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AFRICAN LABOUR IN SOUTH CENTRAL AFRICA, 1890-1914 AND NINETEENTH CENTURY COLONIAL LABOUR THEORY

by

JOHN MACDONALD MACKENZIE
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the mobilisation of African labour in South Central Africa and the creation of a dual economy there. The problem it seeks to examine is why a purely migrant labour system was created, in which Africans spent only short periods in the cash economy interspersed with longer periods in their own subsistence one. This problem is closely linked with the wider issues of land policy, native policy, and colonial labour theory in the nineteenth century. Using the records of the Colonial Office and of the British South Africa Company's administrations in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, together with other contemporary material, an attempt is made to examine the relationship between developments in the Rhodesias and wider colonial experience, between the Company's aims in its administration and the Colonial Office's control of it.

Colonial labour theory in the nineteenth century is found to have emerged as a response to the end of the slave trade and the emancipation of the slaves, as a need to substitute for force both stimulants (like taxation) to overcome so-called tropical indolence and a modicum of land hunger to overcome excessive dependence on subsistence. This had to be balanced, however, by the need to protect the interests and rights of indigenous peoples in the face of humanitarian concern and international opinion. These considerations, coupled with

administrative expediency and the desire of European settler communities for the security of social and political segregation, led to the creation of a reserves policy.

In Southern Rhodesia, the absence of a genuine reserves policy during the first years of settlement appeared to lead to disastrous relations with the native peoples. The Colonial Office insisted upon the creation of reserves, and the effect, if not the intention, of subsequent Company native policy was to move Africans increasingly on to the reserves, away from European centres of employment, opportunities for marketing produce and stock, and principal lines of communication.

As a result, Africans' capacity to respond rationally to the cash economy actually declined as opportunities for exploring the various avenues into it were withdrawn with geographical isolation. In consequence labour became a purely migratory experience which entailed brief periods in the essentially alien environment (accentuated by ordinance) of the town or mine location. This was accentuated also by the migration of labour into Southern Rhodesia from throughout South Central Africa and the import of indentured labour from overseas, policies pursued by an administration convinced of the inadequacy of the internal labour supply. Thus Colonial Office concern for the protection of the native interest led to the perpetuation of an inefficient and, to the African, disturbing system, which ultimately facilitated the mortgaging of Africans' social and political development.

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MAPS

PREFACE

There is no more obvious phenomenon in Africa than labour migration, and it has received a proportionately large amount of attention from both anthropologists and sociologists. Historians of Central Africa have however merely glanced at labour migration. They have seen it as an important part of European political penetration, but its origins have not yet been studied on the scale of Sheila van der Horst's Native Labour in South Africa (1942). The research that has been done is either in the form of rather sketchy articles or unpublished theses, and there has been no attempt to set the colonial labour experience into the wider context of colonial labour theory.

This thesis cannot fully fill this gap. It is intended as an introduction to the problem of the origins and development of attitudes towards labour in both the colonial and the tribal situations, and the application of those attitudes in the growth of a dual economy and the formation of policy.

An extremely difficult problem in this part of Africa is terminology. South Central Africa is a term of convenience intended to include several modern countries and to draw the mind away from the European-created boundaries so often irrelevant in African history. Unfortunately, it is a term based purely on previous European scholarship. Recently, another term has been coined that has perhaps better historical precedents, Zambesia (e.g. in Stokes and Brown, The Zambesian Past, 1966). It also suffers from being of European creation and instantly produces

the unfortunate qualifying phrases Southern Zambesia and Northern Zambesia. For the purposes of this thesis, South Central Africa may be defined as that area from which Rhodesia secured its African labour supply between 1890 and 1914, that is Rhodesia itself, most of Zambia and Malawi, and parts of Mozambique, the Northern Transvaal and Botswana.

A second difficulty is that countries have changed their names, sometimes several times. Some scholars appear to make the modern terms retro-active; others use the name current in each period. In this thesis the modern term will be used in any general context - as in the above paragraph - and the historical term where a particular point of time is concerned.

