰¹C.O.417/461: C. N. Lobengula to Dr. Jameson: April 13, 1908.

¹⁰²C.O.417/462: Memorandum by Inskipp: July 28, 1908.

¹⁰³Ibid: C. N. Lobengula to B.S.A. Co: July 31, 1908.

At Denstone College for instance, the principal, Father H. A. Hibbert, who had previously praised Nguboyenja as "...essentially a student" quite fit for university education,¹⁰⁴ sooner or later turned sour, once the young Ndebele prince refused to accept any of the proposals put forward by the B.S.A. Co. as alternatives. For this recalcitrant attitude towards the Company, Rev. Hibbert, in the end, came to regard Nguboyenja as a "cantankerous" and spoilt young man.¹⁰⁵ Nguboyenja's former Warden at Zonnebloem College, Rev. W. H. Parkhurst, who had hitherto acted as an adviser to the B.S.A. Co. on the young man's education and had all along sided with the Company, was also of the opinion that Nguboyenja had fallen under "bad influence" in England and should, therefore, not be allowed to return to Southern Africa, where it was expected that he would cause further havoc by becoming a veritable focus of "evil influence" to circles of dubious character.¹⁰⁶

It was apparently in accordance with Rev. Parkhurst's theory that the Administration of Southern Rhodesia was to treat Nguboyenja once he returned home in August 1908. The possibility of the young Ndebele prince becoming the centre of attraction to both the educated Africans of Bulawayo and the Ndebele chiefs throughout Matabeleland did not altogether tantalize some official circles in the country. In the end, it was decided, by the Southern Rhodesia Administration, to build a house for Nguboyenja in the Eastern Province of the Cape colony and to also provide him with land and an annual allowance of £150.¹⁰⁷ The offer was quite acceptable to Nguboyenja who had become virtually dismayed and

¹⁰⁴C.O.417/461: Memorandum by Inskipp....: April 1, 1908.

¹⁰⁵C.O.417/462: Rev. F. A. Hibbert to B.S.A. Co: April 18, 1908.

¹⁰⁶Ibid: Rev. W. H. Parkhurst to B.S.A. Co: June 29, 1908.

¹⁰⁷C.O.417/475: A. H. Holland, Administrator's Private Secretary to B.S.A. Co: November 24, 1908.

frustrated by the growing official hostility towards him in Southern Rhodesia.¹⁰⁸

If Nguboyenja's conflict with his mentors was based on what kind of profession he should pursue, that between his brother Njube and the same authorities dealt, essentially, with the rights and prerogatives of the former, as the rightful successor to the Ndebele throne. Indeed, with the illness of Rhodes and Njube's own marriage in March 1902, the Ndebele prince felt that, with the imminent death of Rhodes and his own rite de passage from boyhood into manhood, a stage had been arrived at whereby he had to cut himself off from the coat-tails of the Company and establish his claims with regard to the royal herds of cattle to which he was entitled in Matabeleland and the land promised him in the Cape colony, at the end of his studies.¹⁰⁹ In fact, as the Southern Rhodesian Administration continuously thwarted and frustrated Njube's claims, especially over cattle and kingship issues, by both denying these claims in question and systematically excluding the Ndebele heir apparent from the country, Njube's voice of protest became more strident and the chasm between him and the Company also progressively widened.

Thus following Njube's short visit to Matabeleland in 1909, to which Lord Selborne, the High Commissioner, took great exception and warned the Salisbury Administration against the indulgence (of allowing Njube to return to Matabeleland) "even for 24 hours",¹¹⁰ Njube responded to the ruling of the top Imperial official in rather strong terms. In Njube's opinion, the official decision to exclude him from Southern Rhodesia permanently could only be justified in terms of "a fresh 'Colour Bar' on the eve of the Union (of South Africa)" and the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid: C. N. Lobengula to Milton: December (?), 1908.

¹⁰⁹ NB1/1/15: A. N. Lobengula, Kimberley, to Milton: March 18, 1902.

¹¹⁰ C.O.417/491: Lord Selborne to Major Fair: November 16, 1909.

unscrupulous designs of the B.S.A. Co. to swindle him of the Ndebele royal herds of cattle, to which he was lawfully entitled; a fact which appeared to explain why the Company in question had failed to fulfill its bargain with Njube, that, once he had completed his studies in the Cape colony, it would meet its obligations to him by either simply retaining those cattle promised for the benefit of the Ndebele prince in Matabeleland itself or by sending them down to his farm at Barthust in the Cape at its own expense.

On the question of racism as the cause of his permanent exclusion from Southern Rhodesia, Njube's conclusion seemed quite justified in view of the fact that he considered himself a loyal British subject or, in his own words, "a peaceful man who has done no harm to my King or my country yet I am hounded from my own home (Matabeleland) while members of Parliament in England like Mr. Victor Grayson and Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill, all publicly avowed anti-monarchists and consequently.... rebels are permitted to continue their propaganda unmolested."¹¹¹ In addition, Njube could not understand why people like Colonel Lynch, whom he described as "a prominent rebel" during the Anglo-Boer War, who had even been sentenced to death for his anti-British activities, were, by 1909, pardoned and allowed to pursue their careers in peace, even as members of Parliament, formulating laws for both the British Isles and the Empire, whilst he himself was victimized for no crime he knew of. From this point of view, Njube, therefore, felt quite convinced to assert that all the vindictive measures taken against him by the Southern Rhodesian Administration, with the approval of the Imperial authorities, were carried out "merely because I differ in the colour of my skin from (Colonel) Lynch."¹¹²

¹¹¹ Ibid: Njube Lobengula to Lord Selborne: November 25, 1909: (This letter is also quoted in extenso in Ranger: African Voice: pp 35-6)

¹¹² Ibid:

Njube Lobengula's protest against the authorities in Southern Africa was significant not only in the sense that it laid down the course of action his sons, Albert and Rhodes Lobengula, were to pursue in the 1920's, to recover the Ndebele royal cattle once Njube himself had died in 1910,¹¹³ but also because it presaged a situation in Matabeleland whereby the Ndebele aristocracy, having been severely stung by repeated B.S.A. Co. rebuffs on personal issues, it, consequently, joined forces with other members of the neo-traditional and traditional elites as well as some Ndebele and non-Ndebele elements from the African middle class in that province, then beginning to appear quite vocal on matters of local and national concern.

In terms of the alliance between the highly sophisticated members of the Lobengula family, on the one hand, and the rank and file Ndebele people, on the other, it may be pertinent to observe here that these heirs to the Ndebele throne were fortunate in that they still commanded a great degree of loyalty from the Ndebele society; hence the anxiety in official circles in Matabeleland, over the imminent return of Njube to Southern Rhodesia in 1899, which compelled W. E. Thomas, the Acting Chief Native Commissioner in Bulawayo, to comment forcefully on what he viewed as "the mischievous intrigue" between Njube and the former Ndebele rebel leaders, pointing out, at the same time, that "He (Njube) evidently looks on himself as the future King of Matabeleland - an idea which should, for the peace of this country, be removed from his mind, and the minds of the Matabele, as soon as possible."¹¹⁴ The same attitude was demonstrated in 1926, when Njube's sons, Albert and Rhodes, were allowed to return to Matabeleland. Following the excitement which the presence of these two royal Ndebele youths engendered and which was

¹¹³For death of Njube, Vide: C.O.417/483: Extract from the Star: June 20, 1910.

¹¹⁴NB1/1/8: W. E. Thomas, N/C Bulalima - Mangwe to C/N/C Bulawayo: July 10, 1899.

expressed in the form of cattle and monetary contributions throughout the length and breadth of the province, a show-down meeting was conveniently arranged by the Native Department in the Bubi district in October 1926, in the course of which the Ndebele chiefs and their followers were informed that "...Albert and Rhodes (Lobengula were) being allowed to live in the Colony (Southern Rhodesia), at the pleasure of the Government, without any official status."¹¹⁵ The potential of the grandsons of Lobengula to challenge and undermine the authority of the Administration in Matabeleland was, in this instance, evident enough and had, therefore, to be contained.

In another sense, the descendants of Lobengula became a natural focus for discontented rank and file Ndebele people, because of the peculiar problems associated with land division and shortage throughout Matabeleland in the 1910's and 1920's. The traditional role of the Ndebele rulers as the distributors of land, which they had, in the past, held in trust for their people, had apparently become a useful means for wedding the Ndebele leadership and its followers together during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Land shortage throughout Matabeleland had become very commonplace and widespread during the period before the appointment of the Native Reserves Commission in 1914, as has already been indicated elsewhere in this study.¹¹⁶ Indeed, as early as 1912, Native Commissioners themselves were becoming increasingly concerned over the land shortage problems in Matabeleland, especially exacerbated, in this case, by the growing tendency of the landowning companies to systematically increase the rent charges payable by African squatters on their properties in an off-hand manner.

¹¹⁵S.607/1926: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: October 11, 1926.

¹¹⁶Vide Supra: pp 731-3; 761-2.

Thus in November 1912, the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district expressed his anxieties with regard to the action of some six companies, to wit the Mashonaland Agency, the Bulawayo Syndicate, the Amalgamated Properties Limited, the Bechuanaland Exploration Company, the Gold-fields (Rhodesia) Limited and the Pioneer Exploration Limited, which had introduced grazing tariffs, in addition to the ordinary annual rent charges, on their various farms throughout the district and, by so doing, affecting an adult male population of 654 people, from whom they had normally collected a sum of £981. 0. Od. every year. The Ndebele communities so affected, naturally, resented these new developments. And as the followers of Chief Sikobokobo indicated, these Ndebele squatters in question complained bitterly that "they (the landowners) wait till we are starving and then do these things; even if we did agree to pay what guarantee have we (that) they will not increase the rents further at some other date; they will be taking money from the flies in our kraals next. Better be dead than pay such demands."¹¹⁷ Given such resolve on the part of the Ndebele squatters of the Bubi district against further rent charges, it is not at all surprising, therefore, that they began to move from private land into the already crowded Shangani Reserve.

The plight of the Ndebele squatters of the Bubi district was by no means exceptional. By 1913, the provincial headquarters of the Native Department in Bulawayo reported that as many as 7,429 people and 11,000 cattle were expected to remove from privately-owned land into the reserves throughout Matabeleland, in response to increased fiscal demands by private landowning companies.¹¹⁸ This state of affairs

¹¹⁷C.O.417/533: Lanning, N/C Bubi to C/N/C Bulawayo: November 13, 1912.

¹¹⁸C.O.417/533: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Hole: February 19, 1913.

was obviously worsened by the fact that the activities of these private landowners enjoyed some measure of support from both white colonist quarters and some official circles. The Matobo branch of the Rhodesian Landowners' and Farmers' Association, for instance, supported the whole move on increased charges against African squatters either on private or unalienated land, because, in the view of this colonist pressure group, this would prevent an economic situation whereby Africans were enabled "to compete against the white farmer on favoured conditions...."¹¹⁹ The Chief Native Commissioner for Matabeleland, on his part, justified the contested increase in rent charges on the grounds that it was "only reasonable that the bona fide farmer should get a return from the native to whom he has leased a portion of his ground, in the shape of a rental (fee) based on the productive value of such land to the native concerned...."¹²⁰

In London too, whilst the A.P.S. attacked these increased charges, especially those imposed by the B.S.A. Co. itself on Africans living on the controversial unalienated land from which the said company collected about £3,000 annually,¹²¹ the Colonial Office, however, did not share such views. In fact, the Colonial Office actually attacked the then recent publication on Southern Rhodesia by Professor Rolin of Brussels,¹²² quoted by the A.P.S., as a "very far reaching... indictment of the white man's attitude towards the black (man)..." For its part, Number 12 Downing Street took exception, particularly to the

¹¹⁹Ibid: Quoted in F. G. Elliott, N/C Matobo to C/N/C Taylor: February 14, 1913.

¹²⁰Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Hole: January 13, 1913.

¹²¹C.O.417/537: Travers Buxton, Organising Secretary, A.P.S. to C.O: August 22, 1913.

¹²²Vide: Henri Rolin: Les lois et l'administration de la Rhodesie: E. Bruylant: Bruxelles: 1913.

Belgian scholar's assertion that white settlement in Southern Rhodesia was divorcing the African from land and reducing him to a " 'regime de salariat industrial et agricole' ", which was considered to be more of an unjustifiable moral attack rather than a legal accusation against the B.S.A. Co. In short, the Colonial Office endorsed the policy of the Company to charge rent on unalienated land on the basis that "even on moral grounds.... the policy of taking rent has the support of the (South African) Native Affairs Commission of 1903."¹²³

Given this official blind-eye attitude quoted above, it is not surprising, therefore, that the plight of African squatters in Matabeleland worsened progressively as the problem of land shortage became more pronounced with the passage of time, whilst the landowning companies and other specious landlords tightened their screws, in the process, with a greater degree of resolve than ever before throughout Southern Rhodesia.¹²⁴ To meet this problem of land shortage in Matabeleland, the Administration of Southern Rhodesia shied away from the main issue, which was simply the locking up of a large amount of land in the country by individual speculators and private syndicates as well as the equitable distribution of that unalienated land, which still remained, but was being claimed by the B.S.A. Co. itself in its private capacity as a commercial concern. Thus in the long run, the solutions sought for and applied to meet the needs of the Ndebele squatters were essentially short-term and marginal to the whole problem. In the Nyamandhlovu

¹²³C.O.417/537: Minute by Lambert to Just: September 1, 1913.

¹²⁴Note that even the authorities in charge of the B.S.A. Co. property, the Rhodesdale Estate, lying adjacent to the Que Que Reserve, so tightened up the conditions regulating its African squatters in 1914/15 with the result that this led to a conflict with the colonist employers of labour either on the nearby mines or on the farms. Vide: A3/18/30/44: Memorandum by C/N/C Taylor re: Treatment of Natives on Rhodesdale Estate: March 20, 1915.

district where, for example, Chief Madloli Lopila, the nephew of Lobengula, had clashed with his landlord over land at Inyezi from which this Ndebele leader and his followers were then due for eviction in 1920, the Administration could only solve the problem by removing Chief Madloli to the Shangani Reserve, in spite of the latter's protest that "... in the days of Umziligaze and Lobengula (the Gwaai and Shangani areas) were never inhabited by people," as the region was considered "a desert where wild beasts (lived)" and was, therefore, "similar to the Kalahari Desert."¹²⁵

In the Insiza district, the Administration hoped to solve the land shortage question by means of wholesale transfers of the African communities so affected to other districts. Thus at the beginning of 1921, it was decided to remove the Ndebele people of Chief Maduna, in the Southern portion of the Insiza district, to the neighbouring Belingwe district. The rationale behind this official decision, which was effected by 1923,¹²⁶ was that the Shona-dominated Belingwe district was, in any case, formerly part of the area under the charge of the Godhlwayo section of the pre-1893 Ndebele state and, for this reason, Chief Maduna's people were, therefore, only being removed to an area "within their own former sphere."¹²⁷ Similarly, the Shona communities resident in the proposed area of the Belingwe district were to be removed not merely because it was considered "undesirable to mix the two tribal elements, as this would only lead to friction", but also because it was assumed "unreasonable to allow (the Shona) to scatter indiscriminately over the large areas of the (Belingwe) Reserve."

¹²⁵C.O.417/641: Quoted in Notes of Proceedings at an Interview granted by His Excellency the High Commissioner (in Cape Town) to a deputation of natives from Southern Rhodesia: August 18, 1920.

¹²⁶Vide: Report of the C/N/C for the Year 1923: p 2.

¹²⁷NBB1/1/1: Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: March 24, 1921.

From the northern portion of the Insiza district, more Ndebele squatters were also to be transferred to the Shangani Reserve; a proposal which, in this instance, met with strong opposition from the Native Commissioner of the Bubi district, who himself had had an eye on the Shangani Reserve too, as a probable outlet for those of his charges then living on the property of the Rhodesia Goldfields Development Company, but whose tenure was expected to end shortly.¹²⁸

Finally, in the Ntabazinduna Reserve where, by 1928, overcrowding conditions had reached crisis proportions, the Ndebele communities so affected looked forward to their possible removal to the distant Charter district in Mashonaland, whither they converged with their kinsmen, the followers of Chief Gwebu "Fish" and Bonke, then facing eviction from privately-owned land in the Umzingwane district.¹²⁹ In the opinion of the top officials of the Native Department, the move to transfer the landless Ndebele communities, especially from the Ntabazinduna Reserve, was a welcome relief in the face of adverse conditions occasioned by overcrowding, drought, scarcity of food and grazing land, which had in turn become the cause of heavy losses in stock.¹³⁰ But like all other moves before it, the Ntabazinduna transfer was simply a short-term solution and, obviously, did not fundamentally alter the land shortage situation for the better. Over-population and over-stocking had become a far much more complex phenomenon in the province either in the 1920's or thereafter.¹³¹

¹²⁸Ibid: Carbutt, N/C Inyati to S/O/N Bulawayo: April 11, 1921.

¹²⁹S.607/1928: J. W. Possett, N/C The Range, Charter to C/N/C Salisbury: April 25, 1928.

¹³⁰Ibid: Staley N. G. Jackson, Acting C/N/C to N/C, Charter: June 30, 1928.

¹³¹Vide: J. R. V. Prescott: "Over-population and Over-stocking in the Native Areas of Matabeleland" in R. M. Prothero (ed.): People and Land in Africa South of the Sahara: Readings in Social Geography: Oxford University Press: London: 1972: pp 245-8.

Because of its ambiguous position within the context of both the Ndebele nation and the Southern Rhodesian colonist society, the neo-traditional Ndebele elite, represented especially by the sons and grandsons of Lobengula, was better placed to liaise with all segments of the African society in the country. They thus became not only a centre of attraction to the country's emerging African middle class (by the 1910's and 1920's then predominantly of South African origin), but also an essential source of inspiration to those locally-based ethnic associations, which somehow simulated caste associations, due to their exclusive nature. In another sense, the neo-traditional Ndebele elite also assumed, in its dealings with the rank and file Ndebele, a role which resembled, in every way, that of the African middle class in West Africa in the 1950's, in relation to its interaction with the masses during the heyday of African nationalism. The African middle class in West Africa was evidently a versatile segment, which resorted to nationalism as a weapon to both protect and advance its own social, political and economic position and privileges within the framework of the colonial set-up.¹³² Similarly, whilst the sons and grandsons of Lobengula as well as other members of the Khumalo dynasty had their own axes to grind, they found it more beneficial to marry their own grievances with those of the Ndebele masses in order to wage a more effective campaign within the general rubric of Ndebele national interests.

Thus for his own sake, Nyamanda, the eldest surviving son of Lobengula, at first complained to Chaplin, the Administrator of Southern Rhodesia, about what this Ndebele nobleman called "my poverty and hunger", as he had only "one hundred head of cattle", whilst some of Lobengula's former councillors had many more, like, in this case, Gambo

¹³²M. L. Kilson: "Nationalism and Social Classes in British West Africa" in Wallenstein (ed.): Social Change: The Colonial Situation: pp 536-7.

who, Nyamanda said, "possesses large herds my father's cattle". Accordingly, Nyamanda, unsuccessfully though, implored Chaplin in October 1915 to the effect that "I want my father's inheritance. I see my father's dogs in enjoyment of herds of cattle while I have nothing. I want my father's izinduna to be told to give me my cattle."¹³³ Nyamanda's cousin, Madloli Lopila, was compelled in 1920 to proceed all the way to Cape Town in quest of an interview with the High Commissioner regarding the problem of land shortage in the Nyamandhlovu district, which had very grievously affected him on a personal level, as we have already seen.¹³⁴ The grandsons of Lobengula, Albert and Rhodes, were very much concerned too with their social and economic affairs, when they returned to Southern Rhodesia; hence the cattle-collecting activities of the heir apparent, Albert Lobengula, throughout the various districts of Matabeleland, because he wanted to have something to kill for those people visiting him at Queen Losikeyi's Location in the Bubi district, where he lived.¹³⁵

But whilst their personal grievances were quite pronounced, it is significant to observe that this Ndebele aristocratic class was, sooner or later, able to effectively co-ordinate these personal interests with those of the Ndebele nation at large. In the circumstances, the role of Nyamanda in the Ndebele National Home movement of the early 1920's, which aimed at reviving a mini-Ndebele state within the colony of Southern Rhodesia,¹³⁶ is hardly surprising. The same could be said with regard to Albert and Rhodes Lobengula. By 1927, Albert Lobengula was, for example, playing the role of a credible patron and guide to a

¹³³N3/33/12: Report of an Interview on... 11 October 1915 between Nyamanda and the Administrator.

¹³⁴Vide Supra: pp 861-2.

¹³⁵S.607/1926: S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: October 6, 1926.

¹³⁶Vide: Ranger: The African Voice.....: pp 78-87.

greater portion of those landless Ndebele communities throughout Matabeleland, who were prepared to raise some funds for the purpose of purchasing land.¹³⁷ In his turn, Albert's younger brother, Rhodes Lobengula, was hotly sought for, a few years later, as the figure head of such ethnic-orientated associations as the Ndebele National Home Society.¹³⁸ Of course, it could be said that, like their contemporaries, the Lozi aristocrats across the Zambesi,¹³⁹ the move by the descendants of Lobengula to involve themselves with Ndebele nationalism was essentially a reactionary attempt to restore the lost privileges of the past and that the Ndebele neo-traditional elite was primarily concerned with nobody's interests but its own. Yet, on the other hand, to achieve its goal, the Ndebele aristocracy had to engage itself in a direct frontal challenge of the various fundamentals of white rule and, in this manner, inexorably brought its own cause within the mainstream of the general African crusade against B.S.A. Co. rule in Southern Rhodesia.

From the preceding evidence, it may, therefore, be argued that the alliance between the Ndebele neo-traditional elite and the Ndebele rank and file was simply a marriage of convenience, dictated by factors of common historical precedence and solemnized by the peculiar problems imposed by colonial rule onto both strata of the Ndebele society. With regard to the associational relationship between the same neo-traditional Ndebele elite and the largely alien-dominated African middle class in Matabeleland, a number of factors are significant on the matter. As has already been hinted before, Africans from below the Limpopo, who

¹³⁷S.607/1927: S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: June 30, 1927.

¹³⁸D.O.35/370/10555: C. H. Rodwell, Governor, to J. H. Thomas, M.P: October 17, 1930.

¹³⁹Cf. Caplan: op. cit.: pp 122-3.

constituted a bulk of the African educated elite during the first three decades of Southern Rhodesian history, were themselves linked to the Ndebele society by factors of historical import.¹⁴⁰ But, on the other hand, these South African black émigrés were people who were committed to the new order under colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia rather than a traditional-orientated one. They were men and women who highly prized achievement, rather than ascriptive criteria, as the proverbial sesame to high status attainment in a colonial society, which in turn paid lip-service to vertical mobility as an essential feature of high status crystallization.

Thus in their associations of the 1910's and 1920's, the South African black émigrés in Southern Rhodesia were greatly influenced by their counterparts in the early African National Congress (South Africa), who believed in what Gwendolen Carter calls the philosophy of "South Africanism", which aimed at the attainment, in the sub-continent, of a common citizenship for everybody irrespective of race, creed or occupation; a goal which these early African nationalists obviously hoped to attain not only by trying to influence the white colonists to change their attitudes, but also by appealing to "what were thought to be common Western values."¹⁴¹ In essence, the members of the emergent African middle class of the 1910's and 1920's in Southern Rhodesia were, in relation to their movements and pressure groups, people who were both seriously conditioned and inhibited by their Western ways of life, their alienation from the masses and their incredible degree of faith in the implications of Christian democracy. They

¹⁴⁰Vide Supra: p 818.

¹⁴¹G. M. Carter: "African Concepts of Nationalism in South Africa" in H. Adam (ed.): South Africa: Sociological Perspectives: Oxford University Press: London: 1971: p 105.

believed that "... the process of (social and political) evolution was working in their favour, that their problem was fundamentally one of appealing to the Christian and liberal conscience inherent in white men and of raising the living standards of the Africans to accord with Western values. They expected equality to follow as a matter of course once Africans attained required standards of education and civilization!"¹⁴²

Given this ideological framework within which early African nationalists operated in Southern Africa, it is scarcely surprising to discover that the African movements of the 1910's and 1920's in Southern Rhodesia were, too often, both marginal and irrelevant to the problems of the country's African population. The activities of those associations instituted by and primarily intended to look after the interests of black émigrés from South Africa, essentially, justify the conclusion already pointed out above. Indeed, between 1914 and 1922 for instance, the Union Bantu Vigilance Association (U.B.V.A.) and its alternate organisation, the Union Natives Vigilance Association (U.N.V.A.), very clearly demonstrated in their activities, that they represented a distinctive segment of the Southern Rhodesian African society, which did not favour any form of immediate integration with the indigenous societies.

Formed in Salisbury at the beginning of 1914, the U.B.V.A. for example, reflected its South African orientation in every sense of the word. Its first territorial executive, for instance, consisted of such notable black émigrés as S. M. Vanga, Makubalo, Garnett Magwan, Masiko and Mazingi.¹⁴³ By 1922, just before its demise, only Magwan, a Xhosa teacher at Waddilove Institute in the Marandellas district near Salisbury,

¹⁴²Fatima Meer: "African Nationalism - Some Inhibiting Factors" in Adam (ed.): South Africa: Sociological Perspectives: p 126.

¹⁴³N3/7/2: Taylor, C/N/C to S/O/N, Salisbury: March 5, 1914.

however, still survived as the U.B.V.A. Secretary-General, whilst the rest of the first executive had been replaced. John R. Moeketsi, a Sotho immigrant living in Salisbury, had become the President of the organisation, with Victor Mothohela, another Sotho, also resident in Salisbury, as his deputy. Levi Hella, a prosperous Xhosa immigrant farmer and cattle owner at the Wesleyan Methodist mission station, Sandringham, near Hartley, was appropriately appointed the association's General Treasurer. Vanga had become, by 1922, the chairman of the Bulawayo branch of the U.B.V.A., whose executive also consisted of such men as Z. M. Makgatho and his brother T. M. Makgatho, R. Moyanaga, D. M. Molebatsi and Oliver Somkence;¹⁴⁴ all of whom were either original black émigrés from below the Limpopo or their descendants.

Perhaps because of the predominantly alien membership of these early associations of the 1910's and 1920's, as well as the commitment of the black émigrés themselves to Christianity and white rule in Southern Rhodesia, it is, therefore, easier to understand why the programmes and objectives of their parties were so totally unrealistic and superficial, in the face of a whole host of African problems then obtaining in the country. For example, in March 1914, just a month after the U.B.V.A. had been formed at a meeting attended by "about 20... Colonial Natives" in Salisbury,¹⁴⁵ this association was already calling for the exemption of its members from the general run of the territory's pass legislation, on the grounds that they had rendered loyal service during the Ndebele war (1893) and the Shona/Ndebele risings (1896/7). The new association also demanded to see some improvement in railway facilities, especially for those African passengers capable of paying for "a third class ticket."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴N3/21/10: Bulawayo Branch, U.B.V.A. to S/O/N Bulawayo: May 12, 1922.

¹⁴⁵N3/7/2: Taberer, S/O/N Salisbury to C/N/C: March 30, 1914.

¹⁴⁶Ibid: Quoted in Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary, Department of Administrator: March 31, 1914.

Similar demands were also raised between 1917 and 1922 by the U.B.V.A. In 1917 for instance, the U.B.V.A. complained against municipal regulations prohibiting the Africans to walk on the pavements in towns; the curfew system which confined the urban African to the locations after nine o'clock at night and the charging of rent by municipalities (about 1/4 per night) for African visitors, spending a night or two with relations in the locations. The association complained too against the constant raids by the police of the African dwellings in the locations for passes and beer and the manner in which these raids were mounted, particularly the demand that the African occupants of the dwellings in question should always take off their hats at the appearance of the police.¹⁴⁷

By 1922, these U.B.V.A. grievances had by no means changed either in tone or gravamen. It was still the issues on exemption from passes; compulsory removal of hats by the Africans in the presence of white colonists; demoralization of African girls in the urban environment and so forth, which worried the black émigrés. Of course, a new zest had apparently been injected by 1922 in the old U.B.V.A. grievances. In its demand for railway facilities, especially waiting rooms for African passengers, this association, for instance, denounced the existing ones as only "suitable for the use of Bureau (R.N.L.B.) natives..", hence the need to provide new and better arrangements altogether for Africans of a "superior and progressive class..."¹⁴⁸ In addition, the black émigrés disapproved of the ordinary hempen wear provided to those of their kinsmen serving some time in prison. As the Bulawayo branch of the U.B.V.A. informed Jackson, the Superintendent of

¹⁴⁷Ibid: Quoted in Taylor, C/N/C to Town Clerk, Salisbury: April 16, 1917 and Taylor, C/N/C to Officer Commanding, B.S.A.P., Salisbury Town: April 16, 1917.

¹⁴⁸N3/21/10: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: June 19, 1922.

Natives for the region, in June 1922, the black émigrés in Southern Rhodesia were quite proud of their status as a class distinct from others, even under the rather humiliating prison circumstances. In this vein, they indicated "We natives from the South are accustomed to wear European clothing such as shirt, coat, trousers, socks and boots. Civilized offenders should not suffer this additional degradation (of wearing canvas clothing)." ¹⁴⁹

The U.B.V.A. activities during the period between 1914 and 1922, are significant in many ways, within the context of this study. In the first place, the U.B.V.A. and, to some extent, the U.N.V.A. also, as Eli P. Nare, its Secretary, demonstrated in April 1917, ¹⁵⁰ were obviously pre-occupied with those matters which were very close to the hearts of the black immigrants from South Africa. As far back as 1909, the Mfengu and the so-called "civilised natives" of Bulawayo had complained to the High Commissioner, Lord Selborne, on the question of prison clothes and, at the same time, objecting to the practice of prison authorities issuing to "civilized natives" "... a sort of calico dressing gown.... like prisoners who (had) worn no clothing all their lives..." The Mfengu and their compatriots then resident in Bulawayo wanted to see their kinsmen in prisons provided with clothes "like a Cape Boy (and an Indian) and not like a naked savage," ¹⁵¹ a request considered quite "reasonable" by Lord Selborne. ¹⁵² Individuals of standing, like the two Wesleyan Methodist ministers, Moses Maribi and Moses Mfazi, then working in Matabeleland, also expressed concern in January 1922 over the provision of a wrong type of dress to "civilised natives" in

¹⁴⁹ Ibid:

¹⁵⁰ N3/33/12: Eli P. Nare, Secretary, U.N.V.A., Salisbury to S/O/N Salisbury: March 22 and April 12, 1917.

¹⁵¹ C.O.417/491: Petition of Fingoes and Educated Natives of Bulawayo to Lord Selborne: November 12, 1909.

¹⁵² Ibid: Lord Selborne to Major Fair: November 16, 1909.

jails, which they claimed to be the cause of pneumonia amongst the inmates.¹⁵³

Special clothing for educated African prisoners, among whom Africans from the South were, of course, to be found, was important for its symbolic value. It marked the distinctiveness of the black émigrés from South Africa as a social segment, altogether different from other member groups of the African society of Southern Rhodesia. This value of distinctive prison clothing for educated Africans, comes out clearly from the circulars of various magistrates in response to the U.B.V.A. requests on the matter in 1922. In Salisbury for instance, prisoners from indigenous African societies and trans-Zambesian labour migrants were given "canvas garments" for wear, whereas the matter was different with "natives from the Union."¹⁵⁴ In Fort Victoria, a higher clothing scale was said to be issued "...to quasi-civilized natives which (included) all colonial (Cape) born natives, Somalis and others, who (had) been used by their own customs to clothes only." A standard of education, based on "the acquirement of some other language rather than their own; coupled with a refinement of habit alien to most of the negroid races inhabiting equatorial Africa,"¹⁵⁵ was required for an African prisoner to qualify for this special prison clothing.

In short, special prison clothing served the same purpose as exemption from passes; licences to possess firearms and cartridges; acquisition of land by private purchase and the right to vote, to name only a few, which may be regarded as other symbols of high status crystallization amongst the black émigrés from the South then resident in Southern Rhodesia. For this reason, the Mfengu and other African

¹⁵³N3/21/10: Quoted in Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator, Salisbury: January 18, 1922.

¹⁵⁴Ibid: Smith, Magistrate, Salisbury, to Secretary, Law Department: July 18, 1922.