Yet another problem of terminology is that so many words that have perfectly legitimate meanings have developed pejorative overtones through association with the colonial period. Perhaps the most obvious example is the word native, a word that is virtually a compliment when used of Wales, Alsace, New England and so on, but is now to be avoided in an African context. It is unfortunate that historians have to avoid such a word, simply because of past misuse, for there is no real substitute for it. It has proved necessary to use it sparingly in this thesis, for a total ban seems foolish. An even more obvious example of misuse is the word "boy" invariably used in the colonial situation in Central Africa as a synonym of "labourer" or "servant" or even of simply "male African". In this thesis the word is of course used only to mean a male adolescent or child. It should be

recognised, however, that when it occurs in a quotation it very often involves the much wider meaning*.

Labour migration is of course a continuing process - a relatively stabilised African urban industrial population is still the exception rather than the rule. It should also be remembered that in the case of Rhodesia, current political problems are coloured by labour migration. There can be little doubt that the present regime is delighted that a truly permanent African urban population has never been created, that the reserves exist as a massive system of outdoor relief during a period of high African unemployment. Several Africans interviewed by me in Rhodesia regarded their reserves, their villages, their land, however small and poor, as an insurance against the vagaries of the European economic climate. Thus Africans in Rhodesia regard institutions that are undoubtedly a bar to their political progress as necessary to their day-to-day needs.

To visit a Rhodesian reserve - particularly one near Salisbury - is to see the conditions so often described by Native Commissioners fifty years ago, a community of women and children with an old headman and occasionally an unemployed male or an older child on holiday from school. Almost daily examples of labour migration appear to the traveller or research worker in south central Africa: the youthful employee in a

*Hortense Powdermaker in her Copper Town: Changing Africa (New York, 1962), pp. 92-93 has an excellent example of this problem. One of her research assistants referred to two ten year old boys as "gentlemen", so aware was he of the debasing of the word "boy".

hotel saving to buy a team of oxen to help farm the ancestral land in Inyanga; the young men on the Malawian bus boisterously returning home after a spell in the Johannesburg mines; the depot of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association nearby the Blantyre mission of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian on land actually leased from the mission; the crowded bus that leaves Harare township, Salisbury, for Blantyre every night, via the Mozambique enclave, full of returning migrants using an old route by modern means; the Rhodesian farmer annoyed that the labourer supplied by the government agency had "run away"; and, most interestingly of all, the Africans from the southern end of the country waiting for work on the Mazoe Mine in Rhodesia who took temporary employment as archaeological labourers on an excavation on the Portuguese site of Dambarare within sight of the mine - as work became available, the archaeological labourers melted away! These are just a few personal examples from an extended visit to Rhodesia, Zambia and Malawi in 1967.

All manuscript references in the thesis apply to the National Archives of Rhodesia in Salisbury, and are prefixed by the abbreviation NA. All references prefixed C.O. are Colonial Office files in the Public Record Office, London. A fuller account of the sources can be found in the bibliography.

This thesis has been prepared with the help of the resources of a number of institutions, the universities of British Columbia, Glasgow and Lancaster, the University College

of Rhodesia, the British Museum, the Public Record Office, the National Register of Archives, the Institute of Historical Research, the National Archives of Rhodesia, the former Church of Scotland mission in Blantyre, Malawi, and my thanks are due to the various staffs of libraries and archives who have eased my passage. My thanks are also due to my supervisor, Dr. R.V. Kubicek, who read and effectively criticised each chapter astonishingly promptly, to the beleaguered history department of the University College of Rhodesia, whose seminars proved so informative, to Mrs. P.E.N. Tindall and the Rev. Kenneth Pattison, who provided much-needed hospitality in Rhodesia and Malawi, and to Callisto Kapipiro and Alex Jana, with whom I explored Rhodesian reserves and up-country Malawi respectively.

INTRODUCTION

Migration and labour are expressions of one of the basic instincts of all living creatures, the instinct for survival. In human history they have been transformed from mere survival mechanisms to the motive power and the brain of the modern economic system. Migration has changed from a group to an individual activity; it has acquired ideological, religious and personal motives, but has remained basically economic. Labour on the other hand has been transformed from a personal to a group activity and in the process has accumulated immense ideological accretions.

This thesis is concerned with the meeting of two different types of migration, and the labour which became a function of that clash. One migration formed part of the expansion of Europe; the other was the continuing ebb and flow of Bantu migration which had been going on across Africa for many centuries.

The migration of Europeans was one of the most significant features of the nineteenth century. It had been gathering momentum for several centuries. The crusading zeal of Prince Henry the Navigator in his desire to outflank Islam had turned into an acquisitive drive for the mineral wealth of South America and the luxury traffic of the Orient. These mining and trading contacts were turned by mercantilism into an economic system that European nations could opt out of only at their peril. So for the first time Europeans came into contact with other peoples on a global scale. The Spanish in South America

were the first to experience the problems of indigenous labour, and the ideological battle was joined. The conquistadores acted as conquerors exacting from their tributary peoples the rights that conquerors had demanded since the earliest days of tribalism. As later in Africa, the colonial power caught up with their own colonial conquerors. Their brutality was answered by the clerical paternalism of Las Casas, colonial exploitation of the Indians by the ameliorative efforts of the Spanish Crown. The systems of encomiendas and repartimientos were essentially designed to avoid slavery. They gave the colonials rights over tribute and labour, but not over the persons of the Indians, and under public rather than private control.

The process of the conquerors brought under the control of a colonial power anxious for its own international prestige was to be repeated in Africa in the late nineteenth century. But there were important elements of the Spanish experience - the early creation of a large "poor white" population and the rapid predominance of the mestizo or half-caste population - that were not repeated. Moreover, in the intervening period the European conscience towards Africa suffered a prolonged and disastrous lapse. The early respect of the Portuguese for the King of the Congo, or in a less formalised way for the Monomotapa of the Rozwi Empire in Rhodesia, in the sixteenth century proved short-lived. The Arabs of the East Coast had already solved their slight labour difficulties by a combination

of forced migration and forced unfree labour which fitted very well into the Moslem tradition: slavery. Europeans turned slavery into a system of exploitation that has never ceased to disturb the historical conscience, however much historians have sought expiation in increasingly shocked and lurid description.[1]

Slavery was the most important conditioner of nineteenth century labour policy. It produced in Britain a humanitarian reaction that was as Tory as it was Whig and as Whig as it was Tory: the most ardent anti-slavery gentlemen were also the most anti-democratic. The contemporary jibe that they were more interested in slaves whom they had never seen than the very real and apparent sufferings of the domestic working classes was a pointed one. Their humanitarianism, with a few notable exceptions, was often more akin to the benevolence of anti-vivisectionists.[2] They were however zealous in devoting their lives to the eradication of a great evil, and they founded a crusade that was to have far-reaching ramifications. Many false comparisons have been made between the humanitarianism of the abolitionists and the severity of late nineteenth century imperialism. Curtin has shown[3] how those concerned for the welfare of slaves could support forced labour as a necessary alternative. It is thus not true to say that a considerable revolution in thought on colonial labour - from benevolence to harshness, based on a developing racism - occurred during the nineteenth century. The anti-slavery movement produced two quite different schools of

thought. It was the progenitor of both a benevolent and a harsh paternalism, of both the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Societies of the later century and of the colonial paternalists.

It was not of course the sole progenitor of these attitudes. Nor is it true that advancing European technology was the only other parent of the Victorian cultural superiority complex. When an Africanist like Sir Harry Johnston made the gross error of characterising African peoples as Stone Age,[4] he was not just influenced by the racism of his day. He did so as the bearer of a strange mixture of thought and impressions that were the late nineteenth century inheritance. It was a mixture of Hegelian Eurocentrism, of the rather arrogant brand of utilitarianism dispensed at Haileybury earlier in the century for Indian consumption, of the obiter dicta of "armchair anthropologists" seeking to establish their science with a full blown theory of racism, of sociologists converting evolutionism to their own ends,[5] of travellers (a truly important influence here) conveying as heightened a contrast as possible to their large and avid reading public, of the intellectual paternalism proceeding from the universities, and in particular from Oxford, and finally of the Victorian obsession with visual technological achievement in which they themselves had so excelled.