¹⁵⁵Ibid: Magistrate, Victoria, to Secretary, Law Department, Salisbury: July 17, 1922.

immigrants from South Africa constantly pestered administrative officials to be granted any of the qualifications indicated above, as Garner Sojini and other Selukwe Mfengu were said to be doing to Staley Jackson, the Superintendent of Natives for the Gwelo division, in February 1914.¹⁵⁶

Secondly, the activities of the South African orientated associations in Southern Rhodesia, namely the U.B.V.A. and the U.N.V.A., to a large extent, succeeded in laying down the framework within which kindred organisations later operated, especially during and after the 1920's. In this respect, it is, therefore, pertinent to conclude that the U.B.V.A. and the U.N.V.A. were the progenitors of a political philosophy which one might term the concept of "Southern Rhodesianism",¹⁵⁷ advocating for a wide-ranging common citizenship ideal, embracing everybody in the country, irrespective of race, creed or occupation, as long as one accepted the fundamentals of white colonial rule and qualified for the requirements thereof. In the light of this argument, it is thus easier to understand the origins, objectives and the whole modus operandi of those quasi-political associations which succeeded the U.B.V.A. and the U.N.V.A. after 1922.

The Rhodesia Bantu Voters' Association (R.B.V.A.), which was, for instance, formed in March 1923 as a replacement to the U.B.V.A., reflected, in many ways, those characteristics so closely associated with the earlier movements. The R.B.V.A. believed in a Christian solution to the problems not only of its members, but also to those of the Southern Rhodesian composite colonial society in its entirety. For this reason, the preamble of the R.B.V.A. constitution stated, for its members,

¹⁵⁶ N3/9/2: S. N. G. Jackson, S/O/N Gwelo to C/N/C Salisbury: February 19, 1914.

¹⁵⁷ The term "Southern Rhodesianism" has been coined here as an equivalent to Gwendolin Carter's concept of "South Africanism" conveying the same philosophy: Vide: Supra: p 864.

that "... we believe that only by means of industrial education, a test of Christianity our people will rise gradually in the scale of civilization and that religion must be fostered to grow as the true foundation of a man's character." The associations motto was also quite revealing and indicated "Honour all men, Love the Brotherhood, Fear God, Honour the King (George V)." ¹⁵⁸

The "Southern Rhodesianism" philosophy of the R.B.V.A. was actually demonstrated by the presence, at its inauguration ceremony in Gwelo, of white colonists, ranging from members of the Legislative Council to missionaries, as well as a delegate from the country's Indian population. The first executive of the R.B.V.A. consisted of Chief Garner Sojini, the former Mfengu leader, and his son, Stuart Sojini, from the Selukwe/Gwelo area; Martha Ngano, a Cape born teacher based in Bulawayo; Thomas Maziyane, a Sotho immigrant assimilated into the Ndebele society; Ernest Dube of Gwelo; Eli P. Nare, a Sotho immigrant from Salisbury, and Abraham Z. Twala, a Zulu living near Salisbury. As was then peculiar to the black émigrés from the South, the new party would not have fulfilled its job at all if it had omitted mentioning, as it did, the promotion of African education and the encouragement of Africans to enrol as voters. ¹⁵⁹

The Rhodesia Native Association (R.N.A.), formed a year earlier than the R.B.V.A. and consisting of a mixture of both indigenous Africans and second generation black émigrés from the South, based largely in Mashonaland, said much the same things as its rival organisation, but with a very large dose of ultra-loyalism to the Establishment. One of the leaders of the R.N.A., was, for instance, Johannes

¹⁵⁸ N3/21/6: Preamble to the Constitution of the Rhodesia Bantu Voters Association, Enclosed in Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: March 15, 1923.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid: Constitution of the R.B.V.A., Enclosed in Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: March 15, 1923.

Seroki Mokwile, the son of Lucas Mokwile, a Sotho evangelist from the Transvaal, who had come into the country before white rule to carry out missionary work for the D/R/C.¹⁶⁰ Johannes Mokwile had been born at Madzivire in the Chibi district of Mashonaland and was subsequently educated at the famous L.M.S. institution, Tiger Kloof, in the northern part of the Cape province. Mokwile, like his association, had come to accept the racially stratified colonial society of Southern Rhodesia as a fait accompli.

Perhaps because of his civil service job in the Department of Public Works, based at Ndanga where he was employed since 1922, Mokwile was also very much afflicted by the race complex syndrome and the social Darwinism which this implied, in terms of racial interaction in Southern Rhodesia. Thus after a train journey in 1924, between Gwelo and Fort Victoria, in the company of an Indian co-passenger who had apparently denounced the African land-owners for not making profit out of their land-holdings by hiring out the same for rent, Mokwile became quite spiteful of his own race. Accordingly, he declared that "... unless we (Africans) who live side by side with these white men resolve to depart from primitive conditions, progress is impossible." He wanted to see the Africans "... move with the times, use their opportunity, talk less (and) work more." He particularly disapproved of educated Africans of the Jabavu stamp, then advocating for participation in the political processes of their countries, whom he called men of "extravagant talk.... who (made) leadership their only profession."¹⁶¹ To Mokwile, the African's salvation in the sub-continent lay only in hard work and Christianity and not in aping white men, as educated Africans did.

¹⁶⁰Vide Supra: Chapter I: pp 177-8.

¹⁶¹J. S. Mokwile: "Native Ideals": N.A.D.A: No. 2: pp 95-7: 1924.

Like its leader, the R.N.A. betrayed very much the resignation of its members to the status quo in Southern Rhodesia of the 1920's. It raised its voice on matters of least importance to the African peoples of the territory. These matters included the privilege to bid farewell to the outgoing Administrator, Chaplin, and his wife;¹⁶² representation of African interests by reasonably sympathetic officials in the course of negotiations with Smuts, in connection with the possible amalgamation of Southern Rhodesia with the Union; and other trivial issues like exemption from passes.¹⁶³ For these reasons, the R.N.A., therefore, won much respect from the Salisbury officials, who viewed it, in the words of Chief Native Commissioner Taylor, as "a reputable organisation" which, unlike the U.N.V.A., was "a non-political body whereas the latter {dabbled} in politics."¹⁶⁴ As long as it exuded such ultra-loyalism as it did, the R.N.A. posed very little threat to the fundamental basis of white colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia and was, therefore, quite welcome.

The third significant factor associated with the activities of the organisations of the African immigrants from the South then resident in Southern Rhodesia in the 1910's and 1920's, is the manner in which these early organisations in question, along with their constituents, were able to exert some measure of influence onto the indigenous African societies in which they operated. In Matabeleland for instance, these immigrant-dominated associations were more successful than they were in Mashonaland, for a number of reasons. The historical factor excepted, the province of Matabeleland was certainly more southward-

¹⁶²N3/21/5: J. J. Baminingo, Secretary, R.N.A., Salisbury to Administrator: August 29, 1923.

¹⁶³Ibid: Baminingo to Administrator: January 23, 1922.

¹⁶⁴Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Administrator: August 31, 1923.

looking than that of Mashonaland; a fact which was greatly facilitated, in this instance, by the officials of the province's Native Department, who had been themselves largely recruited from the South, especially from Natal. Besides, the settlement of the Mfengu immigrant community at Bembesi near Bulawayo was one measure whereby the influence of the black émigrés from the South was greatly strengthened in the province by overt administrative fiat. In addition, the exile of the sons of Lobengula and their subsequent education in South Africa, since the end of the 1893 war, was another aspect which inadvertently cemented the bond between the Ndebele neo-traditional stratum and the African peoples of the territories below the Limpopo, whether as indigenes in their own countries or as immigrants in Southern Rhodesia. The marriages of Njube Lobengula for example, firstly to a Mfengu woman in 1902 (the mother of his sons Albert and Rhodes Lobengula) and later in 1905, after the death of his first wife, to the daughter of Chief Ngangelizwe in the Xhosa country,¹⁶⁵ may be viewed as some of the personal acts which inevitably strengthened the South African orientation of the people of Matabeleland. Finally, as has already been hinted, the black émigrés from South Africa were men and women who had had a long history of interaction with the white society and the related colonial forces of change and were, therefore, committed to colonist rule, particularly so in Southern Rhodesia, where they were virtually rootless aliens, with only white colonist power as their base.¹⁶⁶ They believed and were considered to be, in Southern Rhodesia, part and parcel of the predominantly alien African middle class status; a fact which apparently prompted the Bulawayo branch of the U.B.V.A. to point out to the authorities in June

¹⁶⁵C.O.417/484: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Milton: October 20, 1910.

¹⁶⁶Vide Supra: pp 865-6.

1922 that "The privileges of this (exemption) pass should be extended to all natives from the Union (of South Africa) as they are, in almost all cases, comparatively educated men."¹⁶⁷

Because of the particularistic conception of the black émigrés from the South, in regarding themselves as a veritable super stratum within the context of the Southern Rhodesian African society, it is, therefore, hardly surprising that these immigrants tended to associate and ally themselves with only the best from the country's indigenous African population. In Matabeleland, their alliance with the Ndebele aristocracy and other members of the Ndebele neo-traditional elite should naturally be viewed in this light. The Ndebele aristocracy boasted not only because of its Company-sponsored education in South Africa, at a time when even little elementary education was scarcely available in Southern Rhodesia itself, but also because it counted within its ranks one or two individuals who, as a prelude to social and cultural integration, had actually tasted the seeds of an English life in the metropolitan country itself.

Firstly, there was, for example, Nguboyenja Lobengula who had spent a spell of his student life at Denstone College in England, between 1907 and 1908, before he returned to Southern Africa following a difference of opinion between himself and the B.S.A. Co., regarding his proposed legal career.¹⁶⁸ Secondly, there was also the case of Peter Lobengula, the controversial son of the former Ndebele monarch, who had apparently proceeded to England in 1899, in connection with a play on the pre-1893 Ndebele state at the Earls Court Exhibition. Peter Lobengula, popularly known as "Prince Lobengula", thereafter lived in England, subsequently getting married to an Irish woman in 1901.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷N3/21/10: Quoted in Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: June 19, 1922.

¹⁶⁸Vide Supra: pp 849-52.

¹⁶⁹C.O.417/537: Extract from the Daily Chronicle: October 28, 1913.

Till 1913, when he was unearthed by the Manchester Guardian, this Ndebele nobleman had for several years lived in Manchester, working as an ordinary collier at the Agecroft Colliery: an occupation that was obviously responsible for the consumption from which he was suffering at the time and the tuberculosis, which had also afflicted all his four children, as they had become solely dependent on charity and a small pension granted to their bed-ridden and dying father.¹⁷⁰

On account of its peculiar position, the Ndebele aristocracy, like its Lozi counterparts across the Zambesi,¹⁷¹ found itself placed in an ambiguous position, whereby its constituents were both members of a caste associated with a glorious past, which they naturally would have liked to revive and inherit, whilst, at the same time, they were also in the forefront of the African movement for modernisation in Southern Rhodesia. The very fact that the grandsons of Lobengula wanted to recover their grandfather's royal herds of cattle by the late 1920's, whilst, at the same time, they also owned cars,¹⁷² is a very interesting illustration of the dichotomy in which these representatives of the Ndebele neo-traditional elite found themselves in. But for the black émigrés from the South, the Ndebele neo-traditional elite was the ideal ally they were looking for. Thus for instance, whilst Nguboyenja Lobengula was still in England in 1908, his closest friends were mostly Africans from South Africa, like the grandson of the Tswana ruler, Chief Montsioa of Mafeking; Poswayo from the Transkei and a number of others, whom he had met at the South African Institute in London.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰C.O.417/535: Extract from the Manchester Guardian; October 24, 1913 and also C.O.417/536: Peter Lobengula to Harcourt: November 2, 1913.

¹⁷¹Vide: Caplan: loc. cit.

¹⁷²Vide: S.607/1926: S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: October 8, 1926.

¹⁷³C.O.417/462: Miss Maude Reid to B.S.A. Co: August 3, 1908.

In South Africa, the Rev. Henry R. Nqçayiya and other leaders of the Ethiopian Churches in the Union, for instance, did a great job in putting forward the claims of one Thomas Ndaba ka Lobengula before the government of Southern Rhodesia and the High Commissioner in Cape Town in 1923, but without any success.¹⁷⁴ In Southern Rhodesia itself, it was Nqçayiya again and other leading South Africans, like the Rev. Z. R. Mahabane and L. J. Mvabaza, both leaders of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, who had allied with black émigrés such as the Hlazo brothers, Stephen and Titus Hlazo, to bring the grievances of Nyamanda and other members of the Ndebele aristocracy before the Imperial authorities in 1919.¹⁷⁵

In view of these activities, it was, therefore, quite fitting that the black émigrés of Southern Rhodesia should have also sought, in Matabeleland, an alliance with the grandsons of Lobengula, especially Rhodes, by the late 1920's. Rhodes Lobengula was, in a way, by far the more enterprising and worldly-wise of the two royal sons of Njube Lobengula. Towards the end of 1926, he had applied for permission from the authorities in his district to open a school of his own at the Queen's Location farm, where he was living, near Lonely Mine.¹⁷⁶ But this application was refused due to the fact that Rhodes was considered too young and inexperienced, and also on the grounds of inadequate European supervision for African schools in general. Moreover, the Salisbury authorities were not quite confident that Rhodes Lobengula,

¹⁷⁴Vide: C.O.417/695: Statements of Rev. H. R. Nqçayiya before H. A. Key, J.P., Johannesburg: July 9, 1928 and of Rev. Joseph Spawn (Shangaan) and Ndaba ka Lobengula before R. Harrison, Superintendent of Natives, Maitland: August 8 and 9, 1923.

¹⁷⁵Vide: C.O.417/617: The Petition of Nyamanda and Members of the Family of the late King Lobengula and Others of the Mandebele Tribe in Matabeleland and Mashonaland Jointedly with the President, Ministers, Members and Adherents of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa...: Bulawayo: March 10, 1919.

¹⁷⁶S.607/1926: Rhodes Lobengula, C/O Rev. Hlabangana, Lonely Mine to N/C Inyati: November 3, 1926.

who had just opened a shop, could adequately divide his time between the proposed school and his private commercial venture. As a consolation, the Salisbury officials instead renewed their offer to the young Ndebele prince, to teach at Domboshava near Salisbury; a post Rhodes himself had earlier on applied for, stipulating his preference to work in a government rather than a mission school.¹⁷⁷ Dissatisfied by the state of affairs in the teaching field and the bureaucracy allied with it, Rhodes consequently decided to immerse himself more deeply into the business world and, by 1927, was already applying for a five year allowance advance from the Southern Rhodesian government, to supplement his savings from the Queen Losikeyi estate with which he intended to set himself up as a General Dealer and Eating House Keeper in Kimberley, in the Cape colony.¹⁷⁸

Rhodes Lobengula's spirit of enterprise, versatility and, above all, his invaluable role as a champion of the African modernising element was, inevitably, to capture the eye of not only his Ndebele followers, but also the attention of the black émigrés from the South. Thus by 1930 both the Ndebele National Home Society (known around Bulawayo as the 'Ilihlo Lo'muzi') and the R.B.V.A. wanted to see Rhodes join the leadership of their respective associations; in the former as the Society's Secretary General and in the latter as the Chairman.¹⁷⁹ Because of this growing popularity of Rhodes Lobengula, it may perhaps have been justifiable for the Governor of Southern Rhodesia, Sir C. H. Rodwell, to conclude as he did in a secret communication to the Dominions Office, at the beginning of 1931, that:

¹⁷⁷Ibid: H. M. Jackson, Ass. C/N/C Salisbury to S. N. G. Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo: November 24, 1926.

¹⁷⁸S.607/1927: S. N. G. Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: January 14, 1927.

¹⁷⁹D.O.35/370/10555: Rodwell to Thomas: Secret: April 18, 1931.

Of the surviving descendants of Lobengula, Rhodes is the only one who appears to exercise any influence or to be likely to cause the {Southern Rhodesian} Government trouble. Albert, the brother...., is employed in the Native Department and, although he is not entirely trusted, does not seem to be politically inclined. Rhodes has a second brother who resides in the Union {of South Africa} and is believed to be out of touch with Rhodesian affairs. He also has two surviving uncles, Sitojiwa and Ngubeozenja, but neither is of any account and the latter is mentally deficient. 180

The associations of black émigrés from the South, together with those of indigenous origin in Matabeleland, were to cash on these attributes of this on-coming Ndebele nobleman. In the circumstances, the deportation of Rhodes to South Africa, then contemplated by the Southern Rhodesian government in 1932, allegedly for this Ndebele prince's involvement in the extortion of the " 'King's cattle' from natives by threats" along with his half-caste cousin, Baby Usher,¹⁸¹ may apparently have been a convenient excuse for a nakedly vindictive official measure.

On a slightly lower plane, it could also be argued that the impact of the black émigrés from the Union was more pervasive than appears at first glance in the province of Matabeleland. Because of the position of these African immigrants from the South as constituting the second tier within the composite Rhodesian colonial society, they consequently became a positive reference group for the rest of the African population, who aspired to join this African middle class. In Matabeleland, with its traditional South African orientation and the presence of

¹⁸⁰Ibid:

¹⁸¹D.O.35/370/10555: Rodwell to Thomas: Secret: April 23, 1932. (Both Rhodes and Albert were, however, ultimately deported to South Africa for political reasons. They lived on a farm bought for them by the Southern Rhodesian government near Peddie in the Cape province, where both died young; Rhodes supposedly by a drowning accident. Vide: Tredgold: op. cit.: pp 104-6.)

a motley of assimilated African elements, the emerging educated African became easily the most suitable stratum for cementing the bonds between the alien and indigenous communities. One such figure, who was best placed to act as a veritable broker between the two African fronts, was Thomas Maziwane, for instance.

Maziwane was a Sotho immigrant to Matabeleland who had acquired some education and a small farm for himself through his job with the railways. To mark his progress in social and economic mobility in Matabeleland, he was on two occasions married to half-caste (coloured) women. He was quickly assimilated into the Ndebele society, because of the historical affinity that had developed in the nineteenth century between the people of Sotho origin and the fugitive Ndebele nation, during its sojourn in the Transvaal.¹⁸² Moreover, some black émigrés from the Union tried by all means to encourage Ndebele educational efforts as Rev. Radasi did at Bembesi up to 1924.¹⁸³ By these means indicated here, a closer relationship was consequently forged between the black immigrants from the South and the ordinary Ndebele.

Politically, the associations of the black émigrés from the Union appear to have been responsible for injecting a sense of ultra-loyalism to the Establishment into the people of Matabeleland and their organisations of the 1910's and 1920's. On this score, Thomas Maziwane's choral group, the Surprising Singers' Association, consisting of six female members and nine male ones of both South African and Matabeleland origin, is a good illustration which immediately strikes one's mind. In mid-1917, Maziwane himself, as the choir's conductor, applied for

¹⁸²This material is based on Interview with the Rev. Archdeacon Oliver Somkence: St. Patrick's Mission: Gwelo: November 20, 1975 and also Ranger: op. cit. p 92.

¹⁸³Vide: Macpherson (ed.): op. cit.: pp 25, 27 and 32.

permission from the authorities to tour the Salisbury-Shamva region of Mashonaland, holding concerts in order to "encourage and increase the patriotic spirit of the Natives towards helping the good cause of the British Empire in every way."¹⁸⁴ Perhaps as a practical demonstration of this choral group's ideals, the funds raised in the course of its tour were placed at the disposal of the African regiments then on military duty in East Africa.¹⁸⁵

The Loyal Amandebele Patriotic Society, of which Maziyane was, once more, the chairman, also shared these ultra-loyalist sentiments with regard to both local Southern Rhodesian and British Imperial authorities and institutions. It spoke of itself as an association representing "a people loyal to the British Flag."¹⁸⁶ It grieved over the death of Lord Kitchner in 1916, whom it called "... the warrior of warriors, the fighter who made war with weapons,.... and whose guidance of our (British) armies (would) be remembered by whites and blacks."¹⁸⁷ H. M. Jackson, the Superintendent of Natives for the Bulawayo division, was equally praised by the Loyal Amandebele Patriotic Society, apparently for attending to their grievances sympathetically, and called "... the Gwada elishlope li ka Jackson, who is our fountain on which we rely for refreshment and rest..... we trust that you (Jackson) will fight for us in all native affairs and troubles."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ N3/21/7: Thomas Maziyane, Conductor, Surprising Singers' Association, to S/O/N Bulawayo: June 10, 1917.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: September 12, 1917.

¹⁸⁶ N3/21/1: Thomas Maziyane, Chairman, Loyal Amandebele Patriotic Society to S/O/N Bulawayo: August 30, 1916.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid: Quoted in Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: June 10, 1916.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid: N. E. Mahlahla and A. B. Zembe, Secretaries, Amandebele Patriotic Society to S/O/N Bulawayo: March 4, 1916.

Whilst it is, of course, true to speak of those associations of the black émigrés, like the U.B.V.A. and the U.N.V.A., as having been, especially in the 1910's, responsible for propagating an ultra-loyalist sentiment in Southern Rhodesia because of the peculiar circumstances of their constituents, on the other hand, this may not be particularly true with regard to those pressure groups of the 1920's. The R.B.V.A. for instance, in spite of its commitment to the Christian solution as the panacea to the problems of its supporters, was definitely not very well regarded in the official circles in Salisbury, where it was portrayed as essentially representing another outcrop of the growing race consciousness amongst the Africans in the Union of South Africa, then championed particularly by the African National Congress.¹⁸⁹ Besides, the Salisbury authorities were, to some extent, quite chary over what they suspected to be the doctrine of an " 'Africa for the Africans' ", which they associated with the R.B.V.A. and whose ultimate political goal they concluded would be, as the gloomy Chief Native Commissioner indicated, "... to concentrate native opinion more and more upon the view that Africa should be mainly, if not exclusively, developed in the interests of its indigenous races."¹⁹⁰

This progressive hardening of official opinion towards those organisations, dominated by black South African immigrants, was certainly a new departure. Yet on the other hand, it should be viewed in the proper context of the changing circumstances of the 1920's. The black émigrés were by that time facing new challenges to their traditional role

¹⁸⁹Vide: N. H. Wilson: "Native Political Movements in Southern Rhodesia": N.A.D.A.: No 1: 1923: p 17.

¹⁹⁰N3/21/6: Memorandum on the formation of the Rhodesia Bantu Voters' Association by C/N/C Taylor to Secretary, Department of Administrator: March 15, 1923.

as the sole index of African modernising influence in Southern Rhodesia. In Mashonaland, there had emerged the R.N.A., a motley clique of both alien and indigenous African elements, which effectively contested with the R.B.V.A. for official favours and superficial African support.¹⁹¹ In Matabeleland, the Ndebele National Home Society was, in the late 1920's, gradually growing in support and strength; a development which undoubtedly had its climax in the Bulawayo riots at the end of 1929, when the Home Society was said to have been the brains behind the mobilisation of the Ndebele residents of that town and surrounding districts against most non-Ndebele people living there.¹⁹²

In the circumstances, the belated attempts of the Bulawayo branch of the R.B.V.A. to widen and radicalize its programme of action, to include the rural masses, especially in the Gwanda region where the government was about to start the systematic destruction of cattle at the beginning of 1930, as a precautionary measure against the spread of East Coast Fever,¹⁹³ must, therefore, be viewed as an overt R.B.V.A. tactic to steal the limelight from the Ndebele National Home Society. In view of this state of affairs, Sir Rodwell's conclusion that "The (Ndebele National) Home Society appears to have taken the place, as far as the Matabele are concerned, of the Rhodesia Bantu Voters' Association, which included Fingoes as well as Matabele",¹⁹⁴ may have been quite a pertinent observation, with regard to the struggle of the black émigrés from the South in maintaining their position of prominence in Matabeleland in particular and in Southern Rhodesia as a whole.

¹⁹¹Vide Supra: pp 871-3.

¹⁹²D.O.35/370/10555: Rodwell to Thomas: Secret: January 23, 1930 and also the Bulawayo Chronicle: January 4 and 11, 1930.

¹⁹³Ibid: Rodwell to Thomas: Secret: April 16, 1930.

¹⁹⁴Ibid: Rodwell to Thomas: Secret: April 18, 1931.

The success of the South African-orientated associations of the 1910's and 1920's in Southern Rhodesia was minimal. The conclusion that the black émigrés from South Africa helped to initiate the Southern Rhodesian African into the whole maze of white colonist politics,¹⁹⁵ whilst correct is, at the same time, overplayed in terms of its significance to the indigenous societies of that territory. Indeed, to argue, as Gray does, that the associations of these black émigrés were instrumental in promoting the African campaign for "a greater share in the white man's world",¹⁹⁶ is both unconvincing and unrealistic. Neither is Gray's corollary thesis, which exaggerates the importance of the black South African immigrants in Southern Rhodesia, in attempting to influence the indigenous peoples in "...turning their backs on the shattered traditional society and the life of the Reserves, and... (face) the challenge of an 'open society' (of post-1898)," also acceptable in any way, as far as this study is concerned. The associations of the black émigrés were, even in Matabeleland where they were comparatively more influential, both marginal and irrelevant to the problems then faced by the African societies of Southern Rhodesia up to 1930. Their concentration on the franchise (when by 1929 there were only 62 African voters as compared to over 22,000 whites);¹⁹⁷ exemption from passes; removal of hats in public places; prohibition on walking on pavements in towns and so forth, especially after the World War I when racism and the demand for spatial segregation were gathering momentum, culminating in the appointment of the Morris Carter Land Commission of 1925 and the subsequent introduction of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930,¹⁹⁸ is a

¹⁹⁵Vide: Ranger: op. cit. p 45.

¹⁹⁶Gray: op. cit. p 161.

¹⁹⁷Vide: Palley: op. cit. p 243: Footnote No. 6.

¹⁹⁸Vide: Palmer: op. cit. p 130. (Ironically, even Gray himself acknowledges the drive for segregation as the cause of the consolidation of colonist economic and political power in Southern Rhodesia by 1930. Vide: Gray: op. cit. pp 12-7.)

classical demonstration of the valuelessness of these early organisations, dominated by African immigrants from South Africa.

In one sense, this led to a situation which inexorably justifies the assumption that these early African organisations were, at best, "...minimally effective pressure groups recruiting both leaders and members either from the urban elite or from distinct ethnic groups".¹⁹⁹ At worst, the members of these early associations were essentially emasculated constitutional reformists, who shied away from any form of Africanist solution to their problems, in fear of encouraging inter-group polarization and also confrontation with the colonist governments in Southern Rhodesia. Like their contemporaries in South Africa, after the Native Land Bill of 1913, the early leaders of African opinion in Southern Rhodesia were, in spite of the increasing aggressiveness of colonist policies, especially in the 1920's, men who responded to political provocation "... with great equanimity, resorting to respectfully worded petitions and politely conducted deputations rather than to overt hostility."²⁰⁰

In short, it could, therefore, be argued that the protonationalist organisations of the 1910's and 1920's in Southern Rhodesia tried, in every way, to avoid an exclusivist attitude and an Africanist approach, which placed emphasis on the integrity of the African as an individual and his capability to control his own destiny and, by so doing, dismally failed to deal with the practical problems of the whole colonial situation in a way that could have very effectively influenced the ordinary African in the territory. Indeed, unlike the later-day independence movements all over Africa, which concentrated on the issues of political control as well as reforms in and re-structuring of the existing land

¹⁹⁹Patrick O'meara: Rhodesia: Racial Conflict or Coexistence?: Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London: 1975: p 96.

²⁰⁰Meer: "African Nationalism - Some Inhibiting Factors": pp 126-7.

and labour policies for instance,²⁰¹ the protonationalists of Southern Rhodesia were virtually comedians in the theatre of the absurd.

Whilst the black émigrés from the South tried their best, against heavy odds, to establish and solidify their influence in Matabeleland by 1930, in Mashonaland it could be said, without much doubt, that they failed. The reasons for this failure are evident. Those historical factors which had generally favoured their integration into the Ndebele society were patently missing in Mashonaland. In addition, the nature of the initial contact between these émigrés and the Shona societies, at the beginning of Southern Rhodesia's colonial period, was by no means very pleasant. The black émigrés, in their capacity as an auxiliary force of occupation and conquest, had tended to exploit their prominent role as an interpolating medium between the white colonizers and the colonized indigenous communities, with the result that they incurred a great measure of odium from the African communities throughout the length and breadth of Mashonaland. The contempt and disdain, in which these black immigrants often held the local African communities in general and the Shona peoples in particular, did not help matters at all, either before or after the 1896/7.²⁰² In the circumstances, the normal process of group interaction between the Shona societies and the black immigrants from the South was seriously inhibited and conditioned by these attitudes and features of their initial contact in early Southern Rhodesia.

Long after the 1896/7 risings, the scars and wounds occasioned by the pre-1896 inter-group attitudes and perspectives still governed the pace and character of the uneasy truce that existed between the

²⁰¹Vide: Jack Woddis: Africa: The Roots of Revolt: Lawrence & Wishart: London: 1960: pp 43-5.

²⁰²Vide Supra: pp 88-9.

indigenous Shona communities and the motley of African immigrants from the territories below the Limpopo. Because these black émigrés were culturally and socially marginal to the Shona societies in Southern Rhodesia, they very often treated their indigenous hosts in a rather cavalier manner. This state of affairs, in post-1898 Mashonaland, was quite an interesting reversal of similar developments in Buganda, for instance, in relation to the whole modicum of interaction between the indigenous Baganda and the abanamawanga (foreigners) in the 1940's and 1950's. Whereas in Buganda, the Baganda as hosts regarded immigrants from the West Nile, and Ruanda-Burundi as "savages"; "violent and lawless"; "dirty and... having unpleasant personal habits"; generally uneducated and, therefore, inferior to the Baganda themselves,²⁰³ in Mashonaland, the opposite was quite true, with regard to group interaction between the Shona communities and the African immigrants from below the Limpopo.

In the case of Mashonaland, it was not simply those factors of historical and cultural import, which tended to have, as it were, pre-determined the character of the relationship between these two component groups of Southern Rhodesia's plural society. There was also the question of modern social development and high status crystallization, which the black émigrés from the South had apparently achieved through the acquisition of such criteria as Western education, Christian religion and the possession of an assortment of industrial and economic skills that the indigenous African peoples scarcely had, especially during the first three decades of the twentieth century history of Southern Rhodesia. In her recent study on the characteristics of the colonist Rhodesian rural societies, Dr. Weinrich has amply demonstrated the importance attached to education by the country's African communities,

²⁰³A. I. Richards: "The Assimilation of the Immigrants" in Richards (ed.): Economic Development and Tribal Change: Chapter VII: pp 161-2.

as well as the prestige accorded to the African teachers and, to some extent, the religious workers also in these same communities. In Dr. Weinrich's estimation, the educated African elite within the context of the modern colonist Rhodesian African society "...enjoys particularly high esteem.... because it is exceedingly difficult for Rhodesian Africans to complete higher education. (About) less than 2 per cent of all African students complete nine years schooling, less than half a per cent eleven years..... and only 0.04 per cent complete full secondary education." Dr. Weinrich goes on to conclude that this is the kind of situation, which justifies the assumption that "... the less the opportunity for upward mobility exists, the greater is the merit of success,...."²⁰⁴

Given this state of affairs in the 1960's, with regard to the general view towards the educated African elite, it is by no means amiss to assume that in Southern Rhodesia before 1930, a period with which our study is concerned, the situation was even worse. Under these circumstances, it would seem certainly naive to imagine that the African middle class, then consisting mostly of immigrants from the South, was unaware of this enormous prestige attached to its achieved status. The fact that even the indigenous pioneers of African education in Southern Rhodesia had, up to the 1950's, to proceed to South Africa for further and higher education,²⁰⁵ was also not altogether insignificant. Indeed, the dominance, by the 1960's, on the colonist

²⁰⁴A. K. H. Weinrich (alias Sister Mary Aquina): Black and white elites in rural Rhodesia: Manchester University Press: Manchester: 1973: pp 103-4.

²⁰⁵By 1952 for instance, the Southern Rhodesian government was paying about £1,400 per annum to educational institutions in South Africa as well as the provision of bursaries and grants for 19 African students attending degree courses at Fort Hare University College and 2 medical students at Witwatersrand University. Vide: Report of the Director of Native Education (G. Stark) for the Year 1952: p 47.

Rhodesian social and economic scene of a largely estranged African superstratum of inspectors of schools, both educated in South Africa, especially before the Bantu Education Act of 1953, and also married to wives of South African origin,²⁰⁶ is definitely a cogent testimony on the importance that the South African connection once commanded in the colonial history of Southern Rhodesia. From all appearances, it would seem, therefore, that even before 1930, there was a large degree of awareness on the enormous importance attached to this South African connection, if not strongest among the indigenous Africans then certainly it was amongst the black South African immigrants themselves, who were apparently also bent on exploiting this state of affairs.