The century-long anti-slavery crusade was accompanied by a great debate which centred on the nature of the free labour

that was to take its place. The debate was conditioned by the various intellectual strands enumerated above, together with the requirements of a developing capitalism that had outgrown the need for slavery, but had not developed a real labour theory or policy either at home or abroad. Both these problems were still far from solution when Europeans first penetrated Central Africa in appreciable numbers. Their reactions were based, however unwittingly, partly on this debate, partly on South African experience, and partly on the nature of the societies they found in Central Africa.

They found slave trading and indigenous slavery; they found an unconcern for life which, forgetting their not so remote ancestors and the nature of the African environment, they characterised as barbarism and savagery; they found societies pursuing firstly the economic migration of shifting cultivation, pressed on relentlessly by a poor soil, and secondly the political migration of fission and coherence so characteristic of Bantu tribal organisation. The political sway of the Rozwi, the culture of the Empire of the Monomotapa which the Portuguese had encountered and respected, had declined and fragmented. Offshoots of two great Bantu peoples, the Zulus from the South and the Luba-Lunda from the North, had become the overlords of the region. Just as the Roman towns in England had been ignored by the invading Saxons, so the stone zimbabwes were abandoned.

The study of the varied nature of the response of Central

African societies to the whole series of influences that came to bear upon them in the nineteenth century has proved one of the most fruitful approaches to the history of the pre-colonial period. They faced the incursions of other tribes, and were assimilated, raided or compelled to offer tribute. Superior and subject tribes faced the Arab slave traders as fitful collaborators or victims as the case might be. In the early years of European penetration, it was soon clear that the balance of power would change again. Missionaries revealed this better than any other early group, simply because they tended to settle permanently. In Malawi in particular, both at the southern and northern ends of the Lake, they took up residence with the raided and then set about halting the activities of the raiders. The missionaries invariably provided a fillip to colonial control, though with militant Cape Company colonialism from the South and militant Foreign Office diplomatic imperialism from the East, little fillip was necessary. The rulers of Central African societies almost all felt Lobengula's celebrated sensation of the Chameleon and the Fly.[6] They soon became aware of the dangers of the European incursions and the tribute that would be exacted in defeat - taxes, labour and control. The Europeans ostensibly wished to save them from themselves, from savagery and slavery, but the suffering of the merely probable was infinitely preferable to the systematic suffering of the European tax-gatherer and of

capitalist enterprise drawing labour into its insatiable maw.

This European penetration was achieved by a remarkable combination of endemic diplomacy and warfare. Treaties were proffered, accepted and revoked. Various excuses were tendered for the forcible destruction of warlike tribes, of which raiding, slave or otherwise, was the most common. Few events reveal more about African tribes or their colonial rulers than the peaceful - as with the Bemba and the Lozi - or the warlike - as with the Ndebele, sections of the Ngoni and the Yao - establishment of colonial hegemony. Labour migration was then seen by Chartered Company magnates and colonists as the catalyst of tribal fragmentation[7] and of the erosion of traditional authority. Taxation was introduced to speed this process (in addition to providing revenue) and reserves reluctantly established at the behest of the imperial authorities. The acceptance of reserves remained reluctant until European colonists awakened to the political dangers of a landless African proletariat. In Rhodesia, Europeans have balanced policy on the knife-edge between the needs of capitalist production and the fear of a politically conscious working class. Seasonal migration began as an unfortunate necessity - like that of another conquered people, the Irish, to England - but what made economic sense did not make political sense. The Irish had eventually settled and formed an urban sub-culture. Given the population imbalance,

Africans could not be permitted to do the same.