In the Melsetter district of Eastern Mashonaland for example, where Zulu missionaries were brought by their American counterparts from Natal to promote missionary enterprise amongst the Nda (Shona) and also solidify the fraternal relationship between the new field of religious endeavour and the Natal mission of the American Board of Foreign Missions, these Zulu workers enjoyed, in every sense of the word, enormous influence and ipso facto retained a very high socio-economic status within the indigenous communities in which they operated, between 1888 and 1912. Indeed, with their attainment of literacy and industrial skills, especially in crafts such as carpentry, brick- and tile-making as well as bricklaying, the Zulu missionaries of the Melsetter district felt convinced that they had achieved such an economic standard of living and a level of Western education as would render them tolerable and acceptable to their white colleagues. For this reason, these Zulus inexorably formed an identifiable interest group of workers, who viewed themselves "as an elite vis-a-vis the

²⁰⁶Vide: Weinrich: Black and white elites in rural Rhodesia: p 174.

Ndau, but were treated as inferior by the white missionaries".²⁰⁷

To emphasize their social standing and separateness within the context of the African society of Masetter, the Zulus restricted all their forms of interaction with the Ndau people to a very minimal level. Thus during the course of their evangelistic tours before 1912, these alien African missionaries were reluctant to sleep in African huts, placed at their disposal by their hosts in the African villages, and, instead, insisted on sleeping in their own tents, as their white colleagues did. They resented intermarriage between their daughters and the Ndau men, even the educated ones. Thus in 1912, when one of the Zulu girls married an educated Ndau man, in spite of the wishes of her community, the Zulu guests at the wedding disparagingly compared the occurrence "to pigs raiding a garden".²⁰⁸ Between 1907 and 1912, when the American missionaries began to question the whole idea of teaching and preaching to the Ndau people of Masetter in Zulu instead of using Ndau language as a more convenient medium of communication, the Zulu missionaries themselves, paradoxically, supported the idea of introducing Ndau, if only on the grounds that Zulu was not merely "a language of the elite of the area", but also because they felt that "to teach (Ndau) school children to speak in Zulu,...., was to give to humbler peoples illusions of grandeur."²⁰⁹

The case of the Zulu missionaries in the Masetter district, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was by no means bizarre in terms of any attempt to understand the process of group interaction and relationship between the black émigrés from the South and the indigenous African peoples of Southern Rhodesia in general and those of Mashonaland in

²⁰⁷Rennie: op. cit. pp 501.

²⁰⁸Ibid: p 512.

²⁰⁹Ibid: p 510.

particular, in the period before 1930. Throughout the length and breadth of the Shona country, these immigrants actually seem to have been more conscious of what they regarded as their "superior" social status than they had ever been in the province of Matabeleland. In the Selukwe district, a predominantly Shona area administered as part of Matabeleland, the Mfengu and other immigrants from the South manifested some of these social characteristics we have already examined in relation to their Zulu compatriots in the Melssetter district. Intermarriage between indigenous African males and the daughters of these immigrants was, perhaps, the most sensitive issue and hence the most frequent source of conflict. In 1912 for example, one Mfengu immigrant in the Selukwe district, Stephen Silwana, took great offence, when his daughter, Flora Silwana, was made pregnant by John Chidoda, a Karanga, of the same area. In a civil suit at the Native Commissioner's, Stephen Silwana could not help parading his credentials, as the basis to his refusal to accept the proffered union between Chidoda and his daughter, in the following manner:

I am a Fingo and a Christian. I am not prepared to allow Defendant (Chidoda) to marry my daughter. I told him I would not allow him to do so..... I am a Registered Voter in this District (Selukwe). I hire 150 morgen of land in this District from Willoughby's Coy at £45 p.a. I have 38 head of cattle and two wagons. My father was a Christian. I can read and write. I take in a newspaper (regularly). The Defendant is (Karanga). I was (a) Telegraph Messenger at Gwelo for several years. 210

In this Silwana/Chidoda case, what was at stake were neither the credentials of Silwana himself nor the welfare of his daughter, whom Chidoda was obviously prepared to marry and support in every way possible. On the contrary, Silwana, as a Mfengu, was, like all his other compatriots

²¹⁰NGC2/1/1: Evidence of Stephen Silwana before N/C Selukwe: July 31, 1912; in Stephen Silwana vs. Joe Chidoda: Case No. 32/1912.

resident in the country, more concerned with what he and his colleagues represented as members of a second tier stratum and, therefore, a class of intermediaries between the black and white societies in Southern Rhodesia, than with anything else. In the Selukwe district, the Mfengu immigrants had achieved a distinct economic and social position by the 1910's; a fact which was actually corroborated by Native Commissioner, L. C. Meredith himself, in 1914, when Stephen Silwana, along with Jafari Malusi, Jolana Xongo and Piet Nobula, applied to jointly purchase a farm of about 1,500 morgen (over 3,000 acres) in size in the Belingwe district.²¹¹ In keeping with this high status, the Mfengu of Selukwe had also carried out a micro-struggle of their own, outside the mainstream of the general crusade of the black émigrés, as represented in this case by the U.B.V.A. and the U.N.V.A. than operating throughout the province of Matabeleland. Thus in 1917 the Selukwe Mfengu petitioned Chaplin, the Administrator, immediately after his visit to the area, for government-owned land on which to live and pay rent rather than the privately-owned one whereupon they squatted.²¹² Led by Garner Sojini, his son Stuart Sojini and George Sillah, this group of immigrants drew the attention of the Salisbury authorities to their requests, demanding to be heard "... as voters under the English Government on the question of privileges and rights due to voters in matters under Government control."²¹³

In the requests of the Selukwe Mfengu for permission to carry firearms; to buy farms and exemption from passes, the recurrent theme throughout was that their status as an elite should be recognised.

²¹¹N3/10/6: L. C. Meredith, Acting N/C Selukwe to S/O/N Gwelo: May 16, 1914.

²¹²Ibid: Petition of George Sillah, Selukwe, to Administrator: June 11, 1917.

²¹³Ibid: Petition of Stuart G. Sojini, Selukwe, to Administrator: June 11, 1917.

Any concessions in these areas in which they requested special rights and privileges were, of course, to serve as symbols and badges of status to these immigrants. Thus in a district where the Mfengu were surrounded by a large population of indigenous communities into which they were reluctant to integrate, the Selukwe Mfengu specifically emphasized the symbolic functions of those rights and privileges they demanded by pointing out that:

The Government gives us permits to possess guns, but not as though we were voters. The guns are, as it were, only lent to us, as there is a clause in the permits restricting their use.....

We have no privileges (or rights) as voters for, further, we are not allowed to purchase farms from the Government, a fact which destroys the privilege of being voters.

Although we are voters we carry papers (registration certificates) which, here in Rhodesia, nullifies our rights. We have no privileges as voters, there is no distinction (with other Africans). 214

In other parts of the Shona country, relations between the black emigres and the indigenous communities were not very intimate either. In the capital, Salisbury, and the surrounding region, the black immigrants from below the Limpopo were just as opposed to establishing meaningful social relations with the Shona peoples as their colleagues in the Melsetter and Selukwe districts were. To this end, the U.N.V.A. appealed to the government in 1917, for some legal measures forbidding intermarriage between its male members and Shona girls. For this reason, this South Africa-orientated organisation informed the Salisbury authorities that "... our people (are) marrying Mashona girls, and at the same time when they go home (to South Africa) cannot go with them, because parents at home cannot allow them, on any account. We therefore

214 Ibid:

do not see the use of marrying a girl who cannot be accepted at home!"²¹⁵ This U.N.V.A. request on intermarriage with the locals of Mashonaland was by no means extraordinary and was naturally based on the assumption, well portrayed by John P. Ngoni in the Silwana/Chidoda case at Selukwe in 1912, when he stated, in support of Stephen Silwana's claim against John Chidoda, that "the lobola usually claimed (by the Mfengu) from a person of low standing (for marrying one of their daughters) is from 20 to 30 head of cattle."²¹⁶ This was certainly in total contrast to the "ten or eight head of cattle" claimed in terms of intra-Mfengu marriages,²¹⁷ but was obviously intended to check the incidence of this form of social interaction, especially with the indigenous peoples of Mashonaland.

On the personal level, a number of the black émigrés living in Mashonaland before 1930 appear to have strictly abided by these conventions of their community on minimal social interaction with the locals. Frank Zixubu, the Zulu evangelist, who had arrived in Southern Rhodesia before 1896 with the Anglican missionaries,²¹⁸ for instance, provides a good illustration of a black South African immigrant who quite effectively regulated his degree of social and even economic interaction with the indigenous peoples of Mashonaland. By 1925, he was still not married in spite of his 34 years stay in the province. Moreover, on his 600 acre farm, where he carried out some kind of mixed farming, there was scarcely any Shona individual either amongst his tenants or his labourers. Of the 14 families (80 people altogether)

²¹⁵N3/33/12: Eli P. Nare, Secretary, U.N.V.A., Salisbury, to S/O/N Salisbury: March 22 and April 12, 1917.

²¹⁶NGC2/1/1: Evidence of John Ngoni before N/C Selukwe: July 31, 1912.

²¹⁷Ibid: Evidence of Stephen Silwana.....: July 31, 1912.

²¹⁸Vide Supra: pp 30-1.

squatting on his Waterfalls farm near Salisbury, these were mostly of Zulu, Ndebele, Shangaan and "Zambesi" (~~Tonga~~) origin.²¹⁹ Abraham Twala, another Zulu, who was staying with Zixubu, running a school at Waterfalls and had been in Mashonaland since 1914, was still not married also by 1925. Instead, he had a fiancée in South Africa, for which purpose he intended to go back to the Union and marry.

Of course, Twala's social restraint was obviously in keeping with his attitude towards the Shona peoples whom he did not consider as progressive as his Ndebele kinsmen. Thus on being asked by the members of the Morris Carter Commission in March 1925, on the prospects of Africans buying land on the basis of individual tenure in Southern Rhodesia, Twala made no effort to disguise his ideas on his African hosts and went on to indicate: "One thing I am sure of is that the Matabeles would buy the farms, but the indigenous natives (the Shona) would not understand. The indigenous natives are simply looking forward to being given a reserve, and staying under communal tenure. They just want to be together."²²⁰

Under the circumstances indicated above, it is hardly surprising that when Twala became involved with the leadership of the R.B.V.A. since 1923, he felt more comfortable in Matabeleland than in Mashonaland, where he lived. His lack of support in Mashonaland was largely due to the fact that the people on whom he could have relied did not like him and his ethnic chauvinism.²²¹ Yet Twala and Zixubu were not abnormal, in any way. A greater proportion of those African immigrants from South Africa, living in Southern Rhodesia up to 1930, actually shared

²¹⁹S.96/1: Evidence of Frank Zixubu, Salisbury: March 24, 1925.

²²⁰Ibid: Evidence of Abraham Z. Twala, Salisbury: March 24, 1925.

²²¹Interview with the Rev. Archdeacon Oliver Somkence: St. Patrick's Mission: Gwelo: November 20, 1975.

these feelings of condescension and passionate dislike of the Shona peoples of the country. On this account, it is, therefore, not at all intriguing to find that when in the early 1920's, the Mfengu immigrants at Bembesi were carrying out a campaign against those of their womenfolk proceeding to urban and mining centres, where they became victims of sexual exploitation and immorality,²²² they also implored that these women should be forbidden to establish any form of social liaisons with Shona men as well. Indeed, according to Chief Nzimende's communication to the Native Department authorities in November 1923, the Mfengu were quite prepared and willing to have their womenfolk marry Ndebele men rather than "... running away with (Mashonaland) boys and..... other foreigners (whom the Mfengu did) not want to be (friendly) with..."²²³

In the preceding evidence on group interaction between the black immigrants from South Africa and the African societies of Mashonaland before 1930, it has been shown quite clearly, that there was no love lost between these two segments of Southern Rhodesia's colonial society. As far as the black émigrés were concerned, they were quite convinced that the social and cultural gap between themselves and the Shona peoples was too wide to be ignored. In fact, it was even considered an advantage by the African middle class, to which these black émigrés belonged, that the social distance separating them from the ordinary African should be maintained, so as to enhance the standing of this caste-like stratum either in the province of Mashonaland or throughout the whole territory.

²²²Vide: NBB3/1/1: Mbotu vs. Lumva alias Esther: Civil Record Case No. 1/1920; Abel vs. Jessie Sikepe: Civil Record Case No. 10/1920; and Somkepu vs. Nonina: Civil Record Case No. 1/1921.

²²³S.607/1923: Chief Nzimende Ndondo to N/C Inyati: November 12, 1923.

On their part, the Shona communities came to realize that the black émigrés from the Union were evidently a class apart from the locals and, for this reason, any kind of structural incorporation of these immigrants seemed, at first, out of the question. Although, outside the native reserves, the separation between the black immigrants and the Shona peoples appeared more or less informal and ill-defined, it, nevertheless, led the latter to conclude, as the Ndau did in Melsetter, that the former were "in much the same category as white (colonists)," since they too were not subjected to the usually rough and tumble demands of the country's colonial regimen.²²⁴ Thus because of this situation, characterized by mutual antagonism, suspicions and a noticeable degree of social and cultural distance between the indigenous Shona societies and the black émigrés of Mashonaland, it follows that the influence of the latter on the former was rather limited in the 1910's and 1920's, as very often these immigrants were both geographically and socially marginal to the local communities of this particular province. The black émigrés from the South were certainly much more at home in Matabeleland.

II The Dimensions of Trans-Zambesian Immigrant Influence in Mashonaland:

In the absence of any tangible influence from even those black immigrants from the South settled in Mashonaland, another immigrant factor came to the forefront to fill up the vacuum. These were the trans-Zambesian immigrants, especially labourers from Nyasaland, the former North-Eastern Rhodesia and Mozambique, whose presence was particularly felt in various parts of this province. The migrant labourers from Mozambique for example, were widely dispersed on the mining centres

²²⁴Rennie: op. cit. pp 506-7.

1931

NON-INDIGENOUS
AFRICAN EMPLOYEES
1931-1951

1936

1946

PREDOMINANT

-  *Northern Rhodesian*
-  *Nyasaland*
-  *Portuguese*

of the northern and eastern districts of Mashonaland, whilst their Nyasaland counterparts dominated the so-called "maize belt" of Mashonaland, stretching from the Hartley district in the central part of the province to the north-eastern approaches into the territory. They also dominated, by the 1920's, the principal mining and urban centres of both Mashonaland and Matabeleland, where they managed to establish a hold on most of the jobs in the non-mining sectors of Southern Rhodesia's economy, notably in the secondary industries in which they monopolized those skilled and semi-skilled occupations open to Africans. On the other hand, Northern Rhodesian labour immigrants, especially those from the former territory of North-Western Rhodesia, were more dominant on the older and bigger mining centres of Matabeleland, like the Wankie Colliery, Gwanda and the Globe and Phoenix mine near Que Que.²²⁵

This pattern of distribution of trans-Zambesian labour in Southern Rhodesia, particularly with regard to those immigrants from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, has actually given rise to the false assumptions in some academic circles that the nature of such distribution of these foreign labourers was necessarily dictated by a number of specious factors. For example, it is assumed that the Northern Rhodesian Africans gravitated to the mining centres of Southern Rhodesia because they had "a long tradition of mining employment", whilst the Nyasaland migrant labourers were said to dominate the non-mining jobs requiring skill because "they ~~were~~ more intelligent, better educated, and more ambitious than other migrants...."²²⁶

Of course, it could not be denied outright that, because of the greater degree of commitment to the Nyasaland Protectorate and its inhabitants, on the part of the Scottish missionaries, Nyasaland Africans

²²⁵Scott: "Migrant Labor in Southern Rhodesia" pp 44-6. Vide also Appendix XVI (Map): The Distribution of Foreign African Labourers in Southern Rhodesia between 1931 and 1951.

²²⁶Scott: op. cit. pp 44-5.

were more fortunate, than their counterparts elsewhere in South Central Africa, to be placed under a more benevolent form of colonial paternalism, which, in turn, encouraged their training in the relevant industrial skills and other areas of education in general. For this reason, the Rev. Alexander Hetherwick of Blantyre Mission in Nyasaland informed the Southern Rhodesian Native Education Commission in February 1925 that "... the main line of our missionary policy,..... is to train the native both educationally and industrially to meet the coming influx of civilisation and take his share in it for the development of his country's resources. This (Nyasaland) is not a white man's country, and its development can best - in fact, can only - be accomplished by training the native to do it under the white man's guidance."²²⁷

This philosophy of the Scottish missionaries towards African education and development was obviously very much opposed to that of the D/R/C missionaries, mostly of South African origin, also operating in Nyasaland at the time. The D/R/C missionaries at Mkhoma actually confessed that "The education we give (the Nyasaland Africans) is not to fit them for office work in the same way as the education they receive elsewhere does. Our object has been to reach the masses with the rudiments, as far as the literary side of education is concerned..." In industrial education, the D/R/C missionaries in Nyasaland also admitted that "... we do not turn out highly skilled artisans. That is not our object. We would far rather see one of our boys setting up for himself as (a) carpenter in his own village and turn out simple doors, windows, tables, chairs, bedsteads, etc., for sale to his neighbours gradually rising in the scale of civilisation, than have

²²⁷Rev. Alexander Hetherwick, Blantyre Mission, Blantyre, to the Secretary, Native Education Commission, Salisbury: February 20, 1925; in Southern Rhodesia: Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Matter of Native Education, 1925: p 130.

him enter the employment of a European, and ultimately compete with the European."²²⁸

The D/R/C missionaries were, however, a negligible force in Nyasaland of the 1910's and 1920's and, for this reason, their policy on African social development, which obviously smacked of the supremacist ideology of the separation of races, was quite effectively overshadowed by that of their more numerous and influential Scottish colleagues. The upshot of this development was that there emerged in colonial Nyasaland, a sizeable army of qualified Africans who ultimately filled up various intermediary positions in both the administration and the private sector, which might have normally been taken over by white artisans and Asians, as was then the pattern in Southern Rhodesia and Kenya.²²⁹ In the end, the educational policy of the Scottish missionaries not only saved the government of that Protectorate from incurring any financial burdens, importing suitable white artisans from overseas, but it also succeeded, in the words of Dr. Hetherwick, "in obviating any necessity for introducing alien labour - Indian or Chinese" and thus avoided those sociological problems that Kenya faced at the time, in connection with its plural society.²³⁰ Yet, at the same time, it should not be rashly concluded that it was, primarily, the education factor, which enabled the Nyasaland immigrants to dominate the non-mining occupations on Southern Rhodesia's labour market up to 1930. It has to be remembered that, due to the high mortality

²²⁸W. H. Murray, Superintendent, D/R/C Mission, Mkhoma, to Secretary, Native Education Commission, Salisbury: March 6, 1925: in Ibid: pp 131-2.

²²⁹John McCracken: "African Politics in twentieth-century Malawi" in T. O. Ranger (ed.): Aspects of Central African History: Heinemann: London: (Reprint) 1973: p 191.

²³⁰Rev. Hetherwick, Blantyre to Secretary, Native Education Commission, Salisbury: February 20, 1925: in Ibid: p 129.

rate amongst Nyasaland mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia, a ban was imposed by the Protectorate's authorities, with the approval of the Colonial Office, on further engagement of Nyasaland labour for mine work since 1907/8; hence leaving the field open to their trans-Zambesian counterparts, the Northern Rhodesian labour migrants.²³¹

For the African societies of Southern Rhodesia in general and those of Mashonaland in particular, what essentially mattered to them, in the course of their interaction with the Nyasaland immigrants, was not so much the education of a corps d'elite as the remarkable diversity of this mass of immigrants. Indeed, as so often happened, the physical problems faced by these immigrants, during the course of their overland journeys to the South and the economic condition of abject poverty in which most of them arrived in Southern Rhodesia, frequently working their way down to centres of employment amongst the indigenous communities just for food and survival,²³² did these immigrants no credit before their hosts. Like the Ruanda-Burundi immigrants to Buganda in the eyes of their Ganda hosts,²³³ the parlous economic condition of the newly arrived trans-Zambesians became a strong cause for their despication by indigenous Africans of Southern Rhodesia. Moreover, the unfortunate association of Nyasaland labour migrants, for instance with farm work and refuse collection at the mines, the most lowly paid forms of employment, because of an earlier administrative ruling on the matter of labour recruitment in Nyasaland, did not at all enhance the image of these immigrants, where amongst the Shona communities for instance, the term Mabwidi, applied to these foreign labourers, became

²³¹Vide Supra: pp 603-5.

²³²Vide Supra: pp 704-5.

²³³Cf. Richards: "The Assimilation of Immigrants": pp 164-5.

one for fun and abuse.²³⁴ In Matabeleland too, where a close relationship had developed between the Lozi and the Ndebele for instance,²³⁵ the other trans-Zambesian immigrants did not fare better either.²³⁶

In the final analysis, it is scarcely surprising that the Shona peoples, who themselves did not fare quite well within the context of the Southern Rhodesian composite colonial society, should have found it easier to interact on very many levels with the trans-Zambesian immigrants, especially the Nyasaland labour immigrants, than with the black émigrés from territories south of the Limpopo. This close relationship became even more pronounced once the Southern Rhodesian Administration began to pay attention to Dr. Hetherwick's advice, in 1925, that "The only remedy is for you (the Southern Rhodesian authorities) to level up your native education - industrial and otherwise - to our level (Standard VI of the Nyasaland Education code)."²³⁷ After 1925, Dr. Hetherwick's advice seems to have worked quite effectively, as educated indigenous Africans began to appear on the Southern Rhodesian scene and, in so doing, initiated a process whereby Nyasaland immigrants, in particular, were progressively displaced by the 1950's from the semi-skilled non-mining occupations they had hitherto patronised, consequently spreading, as they did, into mining and quarrying jobs, in addition to their traditional farm-work and related

²³⁴The term mabwidi was applied to the trans-Zambesian immigrants by the Shona because they considered the languages of these immigrants too incomprehensible. Interview with Mr. Madyangove Madangombe: July 26, 1975.

²³⁵In the Bulawayo riots of 1929, the Lozi mostly sided with the Ndebele against the Shona. Vide: Bulawayo Chronicle: January 4, 1930.

²³⁶In the 1940's, one Scottish missionary observed that Nyasaland immigrants in Matabeleland were despised and given all sorts of names, in addition to the accusation against them for specializing in "black arts" and possession of "powerful medicines". Vide: McPherson: op. cit. pp 87-8.

²³⁷Rev. Hetherwick to Secretary, Native Education Commission, Salisbury: February 20, 1925: in Ibid:

economic spheres.²³⁸ Through this levelling process of the period after 1925, the chances of interaction between the indigenous Shona and the immigrant Nyasaland labourers were greatly enhanced not only because of the exchange of contact influences, but also on account of the probability of structural assimilation which the inter-group contacts in question engendered.

Of course, a host of other factors may be said to have been responsible here as well for this rapprochement between the Shona peoples and the trans-Zambesian immigrants in Southern Rhodesia. This is particularly true when one tries to analyse the genesis of the various social movements, which emerged in the territory in the 1910's and 1920's and which were, at first, headed by an assortment of Nyasa labour immigrants. The Watch Tower movement, which appeared on the Southern Rhodesian scene during the course of the World War I and had reasonably anchored itself in some parts of Mashonaland by the 1920's, is obviously one of the best illustrations on the process of social interaction between the indigenous peoples of Mashonaland and the trans-Zambesian labour immigrants. Various theories have, as a matter of fact, been put forward, in an attempt to explain the causative factors underlying this rapprochement between the Shona and the Nyasaland immigrants in particular, with special reference to the spread of Watch Towerism below the Zambesi. As might be expected, some of these theories in question are, surprisingly, either too preposterous or unimaginative or even both to be regarded seriously in any attempt to come to grips with the colonial history of Mashonaland.

In his extensive study on the origins and development of the Watch Tower movement in South Central Africa between 1908 and 1945,

²³⁸Mitchell: "Wage Labour and African Population Movements in Central Africa": pp 219-20.

Sholto Cross has, for instance, argued that Nyasaland labour migrants were able to establish Watch Tower influence in north-western and north-eastern Mashonaland, firstly, because, by the late 1920's, "northern Shona society had reached a critical stage of disorganisation in which new initiatives were required...." The main cause of the alleged disorganisation, Cross continues, was apparently due to the fact that the "institution of chieftaincy..... had fallen into considerable decay amongst the Shona in this period."²³⁹ To support this bizarre and very obviously misleading assumption, the author quotes the statement made by Colonel Carbutt, the Superintendent of Native Affairs for the Victoria Circle, to a conference of Superintendent of Natives, held in Salisbury in December 1927, on the same myth relating to the so-called progressive degeneration of the Shona societies and institutions.

Whilst Cross is entitled to his own opinion, it should be said, however, that it is extremely naive, to say the least, for any serious scholar to accept the utterances of the officials of the Southern Rhodesian Native Department on the Shona societies as statements of fact. It is, in fact, as simplistic as attempting to elicit some favourable commendation from the Americans on the advantages of the Soviet political system. A very large proportion of the officials of the Native Department were, it should be stressed, recruited from South Africa and naturally tended to judge the Shona societies on the basis of their South African outlook, as it were. For those functionaries recruited from Natal in particular, who were already imbued with the notion of the nobility of the Zulu blood and the superiority of the Nguni peoples,²⁴⁰ it is hardly surprising that they should have held

²³⁹Cross: The Watch Tower Movement in South Central Africa: pp 150-1.

²⁴⁰Vide Supra: pp 398-400.

those negative and generally disparaging views, as they did, on the non-Nguni Shona communities. In the circumstances, Carbutt was apparently no exception, taking into consideration not only the fact that he himself had been enlisted from Natal after the 1896/7 risings, but also that he was an active agent in the subsequent recruitment of Zulu messengers for Matabeleland and Mashonaland at the request of the B.S.A. Co. Administration.²⁴¹

The second aspect of Cross' misleading conclusions hinges on the superficial judgement that the Shona traditional institutions had degenerated and considerably lost their potency by the 1920's, hence giving room to the innovative doctrines of Watch Towerism. This view is a very interesting one, in terms of the author's self-contradiction which becomes evident, when he states, further on in his study, that Watch Towerism ultimately failed to establish a permanent hold on the Shona societies, thus giving way to Vapostori movement, because the Shona chiefs and headmen "had re-established their influence by the early 1930's....."²⁴²

The Cross analysis on Watch Towerism in the Shona country and its interaction with indigenous traditional institutions is a very sad commentary on some uninformed foreign scholars who carry out research on African societies without any understanding on the nature of the societies they are studying or, alternatively, who spare little effort to analyse in totality, the dynamics of colonialism on the African societies thus concerned. In this particular case, it is unfortunate that Cross failed to grasp the fact that the so-called extraordinary revival of the Shona traditional institutions of the 1930's was nothing else but

²⁴¹Vide: "Mbabazane": "Luveve": loc. cit.

²⁴²Cross: op. cit. p 156.

the naked administrative attempt to provide a justification for the colonist Rhodesian local government policy, symbolized in this instance by the establishment of the native boards in 1931 (later replaced by councils in 1937), in which the chiefs were to play a very prominent role.²⁴³ According to administrative calculation in Salisbury, the effort to redeem the African traditional leadership in general in the 1930's, was, in many ways, intended to deprive the emerging educated African elite of its claims and legitimacy to lead and direct the course of African nationalism in the country. The plan was very much similar to the rougher treatment meted to the kholwa element (African Christians) by the Natal government, in favour of their more conservative traditional counterparts at the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁴⁴ In Southern Rhodesia, as in Natal, the African traditional leadership was considered a lesser threat to white domination than the educated African elite, but this did not radically alter the prevalent official attitudes towards Shona chieftaincy in any way. Indeed, between 1936 and 1963, successive Southern Rhodesian governments relentlessly interfered with the Shona chieftainship system, deposing, degrading and disqualifying those candidates they did not like, with contemptuous abandon.²⁴⁵ In short, it is not enough to make passing remarks and conclusions on Shona traditional institutions as Sholto Cross does without also analysing the political implications of colonialism in the Shona country.

On the socio-economic level, it has also been argued by Cross that "the late 1920's witnessed an acute social and economic crisis in

²⁴³Weinrich: Chiefs and Councillors in Rhodesia: p 14.

²⁴⁴D. Welsh: The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Colonial Natal, 1845-1910: Oxford University Press: Cape Town: 1971: pp 309-10.

²⁴⁵G. Kingsley Garbett: "The Rhodesian Chief's Dilemma: Government Officer or Tribal Leader?" : Race: Vol. VIII: No. 2: October 1966: pp 113-28.

northern Mashonaland...." allegedly induced by, among other things, land alienation which represented the "continual erosion of land-holding (and) constituted a severe challenge for the Shona"; the traditional modes of production whereby "While the plough had made headway amongst the Ndebele, hoe cultivation had continued amongst the Shona, and the low productivity of tribal husbandry had led to a concentration on stock-raising which the confined reserves could not support."²⁴⁶ Whilst one would not, in any way, refute the social and economic pressures generated by such developments as the global land alienation policy of the B.S.A. Co. and the subsequent overcrowding of the African areas, which this tended to produce in the 1910's and 1920's, one is, however, certainly dumbfounded by the arrogant conclusion that north-western and north-eastern Mashonaland should have been so badly affected as to become a veritable bedrock of Watch Towerism. If we were to follow Cross' assumption to its logical conclusion, it would, indeed, be more pertinent to expect that those regions of Southern Rhodesia, which, in reality, suffered more severely from land-grabbing, like the whole of Matabeleland and those areas in the eastern and central parts of Mashonaland, as we have already discussed elsewhere in this study,²⁴⁷ should have been more forthcoming in their support of Watch Towerism. In fact, if the evidence of the Native Reserves Commission of 1914 is to be accepted, the northern portion of Mashonaland had some of the largest native reserves and was, therefore, not as densely populated as those African areas near the centres of white settlement. This is particularly true with regard to the Chimanda and Muchowani reserves in the Mount Darwin district (with a per capita acreage of 81.95): the Sipolilo reserve in the Lomagundi district (per capita acreage 43.5)

²⁴⁶ Cross: op. cit. pp 154-5.

²⁴⁷ Vide Supra: pp 756-9; 855-60.

and the Chiweshe reserve in the Mount Darwin district (per capita acreage of 73.3). In comparison with these areas of northern Mashonaland, a greater proportion of the native reserves in the Salisbury district had an average per capita acreage of below 30 acres. The same applied to the Hartley, Victoria, Gutu and Chilimanzi districts. In the Inyanga, Makoni, Umtali and Melsetter districts in eastern Mashonaland, this was even worse; the Umtasa South and the Zimunya reserves in the Umtali district, for instance, registering an average per capita acreage of as low as 10.2 and 17.5 acres respectively. In Matabeleland, some reserves also recorded even lower per capita acreages in 1914, as the Que Que reserve in the Gwelo district and the Matobo reserve in the Matobo district did, for instance, with only 8 and 6.85 acres per person respectively.²⁴⁸

In a nutshell, the above facts on the amount of land reserved for each particular area of Mashonaland and Matabeleland since 1914, demonstrate that Cross is not a very reliable source. For this reason, his analysis on the socio-economic causes of Watch Towerism in Mashonaland is, therefore, not by any means the best one. In the circumstances, we are, inevitably, forced to look elsewhere for a more realistic assessment of those factors that may be regarded as having most likely created a conducive environment for the spread of Watch Towerism in some parts of Mashonaland and, in this manner, encouraged some measure of fraternization between the migrant labourers from Nyasaland and the indigenous peoples.

In his attempt to try and find an answer on the absence of modern proto-nationalist associations in Mashonaland, comparable to those organisations dominated and controlled by black émigrés from South Africa in Matabeleland in the 1910's and the early 1920's, Ranger has

²⁴⁸C.O.417/564: Report of the Native Reserves Commission to Lord Buxton: December (?), 1915.

attributed the phenomenon to what he calls the fatalism and despondency which gripped Mashonaland after 1897 and which, in many ways, were a product of the brutal manner in which the Shona rising had been crushed.²⁴⁹ In this post-1898 void, where, Ranger further argues, African elite-formation was progressing only at a very slow pace, encumbered, as it was, by a general missionary educational philosophy which aimed simply at educating the African primarily for a subsidiary role within the context of the colonial set-up in Southern Rhodesia,²⁵⁰ and in a situation whereby the Shona were said to have progressively renounced any further military confrontation with the white forces of colonialism, especially in the period after 1915,²⁵¹ conditions were naturally favourable for all kinds of social movements, of which Watch Towerism was only one of them. In his study on African labour in Southern Rhodesia, van Onselen has, however, considerably modified Ranger's nihilistic approach to the spread of Watch Towerism in Southern Rhodesia and, at the same time, concluded that the movement was an attempt to provide a neo-Christian solution to the daily problems of the African worker, facing, as he did, an oppressive industrial situation, symbolized, especially, by the compound system of social, economic and political control, commonplace throughout Southern Africa.²⁵²

As we have already provided a reasonably cogent explanation on the absence of proto-nationalist organisations in Mashonaland, before the late 1920's, in our analysis of the relationship between the black émigrés from the South and the indigenous Shona societies, and have, by so doing, come to a conclusion quite different from Ranger's,²⁵³

²⁴⁹Ranger: The African Voice: pp 12-3; 194-5.

²⁵⁰Ibid: pp 15-9.

²⁵¹Ibid: pp 12-3.

²⁵²Van Onselen: Chibaro: pp 206-9.

²⁵³Vide Supra: pp 886-97.

it is obviously from the point of view of the general limitations of the colonial situation that we are inclined to examine the causes of the spread of Watch Towerism in the Shona country and, in this way, determine why and how a rapprochement between the trans-Zambesian immigrants and the Shona societies encouraged the growth of a more cordial relationship between these two fronts.

Hobsbawn has, in his analysis on the emergence of millenarian and other specious social movements in Southern Italy and the Andalusia region of Spain in the nineteenth century, argued that these phenomena were a product of the political and social ferment which plagued these particular areas of Europe at the time. In the Monte Amiata region of Italy where the Lazzarretti movement made its appearance in the second half of the nineteenth century for instance, this development has been attributed primarily to the imposition of a new social and political order, characterized by extra taxes and new laws, onto an area which was conspicuously backward economically, culturally poor and generally isolated from the rest of Italy.

In Sicily, the other part of Southern Italy, where a comparable social and political ferment was also in progress, it was still the same factors of backwardness and poverty, induced, especially, by the feudal system of land tenure which created a few latifundist barons amidst a multitude of impoverished, ignorant, illiterate and exploited peasants and, by so doing, gave room to an atmosphere very conducive to a strong brand of agrarian revolutionism, which the Fasci movement adroitly exploited.²⁵⁴ In Andalusia too, it was the same story. The latifundist tradition was equally strong, inexorably giving rise to a

²⁵⁴E. J. Hobsbawn: Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries: Manchester University Press: Manchester: (Reprint) 1971: pp 66-8; 94-5.

situation whereby a few Spanish landlords held a greater proportion of the land at the expense of the peasants, who were compelled to either eke out a livelihood as share-croppers and landless braceros (day-labourers) or starve to death, due to lack of employment.²⁵⁵ These economically and socially vulnerable elements of nineteenth Europe were therefore just the stuff the radical social movements required when they later appeared in these particular areas.

In various parts of Asia and Africa as well, millenarian and other sectarian movements arose, by the beginning of the twentieth century, either as a direct result or a by-product of those social, economic and political forces underlying the colonial order. In the two Congos (the French controlled Congo-Brazzaville and the Belgian Congo) for instance, the Ngunzi movement founded by Simon Kimbangu and the Amicale cults established by André Matswa between the 1920's and the 1940's, were not simply irrational outbursts, governed, essentially, by their xenophobia against the white men and the fetishist inclination to protect the indigenous societies from the adverse effects of sorcery and black magic. They were also the beginnings of strong polemical movements, very much geared towards the redemption of the colonized peoples and their cultures; awakening the spirits of these subject peoples for a new revolutionary situation, characterized by a veritable *mélange* of the old traditional world and a Judeo-Christian ideology, represented by the millennium and its beatific promises, as well as demanding the religious and cultural self-determination of their peoples then under the repressive rule of European colonial powers.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵Hobsbawn: Primitive Rebels: pp 74-6; 79-81.

²⁵⁶V. Lanternari: The Religion of the Oppressed: A Study of Modern Messianic Cults: MacGibbon & Kee: London: 1963: pp 8-10; 15-6.

In Melanesia, messianic movements at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century took advantage of the existing traditional belief structures, in order to not only raise a voice of protest against colonial rule, but also to integrate both the Western and Eastern ways of life and, by such means, revitalize rather than destroy their own peoples' cultures. For this reason, the old Melanesian beliefs, whereby the dead were expected to return some day with rich cargoes for the living, became mixed up with the new notions on these same departed ancestors who were to come back in the future as liberators from colonial rule and champions of equality and justice, especially with regard to the distribution of those rich cargoes of industrial goods manufactured and introduced by the Europeans, who, during the period of colonial rule, had become inextricably identified with the ghosts of the dead, since they were also white, whilst their industrial skills were in turn ascribed to their mastery of the spiritual world.²⁵⁷ Nearer home in South Africa, sectarian movements had come to serve not only as a useful alternative channel for non-whites to assume leadership roles in their own organisations, once racial polarization began to intensify towards the end of the nineteenth century, but, with the ascendancy of the Boers to power in 1910 and their progressive economic and political emasculation of the Africans, starting with the Native Land Bill of 1913, these sectarian movements began to be regarded by the Africans of all persuasions as allies against racism and racial domination.²⁵⁸

From the examples given above, the functions of social movements amongst the colonized peoples are too evident to require any further

²⁵⁷ Lanternari: The Religion of the Oppressed: pp 202-5.

²⁵⁸ B. G. M. Sundkler: Bantu Prophets in South Africa: Oxford University Press: London: (Reprint) 1970: pp 85-99.

explanation, except, of course, only in form of a brief summation. In essence, social movements amongst the colonized peoples of Africa, Asia and elsewhere were spontaneous products of the impact of the white man's presence on indigenous societies; an impact which generated more pressures as colonial rule tarried and began to consolidate its hold on the subject peoples over a period of time. The fact that most of these movements were religious in character was only a reflection of the spiritual traits of the indigenous societies in question. This, it could be said, became even more pronounced as the colonized societies were subjected to misery, persecution and several other adversities and were thus, in consequence, compelled to seek some form of relief from their frustrations and sufferings through religious means, as a prelude to organisations of overt political protest and agitation. In asserting their religious independence in this way as they did, the colonized peoples of Africa, Asia and other parts of the world were thus merely carrying out, though on one level only, the struggle against racial segregation, forced acculturation and the general dislocation of traditional life induced by colonial rule.²⁵⁹

On a more positive note, the messianic movements of the colonial era were largely a rational and positive response by the colonized peoples to the new stimuli, generated by the colonial situation. In their activities, these movements attempted to lay down the groundwork for nationalism; to inaugurate a new kind of social order and to restructure disintegrated societies with the aid of those building materials, quarried from the ruins of the past and mixed with selected social and economic values of the conquering groups. Through the deployment of this obviously syncretic design, the messianic movements

²⁵⁹Cf. Lanternari: op. cit. pp 4-5.

were, therefore, only trying to introduce a form of apprenticeship for the colonized peoples, to grasp the new *mélange* of traditional mentality, Western values and a Judeo-Christian ideology over which they demanded a large degree of autonomy and independence of action.²⁶⁰

It was this kind of situation outlined above, which faced the trans-Zambesian labour immigrants and the indigenous African communities of Mashonaland, within the context of the social and economic development of Southern Rhodesia in the 1910's and 1920's. For the Nyasaland immigrants in particular, the doctrines and teachings of Watch Towerism had already become a fait accompli in the Nyasaland Protectorate by the 1910's, through the activities of the maverick missionary, Joseph Booth, whose presence in that British possession, since 1892, coupled with the support of his zealous and tested indigenous African converts, like Elliott Kenan Kamwana, John Chilembwe and Charles Domingo, evidently constitute the most potent cataclysmic factor in the early twentieth century history of Nyasaland. Indeed, it is obvious that it was the teachings of Watch Towerism, which combined with the various grievances of the African peasants of Nyasaland and inexorably sparked off the famous Chilembwe rising of 1915.²⁶¹ In Southern Rhodesia however, it was not primarily a question of agrarian revolutionism that the Nyasaland labour immigrants together with their fellow trans-Zambesians, particularly those from Northern Rhodesia, and the indigenous communities of the territory had to contend with. The predominance of both the mining industry and the white colonist factor here qualitatively

²⁶⁰Cf. R. Bastide: "Messianism and Social and Economic Development" in Wallerstein (ed.): op. cit. pp 469-70.

²⁶¹For the causes of the Chilembwe rising, Vide: Shepperson and Price: op. cit.; Chapters IV and V; Mwase: Strike a Blow and Die: The Story of the Chilembwe Rising: pp 29-47; and R. I. Rotberg: The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964: Harvard University Press: Massachusetts: 1965: pp 64-92.

shaped the nature of the problems the subject African communities had to battle with.

As far as the Southern Rhodesian mining industry was concerned, its objectives, with regard to profit accumulation, mainly through cost minimisation and utilisation of ultra-cheap labour, had always reigned supreme.²⁶² But the segment of the mining industry that suffered most, in the process, was the African labour force, which, incidentally, included within its ranks, a very inordinate proportion of the trans-Zambesian immigrants. Actually, one side-effect of this policy of profit accumulation, through maximum utilisation of cheap labour, is clearly demonstrated, for example, by the high mortality rate, which dominated the Southern Rhodesian mining industry in the early decades of the twentieth century. In fact, it would appear that the reckless disregard which the mineowners and management had shown towards their African labourers, during the period of speculative capitalism in Southern Rhodesia between 1890 and 1903, resiliently survived and even belched into those phases of reconstruction and consolidation, that characterized this territory's mining industry between 1903 and 1933. Thus in 1904, the Colonial Office could still be heard voicing its concern over what it regarded as "an evil pre-eminence" attached to some of the country's gold mines, like the Globe and Phoenix mine, the Gaika, the Morven, the Red and White Rose, the Ayrshire and the Selukwe mines where the mortality rate amongst the labourers was rather unusually high, due to such causes as pneumonia, scurvy and accidents.²⁶³

On the East Gwanda mines in Matabeleland, the high mortality rate amongst trans-Zambesian labourers actually reached such scandalous

²⁶²Vide Supra: pp 299-304.

²⁶³C.O.417/392: Minute by Grindle to Just: September 21, 1904 and Lyttleton to Milner: September 30, 1904.

proportions between 1906 and 1908, that, in spite of the promises of the mine management to improve the working conditions in the future,²⁶⁴ the Southern Rhodesian Administration felt compelled to give in to the demand of the government of the then territory of North-Western Rhodesia, to suspend all forms of labour recruitment for the mines of the Gwanda district from amongst its African subject communities.²⁶⁵ This state of affairs apparently did not at all change for the better, as far as Southern Rhodesia's dominant industry was concerned. Between 1915 and the end of Company rule in the territory in 1923 for instance, the high mortality rate; the poor treatment of trans-Zambesian labour migrants; non-payment of wages and related issues remained a major recurrent theme, raised over and over again by the respective colonial governments of the region.

At the Cam and Motor mine near Gatooma in the Hartley district for example, the Southern Rhodesian authorities discovered, in the years 1915 and 1916, that a number of irregularities, which adversely affected the welfare of the African labourers, had been going on right under their noses. At this particular property, it was not only those problems that related to the shortage of accommodation and inadequate hospital facilities, which the labourers had to face, due to the management's insatiable demand for increased labour supply,²⁶⁶ but they were also not infrequently flogged; fined to the tune of "a few shillings up to £2" for trivial offences and required to deposit £1 or £2 with the Compound Manager, on each occasion they visited the Gatooma location. This was, of course, in addition to the usual lock-up in a cell, reserved

²⁶⁴C.O.417/445: Major Heany, Managing Director, East Gwanda Mines Ltd. to Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo: January 31, 1907.

²⁶⁵C.O.417/444: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Chief Secretary, Salisbury: November 26, 1906.

²⁶⁶A3/18/30/38: D. M. Eaton, Acting Medical Director, to Secretary, Department of Administrator: August 2, 1915.

for the detention of refractory labourers by the mine authorities.²⁶⁷

But it was, however, the cases of non-payment of wages, either as acts of deliberate commission on the part of the mine authorities or through insolvency, which made the lot of the African mine labourers in Southern Rhodesia, between 1915 and 1923, a singularly unpalatable one. In 1917 for instance, Nyasaland labourers engaged at the Angwa mine in the Lomagundi district were forced to appeal to the Native Commissioner's Office at Sinoia against the arbitrary deductions of their wages and upfu rations by their employer, Mr. Standen, for matters not at all related to their nature of engagement. Apparently this farmer-cum-mineowner, frustrated by the death of one of his head of cattle, had decided to take it out on his employees by effecting a 5% all-round deduction in the process; a measure which those Nyasaland labourers engaged for pure mine-work naturally resisted. As their leader, named Roti, who worked on the mine boiler, indicated for instance, the move was rather impolitic; hence Roti's assertion that "I do not know what the beast (Mr Standen's) died of, it was dead in the cattle kraal. It is not my work to look after cattle and I had nothing to do with its death."²⁶⁸

Whilst the more articulate workers like Roti could successfully raise sufficient dust to publicize their discontent over the practice of non-payment of wages by colonist employers in accordance with the rules of the game, others unfortunately could not do so. And it was for the sake of those inarticulate victims of the machinations of unscrupulous colonist employers within the mining industry, that the Salisbury Administration tried to redefine its policy on the subject in

²⁶⁷ Ibid: Meredith, N/C Hartley to S/O/N Salisbury; Confidential: May 26, 1916.

²⁶⁸ A3/18/30/39: Evidence of Roti before E. T. Palmer, J.P., Sinoia: October 24, 1917.

1920. The move which had been directly eventuated by current proceedings, particularly in the Lomagundi and Gwelo districts, did not, however, seem destined to succeed and the Salisbury authorities were very much aware of that. Thus for instance, Dr. Fleming, the territory's Medical Director, quite candidly gave it to be understood that the government could not effectively deal with the whole problem of non-payment of wages and speculation in African labour by colonist employers in the mining industry, either on account of the "excessive loyalty" of the African labourers to their masters or because it feared to put those struggling producers in the industry out of work. In Fleming's own words, it was feared that "...if an employer is taken to court on account of wages owing to native employees, he will have all his other creditors down on him and will have to surrender his estate,....."²⁶⁹ Fleming's views were supported by the Chief Native Commissioner who also felt that there were some mine-owners, who deserved "a period of grace in which to 'make good' " over this issue of non-payment of wages.²⁷⁰

The results of this attitude, on the part of the Salisbury authorities, with regard to speculation on African labour were obvious. In 1922, one smallworker, A. Fouche of Gondia mine in the Hartley district, was exposed to the police for his failure to provide his African workers with food and to pay their wages, thus creating a riotous situation amongst these workers, who were forced, amongst other things, to seek for food in the surrounding veldt, some 60 miles away from Gatooma.²⁷¹ On his part, Fouche ascribed the state of affairs at the Gondia mine to shortage of development capital for the property;

²⁶⁹A3/18/30/38: A. M. Fleming, Medical Director, to Secretary, Department of Administrator: April 7, 1920.

²⁷⁰Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: April 9, 1920.

²⁷¹Ibid: Rex vs. Fouche: Lt. R. Hamilton, A.D.S.P., Gatooma Sub-District, B.S.A.P., to Magistrate, Gatooma: August 16, 1922.

the difficulties arising from the remoteness and isolation of the mine and also the officiousness of the police, whom he accused of trying "to manufacture offences" against "a man who is honestly struggling to earn a living at mining under the greatest hardships..." and who had "no civil redress of any kind against the police for the ruin facing (him)." ²⁷²

Similar developments were also reported in mid-1923, notably in the Gwelo district and the Shabani area of the Belingwe district, where non-payment of wages was causing serious discontent amongst the African labourers. At the Atlanta mine in the Gwelo district where the mine-owner, Mr. Barnett, had gone insolvent owing over £1,000 in arrear wages to his workers, these workers' only hope, perhaps, lay in the inclusion of their claims in Barnett's estate by the Attorney-General's Office, which, from all appearances, was by itself a forlorn gamble. In the Belingwe district proper, the liquidation of the Sabi and the Humorist mines, for instance, only led to the redistribution of the African workers affected in the process to the nearby asbestos properties, the Nil Desperandum and the Shabanie mine, where they were expected to wait and hope that their former but insolvent employers would fulfill their promises and pay their arrear wages. ²⁷³

As a matter of fact, it was by no means only the mining industry which proved a veritable source of grief to the African labourer in Southern Rhodesia, during the first three decades of the country's history. Other branches of the Southern Rhodesian economy were just as defective as the mining industry, as far as the welfare of the labourers was concerned, and the trans-Zambesian immigrants, together

²⁷² Ibid: Rex vs. Fouche: A. Fouche, Gatooma, to Secretary, Department of Administrator: August 9, 1922.

²⁷³ Ibid: Fleming, Medical Director, to Secretary, Department of Administrator: June 5, 1923.

with their indigenous partners, had to reckon with a variety of these shortcomings, arising from the several species of their engagement. The conditions obtaining in the railway and farming industries, for instance, deserve here some measure of attention too. With regard to the railway industry for instance, a number of features are readily discernible, particularly during the period 1903 to 1921. Firstly, like the rest of the Southern Rhodesian colonist employers, the railway authorities were quite prone to overlook their obligations in connection with the regular payment of their labourers; a fact which the Native Commissioner of the Gwanda district aptly commented upon in November 1903.²⁷⁴ Indeed, by December of the same year, when some of the 600 recruits supplied by the R.N.L.B. from the Umtali district were deserted by their Greek sub-contractor, Messrs Pauling and Company, one of the country's leading railway companies, was compelled to foot the bill.²⁷⁵

Secondly, there was a marked predominance amongst the railway sub-contractors of the white colonist element termed the "Dagos", contemptuously referred to by Milton in 1904 as "generally a low class of Greek or Italian origin," forbidden to act as recruiters of labour by the Administration in any respect.²⁷⁶ Whilst the British-dominated Salisbury Administration and London Wall may have been somewhat nationalistic in their perspective on this class of sub-contractors and the notorious treatment they meted onto their labourers, especially in the Wankie district towards the end of 1903 where a situation,

²⁷⁴C.O.417/396: Report on Inspection of Sub-Contractors' Camps, Gwanda Railway Extension (by G. F. Gordon), November 17, 1903.

²⁷⁵C.O.417/397: Report of C/N/C Taylor on a visit of Inspection to Gwanda Railway Construction: December 11, 1903.

²⁷⁶C.O.417/398: Extract from the Report of the Assistant N/C, Wankie, (Andrew Dale) for the Period Ending December 31, 1903.

described as "a crying scandal",²⁷⁷ was observed at the time, perhaps it might not be amiss here to refer to the treatment sustained by the trans-Zambesian recruits supplied in 1914 by the Bureau to Mr. Rhamphos, a sub-contractor on the Gwelo-Umvuma railway line.

The trans-Zambesian labourers concerned in this Rhamphos case, who had to be ultimately rescued by the police, complained not only of "being knocked about by the Greek overseers", but they were evidently overworked as well. In fact, in the words of the Inspector of Compounds for the Gwelo division, it was discovered that these labourers "...worked about 11 hours a day, starting at sunrise and getting no food till mid-day. The form of labour - pick and shovel - (was) very heavy, and they appeared to be overpressed and overworked." In addition, these labourers were worked on the basis of piecework, whereupon they were required "to remove three cubic yards of soil a day, at the rate of 8d per diem, which if they (failed) to do they (got) no pay." To make matters worse, Rhamphos seemed to have been deliberately and systematically ill-treating these Bureau labourers in order to force them to desert, because, as he himself confessed, the labourers in question "were forced on (him)" and he felt convinced that "(he could not) make money with them,...."²⁷⁸

Thirdly, it may also be pertinent to observe here that health conditions were not very good either in the railway compounds, whilst the hospital facilities were apparently non-existent. As early as 1903/4, it was observed, amongst the railway workers in the Wankie district, that sickness amongst them was rather excessive.²⁷⁹ In fact,

²⁷⁷ Ibid: Annexure to B.S.A. Co. Minutes of March 23, 1904.

²⁷⁸ C.O.417/558: Extract from the Report of the Medical Inspector of Compounds for the month of October, 1914: Enclosed in Douglas-Jones to Imperial Secretary, Cape Town: January 11, 1915.

²⁷⁹ C.O.417/401: Report of the Medical Director on Excess of Sickness in the Wankie District: July, 1904.

because of the generally negligent nature of most of the railway sub-contractors in the district, the administration found itself very often compelled to foot the labourers' medical bills, as what happened with regard to the 24 labourers from the "Inceza" Siding compound who were treated at the Memorial Hospital in Bulawayo at the close of 1903.²⁸⁰

Yet very unfortunately for those labourers in the railway industry, health conditions did not seem to have rapidly, if at all, improved for the better. By 1921, the insanitary conditions of the railway compounds were reported once more at such major centres in the territory as Bulawayo, Wankie, Gwelo and Umtali. E. T. Palmer, the Inspector of Compounds for Bulawayo and Wankie for instance, complained of what he considered the overcrowded and filthy state of the railway compounds at these two places, coupled with the general neglect, by the officials concerned, of the sick labourers amongst the residents of these contraptions. At Umtali, the filthy state of the railway compound, of course, appeared, in the view of H. C. Thwaites, the Compound Inspector, to tally with the patently shabby character of the whole compound itself, which apparently consisted of several poorly constructed "V-shaped huts and several tin shanties,.... made up of tins of all sorts and sizes." At Gwelo too, C. R. Grunner, the Inspector of Compounds for the area, was by no means impressed by the railway compound there, which consisted, in the main, of a strange assortment of structures, such as "pole and dagga huts... with scrap iron roofs"; kaytor and "oblong iron buildings...", some of which were said to be "leaking badly".²⁸¹

²⁸⁰C.O.417/398: Charles W. Green, Secretary, Memorial Hospital, Bulawayo, to C/N/C Taylor: December 29, 1903.

²⁸¹C.O.417/660: Reports of the Inspectors of Compounds for the months of January and February, 1921: Enclosed in Chaplin to Douglas-Jones: April 19, 1921.

Finally, it is interesting to observe, especially for the purpose of this study, that, as in the mining industry, there was also a striking dominance of the trans-Zambesian migrant labourers in the railway industry of Southern Rhodesia, during the period under consideration here. This observation, certainly, becomes quite self-evident when one takes into the picture the statistics and facts prepared by Andrew Dale, the Assistant Native Commissioner of the Wankie district, at the beginning of 1904, part of which are portrayed in Table XI below:

Table XI²⁸²

Statistical Returns on African Labourers engaged in the mining and railway industries in the Wankie district by 1904

<u>Country of Origin</u>	<u>Nature of Employment</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>(a) Wankie Colliery</u>	<u>(b) Wankie Railway</u>	
Southern Rhodesia:	44	90	134
Portuguese East Africa:	73	420	493
British Central Africa (Nyasaland):	7	500	507
North of Zambesi (North-Western & North-Eastern Rhodesia):	195	425	620
Other Sources:	23	65	88
Totals:	<u>342</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,842</u>

As has already been indicated elsewhere, the predominance of the trans-Zambesian labour immigrants in the employment centres of the Wankie district was, of course, primarily induced by the geographical position of the district, athwart some of the major labour routes into Southern Rhodesia, as well as the climate of the area which may not have been

²⁸²For these statistics, Vide: C.O.417/399: Labour Returns by Andrew Dale, Ass. N/C Wankie District: March 7, 1904.

unfamiliar to these labour immigrants.²⁸³ The Wankie railway employers, like their counterparts on the colliery, naturally exploited this state of affairs to their advantage.

But on the other hand, this predominance of the trans-Zambesian immigrants in Southern Rhodesia's railway industry does not seem to have been an exclusive preserve of the Wankie district alone. Indeed, the same could easily be said of the Gwelo district. In 1914, when Southern Rhodesian officials openly frowned at the activities of the Greek sub-contractors on the Gwelo-Umvuma railway line, with regard to the abuse of African labour engaged thereon, the concern of these officials was undoubtedly aroused by their anxiety that since most of the labourers in question were "raw Northern natives", supplied by the Bureau,²⁸⁴ official intervention had to be effected as diplomatically as possible, to avoid any inter-governmental complications on the issue.

The foregoing analysis has, in one way or another, obviously managed to portray a fairly rough picture on what may rightly be termed the predicament of the African labourer in the mining and the railway industries of Southern Rhodesia before 1930. It was a misfortune which spared neither the indigenous African labourer nor his foreign immigrant counterpart. Yet it should not be imagined that it was only the mining and railway industries which earned for themselves this dubious reputation over the treatment of their workers. The farming industry of Southern Rhodesia did not, by any means, lag behind in the same notorious game. Indeed, as far as the farming industry was concerned, a number of factors, patently peculiar to this economic sector, may have even made the plight of the African labourer very grim, to say the least.

²⁸³Vide Supra: pp 596-600.

²⁸⁴C.O.417/558: Extract from the Report of the Medical Inspector of Compounds for..... October, 1914.

Firstly, as has already been indicated elsewhere, the farming industry in Southern Rhodesia had been totally neglected and ignored by the B.S.A. Co. during the initial stages of colonization, as this consortium and the rank and file white colonists were too pre-occupied with the gold mining industry to care for any other economic pursuits. Thus it was not until the years 1905/7, that a shift in the Company's economic policy took farming into consideration more seriously than before.²⁸⁵ Moreover, the colonist farmers on their part had, until their revolt in 1912, assumed the attitude that, as a community, the Company Administration had treated them more or less like its illegitimate progeny; a state of affairs they compared quite unfavourably with the amicable relationship hitherto existing between the government and the mining industry. But after 1912, the colonist farmers also became a very cogent factor which had to be reckoned with in administrative circles. The result was that the Administration of Southern Rhodesia, henceforth, assumed a form not dissimilar to the so-called "maize and gold alliance" said to have existed in South Africa after 1910,²⁸⁶ and, consequently, the colonist employers within the farming industry very frequently had their own way in matters pertaining to the deployment of African labour.

Secondly, the colonist farmers, like the traders and artisans, were one group of secondary colonists who felt very much insecure, within the overall framework of the composite colonial society of Southern Rhodesia. The fact that this particular community, from the onset, included within its ranks, men whose qualifications were simply that they had to be, in Gann's succinct phrase, "the right sort of person(s) for a tough frontier community"²⁸⁷ or were, alternatively, to be of the

²⁸⁵Vide Supra: pp 744-8.

²⁸⁶Vide Supra: pp 748-9.

²⁸⁷Gann: A History of Southern Rhodesia: p 154.

illiterate rural Boer type, who could have very easily joined the ranks of the "poor whites" then becoming a growing phenomenon below the Limpopo since the close of the nineteenth century,²⁸⁸ certainly did not augur well for any meaningful labour and race relations within the farming sector. The colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia, it should be observed, looked at the deployment of cheap servile labour not primarily as a sound economic rationale for a struggling industry, but also as a practical way of asserting white group dominance over the African subject communities. It is thus within the limits of such colonial parameters that the poor state of labour and race relations within the Southern Rhodesian farming sector up to 1930 has to be examined, especially given here our objective with regard to how such proceedings affected both foreign and local African labourers and thus, consequently, forged a link based on the notion of comradeship in adversity, between the two African fronts under discussion.

A lot of material exists on the gruesome subject of labour and race relations in the farming industry of early Southern Rhodesia. But given the limited scope of our study at this juncture, we may only refer here to very few cases for illustration. For instance, in 1919, Yao labourers from Nyasaland employed at the Chesa Farm, known by local Africans as "Ma Gum Tree Garden",²⁸⁹ near Umvuma in the Chilimanzi district of Mashonaland, were subjected to such a raw deal, by both

²⁸⁸In fact, when in 1907 the government of Southern Rhodesia decided to raise the financial and educational qualifications demanded by the country's franchise law in order to covertly exclude a greater proportion of the literate Mfengu immigrants, it found itself in a dilemma as the new franchise proposals were actually bound to disqualify a large number of white colonists of Boer origin, who were already exempted, unlike the Mfengu, from the English language legal requirement. Vide: C.O.417/445: Milton to B.S.A. Co. and also to Attorney-General: February 16, 1907.

²⁸⁹N3/22/11/2: W. A. Brookes, Ass. N/C Umvuma to The Assistant District Superintendent, B.S.A.P., Umvuma, September 2, 1919.

their colonist employers and the police, that they felt compelled to appeal to the Zomba authorities on the matter. Thus in a letter addressed to "Bwana Casson" (Mr. Casson, the Superintendent of Native Affairs in Nyasaland), one of their number, Malikwa Manoro, pointed out:

We are very sorry, because here we are killed, and for this reason we are telling you that we are suffering much we are killed like fowls, they (the Southern Rhodesian authorities and employers) say you have commanded that the people of Zomba and Blantyre must be killed without reason, so we are asking you that you might tell us if it is true..... This is what is happening here (at Umvuma), the Europeans of Bulawayo (the Native Department Officials) are not saying anything, they are just confessing it is true these rules have come from your own home in Nyasaland..... Our master has killed *Che* (Mr.) Diaman without doing wrong (just) because he had no pass for walking with, so he was captured by the police of Gumtree Boma and was beaten about 40 lashes and the same day he died, also Che (Mr.) Habit was beaten 14 lashes and he was in bed about a week and died, the same reason (for which) we are killed is on account of passes.

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The unpleasant experiences of the Yao farm labourers near Umvuma were also shared by some of their fellow trans-Zambesian workers engaged by other colonist farmers of Southern Rhodesia. In the neighbouring Charter district also in Mashonaland, the Bemba labourers from Northern Rhodesia supplied by the Bureau in 1920 to one Boer farmer, C. J. A. Kirstein of Inhoek Farm near Enkeldoorn, were virtually in for an equally rough time. These labourers, engaged for either general service or as cattle herders, were too often flogged, kicked and assaulted in every other manner imaginable, apparently as a way of their master's emphasis on the master/servant relationship, hence this

* "Che" is a Yao (Ghawa) term for "Mr." amongst these people of southern Malawi (Nyasaland).

²⁹⁰Ibid: Malikwa M. K. Manoro, "Gum Tree Garden", Umvuma to Casson, Zomba: July 19, 1919.

colonist farmer's frequent reference to his "work not being properly done".²⁹¹ In any case, it was the kind of treatment over which Kirstein himself was only too pleased and, in consequence, informed the Bureau management in Salisbury in an Afrikaans letter (translated into English) written in an unmistakable tone. In a nutshell, Kirstein stated:

As far as I can remember I gave them (his Bemba labourers) a few good flat-hand clouts (plat-hand klappe). What else can one do with such untrained (baar) things as the Awemba Kaffirs. One is sometimes bound to call them to order..... They do not believe you (the Bureau manager), they do not believe me nor do they believe in the Police. I put it to you, is it possible to pay such servants, and give them food and then not be allowed to call them to order?

You ought certainly to give the Honourable Magistrate of Enkeldoorn a (pluimpis) feather for his faithfulness in looking after the Kaffirs as a remembrance from the farmers.

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The cases of the Yao and Bemba farm labourers in the Chilimanzi and Charter districts respectively, do not, as given above, imply, however, that it was only the farmer-employers of Mashonaland who were prone to abuse their charges. Nor would it be fair to even assume that it was only the trans-Zambesian farm labourers who suffered at the hands of the colonist farmers during our period of study. Matabeleland farmers too played their part in making farmwork a veritable anathema amongst potential African labourers and they also had their own share of trans-Zambesian labour supply. But as the Native Commissioner at Plumtree confessed in August 1919, there was hardly any sizeable labour force from Nyasaland, employed by the colonist farmers of Matabeleland.²⁹³ Instead, Nyasaland farm labourers appear to have been replaced by

²⁹¹Ibid: Rex vs. C. J. Kirstein: Statement of UMPANGA (Bemba) before C. M. Fletcher, Magistrate, Enkeldoorn: November 26, 1920.

²⁹²Ibid: Rex vs. C. J. Kirstein: Kirstein, Inhoek Farm, Enkeldoorn to R.N.L.B., Salisbury: October 27, 1921.

²⁹³Ibid: Lanning, N/C Plumtree to S/O/N Bulawayo: August 22, 1919.

Northern Rhodesian ones, obviously due to factors of long historical standing as well as geographical location.²⁹⁴ For these reasons, a greater number of the cases of labour abuse in the Insiza district of Matabeleland in 1920, for instance, concerned mostly Northern Rhodesian labour immigrants.

At the Makovani estate, B. L. Whyte and his son, H. V. Whyte, clashed with the Native Commissioner and the police authorities at Fort Rixon over the ill-treatment of the Angoni recruits, supplied them by the Bureau in the early part of 1920. Because one of his labourers, Kajama, had been severely lectured by Whyte's wife apparently for "having mixed hot and cold milk which caused the milk to turn sour", and consequently protested to working in the kitchen thereafter,²⁹⁵ B. L. Whyte took exception to that and accused Kajama of being "impudent (and walking) towards (his) wife in a threatening manner...."²⁹⁶ This kind of offence was, as this Angoni labourer was soon to discover, a serious affair in a racially conscious and hierarchically stratified colonial society. For this reason, Kajama was "handcuffed by H. V. Whyte (the son), taken to B. L. Whyte (the father) who struck him about the face and knocked him to the ground. The man (Kajama) was then taken behind a building where he was stretched out with his arms and legs tied to trees, an oil drum put under his stomach so as to stretch the skin across the buttocks, a sack which had been soaked in salt water was then put across the buttocks, a gag was put in his mouth and (another) sack pulled over his head, and he was severely beaten with a heavy sjambok."²⁹⁷

²⁹⁴ Vide Supra: pp 600-4.

²⁹⁵ Ibid: Rex vs. B. L. Whyte and H. V. Whyte: W. A. Farrer, N/C Fort Rixon to S/O/N Gwelo: September 6, 1920.

²⁹⁶ Ibid: Rex vs. B. L. Whyte and H. V. Whyte: B. L. Whyte, Makovani Estate, Insiza, to R.N.L.B., Salisbury: October 18, 1920.

²⁹⁷ Ibid: Rex vs. B. L. Whyte and H. V. Whyte: Farrer, N/C Fort Rixon to S/O/N Gwelo: September 6, 1920.

B. L. Whyte, it would appear, did not flog his African labourers simply to protect the weaker sex against the impudent elements from amongst the subject peoples. He was apparently quite well known by the Insiza district officials for the rather violent regimen, which he often prescribed on his property. Indeed, in 1916 for example, he was said to have made an African constable from Fort Rixon "crawl round the yard on his hands and knees" whilst Whyte himself "had a ride (on the constable's back)...." This bizarre punishment, for which Whyte was fined 10/- for disgracing "the King's uniform", was seemingly intended "to break his (the constable's) dignity in front of the girls (Whyte's servants) he was holding forth to...."; hence the charge of impudence.²⁹⁸ And yet Whyte was by no means an exception even within the limited context of the activities of the Insiza district farmers. C. J. Lienberg of Pumilanga Farm was, in fact, perpetrating an even worse regimen over his Angoni labourers too and was, in addition, quite unrelenting and unrepentant, even in the face of legal proceedings over the matter. Thus after flogging one of his labourers unconscious in October 1920, he told the Bureau officials: "...I am quite willing to point out to you why I gave him (Yohanne, the Angoni labourer) a thrashing for not obeying orders and being cheeky to me, and not taking any notice of me when I speak to him. And he was also a damn nuisance to my other boys. It seems to me he is a spoiled buckie."²⁹⁹ Yohanne, who was a cattle herder, had apparently offended his employer, because of his failure to find some lost pigs, which had never been his responsibility in the first place.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ Ibid: Rex vs. B. L. Whyte and H. V. Whyte: Whyte to R.N.L.B. Salisbury: October 18, 1920.

²⁹⁹ Ibid: Rex vs. C. J. Lienberg: C. J. Lienberg, Pumilanga Farm, Shangani, to R.N.L.B., Salisbury: November 6, 1920.

³⁰⁰ Ibid: Rex vs. C. J. Lienberg: Statement of Yohanne (Angoni) before Farrer, J.P., N/C Fort Rixon, October 2, 1920.

In summing up this subject on the treatment of trans-Zambesian labourers at their various places of employment in the mining, farming and railway industries of Southern Rhodesia before 1930, a number of factors have to be taken into consideration. Firstly, it has to be remembered that the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia were not by any means Exeter Hall enthusiasts. They were a class of property owners, who not only controlled the means of production in the territory, but were also bent on a clear course of profit accumulation through both covert and overt designs on cost minimization and maximization of production in which the exploitation of ultra-cheap African labour played a very important part. Secondly, because African immigrant labourers, like all other forms of foreign labour in every part of the world, were vulnerable to divers social and economic pressures outside their own countries and were, therefore, likely to be more dependent on their employers, they naturally occupied a very significant place in the economic reckoning of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia. But, on the other hand, when such labour turned out to be the exact opposite of what the colonist employers in question expected of it, the consequences arising therefrom were very sharp and bitter.

Thirdly, because of the manner in which agriculture had been generally neglected before 1907 and the prevalence of cattle diseases in early Southern Rhodesia, food was at the time very expensive in the country. For the mine owners and management, however, the expensive nature of food suited their cost minimization plans quite fittingly and, therefore, food (especially meat) became a very reliable weapon, deployed largely on the centres of employment throughout the country either as a means for effecting the social control of the labourers or more appropriately as an incentive to increased production.³⁰¹ For the

³⁰¹Van Onselen: Chibaro: pp 159-60.

labourers thus deprived of this essential life-line, these actions of their employers could only mean inexorable deterioration of their working conditions.

Finally, African labour utilization, just like the mode of its mobilization in the first place, was not simply an economic matter. It was, indeed, a thorough and on-going process of colonization whereby the colonist employers sought to assert their mastery over employees from the subject peoples and, in this way, re-emphasize the syndrome of superordination and subordination, which was unquestionably the bedrock of the colonization movement. For this reason, colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia may be excused for carrying out their ideology on racial domination and repressive control over their employees to a fanatical degree. But even then, this state of affairs was only in line with official thought and policy as laid down in 1911 by the Native Affairs Department and the Company Administration as a whole. In the opinion of Carbutt, the then Acting Chief Native Commissioner for Mashonaland, expressed immediately after delivering a lecture to the African government employees in Salisbury, deference was always expected of the African worker by his colonial masters, hence this official's assertion that:

I told them (the African workers),.... that instead of lolling about the doors of the offices to which they are attached, they are to stand at attention upon the approach of all white-men, whether they be members of the Government Service, or persons visiting the offices on business; that they are to take off their hats, and remove pipes or cigarettes from their mouths, and that in the streets they are to take off their hats to His Honour the Administrator and all the principal Government officials.

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³⁰²N3/22/1/1: Carbutt, Acting C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary, Department of Administrator: August 7, 1911.

On a more practical level, the colonist employers' bug for domination over their subject workers, especially on the mines, was quite effectively catered for by the compound system of accommodation and control. This institution which had been introduced at Kimberley by Rhodes's De Beers Consolidated Mines in the 1870's, to check diamond smuggling and the proliferation of the illicit diamond buying trade,³⁰³ had, by the close of the nineteenth century, become a very useful handmaid to employers in the mining industries throughout Southern Africa in their bid to control their African labourers. In spite of the resentment the institution aroused amongst the African workers, shepherded into these dehumanizing barrack-like quarters, and the criticism the whole arrangement evoked from overseas sympathisers like the Pan-African Conference held in London in September 1900,³⁰⁴ the various managers and mineowners in Southern Rhodesia, as elsewhere in Southern Africa, found in the compound system the most convenient means for effecting a variety of economic and political advantages at a very minimal cost. Economically, this institution, for instance, enabled the mining authorities to reduce costs and stabilise African labour through standardised mass feeding and housing arrangements for their workers at subsistence level by inhibiting absenteeism and desertion amongst these same workers. Politically, the compound system allowed the colonist employers in the mining industry to establish maximum control over their workers through a process of "fragmentation, isolation and concentration of the African labour force in separate, dependent and prison-like compounds...." easily dealt with in times of trouble by the

³⁰³Van Onselen: op. cit. pp 128-9.

³⁰⁴C.O.879/68: H. S. Williams, General Secretary, the Pan-African Association to Her Majesty's Private Secretary: September 25, 1900.

The Geelong Mine Compound, Matabeleland, 1898-1904: An Example of the Open Compound System of Labour Control in Early Southern Rhodesia (Plate XVII)



A MINE COMPOUND. - GEELONG MINE: 1898-1904:

Extract from S.P. Nyatt: The Diary of a Soldier of Fortune: (P. Werner Laurie: London: 1910).

forces of coercion and domination.³⁰⁵ But all these benefits for the colonist employer in the mining industry, either in Southern Rhodesia or in Southern Africa as a whole, could, of course, only mean a gradual worsening of the lot of the African labourer.

In the analysis above, on the working conditions obtaining at the various centres of employment throughout Southern Rhodesia before 1930, the gravamen of our argument is, in a nutshell, that the experiences encountered by the trans-Zambesian labour immigrants were, to say the least, quite traumatic. But it was not these foreign labourers only who fared badly in the process of their venture into wage employment in Southern Rhodesia. The indigenous African societies were also subjected to very much the same treatment. In Mashonaland, in particular, where no implied and unwritten policy of benevolent paternalism, on the part of the administrative authorities, especially those within the Native Department, operated, the lot of the indigenous African of the province was a lamentable one, pitted, as he was, against the rougher features of colonist frontier activities and the brazen attitudes of racial animosity, which had evolved from the cradle of the 1896/7 risings. Indeed, as we have already examined rather extensively elsewhere the activities of the Native Department and its allies on the subject of labour mobilization and the role of physical coercion and fiscal pressure, in the process, between 1896 and 1914,³⁰⁶ for our purposes at this stage, we can only give a summation of those proceedings that characterized this early phase of colonization in Southern Rhodesia in general and in Mashonaland in particular.

³⁰⁵ Johnstone: op. cit. p 38: Vide also: Plate XIV: The Geelong Mine Compound, Matabeleland, 1898-1904: An Example of the Open Compound System of Labour Control in Early Southern Rhodesia.

³⁰⁶ This material is contained in the original Chapter 3 of this study which has been turned into the article: Makambe: "Colonialism and Racism...."

In the Mtoko district of Mashonaland for instance, the activities of F. R. Byron, the Acting Native Commissioner of the area between 1898 and 1907, are a very interesting eye-opener on the psychology and the general modus operandi of the officials of the Native Department in that province. Firstly, Byron procured labour by force for the Barwe Boundary Commission in 1898-9, alleging that he was only doing the Shona people a favour by reforming their "constitutional dislike of work".³⁰⁷ Secondly, by 1902, the same official was acting ultra vires in dealing with Chiefs Gose, Saramunda, Chigi Mkota and "Yanguwo" under him. The burning of villages, destruction of crops and capturing of women and children as prisoners, apparently to facilitate his campaign on the collection of labour and hut-tax, did not, in any way, please the Imperial authorities.³⁰⁸ Finally, between 1905 and 1907, Byron obviously over-reached himself by excessively flogging those labourers from his district who had deserted from the Ayrshire mine in protest against the high accident and fatality rate at the property. The fact that some of these ex-Ayrshire mine labourers so flogged by Byron either died or were hospitalized in Salisbury surely did not endear this Acting Native Commissioner even amongst those officials who supported him.³⁰⁹

Byron's activities in the Mtoko district did not, however, lack its parallels in other parts of the Shona country. Indeed, Byron had his equivalent in "Maparara", Henry de Laessoe, the Native Commissioner

³⁰⁷C.O.879/57: F. R. Byron, Acting N/C Mtoko to C/N/C, Salisbury: April 13, 1898.

³⁰⁸C.O.417/344: Clarke to Milner: August 23, 1902 and Milner to Clarke: September 26, 1902.

³⁰⁹C.O.417/424: Rex vs. Byron: Evidence of F. R. Byron before R. McIlwaine, Acting Magistrate, Salisbury: February 19, 1906 and also: Report on Native "Kadziranga" by Frank Hygate Ellis, Principal Medical Officer, Salisbury: February 19, 1906.

of the Belingwe district, another region of Southern Rhodesia predominantly occupied by the Shona people but ruled as part of the province of Matabeleland. What is particularly striking in the case of de Laessoe, during the period of his reign in this area between 1905 and 1908, is the manner in which he used his police and messengers to procure forced labour quite overtly from the African residents of the district and in the process inevitably forced a large number of them to remove into the neighbouring districts. Even more intriguing, in the "Maparara" affair, is also the manner in which his activities excited popular support amongst the white settlers, turning the whole affair into a well orchestrated demonstration of white populism.³¹⁰ For the Shona communities of the Belingwe district however, the feeling of despair and despondency, especially amongst those of them who did not flee into the neighbouring districts, was almost tangible.³¹¹

Further south-east, in the broad belt of Mashonaland called the Victoria Circle, similar proceedings, relating to the abuse by the Native Commissioners of their African charges, were also quite prevalent in the Gutu district between 1898 and 1908. Here as in other parts of Southern Mashonaland, the Native Department officials appear to have taken advantage of the general mobilisation of labour from this region for the Gwelo/Selukwe mining area since 1898, with predictable telling effects. Thus J. H. Williams, known locally as "Jakata", the Native

³¹⁰C.O.417/436: H. de Laessoe to Chief Secretary, Department of Administrator, Salisbury: December 27, 1906. The concept of "white populism" expressed by this author is definitely more wide-ranging than Henderson's analysis in relation to the colonist farmers' revolt in Southern Rhodesia in 1911-12. Vide: Ian Henderson: "White Populism in Southern Rhodesia": Comparative Studies in Society and History: Vol. 14: 1972: pp 357-99.

³¹¹Ibid: Statement of Tjotjo before A. A. Campbell, J.P., N/C Insiza: December 20, 1906.

Commissioner of the Gutu district from 1898 to 1902, was not slow to awaken to the situation and, in the process, used hut-tax and labour collection not only as a means of harrassing and flogging, right and left, those of the Gutu people who incurred his displeasure, but also as a stepping stone for promoting his personal economic interests, especially by building up a huge cattle empire of his own throughout the district;³¹² a measure which, however, turned out to be the cause of his undoing.

"Jakata's" successor, Hilton Clifford Knight Fynn, the brother of C. G. Fynn of the Fingo location fame, was not by any means different from his predecessor. If anything, the latter was certainly a more vigorous labour activist than "Jakata" had ever been. In a nutshell, the activities of Native Commissioner Fynn and his cousin, J. H. MacDonald, in the Gutu district between 1904 and 1908, reveal, perhaps in greater depth than in any other case, the dilemma of mixing administrative duties with private economic interests. On a wider perspective, Fynn's case also demonstrates some of the salient problems of the B.S.A. Co's ambivalent role as both an economic power and a political authority in early Southern Rhodesia. In short, the Fynn/MacDonald case was mainly a collusion between a Native Department official and a private labour agent for the East Gwanda Mines to promote personal economic interests, under the overall rubric of recognised administrative sanction, to the disadvantage of the Shona subject communities of the Gutu district. In essence, the issues involved in the Fynn/MacDonald case consisted of flogging people to procure labour recruits for the

³¹²C.O.417/371: Statement of Chief Gutu in Enquiry held by W. S. Taberer, Acting C/N/C, Mashonaland, into Complaints made by Chief Gutu on his Treatment at the hands of J. H. Williams, N/C of Gutu District: August 31, 1902.

Gwanda mines by coercion; establishing a private police force, the "potoria", to facilitate the work of a private labour agent; collusion between a Native Department official and a private labour agent to dispose of African cattle at paltry prices, in order to compel the owners onto the labour market and finally, bribery between an administrative official and private economic interests,³¹³ to name only a few instances.

The proceedings in the Mtoko, Belingwe and Gutu districts, referred to above, are by no means exhaustive. But even in summary form, they certainly demonstrate, to a very large extent, the manner in which colonialism in early Southern Rhodesia had direct adverse bearing amongst the Shona societies of the country. The predicament of these colonized Shona societies did not, however, end in 1908 as our case studies above tend to indicate. Nor was this sorry tale of woe confined, primarily, to the activities of the labour agents and the obliging Native Commissioners in the countryside. In fact, it was replicated all over again at the centres of employment throughout Southern Rhodesia, where the Shona labourers not infrequently occupied the lowest rungs of the wage ladder and were also treated with contumely and scorn, as the case study on the Selukwe mines between 1896 and 1902 illustrates.³¹⁴

Long after the affairs at the Selukwe mines, up to 1902, and the activities of Native Commissioner of the Gutu district in 1908, Shona labourers and recruits still faced a multitude of problems arising from the poor labour and race relations at the centres of employment in the

³¹³C.O.417/437: Hugh C. Rolleston, Clerk, Gutu, to Huntly, Magistrate, Victoria: March 7, 1907.

³¹⁴Vide: Makambe: "Colonialism and Racism...."

country. The case of the twenty-seven Bikita labourers, recruited by Holman and forwarded to the Lonrho-owned mining property at Cam and Motor near Gatooma in 1917, is a very powerful index on the resilience of the predicament created by colonialism in the Shona country in early Southern Rhodesia. As was revealed during the course of an enquiry on the matter, the Bikita labourers in question had been discharged from their employ, because they had succumbed to one variety or another of those pulmonary diseases and scurvy which were a veritable scourge on the mines and the authorities at Cam and Motor did not want any of these sick labourers to die on the property.³¹⁵ Indeed, as the death of a twelve-year old ex-Cam and Motor mine labourer, Ringisayi, the son of Takura, a resident of headman Nenduwa's village under Chief Ziki, was to reveal, the callousness of the Cam and Motor mine management towards the Bikita labourers verged on the extremes of crudity.

Ringisayi had been engaged at Cam and Motor as a surface boy since April 1917 till September of that year, when he was dismissed along with other sick labourers, of whom 19 later died en route to their homes.³¹⁶ In dismissing this young labourer, who was actually "in the last stage of consumption or phthisis",³¹⁷ the Cam and Motor mine authorities were so much concerned with getting rid of this invalidated labourer and thus protecting the reputation of their property, that they made no effort to provide him with either fare or food for the railway journey from Gatooma to Fort Victoria. Thus it was a destitute and ill Ringisayi who arrived at the Native Commissioner's office in the Chilimanzi district at the beginning of September, whereupon the Chilimanzi

³¹⁵A3/18/30/41: Statements of Neya, Murgwira et al. before H. N. Watters, Ass. N/C Bikita: October 25, 1917.

³¹⁶Ibid: Watters, Ass. N/C Bikita to N/C Ndanga: October 8, 1917.

³¹⁷Ibid: W. E. Thomas, S/O/N Victoria to N/C Ndanga: October 4, 1917.

Native Department officials used some of their cash from the official vote to forward him to Fort Victoria by train, a destination that he reached apparently in what H. N. Watters, the Assistant Native Commissioner of the Bikita sub-district, called "practically... a dying condition...."³¹⁸ Yet in their own defence after the death of Ringisayi, the Cam and Motor mine authorities, still asserted that this Bikita labourer was certified by the property's medical officer, Dr. J. du Toit Malan, as "fit to travel",³¹⁹ hence the reason for his discharge.

Here the recalcitrant Cam and Motor mine management obviously took comfort in a ruling by the Assistant Native Commissioner at Gatooma, with the prior approval of the Chief Native Commissioner in Salisbury, that the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia could hardly be expected to cope with the increasing costs on the repatriation of sick alien labourers,³²⁰ a ruling readily applied, it would appear, to every sick African labourer by unscrupulous employers. Besides, even if the Cam and Motor mine authorities had accepted responsibility over the death of Ringisayi and other sick labourers from Bikita who had subsequently died on their way home, the top-level officials in Salisbury and the police were not prepared to institute legal proceedings over the issue,³²¹ hence there was absolutely no effort by the Southern Rhodesian Administration to encourage a sense of obligation and responsibility by these and other mine authorities towards their African labourers.

The plight of the Bikita labourers at the Cam and Motor mine in 1917, can be said to have been, at best, only a minutae of the widespread

³¹⁸Ibid: Watters, Ass. N/C Bikita to N/C Ndanga: September 28, 1917.

³¹⁹Ibid: Dr. J. Du Toit Malan, Medical Officer, Cam and Motor Hospital to General Manager: September 1, 1917.

³²⁰Ibid: E. J. Eardley Mare, Ass. N/C Gatooma to Acting Hospital Surgeon: October 27, 1917.

³²¹Ibid: Minute by Secretary, Department of Administrator to Chaplin: November 28, 1917 and Lieutenant W. J. Phillips, Staff Officer, B.S.A.P., Salisbury, to Medical Director: November 23, 1917.

problems faced by the African subject peoples involved in the colonist economy of Southern Rhodesia in one form or another. Because of the somewhat repressive and tighter administrative policy deployed by the various branches of the Southern Rhodesian Administration in Mashonaland for reasons of historical bearing, colonial rule assumed a peculiar virulence for the Shona societies, notably in the field of labour exploitation. The South African origin of a greater proportion of the white colonists of Southern Rhodesia did not, indeed, augur well for these indigenous societies and it was this South African connection that white colonists in Southern Rhodesia often resorted to, in order to justify both their activities and ideological idiosyncracies throughout the length and breadth of the Shona country.

Thus erring mine managers caught up in the morass of their own creation, with regard to the abuse of their Shona labourers, could, for instance, say with A. H. Brunel-Stevens, in his defence of the activities of William Francis Baudinet, the manager of the Aurora mine in the Hartley district who had been accused of ill-treating his labourers in 1921, that "... before there was any Rhodesia, my brother and myself were both unofficial and official protectors of natives down South (in South Africa), but those natives were men, two of whom, at the Capetown Docks and coast ports would shift as much cargo as 6 or 8 of the specimens that inflict us, as a community, in this country."³²² It was certainly this kind of ideological dressing to the activities of the white colonists, concerning the abuse and ill-usage of the subject peoples in one sphere or another of general group interaction, which did not make matters easier for the Shona societies. Indeed, by the 1920's, the situation was not improving by any means, given in this

³²²N3/22/11/2: A. H. Brunel-Stevens to Secretary, R.N.L.B., Salisbury: November 29, 1921.

instance the progressive diminution of African land and stock holdings, then commonplace throughout Southern Rhodesia, as a prelude to the policy of spatial segregation advocated by the Land Apportionment Act of 1930. Moreover, such contentious issues as the use of forced labour do not seem to have ended at all in the Shona country, even as late as 1930. The use of coercion to procure African female labour for the extremely unpopular road construction work was, for instance, one issue raised by the Wesleyan Missionary Society, with the tacit support of the Southern Rhodesian Missionary Conference, for proper attention on the part of the Moffat government in October 1930, without much success however.³²³

Shona response to these various facets and challenges of their so-called "colonial predicament" by 1930 was, indeed, multi-dimensional, as these people tried to come to terms with a colonial situation that had become a fait accompli. In the first place, however, it is significant to observe here that the Ranger notion on the mood amongst the Shona peoples he describes as "characterized by passivity, fatalistic acceptance (of colonial rule) and despair",³²⁴ is particularly misleading, especially if this mood in question is taken out of its proper context on the general tedium of acts of colonial domination and control. In addition, it should be pointed out that Ranger goes on to refer to the Shona communities of the Belingwe area whose story of woe we are very much acquainted with, in terms of labour mobilization, tax collection and other means of repressive colonial control at the beginning of the twentieth century.³²⁵ The same applies to another conclusion by Ranger, with regard to the people and economic conditions of the Gutu district,

³²³D.O.35/370/10555: Rodwell to Thomas: Secret: October 7, 1930.

³²⁴Ranger: op. cit. p 194.

³²⁵Vide Supra: pp 935-6.

also in the 1920's, as reflecting a pervading state of "degradation", "brutish stupor", "demoralization" and general backwardness of the area.³²⁶

The Ranger deduction on the state of affairs in the Gutu district can hardly be said to be a realistic assessment of a district, which had witnessed a systematic denudation of the economic wherewithal of the people for the benefit of Native Department officials and private colonist interests.³²⁷ Indeed, in view of our knowledge of the operations of the Native Department officials in the Belingwe and the Gutu districts between 1898 and 1908, it is only proper to conclude that what was generally regarded as a widespread state of economic degradation and degeneration, despair and despondency amongst the Shona peoples in early Southern Rhodesia was not altogether unconnected with those after-effects of the activities of both the Company officials themselves and the rank and file white colonists. In the circumstances, the statement of one victim of "Maparara's" high-handed and arbitrary activities, in the Belingwe district between 1905 and 1908, is probably one of the best comments so far on the negative side of colonialism amongst Shona societies. "Sigwaca", the victim in question, portrayed the mood of the Belingwe people at the time of "Maparara" in the following graphic manner:

The whole of the Belingwe (district) is suffering under its present administration. The N.P. (Native Police) sjambok us when they are out on patrol. They force our beer from us and also our goats and sheep. It is common knowledge that they sleep with the women when they go to the N.C. (Native Commissioner) to complain. The natives are turned out to work at the mines by the N.P. with sjamboks. I don't know a single native in Belingwe who will speak well of our N.C. We just live and tremble, not knowing what will come to pass tomorrow. 328

³²⁶Ranger: op. cit. p 195.

³²⁷Vide Supra: pp 936-7.

³²⁸C.O.417/436: Statement of Sigwaca before A. A. Campbell, J.P., N/C Insiza: November 25, 1906.

Whilst the Sigwacas and their genre had obviously given way to despair and despondency, as their own manner of responding to colonialism in the Shona country, others, however, adopted an alternative form of response to the situation. This was a class of people who still banked on the efficacy of Shona traditional religion as an antidote to the adverse effects of colonialism amongst the Shona societies. In one sense, it is particularly interesting to note how the proponents of Shona religion and related traditional institutions were able to exploit these paraphernalia as a direct response to particular pressures, arising from the colonial setting in early Southern Rhodesia. Thus following the imposition of increased hut tax in 1903/4, the Mwari cult was immediately brought into the picture in the Charter district and the Victoria division of Southern Mashonaland. In the Charter district in particular, where a number of mbonga women (messengers of Mwari)³²⁹ had called on the local traditional rain-maker to confirm the latter's role as Mwari's representative in the area as well as to convey Mwari's message from the Matonjeni shrine in the Matopo district of Matabeleland, these proceedings did not seem to augur well for the Southern Rhodesian Administration. It was, therefore, this rain-maker - turned - messenger of Mwari who tried, in early 1904, to marshal opposition to increased hut-tax amongst the Shona chiefs of not only the Charter district, but those of the Gutu, Selukwe and Chilimanzi districts as well.

The message of the rain-maker-messenger to the Shona chiefs in the Charter district in 1904, for instance, was clear. He had been delegated by Mwari to remind the Shona rulers that "this country

³²⁹For the mbonga women and their role in the Mwari religion, Vide: M. L. Daneel: The God of the Matopo Hills: An Essay on the Mwari Cult in Rhodesia: Muoton & Co: The Hague: 1970: pp 44-52.

{Southern Rhodesia} is His, if you obey Him it will be restored, and all of you will live in peace. The whites are daily increasing and will firmly establish themselves, but the time has come for them to be driven out. I will send whirlwinds, which will destroy them all." Those Shona chiefs of the Charter, like Gambiza and Tumbare, who had accepted Mwari's message and pledged their support to him were alright. But their opposites who had refused to co-operate, like Magaya and Kwenda, were "to prepare to leave the country with the whites".³³⁰ Though this particular messenger of Mwari was ultimately arrested and tried, allegedly "for obtaining stock and goods under false pretences," his message did not go unheeded. In the Victoria division, rumours on general unrest, connected with African opposition to the new tax increase, were equally rife.³³¹ The same applied to the central and northern parts of Mashonaland where the new administrative measures had apparently given rise to increased liaison between Shona leaders on the Southern Rhodesian side of the border, like Kunzwi-Nyandoro, and those on the Portuguese side, like Makombe of the Barwe country.³³²

The years 1911/13 witnessed another upsurge in the Mwari cult activities, largely as a response to pressures then current within the Shona societies. In 1911/12, there had occurred the colonist farmers' revolt which had resulted in increased administrative effort to procure compulsory labour for the benefit of the colonist farming community, apparently as a sign of empathy on the part of the Salisbury government. For those Shona societies caught in this forced labour drag-net, notably

³³⁰C.O.417/398: J. W. Possett, N/C Charter to Acting C/N/C, Taberer, Salisbury: February 17, 1904.

³³¹C.O.417/397: A. T. Holland, Ass. N/C Ndanga to Gielgud: December 4, 1903.

³³²C.O.417/398: Inspector R. C. Nesbitt, Officer Commanding, B.S.A.P. "B" Troop, Goromonzi, to Commandant, Salisbury: February 18, 1904.

in the Charter, Salisbury, Inyanga and Makoni districts,³³³ the situation was serious and the disadvantages very well pronounced. Besides, taking into account the 1911/12 drought and the subsequent famine, which this cosmic factor occasioned, it is easier to understand why the crisis arising from forced labour, drought and famine simply created a germane environment in which the Mwari cult could, therefore, operate effortlessly. In the Victoria division of Southern Mashonaland, the activities of the Mwari messengers, Nemacha and Magomana, were destined to raise a number of eyebrows amongst the Native Department officials and a lot of anxiety on the part of the white colonists.

The activities of above mentioned messengers of Mwari in Southern Mashonaland in 1913 provide a very interesting study on the modus operandi of the Mwari religion in early Southern Rhodesia. Nemacha, for instance, was originally a rain-maker from Nemabgwa's village in the Ndanga district, before he assumed the role of a " 'Munyai' or 'Manyusa' of Mwari (a messenger from God)...",³³⁴ to quote the exact language of the Native Commissioner of the Gutu district in June 1913. On his arrival in the Gutu district to convey the wishes of Mwari as a curative to the problems of the people of the area, Nemacha had an undaunting task, at first, to convince the Gutu people that he was not merely "one of the many grain thieves", trying to take advantage of the general shortage of this commodity at the time. It was not until he had caused some rain to fall at Chimedza's village, that his bona fides as Mwari's messenger was finally accepted. In consequence, Nemacha was,

³³³ C.O.417/508: Burns-Begg to Newton, Acting Administrator: October 24, 1911.

³³⁴ C.O.417/534: E. T. Kenny, N/C Gutu to Jackson, S/O/N Victoria, April 13, 1913, in King vs. Nematcha. For a description and functions of Manyusa in Shona religion, Vide: Daneel: The God of the Matopo Hills: pp 52-61 and H. Franklin: "Manyusa (Amanxusa)": N.A.D.A.: No. 10: 1932: pp 77-83.

therefore, able to place the whole of the Gutu district in 1913, under the spell of the Mwari cult.

As a sign of this widespread influence of Mwari, the Gutu people were expected to abide by a clearly defined routine in their daily activities. Firstly, they were expected to observe chisi days (about four in a month)³³⁵ more rigorously and were, therefore, not supposed to work in the fields under pain of severe punishment from Mwari. Secondly, they were required to take great care of their grain; store it, when reaped, in secure places, especially near the hill strongholds, and avoid selling it to white men. Thirdly, they were also required to take good care of their weapons, which in this case included old muzzle-loaders, assegais and bows and arrows. After all this was done, the Shona communities of the Gutu district were promised that "a period of seven days of darkness (would) occur, and that when the light again (appeared), no white man (would) be found in the country."³³⁶ Nemacha seems to have obviously won the confidence of the Gutu people in these Mwari proceedings, due to, it might be said, the respect these people accorded him as "Sekuru" (grandfather) and their refusal to divulge anything to people associated with the "hurumende" (government).

Nemacha's compeer, Magomana (also known as Mazayi or Nzembe) was, however, more forthright in his manipulation of the Mwari religion as a means of confrontation with the colonial rulers in the Victoria district and other parts of the country. Originally, he hailed from Murebekwe's village in the Chingoma chiefdom of the Belingwe district, whence he had been sent by one mbonga woman, "living close to Bulawayo", with orders to proceed to Chief Zimuto's in the Victoria district via Chilimanzi

³³⁵For Chisi days, Vide: H. Franklin: "Chisi or Zwisi": N.A.D.A. No. 11: 1933: p 32.

³³⁶C.O.417/534: Kenny, N/C Gutu to Jackson, S/O/N Victoria: June 2, 1913.

and "see if the people were still alive after the famine."³³⁷ For his hosts in the Zimuto chiefdom, Magomana promised to intercede with Mwari, for a wind to enable them to regain once more their lost strength and confidence with which they were to drive out the whites from the country, whilst the wind in question was, for its part, to "comerolling stones that would crush all the white men in the country." As a price for this promising divine service, Chief Zimuto was expected to provide two men and a girl, from amongst his people, who were to serve as apprentices under the tutelage of Mwari at Matonjeni and of whom it was expected that "... by the time {they} could return from their errand all the white people would have been crushed out of the country."³³⁸

In the interim, the Zimuto people, who apparently were to remain mere passive observers of Mwari's divine intervention in their plight, were all treated by Magomana with snuff, which was to act not only as a curative by means of which these people could regain their strength, but was, in another sense, also expected to help them shed off the dross of the then evil world and purify themselves for the great day. The messenger of Mwari in this case also provided the Zimuto people with "matibisi {fertility medicine} prepared from munga-meal and water" in order to make their fields more fruitful, but on condition that they did not sell any rukweza (rapoko) grain to the white people.³³⁹ According to Magomana, the cost for disobeying the word of Mwari was death and, for Chief Zimuto in particular, the example of the incumbent Chief Gutu, who had then gone mad, was pertinently referred to here with desired results.

³³⁷ Ibid: Statements of Chief Zimuto et al. before C. W. Cary, Magistrate, Victoria, June 12, 1913; in King vs. Magomana.

³³⁸ Ibid:

³³⁹ Rukweza grain occupied (and still does) an important place in the mutoro (rain-invoking) and other ceremonies associated with the Mwari cult. Vide: Franklin: "Manyusa (Amanxusa)": p 80.

Nemacha and Magomana's activities in the Victoria division in 1912, in relation to the Mwari religion, were not at all out of the ordinary. The whole Shona world was, between 1911 and 1913, witnessing a convulsion in which their day-to-day problems were exacerbated and exaggerated by a combined set of cosmic and man-made factors. Under these circumstances, because of Mwari's role in the Shona world as both an immanent and transcendent force,³⁴⁰ a greater proportion of the Shona societies of Southern Rhodesia was actually compelled to look for help in this psychological anchor of longstanding, during these years of crisis. For this reason, it is thus interesting to observe that in mid-1913, when Chief Gutu sent his three messengers to Matonjeni, they met delegates from such diverse parts of the Shona world as the Zimuto chiefdom in the Victoria district, Jiri in the Ndanga (later Bikita) district, Charter, Chibi, Belingwe, Nhema in the Selukwe district and even Bunyati in the Bubi region of Matabeleland,³⁴¹ where, a year before, the Native Commissioner of the area had complained on the activities of Matendere, a messenger of Mwari, and a group of mbonga dancers from the neighbouring Gwelo district, who were apparently causing a lot of stir amongst the district's Hole elements.³⁴²

With the outbreak of the World War I, these Mwari cult activities had actually become more frenzied and wide-ranging, with the result that they had also become intertwined with Ndebele opposition to the war. Both the Shona and the Ndebele societies in Southern Rhodesia were, by 1915, certainly quite concerned about the rumours, reaching them through the grapevine, that "they would be made to fight for the British

³⁴⁰Cf. Daneel: op. cit. p 17.

³⁴¹C.O.417/534: Jackson, S/O/N Victoria to C/N/C Salisbury: June 21, 1913.

³⁴²C.O.417/519: Lanning, N/C Inyati to C/N/C Taylor, Bulawayo: February 12, 1912.

and would be put into the front firing line...." In addition, it was said that "their cattle (were to be) seized to feed the troops."³⁴³ Naturally, as a reaction to these disturbing rumours, "unusual ceremonies" were reported in the Victoria Circle, where chiefs also sent chains of messengers to the Mwari shrines in the Matopo district for consultation. In central Mashonaland, Nehanda, the spirit medium of the 1896/7 risings fame, reappeared in the Chikwakwa Reserve of the Goromonzi district near Salisbury, where a meeting of most of the leading Shona chiefs of the region was convened. To this jigsaw puzzle of Shona traditional religion was added the Ndebele factor, as messengers from Nyamazonke, a leading chief of the Matopo district in Matabeleland, sought to liaise with leading traditional leaders in Mashonaland on matters relating to World War I,³⁴⁴ much to the discomfiture of the Salisbury government.

From our preceding analysis on events between 1903 and 1915, it is apparent that the Shona world was quite alive to the problems and limitations connected with colonial rule in early Southern Rhodesia and it was, therefore, only logical for the various Shona societies, so threatened with what amounted to dislocation, to appeal to their traditional religion which had previously served as a veritable psychological panacea to their ills. But this appeal to traditional religious devices, as a bulwark against the onset of colonialism, was only one aspect of the several ways in which the Shona responded to the pressures arising from colonial conquest. The third form of Shona response to the colonial situation we shall examine here is economic in character.

³⁴³C.O.417/560: Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Chaplin, Confidential: April 26, 1915.

³⁴⁴Ibid: Statement of Native spy Patrick before Taberer, S/O/N, Salisbury: April 21, 1915.

Of course, it has been rightly argued, in terms of African economic response to colonialism in early Southern Rhodesia, that the Shona resorted to increased agricultural production to meet the situation.³⁴⁵ But whilst this argument on colonialism acting as a form of stimulus to Shona agricultural output has its own merits, it has, on the other hand, to be admitted too, as Phimister has aptly demonstrated in connection with peasant production and under-development in the Victoria district,³⁴⁶ that by the outbreak of World War I in 1914, increased peasant production amongst the African societies of Southern Rhodesia was, obviously, losing its old magical potency, on account of the rise of a very strong capitalist agricultural sector in the country; limited market opportunities and inequitable social and capital investment. For these reasons, Shona economic response to the colonial situation in Southern Rhodesia up to 1930, here, essentially deals with the withdrawal of labour and emigration to the more favourable markets below the Limpopo.

Although labour emigration from the Shona country to South Africa was a phenomenon which pre-dated the colonial period in Southern Rhodesia,³⁴⁷ it has to be admitted that the movement was given quite a boost by the advent of colonial rule. A number of factors account for this state of affairs. There was, for instance, the notorious operation, within the composite colonial society of Southern Rhodesia, of non-economic factors to influence economic issues. In this case, the ethnic factor, for example, was widely deployed by the Southern Rhodesian

³⁴⁵Vide: Arrighi: Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: pp 201-3.

³⁴⁶Vide: Phimister: "Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914,...": loc. cit.

³⁴⁷For Shona pre-colonial labour emigration to South Africa, Vide: Beach: "The Initial Impact of Christianity on the Shona...": loc. cit. and H. von Sicard: "Places of Ancient Occupation in Chief Negove's Country": N.A.D.A.: No 34, 1957: p 22.

colonist employers as a convenient excuse for imposing differential treatment on various groups of African labourers and hence the discrimination against the Shona labourers at the various centres of employment throughout the country. The case of the differential standards of treatment between the Shona and Shangaan labour recruits of similar working experiences at the Claremont mine in the Insiza district of Matabeleland in 1910,³⁴⁸ aptly illustrates this point.

Moreover, there was the question of the unpopularity of the Bureau, with which both colonist employers and labour agents in the field tried to associate Shona actual and potential labourers, as a means for effecting a very low wage tariff amongst this class of indigenous labourers. For this reason, Walter Goddard, nicknamed "Hokoyo", a farmer and Bureau agent in the Victoria district, may be excused for siding with his recruits, in their protest in 1911, against the manner in which they were ill-treated by the employers of Matabeleland to the effect that:

Some of the boys I have seen this year (1911) say,....., but why are we treated like dogs at some of the mines and called damned chibarro, maholi, etc, (sic) when if we go on our own we are treated similarly to other boys on the mines and have our wages raised when other boys' wages are raised.

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This abuse of local Shona labour at the centres of employment in Southern Rhodesia, arising from the white colonist attitude that these labourers could not, in the words of the Chief Native Commissioner for

³⁴⁸Note that Shangaan old hands from the neighbouring Portuguese territory at the Claremont mine received £2 per mensem in wages whilst their Shona counterparts got only 15s. Vide: N3/22/11/1: Statements of Chanda (Shona) and Macebo (Shangaan) before A. A. Campbell, J.P., N/C Insiza: April 8, 1910.

³⁴⁹Ibid: Extract from letter by W. Goddard, Victoria, to General Manager, R.N.L.B., Bulawayo: April 4, 1911.

Matabeleland in 1900, "... be of much use on the mines as they are the laziest, most ignorant and unpromising material we have to deal with."³⁵⁰ had a very telling effect, especially when it inadvertently combined with the Shona dislike of the Bureau, which, as far as they were concerned, only worsened their lot at the hands of the colonist employers. On the local level, as Rev. John White of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, then based in the Marandellas district, observed in 1904, Shona labourers, not infrequently, could not get work even on the farms, in spite of the crying shortage of labour, because the colonist employers considered them "awkward and useless" people, who could not do "even a bit of farm work..... without a tremendous lot of trouble in teaching them."³⁵¹

On the external level, labour emigration from Mashonaland to South Africa, which had been temporarily but unsuccessfully smothered by the Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902) and the interference of the R.N.L.B./W.N.L.A. mutual agreement between 1903 and 1906,³⁵² was given quite a tremendous spur by the callous eclectic attitude of Southern Rhodesia's colonist employers. Indeed, by the end of 1911, with the opening up of the Messina Copper Mines and the construction of a projected railway line, connecting Messina to the New Motali Mines in the northern Transvaal and running parallel to the Limpopo River for some 60 miles, authorities in Southern Rhodesia could not help feeling a sense of threat to the country's labour resources by these new developments.

³⁵⁰C.O.417/311: Report on Native Labour on the Mines in the Selukwe District by Taylor, C/N/C Matabeleland, July 27, 1900.

³⁵¹Evidence of Rev. John White, Salisbury: September 1, 1904, in South African Native Affairs Commission Report 1903-5: Vol. IV: pp 112-3.

³⁵²Vide Supra: pp 447-51.

Moreover, given the higher wages of the Transvaal and the absence of strict legislative measures against both overt and clandestine recruiting of labour in Southern Rhodesia, not to mention the absence of a railway line connecting Fort Victoria and districts further south, like the Ndanga, to enable local employers to effectively tap the labour resources of the region,³⁵³ Southern Rhodesian authorities obviously felt hopeless over developments below the Limpopo, which threatened to open the sluice-gates and further encourage the mainstream of labour emigration, especially from Southern Mashonaland, to South Africa. To make matters worse, there was apparently a growing awareness amongst the indigenous Africans, particularly in those parts of Southern Rhodesia more exposed to labour emigration, of the value of their labour in outside labour market; a factor which administrative officials in Salisbury admitted at the time, evidently with some pangs of remorse.³⁵⁴

Under the circumstances indicated above, it is thus not surprising that after 1911, for instance, labour emigration from the Shona country grew in leaps and bounds. In the Belingwe and Chibi districts, for example, agents and touts of various South African mines were actually making a lot of headway, recruiting labour illegally from these areas at the beginning of 1912, by taking advantage, as they did, of the general famine conditions of the period to advance grain and money as "bonsella" to prospective recruits, as well as providing generous rewards to runners and sympathetic storekeepers, whose stations served as food depots in the process.³⁵⁵ At the Rand itself, during the

³⁵³A3/18/30/27: Memorandum by Philip Jenkins, General Manager, R.N.L.B., Confidential: December 7, 1911.

³⁵⁴Ibid: Taylor, C/N/C Bulawayo to Secretary, Department of Administrator: December 13, 1911.

³⁵⁵A3/18/30/28: Minute by Hole to Milton: January 17, 1912.

outbreak of the 1913 strike by white workers, there was a force of 2,700 African labourers from Southern Rhodesia, of whom 2,000 came from Mashonaland and 700 from Matabeleland.³⁵⁶

Indeed, in the same year when the government of South Africa imposed a ban on the recruitment of labourers from those tropical areas lying north of latitude 22^o, on account of the high mortality rate amongst this class of labour,³⁵⁷ labour emigration from Southern Rhodesia to the South had virtually become an established industry. In the southern portions of the Ndanga, Chibi and Melsetter districts, where the dense bush and forest coverage as well as the absence of effective administrative control, made matters easier for the illicit recruiters to elude police patrols into either the neighbouring Portuguese territory or across the Limpopo into the Transvaal, labour recruitment for the South African mines went on unchecked till efforts were made to control the situation in 1915.³⁵⁸ In these southern parts of Mashonaland, labour agents like "Kunene" (D. T. Buchanan) and his touts enlisted recruits, whom they later registered as coming from one or another of the Venda Chiefs in the Sibasa district of the northern Transvaal.³⁵⁹

Moreover, voluntary Shona labour was still forthcoming in large numbers, as happened with the 400 labourers from the chiefdoms of Mazungunye, Mabika, Muroyi, Ziki and so forth in the Bikita division of

³⁵⁶ C.O.417/535: F. Possett, Johannesburg, to C/N/C Taylor: July 29, 1913 and also C.O.417/530: Burns-Begg to Lord Gladstone: Telegram: July 29, 1913.

³⁵⁷ Schapera: op. cit. pp 29-30.

³⁵⁸ A3/18/30/22: Report on Patrol against illicit Recruiters by Trooper J. M. Scallan to A.D.S.P., Melsetter: August 18, 1915 and also Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary, Dept. of Administrator: February 7, 1916.

³⁵⁹ Ibid: Statements of Manyatshe, Tshimbute et al. before C. H. Harris, sub-N/C, Sibasa District, Zoutpansberg: June 12, 1915.

the Ndanga district in 1914. These Shona labourers, who were in due course, swindled by David Erskine, the Pietersburg District manager of the Native Labour Recruiting Corporation, on their way to the South and were also diverted from their intended destination at "Mhlangane" (Randfontein) mine to the Hlobane Colliery in Natal, were apparently old-timers in the game of labour migration to South Africa. As their leader, Tom Matimbiwa, from the Duma chiefdom of Mazungunye, was to confess on how Erskine had fooled them by exploiting their ignorance on the dimensions of the 1913 Rand strike of the white miners and the World War I, the plans of these people, before they left Mashonaland, had been well prepared and laid out. Thus Matimbiwa stated:

During our stay in the Compound (in detention) at Pietersburg I had an interview with David (Erskine) and informed him of my intention to proceed to Randfontein with my party. He informed me that there was war between the Europeans on the mines (the Rand) and that the mines were closed but that he could provide employment for me and my party on some of the (coal) mines.

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In the event, these labourers had been ultimately sent to the Hlobane coal mines in Natal, on the strength of misleading promises that the conditions there were good and that they would, in addition, get "a lot of money, Kaffir beer, food and also women....."

In any case, labour recruiting from the southern portion of Southern Rhodesia continued to thrive for a long time to come. And these labourers were quite useful in South Africa not only in terms of the agricultural work they did in the Transvaal, on such estates as the citrus plantations at Zebediela and the tobacco farms around Rustenberg, Louis Trichardt and Pretoria, but also because, by 1917, the Native

³⁶⁰N3/22/4: Statement of Tom Matimbiwa (and also Takume) before I. W. de Jager, Inspector of Native Compounds, Hlobane Colliery, Natal: December 22, 1914.

Recruiting Organisation was regularly despatching large batches of them to the sugar plantations of Natal; hence this body's demand for the lifting of the restrictions on recruiting in Southern Rhodesia.³⁶¹ The Messina copper mines, which also depended largely on Shona labour, was by 1919 making similar demands to the government of Southern Rhodesia.³⁶² In fact, a year before, a conference was even held in Pietersburg in the Transvaal, with regard to labour migration from Southern Rhodesia and territories beyond the Zambesi to the South African markets, in spite of the 1913 ban.³⁶³

In the course of all the above proceedings, the real loser was the Southern Rhodesian colonist employer, as W. Wood, the labour agent of the Shamva mine was to discover in 1917, in relation to labour supply conditions in the Melsetter district, where, it was reported,

about 8,000 labourers had left for the Messina and Rand mines to work for periods ranging from 6 months to 2 years at a time, in response to the considerably higher wages obtaining at these centres.³⁶⁴ This state of affairs was to continue for a long time to come and the extent of the phenomenon in those districts with a long tradition of labour migration to the Union of South Africa even reached alarming proportions. This was particularly true in the case of the Ndanga district, where, by 1929, a large proportion of the 85 per cent of the able-bodied men in wage employment were actually working in the Transvaal.³⁶⁵ Even the labour routes and market intelligence mechanisms relating to

³⁶¹A3/18/30/20: David Erskine, District Manager, Native Recruiting Corporation, Ltd., Pietersburg, to J. Coghlan, Bulawayo: November 26, 1917.

³⁶²N3/22/4: The Mine Secretary, Messina, Transvaal, to C/N/C Salisbury: April 21, 1919.

³⁶³Ibid: Notes of a conference held at Pietersburg on Tuesday, September 10, 1918; Enclosed in Taylor, C/N/C Salisbury to Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria: December 18, 1918.

³⁶⁴A3/18/30/20: W. Wood, Chipinga to C. W. Terry, Shamva: June 30, 1917.

³⁶⁵Report of the C/N/C for the Year 1929: pp 8-9.

the state of affairs on the markets of the Union were becoming increasingly more defined and sophisticated.³⁶⁶

Judging from the extent and resilience of the labour emigration movement to South Africa from Southern Rhodesia in general and Mashonaland in particular, as outlined above, it is evident that Shona response to colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia, by 1930, was quite effective, notably in relation to the manner in which they resorted to their traditional religious institutions and also intensified labour emigration to the South African markets. The fourth dimension of this reaction to colonialism in the Shona country, which incidentally took the form of millenarianism, is a significant one. In essence, it was a combination of a number of forces associated with the Shona traditional belief system and those sectarian movements championed by trans-Zambesian immigrants, especially the Nyasalanders. Amongst the sectarian movements imported into Southern Rhodesia by trans-Zambesian immigrants, Watch Towerism was perhaps the most influential amongst the Shona societies and hence the most successful, where it operated. The others were essentially peripheral and hence could only achieve minimal success, especially amongst fellow trans-Zambesians living in the country.

G. C. W. Kampara's Gazaland Zimbabwe Ethiopian Church (G.Z.E.C.), operating in Southern Mashonaland between 1915 and 1919, was unsuccessful, because, apparently due to the South African experiences and connections of its leaders, it was semi-elitist in character and evolutionary in its approach to African problems in the country; hence its tendency to operate largely within the framework of the "Southern Rhodesianism" concept.³⁶⁷ Actually, the Gazaland Zimbabwe

³⁶⁶Vide: Report of the C/N/C for the Year 1926: pp 5-6.

³⁶⁷Cross: op. cit: pp 127-9. For the "Southern Rhodesianism" concept Vide: Supra: p 870.

Ethiopian Church had much more in common with the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.C.) which had operated in Matabeleland since 1898³⁶⁸ and only made tentative but belated and unsuccessful efforts to come to Mashonaland in 1919, when it appeared at the Mashaba mines through the work of Rev. Michael Makgatho.³⁶⁹ Because of their black American origin, blended with a strong South African flavour, these and other Ethiopian sects in early Southern Rhodesia, which simply promised modernization without providing any cure for the social and economic ills of the subject African population, were easily dismissed as a naked quest by a handful of "proto-intellectuals" of South African and Nyasaland origin to assert their leadership over other Africans and, at the same time, secure recognition and acceptance by the white colonist rulers.

Compared with the G.Z.E.C., only one other sectarian organisation introduced by Nyasaland labour migrants into Southern Rhodesia and with a strong South African base as well as black American ancestry, may have fared better. This was the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion (C.C.A.C.Z.) which appeared in Salisbury and the surrounding districts in 1922. The overall leader of the C.C.A.C.Z. in Southern Africa was apparently a black American named John George Philipps, living in Johannesburg, whence he directed operations as the organisation's "Overseer-in-charge for South Africa". John Wesley Newton Dingiswayo (also known as "Banya"), an Angoni labour migrant from Nyasaland and a former Wesleyan Methodist teacher who had lived in Johannesburg till 1922, was "the master-in-charge" in Southern Rhodesia, where, especially

³⁶⁸Vide: NB1/13: Mikkea Ncube, Zoutpansberg, Transvaal, to Jackson, N/C Mzingwane, n.d: Enclosed in H. M. Jackson, N/C Mzingwane to C/N/C Bulawayo: February 24, 1898.

³⁶⁹N3/5/2: Thomas, S/O/N Victoria to C/N/C Salisbury: July 4, 1919.

in central Mashonaland including the urban centres of Salisbury and Gatooma, he was assisted by two Angoni hands, Ozias Matando and Yohanne Sikali in Salisbury, and also Paul Manondo, styled the deacon of Gatooma.³⁷⁰

Perhaps more important than anything else, especially in terms of group-interaction between the indigenous Shona and the trans-Zambesian immigrants, the C.C.A.C.Z. was able to establish and spread some influence of its own, however limited, in the Marandellas, Salisbury and Hartley districts where it operated. Thus whilst Salisbury and Gatooma boasted a following of 60 C.C.A.C.Z. members apiece, the Chiota reserve had 150 of them. Obviously this C.C.A.C.Z. success at Chiota's was largely due to the work of two of its prominent local workers; Isaac Chiriseri, a former member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and Abel Mashora, allegedly expelled from A. J. Luttig's Apostolic Faith Mission at Gatooma for misconduct.³⁷¹ Besides, unlike other sectarian movements of the time which adopted a very pronounced anti-government attitude, the C.C.A.C.Z. appears to have assumed a very moderate posture towards the Southern Rhodesian Establishment. This comes out quite clearly in Dingiswayo's instructions to Chiriseri in September 1923, when the latter was informed "Honour the Administrator and the Native Commissioners, curse them not (and) pray for them."³⁷²

But, as has been roughly hinted, the most successful of all those sectarian organisations, either introduced or associated with trans-Zambesian immigrants in Southern Rhodesia, was the Watch Tower movement. In Mashonaland in particular, the groundwork of this millenarian

³⁷⁰N3/5/3: Ass. Superintendent, C.I.D. (B.S.A.P.) Salisbury to C/N/C; September 4, 1923.

³⁷¹Ibid: F. Possett, N/C Marandellas to S/O/N Salisbury: October 11, 1923.

³⁷²Ibid: J. W. N. Dingiswayo, Johannesburg, to Isaac Chiriseri: September 24, 1923.

organisation was undoubtedly laid down by those issues of social, economic and political nature which, in common with similar problems in other parts of the world where either socio-economic maladies or the limitations of colonial rule induced some measure of political destabilization in one way or another,³⁷³ naturally created a very ideal breeding ground for the seeds of a credible spirit of revolutionism. In this case, the people of Mashonaland and their trans-Zambesian counterparts, employed in various sectors of the Southern Rhodesian economy before 1930, clearly seem to have tasted the same rancid broth, carelessly prepared by their colonist employers with adverse but predictable consequences.³⁷⁴ And because of the peculiarity of Watch Towerism as a kind of religion which thrived best in times of adversity and bad news rather than in times of prosperity and tranquility,³⁷⁵ it is hardly surprising that this new teaching should have, at first, attracted quite a sizeable following from amongst the indigenous and foreign African communities, faced as they were with immense problems of industrialization, gradual impoverishment and increasing land shortage in Southern Rhodesia of the 1910's and 1920's. After all, the same teaching was actually being used, with good effect, in other parts of South Central Africa during this period, notably in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland where Watch Tower activists had quickly sprung onto the scene, in order to take advantage of the hardships created by the outbreak of the World War I and in consequence portrayed Watch Towerism, to the bemused African societies thus affected, as a panacea for their unwarranted ills.³⁷⁶

³⁷³Vide Supra: pp 910-64.

³⁷⁴Vide Supra: pp 914-42.

³⁷⁵W. C. Stevenson: Year of Doom 1975: Hutchinson: London: 1967: pp 30-1.

³⁷⁶Vide: Cross: op. cit. Chapters II and IV to VI; Meebelo: op. cit. Chapter VI and Shepperson and Price: loc. cit.

For those African societies of Southern Rhodesia resident either in the urban and mining centres or in the rural areas, whose members were converted to Watch Towerism, it is evident that they found its value as a critique on the colonial situation quite irresistible. In this instance, the effect of the teachings of George Kunga, for example, to a predominantly trans-Zambesian working population of Bulawayo in June 1923, on the levelling qualities of Watch Towerism, can just be imagined, in view of this preacher's assertion that:

You must not listen to the teachings of the white people as they tell lies. You can only work for them, but you cannot do what they say or tell you if you are to obey the teachings of the Gospel. In America the home of my church the natives are equal to the white man, and that is why the English people in Rhodesia do not want the American type of religion in this country. If the American churches are allowed to open here - that is the Church of the Watch Tower, all the natives will leave the other churches and join the Church of the Watch Tower.

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Kunga continued to inform his following, on their mixed fortunes in a colonial setting, by pointing out that "They (the Southern Rhodesian authorities) have also stopped America from opening mission stations here as they are afraid we - the natives will become too clever, and will cease to work for them." He urged them: "Be strong as the world will shortly be changed, and the white man will be the servant of the native in heaven."

Similarly, the Watch Tower protagonists continued to belabour this peculiar role of Watch Towerism in the Shona country as a liberating theology, characterized by a quasi-egalitarian dressing which no colonized people, who had suffered as much as the Shona did at the hands of their colonial rulers, could easily shun. Moreover, as in Melanesia

377 N3/5/8: Extracts from meetings addressed by George Kunga of the Watch Tower: Enclosed in J. C. Brundell, Superintendent, C.I.D. (B.S.A.P.), Bulawayo, to C/N/C Salisbury: June 25, 1923.

at the beginning of the twentieth century where the subject peoples had attributed their subordination by the white men to the latter's mastery of industrial skills and knowledge which they themselves consequently yearned to possess, in order to achieve a more just plural society,³⁷⁸ the Shona peoples were, during the millenium so promised by the Watch Tower movement, to be fortunately aided by the Afro-Americans, who were to make up for any industrial shortcomings on the part of these indigenous peoples and thus enable them to effectively confront the dominant white colonist group and so turn the tables as they were then in Southern Rhodesia. Thus in the Lomagundi district of Mashonaland, where Watch Towerism was trying hard to establish a foothold, the Kore Kore communities of the Urungwe area were assured by Watch Tower activists in May 1929, that:

In about six months, a flight of aeroplanes will come from America - sent by a person who lives under the water there - manned by black people, who will make an aerial reconnaissance of the whole country. These negroes will recognize their own people and will then return to America. Shortly after this they will return and bring war in their train. The white people will then be driven out of the country and the natives will be freed from all taxes and European control. All those who have been (baptized) will be rendered bullet proof thereby; any bullets striking them will be made harmless, merely flattening out and falling to the ground in coming into contact with one of the faithful. 379

Fortunately, for the Watch Tower activists in the Lomagundi district, the Shona country in early Southern Rhodesia was already favourably predisposed towards religious notions which resembled, though in a limited sense, those ideas propagated by this new faith. Indeed, it could be said that the existing traditional religious belief system in the Shona country made matters much easier for the predominantly

³⁷⁸Vide: Lanternari: loc. cit.

³⁷⁹Quoted in Ranger: op. cit. p 205.

trans-Zambesian protagonists of Watch Towerism. Thus in a very striking manner, there developed amongst those Shona communities where the Watch Tower Society operated, a very powerful combination of millenarian and nativistic forces, both working for the betterment of the lot of the African subject peoples in their own peculiar ways. In fact, though it could be said that since Shona traditional religion, with its strong nativistic flavour, was, more or less, backward-looking, especially with regard to its quest for a pre-colonial world altogether devoid of white colonist control, and was, therefore less, syncretic and receptive to new ideas than the millenarian teaching of the Watch Tower movement, it could still also be argued, however, and with a lot of justification too, that these two forms of religious expression certainly shared a common front in relation to their utopian objectives.

In one respect, whilst Watch Towerism forecast imminent total change through both divine and American intervention, Shona religionists banked on the immediate drastic action of Mwari against the existing colonial order as a way of effecting the change the subject peoples needed, at least according the teachings of the Mwari messengers in Southern Mashonaland in the 1910's as already discussed.³⁸⁰ To a large extent, this utopian ideal, underlying Shona religion, is very well portrayed in the songs and traditions, which still pervade the Shona world even today, as depicted here by the following song of bira traditional worship:

Muvambi: Richauya jongwe raIshe, Hoye (Repeat)

Vabvumiri: Vene vedzinonyika vachauya
O-hwa machinda ose achauya
Dindingwe rinenge Shumba inoruma!
(Repeat)

³⁸⁰Vide: Supra: pp 944-50.

↳Soloist: The Cock, the Ruler will come, Harken!
 (Repeat)

The Rest: The owners of this country will come,
 Listen, all the Counsellors will come
 With the Ruler, the Predator, the
 rampaging Lion! (Repeat) } 381

For both Watch Towerism and Shona traditional religion, utopianism was obviously essential as a social device for generating superhuman efforts and extorting maximum loyalty from their followers, armed with which, it was considered that no change in the colonial situation in Southern Rhodesia was beyond reach. Besides, it also served very well as the most effective way of portraying the ideal society, which these people wanted to see installed, as a substitute to the racially stratified colonial one, then existing in Southern Rhodesia in the 1910's and 1920's.

Another factor which may have played a very significant part in facilitating the spread of Watch Tower influence in Mashonaland and ipso facto intensified the process of inter-group relationship between the indigenous Shona and the trans-Zambesian immigrants, particularly those from Nyasaland and former North-Eastern Rhodesia, was the geographical distribution of these immigrants throughout Southern Rhodesia. As we have already indicated earlier on in this study, there was a very noticeable dominance in both the farming areas and the mining centres of Mashonaland of trans-Zambesian immigrants.³⁸² In north-eastern and north-western Mashonaland which served as entreports for Nyasaland and former North-Eastern Rhodesian labour immigrants into Southern Rhodesia, it is only natural that the districts of Lomagundi, Mount Darwin, Mazoe and Mtoko in particular, should have also acted as receptacles to the teachings of the wandering activists of the Watch Tower movement, represented here, for example, by men like Adam and

³⁸¹Recorded at a bira ceremony in the Madangombe Chiefdom, Chibi district: September 28, 1975.

³⁸²Vide Supra: pp 897-8.

Jack Muchenga, operating in the Lomagundi district in the mid-1920's.³⁸³ For one reason, it has to be taken into consideration that numerous independent labour migrants to Southern Rhodesia from the former territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were quite wont to interacting in various ways with those Shona communities of north-eastern and north-western Mashonaland, living along the major labour routes, in order to procure some food and thus offset their destitution or simply to replenish their supplies.³⁸⁴ Indeed, it was in the Mount Darwin district for that matter, where the Native Commissioner of the area suggested in 1923 that since land was fairly abundant in his district, some of it could as well be set aside for those immigrants from Nyasaland who wanted to acquire land and settle in the country.³⁸⁵

Moreover, it has to be said, perhaps as a credit to the sectarian movements in early Southern Rhodesia, that there appears to have existed some kind of "gentlemen's agreement", governing the activities of these various bodies in relation to the specific geographical spheres in which they could easily operate without stepping on each other's corns. Of course, whilst one has to accept that such a "gentlemen's agreement" between the various sectarian movements concerned, may have been largely a product of historical accidents, issues of cultural and social affinity as well as those physical difficulties none too often associated with a general lack of an adequate communications infrastructure, yet, at the same time, it has to be admitted that there appeared in early Southern Rhodesia a definitely discernable trend towards unconscious compartmentalization and confinement of these independent churches

³⁸³S.138/106: E. G. Howman, N/C Sinzia to C/N/C Salisbury: October 8, 1926.

³⁸⁴Vide Supra: pp 748-9.

³⁸⁵Gann: A History of Southern Rhodesia: p 185.

to particular geographical loci, especially with regard to the spread of the influence of those bodies introduced and dominated by foreign Africans in the country, on which our analysis is focused here. Thus whilst those sectarian movements with a predominantly black South African origin and leadership established their influence, firstly, in Matabeleland and only began to look towards Mashonaland after the stage of consolidation, the other bodies dominated by trans-Zambesian immigrants, especially Nyasalanders, did exactly the opposite, operating, firstly, in Mashonaland and then proceeding to Matabeleland only at a later period.

From this point of view discussed above, it is, therefore, much easier to understand why the South African-orientated A.M.E.C., which started to operate in Matabeleland since the beginning of 1898, when Mikkea Ncube of the Zoutpansberg in the Transvaal (apparently a boyhood acquaintance of the famous official of the Native Department, W. E. Thomas, during the days of Lobengula) applied to establish a church and a school in the province,³⁸⁶ made such slow progress to expand beyond the realms of that province. Actually it is interesting to observe in this respect that, in spite of the fact that the A.M.E.C. had become quite an established phenomenon by 1903 in the Bulawayo and Insiza districts of Matabeleland under the leadership of Rev. Daniel K. Gabatshwane,³⁸⁷ it had to wait for over twenty years since its first arrival in Matabeleland, to cross the frontiers into Mashonaland in 1919. But even then this appearance turned out to be quite abortive and nearly cost Rev. Makgatho, a long-time Sotho immigrant from the Transvaal, his Southern Rhodesian citizenship, since the authorities of

³⁸⁶ NB1/1/3: Mikkea Ncube, Zoutpansberg, Transvaal, to Thomas, Acting C/N/C Bulawayo: February (?), 1898.

³⁸⁷ NB1/1/19: Leo G. Robinson, Ass. N/C to N/C Insiza: Confidential: May 2, 1903 and September 20, 1903.

the Native Department in the Victoria district, where he claimed to have won some 40 adherents at the Mashaba mines, were very much opposed to its emphasis on independence from white leadership and control.³⁸⁸

Conversely, the Watch Tower movement which had made its appearance on the mines and farms of central and northern Mashonaland at the height of the World War I³⁸⁹ only managed to make its presence felt in Matabeleland seven or so years later, following the arrival of the famous Nyasaland leader, George Kunga, in Bulawayo in December 1922, after a two-year spell of minework at the Rezende mine near Penhalonga in eastern Mashonaland.³⁹⁰ And like the A.M.E.C. in relation to its belated appearance on the Mashonaland scene in 1919, the Watch Tower movement's arrival in Bulawayo in 1923 unfortunately coincided with an increasingly hostile official attitude, on the part of the Native Department, towards separatist organisations. In Matabeleland in particular, where the Native Department authorities had no experience on how to deal with Watch Towerism, they, at first, looked for similar precedence in Mashonaland before they actually snuffed out the movement in the bud, as they demonstrated by the systematic harassment they mounted against Kunga, to frustrate his movement from spreading its influence in the province.³⁹¹

In view of the facts given above, it is, therefore, quite logical to conclude that official reaction to the incidence of Watch Towerism in Southern Rhodesia greatly facilitated the process of compartmentalization,

³⁸⁸N3/5/2: Thomas, S/O/N Victoria to C/N/C Salisbury: July 4, 1919 and Taylor C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: July 31, 1919.

³⁸⁹N3/5/8: Fynn, Ass. N/C Shamva to S/O/N Salisbury: Confidential: January 29, 1917 and Taylor C/N/C to S/O/N Salisbury: Confidential: February 5, 1917.

³⁹⁰Ibid: Statement of George Kunga before Brundell, J.P., Superintendent, C.I.D. (B.S.A.P.), Bulawayo: May 16, 1923.

³⁹¹Ibid: H. M. Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: May 5, 1925.

whereby this movement became inexorably associated with the trans-Zambesian immigrants and the Shona country, in very much the same manner as Ethiopianism became synonymous with the spread of black South African influence, largely, in the province of Matabeleland. Through these proceedings, administrative action, therefore, only served to reinforce those factors of geographical import which played such a crucial role in shaping the direction and course of the influence of the foreign Africans in Southern Rhodesia up to 1930.

Finally, in considering the growth of Watch Towerism in Southern Rhodesia as one aspect of the spread of black immigrant influence in the territory by 1930, it must be taken into account that in Mashonaland, the process of social interaction between the indigenous Shona peoples and the immigrant trans-Zambesians was very well pronounced and thus the pace of cultural incorporation of the latter by the former was much quicker and more easily effected. In this connection, it might, therefore, be noted too that whilst intermarriage between the Shona peoples and the black émigrés from South Africa was, in early Southern Rhodesia, rather difficult to carry out, due obviously to innumerable but somewhat irrational mutually antagonistic intergroup attitudes which had become ossified over a period of time,³⁹² the situation was quite different in connection with relations between the same Shona societies and the trans-Zambesian aliens. Of course, a very decisive factor in the relations of these two segmental groups in early colonial Southern Rhodesia is the role played by both sexual deprivation amongst the trans-Zambesian labour immigrants and the initial pangs of social destabilization amongst the indigenous Shona communities.

³⁹²Vide Supra: pp 886-97.

Because both state and mining officials never, in the first place, recognized overtly the existence of women in the mine compounds, hence the justification of the bachelor wage tariff at the various centres of employment in Southern Rhodesia; because the mine authorities tended to exploit sex as a potential for social control amongst their labourers in the compounds and because family life was so patently insecure in the Southern Rhodesian urban and mining centres, this basic human need became not only a scarce resource amongst the African workers, but also a source of both intra- and intergroup conflicts.³⁹³ This state of affairs was only further worsened by official restrictions on the influx of foreign African women, whom administrative authorities blamed for the absence of stable social relations amongst the foreign African labourers and the inconvenience they caused the Administration of Southern Rhodesia, due, especially, to the different African marital systems which obtained beyond the Zambesi.³⁹⁴

Under these circumstances, it is only natural, therefore, that local African women, who felt either rejected by their own societies or were victims of a variety of social and economic mishaps, should have resorted to the employment centres to look for men, where, unlike foreign African women, they were favourably regarded by the authorities as a positive factor in the process of labour stabilization.³⁹⁵ Thus at a very early stage, Native Department officials in those parts of the Shona country, where mining operations took place on a large scale, were quite hard put to the task of trying to check the increasing problem of sexual liaisons and other forms of social interaction between Shona

³⁹³Van Onselen: op. cit. pp 174-82.

³⁹⁴N3/22/6: Fynn, Ass. N/C Shamva to N/C Mazoe: March 3, 1921 and Taylor, C/N/C to S/O/N Salisbury: March 17, 1921.

³⁹⁵N3/22/8: Taylor, C/N/C to Secretary, Department of Administrator: October 1, 1918.

women and trans-Zambesian labour immigrants, as was, for instance, the case in the Selukwe district, at the close of the last century.³⁹⁶ Actually at the King's asbestos mine at Mashaba in the Victoria district, for example, where a system of residential segregation existed in the compounds between the local and the trans-Zambesian labourers, it was alleged, in 1916, that the causes of conflict between these two sets of labourers arose not only from the manner in which the capitaos, who were predominantly "Northern boys.... treated local boys very very roughly (sic) and (told) lies about them to the Compound Manager", who, in turn, was said to have had "... a great predilection for Northern boys",³⁹⁷ but also from the fact that "... the alien natives - being mostly well set-up - often (caused) trouble in the family circle of local natives who (were) visited by (their) female relations";³⁹⁸ facts which can even be ascertained today from the oral evidence of the same region, whereby the Karanga males of the neighbourhood, especially ex-mine labourers, are more or less hostile towards trans-Zambesians for the same reasons given above, whereas their female counterparts are generally less antagonistic to these aliens.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁶The Selukwe mines and the surrounding Shona chiefdoms, at the close of the last century, provide an interesting example on this matter. Vide: Driver's Diary: Vol. II: Entries for December 26, 1897 and January 21-6, 1898.

³⁹⁷N3/22/1/2: Thomas, S/O/N Victoria to C/N/C Salisbury: July 20, 1916.

³⁹⁸Ibid: Dr. T. Williams, Resident Surgeon, King's Asbestos Mine, to Medical Director, Salisbury: July 14, 1916.

³⁹⁹During the author's fieldwork research in the Madangombe chiefdom of the Chibi district, just a stone's throw away from the Mashaba asbestos mines, it was asserted by female informants that trans-Zambesians were likeable people, who readily parted with almost all their earnings during their visits, when off-duty, to surrounding villages. But the local male informants, on the other hand, regarded these aliens, especially Nyasalanders, as awful people, whom they not only accused of black magic and witch-craft, but also viewed them as the cause of the local labourers' undoing at the hands of the white colonist employers. The alien labourers' allegedly cringing attitude towards the Southern Rhodesian authorities and their tendency to curry favour at the expense of the locals were totally disapproved of. Vide: Interviews with Mrs. Tsindika Tadeno, Mrs. Mbevi Tetewende and Messrs. Gude Matsveru and Madovi Magiya: Madangombe: Chibi district: July 26, 1975.

On a more positive level however, it was primarily because of this ease, with which social relations could be forged between the Shona peoples and the trans-Zambesian labour immigrants, that the latter were able to influence the former. The case of Richard Kalinde and the spread of Watch Towerism in northern and central Mashonaland between 1917 and 1927 is, particularly, fascinating on this matter. Kalinde was a Yao and a former member of the Dutch Reformed Church from the area of Chief Malenga in the Zomba district of southern Nyasaland. He had come to Southern Rhodesia in 1900 as a labour migrant, working at Shamva for two and a half years, at first as a pumping station attendant, till he left the mine in 1903. By 1915, he returned to Shamva, taking charge of the mine's pump line to the Nyague river and then rising up to become a caretaker over the mine's grain store, mill, kitchen and other matters relating to the feeding of the labourers on the property; a position over which he was commended by the Compound Manager as "thoroughly honest and absolutely reliable".⁴⁰⁰ But till the end of 1922, when Kalinde resigned his job at Shamva, a number of other things had happened to him. For instance, he had married a local Shona (Budja) woman with whom he had seven children and was himself officially accepted as both a domiciled alien and an assimilated Shona. Indeed, when he appeared in Bulawayo as a Watch Tower preacher in July 1923, he was actually treated as a Budja from the Mtoko district.⁴⁰¹ Moreover, in all his twenty-two years stay in Southern Rhodesia, Kalinde had never returned to Nyasaland even for a short visit, as he planned to do in mid-1922.⁴⁰²

As may be evident, Kalinde's sojourn and experiences in northern Mashonaland were to play a crucial role in the spread of Watch Towerism

⁴⁰⁰N3/5/8: H. Montague, Compound Manager, Shamva Mine to Harvey, Ass. N/C Shamva: December 19, 1922.

⁴⁰¹Ibid: Jackson, S/O/N Bulawayo to C/N/C Salisbury: July 30, 1923.

⁴⁰²Ibid: L. Molyneaux, Ass. N/C Shamva to N/C Mazoe: July 21, 1922.

after his resignation from the Shamva mine at the close of 1922. This long-term Nyasaland migrant labourer was, in fact, best placed to play a mediating role between the indigenous Shona communities and the trans-Zambesian immigrants and thus facilitating a process of social interaction between the two fronts. Indeed, once Kalinde and those of his compatriots from Nyasaland began to propagate the teachings of the Watch Tower movement at Shamva and other centres in Southern Rhodesia, those factors, associated with his peculiar position in the country, were to be of tremendous advantage to him. Firstly, there was the question of his long and faithful service to the Shamva mine which earned him quite a glowing recommendation from the mine management to the administrative authorities of the Mazoe district and those in Salisbury.⁴⁰³ Secondly, there was his social attachment to the Shona world which obviously enabled him to attract Shona adherents to the Watch Tower movement. In this instance, the presence of a sprinkling of Shona followers from the Makoni, Mount Darwin and Mtoko districts amongst a predominantly trans-Zambesian membership of the movement, especially in such Watch Tower branches as the Salisbury, Shamva and Gatooma ones,⁴⁰⁴ must certainly be credited to Kalinde's role in the matter. Thirdly, because Kalinde had not lost all forms of contact with his fellow labour migrants from Nyasaland, it is, therefore, not at all surprising that within one year of his resignation from regular employment, he and his compatriots had established a credible foundation on which the Watch Tower movement could build and expand in Southern Rhodesia.

⁴⁰³This kind of trust and faith in trans-Zambesians by the Shamva mine management was shattered by the 1927 strike at the property. Vide: I. Phimister: "The Shamva Mine Strike of 1927: An Emerging African Proletariat": Rhodesian History: Vol. 2: 1971: pp 65-87.

⁴⁰⁴N3/5/8: Lists of Watch Tower followers compiled by Richard Kalinde, n.d.: Enclosed in C/N/C Salisbury to Superintendent, C.I.D. (B.S.A.P.), Bulawayo: July 17, 1923.

Kalinde himself lived in Salisbury as his movement's "Pilgrim".⁴⁰⁵ But Wilson Chienje, a Yao hospital orderly; Dickson Mpovu, a Chewa, working as a cook and Elias Gedetsi, an Angoni from the Dowa district and a former teacher employed as a tailor by a private company, were all in charge of proceedings at Shamva.⁴⁰⁶ In this respect, it is, indeed, remarkable how this Nyasaland immigrant helped to broadcast the influence of Watch Towerism in central and northern Mashonaland and also acted as a veritable bridge between the indigenous Shona and the trans-Zambesian immigrant worlds in early Southern Rhodesia.

Kalinde's story should, however, not be viewed as altogether demonstrating an all-round successful spread of Watch Towerism in particular and trans-Zambesian influence in general throughout Mashonaland before 1930. This was actually not the case. In fact, whilst some form of social interaction could readily take place between the indigenous Shona peoples and the trans-Zambesian immigrants, there were, however, several constraints which very often made the whole process of this kind of group interaction rather difficult. There was, for instance, a discernable trend amongst the Watch Tower protagonists to introduce what has been called "unreal activism", whereby they envisaged to create a community of faithfuls which resembled "a small island in an ocean of iniquity" and thereby preserve their identity as a community wholly encapsulated by unbelievers.⁴⁰⁷ It was obviously this community-creating ideal of the Watch Tower movement, which eventually set it on a collision course with the host Shona peoples. Thus whilst in the

⁴⁰⁵Ibid: A. H. Bowker for S/O/N Salisbury to C/N/C: September 4, 1923.

⁴⁰⁶Ibid: Lists of Watch Tower followers compiled by Richard Kalinde, n.d.

⁴⁰⁷Cf. J. A. Banks: The Sociology of Social Movements: Macmillan Press: London and Basingstoke: 1972: p 22.

former territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, African chiefs of the region had, in the late 1910's, taken exception to such idiosyncratic practices amongst the Watch Tower faithfuls as sleeping together in the centre of the villages, allegedly anticipating that the end of the world might take place any time and even at night,⁴⁰⁸ the Shona chiefs of north-eastern and north-western Mashonaland, in turn, could not put up with some of the movement's peculiar doctrinal prescriptions as well.

In the Mount Darwin district, the consternation of those Shona people, who were not members of the Watch Tower movement, can just be imagined at the attempts of the trans-Zambesian protagonists of this society to superimpose a mixture of Swahili/Chewa sub-culture in a Kore Kore environment. The idea that local adherents of the movement were expected to speak only trans-Zambesian languages, like Chewa (Chinyanja), Chisenga and so forth, rather than Shona; that they had to pray also to John Chilembwe among other foreign intercessors and that, in their greetings, they referred to the practice as "Chikundano", whilst in addressing each other they exclaimed "Chikonde amayi" for female members and "Chikonde ababa" for males, not to mention the tampering with the local marital and burial customs in general, which this movement also sanctioned, could hardly have been allowed to continue for long without arousing a lot of furore, as it did in this area in the late 1920's.⁴⁰⁹ Indeed, it has to be recognized that it was this kind of cultural arrogance and general interference with Shona customs and traditions by the pre-1896 black immigrants from the South, which cost them their lives during the risings.⁴¹⁰ In fact, as far as the trans-Zambesian immigrants were concerned, though they may have

⁴⁰⁸ Meebelo: op. cit. pp 140-1.

⁴⁰⁹ Ranger: op. cit. pp 206-10.

⁴¹⁰ Vide Supra: pp 86-7.

interacted very easily with the Shona peoples, they, however, seem to have generally shared their colonist employers' disrespect of Shona traditions and institutions, especially with regard to their attitude towards the Shona chiefs.⁴¹¹ This, of course, was quite different from the behaviour of even most members of the educated Shona elite, who may have questioned the bona fides of particular incumbents, but did not, in any manner, oppose the sanctity of chieftaincy itself.⁴¹²

On a much more fundamental level, the spread of trans-Zambesian influence in Mashonaland and the whole of Southern Rhodesia through such bodies as the Watch Tower movement, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (I.C.U.) and so forth had a lot to do with those constraints generally associated with composite colonial societies not only in early Southern Rhodesia, but in every other part of the world. Thus Watch Towerism failed to mature not necessarily because of its rather narrow social base represented by its inordinate dependence for support, particularly in the urban and mine centres, on migrant workers of predominantly Nyasaland origin, but also because this movement's ideology did not appeal to the colonist authorities in Southern Rhodesia. After the Shamva mine strike of 1927 for instance, it was actually feared that any form of African unrest could very easily impair the security of the white colonist population and, therefore, efforts were consequently mounted to tighten the screws on any form of independent expression of African opinion in the country and the Watch Tower movement and the I.C.U., both of which were somewhat synonymous with the spread of trans-Zambesian immigrant influence in Southern Rhodesia,

⁴¹¹Vide: Weinrich: Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia: p 65.

⁴¹²Note the role of Shona traditional leaders like Chiefs Tangwena and Chiweshe in the Z.A.N.U. liberation movement today. Vide: Zimbabwe News: Vol. 10: No. 1: January-February, 1978: pp 17-9.

naturally suffered in the process.⁴¹³ Indeed, as far as the suppression of Watch Towerism was concerned, the Shamva mine strike appears to have tremendously strengthened the argument of that lobby ~~within~~ the Salisbury official circles, which had, as early as 1924, advocated for the introduction of a law somewhat similar to the Northern Rhodesian Native Schools Proclamation of 1921, as an appropriate mechanism for controlling African activities on religious matters.⁴¹⁴ This was however to be achieved later with the introduction of the Native Preachers' Bill in 1934.

In many respects, the fate of the Watch Tower movement was very much similar to that of the I.C.U. in Southern Rhodesia. In Robert Sambo, John Mphamba, Stephen Matendeza, Ronald Mapundu and other Nyasaland immigrant veterans, the I.C.U. Yase Rhodesia had a very strong element of trans-Zambesian leadership and origin. But whilst this labour movement tried, in the late 1920's, to spread its tentacles to various urban and mine centres throughout the territory, by the late 1920's, however, the repressive measures adopted by the Salisbury authorities in dealing with this movement ultimately emasculated it in various ways. In 1927 for instance, Robert Sambo, the disciple of Clements Kadalie, the Nyasaland immigrant founder of the I.C.U. of Africa in South Africa, was deported from Southern Rhodesia, allegedly for creating disorder in the country; spreading communism; promoting Afro-American movements and embezzlement of I.C.U. funds.⁴¹⁵ On numerous mining properties in the territory, the management also restricted all forms of access to their workers by I.C.U. leaders and organizers and, in this way, demonstrated beyond doubt the success of

⁴¹³Phimister: "The Shamva Mine Strike of 1927...": pp 84-6.

⁴¹⁴S.138/106: Taylor, C/N/C, to Secretary, Premier's Office, Salisbury: April 10, 1924.

⁴¹⁵D.O.63/4: Sir F. Newton to A. Edgecumbe: September 21, 1927.

the compound system as one of the best forms of labour control in the sub-continent.⁴¹⁶ Such official measures, of course, only strengthened those shortcomings of the I.C.U. Yase Rhodesia in relation to its weak financial base, fragmented support amongst the African workers and lack of adequate organizational drive and appropriate strategy on the problems of the African worker, which were to prove, in the long run, the undoing of this movement.⁴¹⁷

In the final analysis, both Watch Towerism and the I.C.U., as forms of expressing the African independent viewpoint on matters of religion and labour relations in which the Nyasaland immigrants took such an active lead, were, however, not very successful by 1930. As far as Watch Towerism was concerned, independent African religious expression of a more meaningful nature had to wait for the appearance, sooner or later, of those sectarian movements either founded or imported from the South by local African activists themselves, but considerably modified, in the process, to suit the cosmology of the indigenous societies. Thus the birth of, for instance, Samuel Mutendi's Zion Apostolic Faith Church in Southern Mashonaland in 1925, immediately after this activist's return to his Bikita home area from Johannesburg,⁴¹⁸ and that of the Vapostori movement of Johanne Maranke in Eastern Mashonaland in 1932,⁴¹⁹ indeed, presaged the arrival, on the local scene, of religious movements that were more aware and sensitive to the problems

⁴¹⁶Cf. Van Onselen: op. cit. pp 217-8.

⁴¹⁷Ranger: op. cit. pp 163-7.

⁴¹⁸S.138/148: Statement of Samuel Mutendi before C/N/C Salisbury, n.d.: Enclosed in Taylor, C/N/C to S/O/N Victoria: April 4, 1925 and M. L. Daneel: Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches: Vol. I: Background and Rise of Major Movements: Mouton & Co: The Hague: 1971: pp 376-8 and 410-1.

⁴¹⁹Vide: M. W. Murphree: Christianity and the Shona: The Athlone Press: London: 1969: pp 92-110.

of the communities in which they operated and were, in a number of ways, also more accommodating towards various aspects of Shona culture. In the labour field, the I.C.U. Yase Rhodesia had to wait for the emergence of a predominantly local african leadership in the movement, which assumed the responsibility of directing its efforts into those problematic areas that were of more immediate concern to the local African peoples. Thus by the late 1920's, the I.C.U. executive for example, included such indigenous figures as Masoja Ndhlovu, Thomas Sikaleni Mazula, Job Dumbutshena and Charles Mzingeli, to name only a few of those who began to gradually substitute the influence of their Nyasaland predecessors by the beginning of the 1930's.⁴²⁰

⁴²⁰Mss. Br. Emp. S.22/File: 168: Sergeant Masotcha Ndhlovu, General Secretary, Independent I.C.U. to Harris: May 4, 1932 and van Onselen: op. cit. pp 213-4.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

As an apt summation to this study, it is argued and emphasized that foreign African groups constituted a very significant but often underestimated social and political force in the history of the colonization of early Southern Rhodesia. Because of the fact that colonialism as a form of pluralism presaged a situation characterized by "fundamental discontinuities and cleavages, and a cultural complex based on systematic institutional diversity...",¹ necessitated by the imposition of alien rule by the colonizers over the colonized, it is, therefore, not unexpected that the annexation of Southern Rhodesia in 1890 should have given rise to a subsequent period of conflict between 1890 and 1898. The indigenous societies naturally resented the arbitrary imposition of the new economic and political order and the white settler dominance it implied.² Under these circumstances, those foreign Africans, introduced in early Southern Rhodesia as simple menials, military auxiliaries and necessary adjuncts in the course of missionary enterprise, became a very important factor in the whole process of military conquest and the subsequent political domination of the various forces of colonialism in the new colonial possession. In this instance, African pioneers from below the Limpopo like John Grootboom, Tom Dhlamini and the rest of their class, who participated in the 1893 war and the 1896/7 risings, proved to be very useful allies to the white settlers.

¹Smith: "Institutional and Political Conditions of Pluralism": in Kuper and Smith (eds.): op. cit.: p 27.

²Cf. S. Lieberman: "A Societal Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations": in P. L. van den Bergh (ed.): Intergroup Relations: Sociological Perspectives: Basic Books: New York: 1972: p 38.

A number of factors account for the role of the foreign Africans in the wars of conquest and "pacification" in early Southern Rhodesia. From a technical point of view, the use of African auxiliaries, whether as an on-going process of overt collaboration or by virtue of very deliberate administrative policies of divide and rule, was a matter of economic expediency. In Southern Rhodesia, the B.S.A. Co. was a commercial consortium very much concerned with the problem of effecting the most economical means of annexing their new possessions of Matabeleland and Mashonaland. Secondly, from an historical perspective, the annexation of Southern Rhodesia was essentially an extension of South African political and economic influence and, for this reason, it was not unnatural that a large proportion of South African capital and manpower should have been involved. Given the B.S.A. Co's. emphasis on cost minimization, it is not surprising, therefore, that African auxiliaries from the South should have come to form part of this company's scheme regarding the conquest and "pacification" of the Shona and Ndebele territories.

Moreover, it should be observed that Africans from the South of the Limpopo had, by the 1890's, had a fairly long history of contact with the white forces of colonialism and change in the sub-continent. They had become involved in various processes of integration into the social, economic and political systems dominated largely by the values of the white colonists. For the new settler society of early Southern Rhodesia, which, like racially stratified colonial societies elsewhere, manipulated the ideology of cultural differences and emphasized the importance of its own culture at the expense of those of the indigenous African communities,³ the attainments of the African peoples below the Limpopo could not be ignored.

³Cf. L. Kuper: Race, Class and Power: Ideology and Revolutionary Change in Plural Societies: Gerald Duckworth & Company Limited: London: 1974: pp 27-8.

For their part, those African peoples below the Limpopo, who had acquired certain skills and education, tended to become discontented, during the 1880's and 1890's, by the constraints imposed by the narrow ethnic and geographical boundaries of their indigenous entities and colonial domination. The growing exodus of African youths from South Africa to Europe and America, at the close of the nineteenth century, in quest of opportunities that did not then exist in their country, reflects a growing sense of international awareness; a trend that also spurred some of their compatriots to join the colonial movement then spilling across the Limpopo into Southern Rhodesia. John Makunga, Karl Khumalo, John Jacobs and many others represent that class of Africans from the South who were prepared to proceed to Southern Rhodesia, in the early phases of colonization, and utilize their hard-earned Lovedale skills to advantage.

Moreover, the use of foreign collaborators as a mechanism for facilitating the establishment and subsequent entrenchment of colonial rule in various parts of Africa was more complex than appears at first sight. Apart from those social images derived simply and directly from the social relations of production and the concomitant structural advantages which the European colonizing agencies generally associated with those militaristic states in various parts of Africa such as the Zulu, the Galla, the Baganda, the Fulani and many others, it has to be noted that such positive images as might have been held by the colonizers were also shaped by the preconceptions of pre-colonial European travellers, missionaries and traders in Africa. These preconceptions may have been somewhat lacking in objective reality and could have owed their bona fides solely to the nature of initial contact between the European visitors and the African peoples concerned, but, all the same, they contributed to those social and psychological stereotypes that

subsequently governed the course of race and ethnic relations, during the colonial era.⁴

Against this background, in West Africa, for example, both the British and the French colonizing agencies came to rely, for military purposes in particular, on specified national groups from the hinterland. For instance, there was widespread admiration, amongst the British and French colonizers, for the Moslem groups from the hinterland, allegedly for their physique or because of their traditional and military backgrounds, which evidently justified these colonizers' reliance on these national entities. In Southern Africa, this practice was pushed even further. The British admiration of the Zulus and, to some extent, those ethnic groupings descended from the "noble Zulu blood", like the various Nguni offshoots throughout the sub-continent, was proverbial.⁵ Because of these idealized views of the Zulus and their alleged ability to adapt to all types of soldiering and discipline, it is, therefore, not in the least surprising that this particular African group should have been hotly sought for during the period of conquest and "pacification" in Southern Rhodesia; firstly, as recruits in the Matabeleland Native Police in 1894 and secondly, as a dominant factor in the "Black Watch" (the Mashonaland Native Police) in 1898. The Sotho and the "Cape Boys", who also played a prominent part as auxiliaries to the white forces of colonialism during this period, were simply substitutes, engaged as alternatives when the Zulus were not forthcoming from Natal.

⁴Cairns has excellently discussed this subject at length. Vide: Cairns: loc. cit.

⁵This idealization of the Zulu and Nguni culture in general is clearly demonstrated, in its extreme form, in the manner in which, in colonial Southern Rhodesia, distinctly Shona names were, for instance, rendered in Nguni. These include Umtali (for Mutare); Umvuma (for Mubvumi); Bubi (for Vubwe); Umzingwane (for Mudzingwane) and so forth. For this interesting aspect of Southern Rhodesian history, Vide: T. V. Bulpin: To the Banks of the Zambesi: Thomas Nelson and Sons: Johannesburg: 1965.

Just as in the military field, a variety of ideas and justifications were also employed on the labour front to introduce foreign elements into Southern Rhodesia. The Zulu and other African immigrants from the South, who had been so much idolized in the pre-1898 era, unfortunately could not adjust, satisfactorily, from military to labour operations. Thus as the phase of conquest and "pacification" receded into oblivion, a noticeable volte face became apparent in both official and colonist circles in Southern Rhodesia, as far as their attitudes towards the black émigrés from the South were concerned. The loudest outcry was raised against the "Cape Boys", whether they were of mixed, "Coloured", origin or simply the educated Africans from the South, whose pretensions to simulate the colonizers' culture were bitterly resented.

As a manifestation of the growing white colonist and official resentment against these black émigrés, punitive measures were taken against those individuals who tried to raise their heads above the level prescribed for African subject peoples in general. Karl Khumalo and John Jacobs, both former secretaries of Lobengula before the 1893 war, were some of the individuals who bore the brunt of colonist vindictiveness. In the religious field, Rev. Michael Makgatho sustained similar ill-treatment at the hands of his Boer patrons of the D/R/C in Southern Mashonaland. On a general level, restrictive legislation was even passed, by 1898, to monitor the movements of the black émigrés from the South in Southern Rhodesia. In the circumstances, the Mfengu immigration scheme of 1898-1902 was, therefore, exceptional. Yet it was those peculiar assumptions relating to Mfengu relationship with the white colonist societies of Southern Africa that rendered the scheme liable to founder.

In the wider context of foreign labour importation and utilization in Southern Rhodesia since 1898, it is argued that the course of events that characterized this question up to 1930 was marked, from the beginning, not only by the nature of the relations between the dominant white colonist

group and the various indigenous African societies of the territory, but also by those features which commonly underlay colonial economies in plural societies. In terms of racial and group interaction in early Southern Rhodesia, it has to be emphasized that the processes of conquest and colonization had given rise to characteristic mutual distrust and hostility which bedevilled various forms of economic co-operation.⁶ Secondly, the inability of the white settlers to make the indigenous African peoples of Southern Rhodesia willingly participate in the external economy of the country, in accordance with the new colonial order, provided the dominant group with a sound pretext for introducing new immigrant groups to fill up those economic niches created by the new social and political order, very much in the same manner as the colonist planters of the United States, Brazil and the West Indies did by bringing up African slaves to take up the place of the local labourers or the way in which Indians were imported to work in Natal, Mauritius, Fiji and so forth by sugar growers.⁷ Thirdly, in Southern Rhodesia as elsewhere where the dominant settler society felt insecure, the plurality of subordinate communities was largely seen as a means of guaranteeing the security of the dominant society. The Mfengu, the Shangaan, the Tonga and many other communities were, therefore, expected to provide the guarantee the white settler society required.⁸

On the general economic level, it might be observed here that the colonization of Southern Rhodesia was simply part of a wider

⁶Albert Memmi calls this mutual hostility the "Nero complex". Vide: Memmi: loc. cit.

⁷Liebertson: "A Societal Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations": p 44.

⁸Cf. The case of Hawaii where Chinese, Japanese and Portuguese immigrants were expected to serve the same purpose to the ruling plantocracy. Vide: Liebertson: op. cit.: p 45.

European movement that had begun during the mercantile era, when the European powers established for themselves a world commodity market based on inherent inequalities of exchange in trade with the rest of the world and thus giving rise to European development and colonial underdevelopment in the other parts of the world. With regard to the establishment of white settler societies, in what is now known as the Third World, during the nineteenth century as manifest presence of competitive capitalism, this was largely a projection of those inherent inequalities of exchange already observable during the era of mercantilism. The only difference in relation to white settler societies and competitive capitalism is that the dominant colonist classes were, in every way, better placed to harness "... the labor-power of non-Europeans to create a surplus for themselves and for the metropolis". Alternatively, the existing mode of production amongst the indigenous peoples was "harnessed.... to the requirements of surplus-creation for Western Europe". Finally, the colonial economies of forced labour were also created in various regions for the benefit of the colonising powers, which became the epicentres for colonial development whilst the colonies themselves were mere peripheries, where cheap labour and extraction of commodities were the main economic concerns.⁹

These fundamental aspects of colonial political economies were to have their effects on the plural society of Southern Rhodesia too. The indigenous African societies were subjected to a regimen of forced labour which largely contributed to the 1896/7 risings. After the risings, whilst the repressive aspects of forced labour extraction had become modified, the ideological ones, however, became very pronounced

⁹M. Legassick: "South Africa: Forced Labor, Industrialization and Racial Discrimination": in R. Harris (ed.): The Political Economy of Africa: Schenkman Pushing Company: Cambridge: Massachusetts: 1975: p 233.

and were characterized by taxation and other forms of non-economic coercion in which the state was the prime enforcer by virtue of its monopoly over the legitimate means of force and regulation.¹⁰ The subsequent extensive emigration of local labourers to labour markets below the Limpopo is, in part, evidence of the depth of resentment within the indigenous African circles of Southern Rhodesia.

Secondly, because of the sense of mutual antagonism between the colonists and the colonized and because of the absence of sufficient incentives to attract local labourers, the indigenous peoples, who still controlled their own means of production at the early period of colonial rule, preferred to participate in what was then essentially a mercantile economy in the territory through the exchange of surplus in form of grain, cattle and other products. It was only by 1904-7, for instance, that the African indigenous economy in Southern Rhodesia was visibly weakened as a result not only of colonist restrictive measures,¹¹ but also consequent to the rise of colonist commercial agriculture which, inexorably, encouraged land speculation, the increase in the value of land and the systematic attempts of the B.S.A. Co. to squeeze the African off the land. To this was added the discretionary investment policy of the Company which overtly discriminated against the African areas in favour of centres of colonist settlement. Yet in spite of this squeeze, it was only by the 1920's that the local African became convinced that all was lost and began to accept his lot under the local colonist employer.

¹⁰ Legassick describes repressive forced labour economies as those relying on physical force, whilst the ideological ones are those employing non-economic devices. Vide: Legassick: "South Africa: Forced Labor, Industrialization, and Racial Discrimination": p 234.

¹¹ By 1904, Africans, especially in the eastern parts of Mashonaland where gold-washing^{was} still in progress, were forbidden, under pain of punishment, to participate in this trade.

Under the circumstances portrayed above, foreign labourers became a primary concern of the colonist employers and officials of Southern Rhodesia. The Abyssians, Somalis and Arabs between 1899 and 1901; the Chinese and Indians (1899-1904); the Mfengu settlement scheme (1898-1905); the black West Indians in 1899; the recruits from the Great Comoro Islands (1911) and Zanzibar (1919) and the trans-Zambesians, particularly from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1903-1930), represent a variety of schemes tried, at one time or another, for labour importation into Southern Rhodesia, with various degrees of success. These foreign labour schemes were expected to meet the needs of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was assumed that the foreign labourer was much cheaper, more reliable and easier to control, since he was more vulnerable to divers pressures in a strange environment. Secondly, these employers were both unable and reluctant to pay attractive wages and stabilize labour supply, since they were operating in marginally profitable farming and mining industries.

Thirdly, in a general way, labour from distant territories tended to accord with the marginalist economic theory on labour migration, very widespread during the colonial period in Africa, whereby the mobility of labour, rather than capital, from one region to another was viewed solely in terms of favourable geographical location and aggregation of the factors of production (namely capital, labour and natural resources) in specified areas and in this way gave rise to inequitable economic development in both colonial and subsequent neo-colonial Africa. Finally, these numerous schemes for importing foreign labour supply represented, in the Southern Rhodesian colonist context, migrant labour at its best. Because of the fundamental requirements of the system of spatial segregation which obtained in the territory, foreign labour schemes represented an attenuated form of migrant labour, designed not

only to arrest the total urbanization of the African worker and his permanent exodus from the rural to the urban centres, where he would become a social and political threat to white control, but also in order to allow the colonist employers to benefit from a unique system of labour utilization and control, represented in this instance by the compound system, which treated the African labourer as a perpetual batchelor.¹²

Yet in spite of all the expectations and general optimism which accompanied these foreign labour schemes, most of them, however, failed. The Abyssinian, Somali and Arab labour schemes ironically failed because of those advantages discussed above which the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia so highly priced, but which these foreign labourers vigorously and successfully contested. Indian labour importation failed to materialize because of the racial sentiments, which it engendered in white colonist circles of Southern Rhodesia, and also due to the fundamental requirements related to a more credible Imperial policy on British trusteeship and Indian rights as British subjects either in India itself or elsewhere in the empire. The hostility of the secondary colonist segment in Southern Rhodesia did not seem to guarantee those rights Simla would have liked for its subjects. As far as Chinese labour was concerned, colonist public sentiment in Southern Rhodesia was even more hostile than it ever was to Indian labour. Besides, Number 12 Downing Street saw no strong justification in allowing the territory's pro-Chinese lobby to proceed with its plans to import this labour. Mfengu labour too was merely a partial success, which fizzled out as quickly as it had begun like a bubble. But these immigrants, however, remained permanently in the country.

¹²Cf. Legassick: "South Africa: Industrialization and Racial Discrimination": pp 248-9.

Trans-Zambesian labour from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was, therefore, unique amongst the foreign labour schemes indicated above. In the first place, the trans-Zambesian territories were, as sources of labour supply to Southern Rhodesia, better placed and nearer geographically than most of the foreign sources the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia hankered for. Secondly, the probability of any diplomatic complications affecting the flow of labour to Southern Rhodesia was very minimal, since the B.S.A. Co. exercised a lot of influence in the trans-Zambesian territories, either through direct political control as in Northern Rhodesia up to 1923 or through financial contributions as in early Nyasaland. Thirdly, in Northern Rhodesia, the R.N.L.B. Co. established veritable monopoly over labour recruitment which greatly benefitted the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia between 1903 and 1923. In Nyasaland too, official attempts to canalize their labour supply solely to the Rand simply ended up benefitting the Southern Rhodesian employers in a number of ways.

The success and permanence of Mfengu and trans-Zambesian immigration into Southern Rhodesia had wide-ranging results. For the trans-Zambesian territories, the progressive institutionalization of labour emigration to Southern Rhodesia and beyond could only encourage the process of underdevelopment from which they were to take some time to recover. The social and economic costs the trans-Zambesian territories were forced to bear, to the advantage of Southern Rhodesia, were quite heavy. In the true tradition of the system of migrant labour in the forced labour economies of the colonial period, the trans-Zambesian territories became not only virtual labour reserves for the Southern Rhodesia labour market, but they also became the appropriate extensions of the social and economic system of Southern Rhodesia, where children were raised and old men returned to die. Because of the migrant labour

system and its allied denial of full urbanization to the African labourer, the trans-Zambesian territories became, by and large, the providers of social services, pensions and other amenities to those of their subjects who had spent their prime in the service of the colonist employers of Southern Rhodesia. In Nyasaland in particular, where no comparable mining industry later emerged to salvage the situation, these human and economic costs involved in labour migration were also responsible for the systematic retardation of the protectorate's plantation economy and the rise of a credible indigenous bourgeoisie, actively involved in the territory's economic life.

In Southern Rhodesia itself, African immigrant presence had new implications for the successive governments and the territory's plural society as a whole by 1930. For instance, whilst the trans-Zambesian immigrants became, by and large, a significant force in the economic development of that country, their counterparts from the South had other functions to perform. The fact that these black émigrés from the South were, in every way, products of an on-going process of black/white interaction of long standing in which they had been bred and tutored, obviously placed them in the role of an interpolating median in Southern Rhodesia's highly stratified society. Indeed, because of the characteristic tendency of the dominant groups in racially stratified plural societies to emphasize the primacy of cultural differences as the basis for racial discrimination and an inequitable class structure,¹³ the black émigrés from the South, who had accepted the doctrine of the universality of the Western values and the superiority of Western culture which underlay the cultural imperialism of colonialism,¹⁴ were,

¹³Kuper: Race, Class and Power.....: p 27.

¹⁴Ibid: p 25.

at first, well placed in Southern Rhodesia to develop corporate economic and political interests of their own under the shadow of their colonist patrons.

In one sense, these corporate economic and political interests of the black émigrés, symbolized by the land grants extended to them by the B.S.A. Co. and their independent political structures at Bembesi, tended to foster the feeling of these immigrants' distinctiveness from the rest of the subordinate African world in the country. It was only after the shift in the B.S.A. Co's. economic policies between 1905 and 1907 and the subsequent gradual withdrawal of official recognition of the distinctiveness of this group's distinctiveness, that the black émigrés felt that their corporate interests were being threatened in the process.¹⁵ In the circumstances, the relationship between the two former allied fronts changed over the years from that of submissive behaviour and deference, in expectation of preferential treatment, on the part of the black émigrés, and patronage and paternalism, on the part of the white colonist society, to outright confrontation, which certainly militated against the usual etiquette of race relations that had hitherto existed.¹⁶ In this way, the black/white alliance between these two fronts, which had developed within the framework of something resembling a meeting ground between personal and collective relationships, was thus shattered as each front became increasingly conscious of its own political and economic position.

For the African cause as a whole however, these developments, which shattered the former alliance between the white colonist society

¹⁵Cf. Cohen: Two-Dimensional Man.....: pp 102-3.

¹⁶Cf. The relationship between ex-slaves and ex-masters in post-Civil War America in H. J. Walker: "Changes in the Structure of Race Relations in the South": in van den Bergh (ed.): Intergroup Relations: Sociological Perspectives: pp 28-9.

and the black émigrés from the South and subsequently set the latter onto the war-path against the former, were quite beneficial in every way. Such events actually allowed the black émigrés from the South to take an active lead in the processes of articulating African grievances against the B.S.A. Co. Administration in Southern Rhodesia. Starting with the struggle of the "black pioneers", led by members of the Hlazo family, against the B.S.A. Co. Administration between 1905 and 1923 over the Ntabazinduna reserve and later joined in the tussle by Chief Garner Sojini's "black settlers" in the period between 1914 and 1923, the black émigrés from below the Limpopo demonstrated, however unsuccessfully, that having learnt the ways of the white colonist society and come to appreciate its sub-culture, they were, in every way, also determined to wage a legal and verbal warfare against their former patrons, according to the rules of the latter's own game; hence the resort by these black émigrés to public appeals and law courts as they sought for relevant solutions to their controversies.

In terms of group interaction within the African subject communities of Southern Rhodesia, a credible pattern of alliances developed between the African indigenous front and their immigrant counterparts. In reality, a process of progressive compartmentalization emerged as groups of African immigrants allied themselves to particular indigenous ethnic groupings in the territory; a course of developments which was, indeed, strongly encouraged not only by factors of cultural and historical import, but also by issues relating to geopolitical location and the system of communications that had emerged with the rise of the colonial era in the sub-continent. In this instance, the Mfengu and the other black émigrés from the South, for example, allied themselves with the people of Matabeleland, whilst the trans-Zambesian immigrants generally associated with the indigenous communities of Mashonaland. Of course, this pattern of alliances may not have been as water-tight as it appears,

but it roughly portrays the general outline of those developments which marked ethnic interaction in Southern Rhodesia up to 1930 and beyond.

In essence, the alliance between the black émigrés from the South and the Ndebele was an historical and cultural one, whilst that between the trans-Zambesians and the Shona societies was simply identificational and structural.¹⁷ The Ndebele and the black émigrés shared a common historical past and similar cultural traits which justified a reasonable form of alliance between them. As far as the Shona and the trans-Zambesian immigrants were concerned, their alliance arose primarily from the common form of treatment they sustained under a repressive system of colonial regimen. In between these specified parameters on ethnic interaction between the indigenous and immigrant African communities in early Southern Rhodesia were, however, a number of exceptions. For example, the Shona immigrants from Mozambique, who were victims of the process of arbitrary bifurcation of various national groups all over Africa, through the imposition of artificial political boundaries by respective colonial powers, obviously allied with the people of Mashonaland for historical and cultural reasons. The Ngoni of former North-Eastern Rhodesia, who allied with the Shona, as well as the Lozi of former North-Western Rhodesia, who allied with the Ndebele, were not unnaturally victims of the colonial system of communication whose convenience they could only ignore at a great cost.

It is against this background of a complex pattern of group alliances, nourished by factors of historical, cultural, social, political, geographical and structural nature, that we should, therefore, measure the spread of African immigrant influence in Southern Rhodesia.

¹⁷For a discussion on the dimensions of assimilation and alliances, Vide: M. M. Gordon: "Toward a General Theory of Race and Ethnic Group Relations": in N. Glazer and D. P. Moynihan (eds.): Ethnicity: Theory and Experience: Harvard University Press: Cambridge: Massachusetts: 1975: pp 84-5.

For instance, the black émigrés from the South, who had allied themselves with the people of Matabeleland, could thus not avoid getting involved in a process which was, sooner or later, to influence the politics of Ndebele traditional leadership, represented by the activities of Nyamanda, the son of Lobengula, and Madloli Lopila, his cousin, in their appeals to Imperial authorities and B.S.A. Co. officials over land and cattle issues. The Ndebele middle class and neo-traditional elements were also equally influenced by the proceedings of the black émigrés from the South, as may be seen in the activities of the grandsons of Lobengula, Rhodes and Albert, and in the organisation of early Ndebele irredentist movements.

In Mashonaland, on the other hand, it was the trans-Zambesian immigrants who became a significant factor in the spread of African immigrant influence in the province. The black émigrés from the South were unsuccessful in Mashonaland ironically because of those same reasons of historical, cultural and social import which had rendered them such a success in the province of Matabeleland. The success of the trans-Zambesians in spreading their influence in Mashonaland was obviously predetermined partly by the character of colonial rule in this province, which tended to be overtly repressive, whereas in Matabeleland, the colonial regimen there was, more or less, paternalistic. Besides, the nature of group interaction between the trans-Zambesians and the indigenous Shona societies was somewhat happier in many respects than it was between the latter and the black émigrés from the South. For these reasons, it is, therefore, not surprising that it was the trans-Zambesian-led sectarian religious movements like the Watch Tower and the Christian Catholic Church in Zion, which managed to establish a foothold in the province of Mashonaland for a time before 1930.

In their overall dealings with the indigenous African societies, the African immigrant elements initiated an intricate pattern of social

relations and political alignment to facilitate group interaction across the frontiers and thus learn to live side by side with one another. Indeed, it could be said that, in the final analysis, both the black emigres from the South and the trans-Zambesian immigrants qualitatively influenced the course of the historical development of Southern Rhodesia and also made significant contributions to the country's culture during the early colonial period and after. Although as far as the black émigrés from the South were concerned, their role in the establishment of a credible foundation for African nationalism in the territory was, at first, not altogether devoid of particularistic motives. These black émigrés were, in the 1910's and 1920's for instance, very much concerned with issues of social and political exclusiveness and, therefore, tended to emphasize those matters relating to their rights and privileges as a third tier within the Southern Rhodesian plural society. In this case, those organisations which were dominated by these black émigrés, like the U.B.V.A. and U.N.V.A., were, therefore, essentially strategies for effecting formal communication amongst themselves, either through ritual and ceremonial gatherings or by exchange of views at regular intervals, and, in this way, fostering that distinctiveness to which they laid claim.¹⁸

But with the rise of indigenous-led organisations like the Ndebele National Home movement and the R.N.A at the close of the 1920's, the dominance of these black émigrés in quasi-political organisations was severely threatened. That of the trans-Zambesian immigrants in labour movements and sectarian religious societies was also seriously challenged by the beginning of the 1930's. With the rise of the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress led by Aaron Jacha; the emergence of local

¹⁸For similar developments amongst the Creoles, Vide: Cohen: op. cit.: p 75.

leaders like Charles Mzingeli in the trade union movement and the consolidation of Mutendi and Maranke's sectarian religious movements in the 1930's, this could only mean that immigrant African leadership in Southern Rhodesia had, finally, been deposed and overshadowed. Thus from the 1930's up to the early 1960's, when the politics of reform and negotiation still held sway, it was with the indigenous African political leadership that the successive colonial governments of Southern Rhodesia had to deal with.¹⁹

On the whole, such developments, dating from the later period, should not be allowed to detract from the contribution of African immigrant influence in the overall development of Southern Rhodesia. The role of the descendants of Mfengu immigrants, for instance, in the social and political development of the African subject peoples of Southern Rhodesia is a very positive fact. Individual descendants of these Mfengu immigrants, who immediately strike the observer's eye, include among them, those people who have played and still play an important part in the nationalist politics of modern colonist Rhodesia like Ernest Ndzombane, a former member of the Fingo Council at Bembesi, a Z.A.P.U. activist and also an ex-detainee. There is also the case of William Kona, the sometime president of the Rhodesia African Farmers' Union (R.A.F.U.) and national chairman of Bishop Abel Muzorewa's United African National Council (U.A.N.C.).²⁰ Other leading Mfengu have also distinguished themselves in various ways, notably the descendants of the Hlazo, the Sojini and Somkence families in relation to their role in the

¹⁹For these African political organisations and leaders of Southern Rhodesian politics, Vide: O'Meara: op. cit.: pp 91-106; and Ranger: "African Politics in twentieth-century Southern Rhodesia": in Ranger (ed.): Aspects of Central African History: pp 225-45.

²⁰Mr. Kona was the national chairman of Bishop Muzorewa's party by 1975.

educational and other forms of African social development in the country of their adoption.

Trans-Zambesian immigrants, individually and collectively, also made and still continue to make significant contributions of their own to the welfare and general advancement of those host societies in which they settled. The role of Dunduza Chisiza, the former Minister of Finance in Dr. H. K. Banda's pre-independence government in Malawi, in allying with leading Southern Rhodesian indigenous African nationalists like James Chikerema, Edson Sithole, Nathan Shamuyarira, Henry Hamadziripi, George Nyandoro and many others over the formation of the Salisbury Youth City League in the mid-1950's,²¹ is not insignificant. Bernard Chidzero, of the United Nations fame, is worth our mention too. Because of his mixed Shona/Chewa parentage, Chidzero's contribution in the educational and literary fields in colonist Rhodesia is an important one,²² as far as the present study is concerned. Vida Mungwira, the first African woman to qualify as a medical practitioner at the beginning of the 1960's,²³ is another example of the positive results of trans-Zambesian immigration and presence in Southern Rhodesia.

On a lighter note, the role of these descendants of trans-Zambesian immigrants in African social circles of present colonist Rhodesia is no small one, especially in the fields of music²⁴ and soccer.²⁵

²¹Vide: N. M. Shamuyarira: Crisis in Rhodesia: Andre Deutsch: London: 1965: pp 26-44.

²²Vide: Dr. Chidzero's Shona novel, B. T. Chidzero: Nzvengamutsvairo: Rhodesia Literature Bureau: Salisbury: 1957(?).

²³Personal Observation.

²⁴Note here the role of Elias Banda and his band, the Great Sounds, in the urban African music of colonist Rhodesia.

²⁵It must be observed that the most popular African soccer team in Salisbury (very often identified with nationalist aspirations), Dynamos, is largely composed of players of trans-Zambesian immigrant ancestry.

In fact, some of the existing historical landmarks throughout the country are by themselves a living testimony to the pervading character of African immigrant influence.²⁶ In short, it could, therefore, be said, as a fitting conclusion to this survey, that once African immigrant elements were introduced into Southern Rhodesia, they came to stay and, at the same time, established an enduring influence in the country's history.

²⁶ Attention here has to be drawn to the Adelaide Ntuli Hall at the College of Education in Bulawayo, named after a leading Mfengu female educationist of the 1920's to the 1950's, and the Mai Misodzi Ayema Hall in the Harare Township of Salisbury, named after a leading Shona female activist of the 1940's and 1950's, married to a Bemba immigrant. The same applies to leading African secondary schools, Bernard Mzeki (near Macheke) and Moleli Secondary School (near Hartley), named after two foreign African evangelists who died in the 1896/7 risings.

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Interviews

1. Adonis, Ruby (née Makunga): Born 1936 at Domboshava where father was a teacher (Mr. Dodson Makunga). Educated in South Africa; married to a Xhosa and living in Gwelo. Member

of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.C.). Informant only significant as a grand-daughter of John Makunga, but otherwise not very helpful. Interviewed at Mkoba Township, Gwelo: Rhodesia: November 20, 1975.

2. Chirwa, Kahole: Tonga immigrant from Malawi. Came to Southern Rhodesia in 1919 as a youth and worked continuously at the mines of the territory till 1974, namely Shamva (for eight months in 1919 as new arrival); Gath's mine (Mashaba) (for ten years - 1919-1929); King's mine (Mashaba) (for 25 years - 1929-1954) and at the Mashaba Chrome mine (for another 20 years - 1954-1974). The unusually long period of service was explained to the author as arising from the fact that the mining companies for which this labour migrant worked either provided very little pension or none at all. So in order to survive the informant had to work continuously since he had no intention of going back to Malawi. By 1974, the informant however retired and, because he is married to a Shona wife, settled in the Makambe ward of the Madangombe Chiefdom (Chibi district). Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 25, 1975.

3. Dywili, Diane (Miss): Born in November, 1919. Daughter of Moses Dywili, a leading Mfengu personality. (Dywili was a member of the Hlazo group of "black pioneers" and also an important figure in the A.M.E.C. He worked at various centres for his church in Mashonaland before his death in 1962). Informant not very acquainted with Mfengu historical and political developments before the late 1930's. Interviewed at Fingo Location, Bembesi, Rhodesia: November 18, 1975.

4. Dywili, Georgina (née Uwani): Born in 1900 at Umtwaka in the Cape colony. Mother of Diane Dywili (first born out of seven children) and wife of Moses Dywili. (Married during the 1918 Influenza epidemic). Somewhat guarded and suspicious of author's interview. Could only talk more freely on her stay in Mashonaland, especially in the Mhondoro area near Hartley and at Inyanga, where the husband was posted in the late 1920's. Interviewed at Fingo Location, Bembesi, Rhodesia: November 18, 1975.

5. Hlazo, Paul: The surviving son of the famous leader of the "black pioneers" at Bembesi, John Hlazo. Paul Hlazo was the fourth son of Hlazo (after Jeremiah, Stephen and Titus). Unlike his elder brothers who were all born in the Cape, he was born at Tegwani in the Bulilima District of Matabeleland on March 11, 1898, when John Hlazo was still an evangelist and teacher for the Methodist missionary society. Started teaching in "Kraal Schools" in Southern Rhodesia in 1914 before proceeding to Lovedale and St. Matthews in the Cape, between 1914 and 1924. He boasted to the author of having witnessed the opening of Fort Hare College by General Louis Botha, the South African Prime Minister, in 1916, when he was a student at

Alice. Taught for 30 years in Southern Rhodesia since 1924 and was also the Superintendent of the Free Presbyterian schools for some time. During the interview, Mr. Hlazo demonstrated that he was very well versed and involved, in every respect, with Mfengu affairs either at Bembesi or in the Cape. Indeed very little use has been made of Mr. Hlazo's valuable information by the author because of the length of the work when it was, in due course, committed onto the paper. But most important of all, Mr. Hlazo demonstrated more clearly than anybody else those qualities which characterize the Mfengu as distinctive in the history of African social and political development in the sub-continent. He was proud of Mfengu commitment, in the past and contemporary times, to Christianity and the alliance with British institutions and authorities which this implies. For this reason, he quickly reminded the author that the primary school just near his place at Bembesi was called Umqwashu (Milk) Tree School, in memory of Mfengu "liberation" by Sir Benjamin D'Urban and the British missionaries from Xhosa domination in 1835. Moreover, he informed the author that the Mfengu still celebrated May 8th as their "Liberation Day". On this score, Mr. Hlazo even called upon his daughter, who had arrived from the Cape on the same day as the author, to affirm his facts. Interviewed at Fingo Location, Bembesi: Rhodesia: November 18, 1975

6. Khambula, John: Date of birth not known. Came to Southern Rhodesia from Natal in 1894 at the age of 15/16 years. Served in various capacities in the service of white colonists, at first as a servant and groom and later as a wagon driver to the B.S.A.Co. and other private employers. Knew Tom Ntamekhwana Dhlamini to whom he was related. Participated in the Shona rising (1896/7) in various capacities. Unlike other Zulus, he became very much integrated into the indigenous Shona society. By the 1930's, he owned a farm at Musengeza Purchase Area in the Hartley District, but sold it after the death of his wife and some of his children because he had a "white" certificate, and not the "black" one commonly issued to other Africans from the South and which thus barred them from living in the Native reserves (the Tribal Trust Lands), Khambula was therefore able to reside in the Mhondoro reserve under Chief Mashayangombe, whom he accepted as his overlord. Interviewed at Chegutu Location: Hartley: Rhodesia: November 22, 1975.

7. Kona, Kenneth: Born March, 1918. A member of one of the Mfengu dynastic houses. A grandson of Zita Kona (died 1903) and Elsie Kona (his third and most controversial wife). Mr. Kona was very well informed on those matters pertaining to Mfengu internal politics and the bona fides of Mfengu dynastic families. Very helpful on the Helese Ginya (Elsie Kona affair 1903-5). Interviewed at Fingo Location, Bembesi, Rhodesia: November 19, 1975.

8. Mpengesi, Meckson: Born at Bembesi in 1912. An ex-Fingo Councillor and was therefore well versed on matters relating to both Mfengu internal politics and general local government issues. Interviewed at Fingo Location: Bembesi: Rhodesia: November 18, 1975.

9. Madangombe, Cephas Vushemakota: An indigenous member of the Madangombe (Mhari) dynasty of the Chibi District. Worked at the Shabani and Mashaba mines from 1922 to 1968, during the course of which he interacted widely with trans-Zambesian labour migrants. Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: September 18, 1975.

10. Madangombe, Isaac Ketiwa: An indigenous member of the Madangombe (Mhari) dynasty of the Chibi District. A lay preacher with the African Reformed Church (formerly D/R/C) and very well informed on the history and political development of the Madangombe dynasty, dating back to the nineteenth century. Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: August 24, 1975.

11. Madangombe, Madyangobe: An old indigenous member of the Madangombe (Mhari) of the Chibi District. Fearless and very well known for his anti-Establishment views and was, not unexpectedly, one of the figures behind the conflict between Chief Masvavike Madangombe and the District Commissioner at Chibi over the boundaries of the Chibi and Madangombe chiefdoms during the time of the interview. Very well informed on the coming of the whites, Mapainera (Pioneers) along the "Road of Mapasure" (The Pioneer Column Road) in the southern part of the Chibi District. He was also well versed on the imposition of colonial rule and the beginnings of Mabuka (wards) and mutero (taxation). The informant was also quite helpful on the history of the nearby mines (Mashaba, Shabani and Selukwe), Chibaro and the coming of trans-Zambesian immigrants into the country. He also remembered, with resentment, the role of the "Cape Boys" as wagon drivers at the local mines. Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 26, 1975.

12. Madangombe, Shumbei (Miss): Perhaps the oldest member of the Madangombe (Mhari) dynasty of the Chibi District interviewed; hence she died three days later (September 15, 1975). Informant dealt mainly with the coming of the white settlers and Shona (Ndebele relations and their effects in the chiefdoms of South-Western Mashonaland. Interviewed at Madangombe, Chibi District: Rhodesia: September 12, 1975.

13. Magiya, Madovi: Born in 1912. An indigenous resident of the Madangombe area of the Chibi District. Worked variously at the Mashaba and Selukwe mines since the 1920's, where he interacted with trans-Zambesian labour immigrants.

Had no liking at all for trans-Zambesians whom he accused of causing the travails that the local labourers incurred at the hands of colonist employers. Nyasaland immigrants were particularly disliked for their knowledge of black arts and dangerous medicines. Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 25, 1975.

14. Matsveru, Gude: Aged about 90 years. An indigenous member of the Bere (Mhari) dynasty of the Victoria District. Was well acquainted with the coming of the whites and remembers how his uncle was shot dead by a white colonist before the Anglo-Ndebele war (1893) in the Mashaba region, allegedly for allowing his cattle to drink the water this colonist regarded as his. Worked at the Shamva, Shabani and Mashaba mines from 1917 to 1974. Was a member of a party of labourers that started operating the Nil Desperandum mine at Shabani in 1917, cobbing the asbestos ore by thrashing it like corn (i.e. "Kupura Chinda Namavoko Sezviyo"). Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 26, 1975.

15. Mumba, Joshua: A Senga from the former North-Eastern Rhodesia region of modern Zambia. Came to Southern Rhodesia as a youth in 1923 under the influence of glossy but false promises of the R.N.L.B. agents, operating in his home area, that everything was milk and honey in Southern Rhodesia. Indeed this informant and those of his colleagues who came along with him were apparently informed by Bureau agents that all the African men in Southern Rhodesia had died of the Spanish Influenza Epidemic (1918) and that only women had survived the crisis. Worked mostly at the Mashaba mines from 1923 to 1973. Retired and settled in the Tigere ward of the Madangombe chiefdom on the strength of a Shona woman to whom he was married. (Informant died in October, 1975, shortly after the interview). Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 26, 1975.

16. Musiyiwa, Majengwa: Born in the Zimuto chiefdom of the Victoria District in about 1905/6. Took a situpa (registration certificate) at the Chibi Office in about 1923. Self-taught and went into employment at a very early age, starting with looking after the sheep of the missionaries at Copota (D/R/C) Mission station in the late 1910's and rising to the position of a clerical assistant at the Shabani mines in the 1930's. A very brilliant informant on the nature of labour and race relations as well as the interaction between the indigenous African peoples and various classes of African immigrants in the early period of colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia. Had a very clear grasp of the manner in which Native Commissioners and their aides collected taxes in South-Western Mashonaland in the 1910's and 1920's and also on the mobilisation of labour by these same officials and the Bureau. Was also very well informed on the issues of land and labour during the reign of the author's great grandfather, Chief Maripise "Furingi" Madangombe IV, up to 1927 and also on

how the author's grandfather, Makambe Madangombe, as the eldest son of Chief Madangombe, was conscripted to work not only at the Selukwe, Mashaba and Shabani mines, but was also in charge of marriages and taxes in the Madangombe chiefdom in the 1910's and 1920's, issuing Zvikwangwani Zvishava (red pendants) for those wives, whose husbands had paid their taxes, to wear around their necks, to avoid the conscription of their men for the Bureau. (Native Commissioners' police and messengers, of course, had the tendency to seize those wives who did not have these red pendants in question, holding the women as hostages till their husbands owned up). In this process, the author's grandfather was said to have been frequently assisted by his brother-in-law, Gweme Muguti. (In fact, very little use has been made of this intriguing information for the purpose of this research, because of its sheer size already. But it is hoped that, should both of us survive the crisis that plagues our country at the moment, the author might subsequently write a biography of this informant as an index on labour and race relations in colonial Zimbabwe). Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 26, 1975.

17. Ndzombane, Ernest S.: Born in 1911 at Bembesi. An ex-Fingo Councillor and a leading Mfengu political activist; hence his periodic detention along with other African nationalists of modern Southern Rhodesian politics. Was quite helpful on those matters connected with the relations of the Mfengu community and the neighbouring colonist farmers at Bembesi and the Bubi District. Interviewed at Fingo Location: Bembesi: Rhodesia: November 18, 1975.

18. Nyilika, Chief Morosi: Born in 1903 at Bembesi. Related to Mtyakisani, one of the original five Mfengu chiefs to arrive at Bembesi from the Cape in 1898, but four of whom were later demoted in 1905. (As Mfengu chieftainship relates amongst the descendants of these dynasties, it is therefore natural that Nyilika should have been the Mfengu leader in 1975, when this research was carried out. His appointment was due to the fact that there was no agreement amongst the Konas as to who should be chief). Chief Nyilika was well informed on Mfengu history and Mfengu/Xhosa relations in the Cape, as well as on the whole genesis and development of the Mfengu community in Southern Rhodesia. Long before he became chief, he worked at several mining centres in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland and was, therefore, quite acquainted with the nature of Mfengu labourers' interaction with other African groups in the territory. Interviewed at Fingo Location: Bembesi: Rhodesia: November 17 and 18, 1975.

19. Somkence, Rev. Oliver: Born 1903 in the Transkei before father (Robert Somkence) moved to Southern Rhodesia. The author had sent a message to Archdeacon Somkence, long before he left England for Southern Africa in July 1975 and thus the informant was quite friendly and prepared to volunteer information on a number of subjects. Informant was, how-

ever, quite helpful on matters relating to the role of the Mfengu and other black emigres from the South in the proto-nationalist organisations of the 1910's and 1930's in Southern Rhodesia. This was a field in which the informant excelled, since he was by 1922, an Executive member of the U.B.V.A. as well as a registered voter by 1928. With the creation of the African (Native) Purchase Areas in Southern Rhodesia in 1930, Rev. Somkence, then still a teacher, was amongst a dozen or so African applicants whose applications for land were submitted to the Colonial Office by the Governor, Sir C.H. Rodwell. Because of his position as a member of Southern Rhodesia's African middle class of the 1920's and the 1930's, it is not unexpected that Archdeacon Somkence should have been so helpful on his personal experiences and knowledge of some of the African stalwarts of the early period, like Thomas Maziyané, Abraham Z. Twala, Johannes S. Mokwile and so forth. Just as in the case of Mr. Paul Hlazo, Rev. Somkence's information was hardly used for the purpose of this work, but will be consulted for further research. Interviewed at St. Patrick's, Gwelo: Rhodesia: November 20, 1975.

20. Tadeno, Tsindika (Mrs.): Indigenous female informant. Born in the Chilimanzi District but married and living in the Madangombe chiefdom of the Chibi District. Was quite a girl during the Spanish Influenza Epidemic (1918) and remembered quite well the catastrophic effects of this crisis, especially as labourers from the Mashaba mines fled into the open country, at the instructions of the authorities, and therefore flocked into the neighbouring Chilimanzi District too. Was quite helpful on the process of interaction between trans-Zambesian male labour immigrants and indigenous Shona women in the early period of Southern Rhodesian history. Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 26, 1975.
21. Tetewende, Mbevi (Mrs.): Born in the Masunda chiefdom in the Southern part of the Chibi District, but married and living in the Madangombe chiefdom in the northern end of the same district. Was particularly informative on local African and trans-Zambesian labour migration to South Africa, using the southern region of the Chibi District, which borders on the Limpopo, as a transit area. Some of these potential migrants were said to have temporarily worked at Mazunga (the Nuanetsi Ranch) on their way to the South. Interviewed at Madangombe: Chibi District: Rhodesia: July 26, 1975.

Personal Communications

1. Bhebhe, T. (Mrs.): Great grand-daughter of Chief Nzimende Mbulawa Ndongdo (and grand-daughter of Cronje Ndongdo). Too young to know all the gruesome detail of Mfengu history, but helpful on modern Mfengu social conditions. Communication from Middlesex to author: York: November, 1973.

2. Makunga, D.: The son of John C. Makunga and father of Mrs. Ruby Adonis. Was a teacher for a long time in Southern Rhodesia and noted particularly for his musical expertise. Later left the country to live in Botswana. Was quite helpful on the role of his father amongst the "black pioneers" of Southern Rhodesia and his services in the Native Department. Communication to author from Selebi-Pikwe: Botswana: December, 1974.

3. Sojini, Rev. W.J.: Son of Chief Garner Sojini and an active member of "black settlers" and the African middle class since the late 1910's. Was very helpful on various aspects of Mfengu history, including his own and his family's role. Personal friend of late Chief Zvimba. Communication to author from Sinoia: December, 1975.