The missionaries had sought imperial control, but the control imposed was seldom to their liking. While it was only within its framework that they could successfully pursue their religious objects, they usually objected to the colonials' methods, and this is particularly true of the recruiting of labour. They faced a very real dilemma here. While approving the end, civilization through the medium of the dignity of labour, they disapproved of the means. During the penetration period, the more sophisticated chiefs like Lobengula or Lewanika had been educated - often by the local missionary - to an awareness of the existence of a moderating influence, to them the Great White Queen, to us the Colonial Office.[8] Chiefs and missionaries alike continued to turn to London to curb the worst excesses of the "man on the spot". In the Spanish Empire the Church had succeeded in doing this with one important difference - the Spanish Church was a monolithic establishment inextricably bound up with the State. The British Church was fragmented and important only insofar as the adherents of each branch at home could influence policy. What distinguishes British colonial church history in South Central Africa is the fashion in which it rapidly lost control of both the African and the European situation in the colonial period.[9]

Chiefs and Church turned to a Colonial Office which in a

sense owed its modern development to labour. Sir Henry Taylor describes in his Autobiography[10] how inadequate the Colonial Office was during the twenties and thirties of the nineteenth century to cope with the move towards the abolition of slavery, how some new and bright clerks were appointed of whom he was one. Sir James Stephen emerged through emancipation as the first great Permanent Under Secretary. After him the Colonial Office never lost its humanitarianism, but during the twentieth century it - like the Church - lost control of the Southern African situation. The Devonshire Declaration and the Passfield Memorandum only just saved it from losing control of East African developments. The creation of the Union of South Africa was a triumph for the devolutionists; the development of the conception of indirect rule marked the triumph of an anachronistic Whiggism. Both events were fatal to the growth of a colonial labour policy parallel to the domestic one. The Central African Federation was a last clutching at straws, a chimera of racial partnership and political advance.

This thesis is an attempt to approach labour from a number of angles: firstly from the Colonial Office in the nineteenth century, though what is said is merely a general exploration, so much remains to be winkled from the Colonial Office Archives; secondly from the South Africa that produced the Chartered Company and so many of the early settlers; thirdly from the

tribal environment. This provides the background. The thesis goes on to examine the mechanism of migrant labour, the techniques of mobilisation at work, and the establishment of a corpus of ideas on African labour that has proved long-lived. There are a number of incidental problems, the relationship of the Colonial Office with the Company, of the Company with the settlers, of the settlers with the Africans, of the missionaries with the settlers, of the Colonial Office with its opposition at home, and permutations of all five. While providing constant and irritating constraint, the Colonial Office not surprisingly failed in this period to establish the groundwork for a progressive labour policy which was the sina qua non of a progressive political policy. Having lost the initiative the Colonial Office was never able to regain it.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION.

1 See for example the recent work of J. Pope-Hennessy, Sins of the Fathers, (London, 1967).

2 This contention is not as remarkable as it seems. Sir Henry Taylor (vid. inf.), who was an official in the Colonial Office for almost fifty years from 1824, opposed slavery, supported Governor Eyre after his brutal suppression of the Jamaican uprising, and attacked vivisection. For further details see Chapter 1.

3 Philip D. Curtin, The Image of Africa, (Madison, 1964), pp. 273-4.

4 Sir Harry H. Johnston, paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute, January 15, 1889, quoted in Stokes & Brown, op. cit., p. 356.

5 Thomas Huxley in his Romanes Lecture of 1893 disclaimed the idea that biological theories of evolution provided any indication of human social progress, Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays, (New York, 1898), p. 83.

6 Philip Mason, The Birth of a Dilemma (London, 1958) recounts the King of the Matabele's own description of his feelings as the concession seekers closed in.

7 Eric Stokes & Richard Brown, (eds.), The Zambesian Past, (London, 1966), p. 93, for the Company's hope regarding the Ndebele. The fact that the tribe did not fragment led to the War of 1893.

8 There is an interesting example of the monarch expressing his personal opinion in 1911. During the discussions regarding the transfer of Bechuanaland to South Africa in 1911, the chiefs petitioned George V in the traditional way. He personally wrote on a Colonial Office minute that his sympathies were with the chiefs. C.O. 417/499.

9 Terence O. Ranger, "State and Church in Southern Rhodesia, 1919 - 39." Historical Association of Rhodesia and Nyasaland pamphlet. n.d.

10 Henry Taylor, Autobiography, (London, 1885), p. 64.

CHAPTER 1

THE COLONIAL OFFICE AND LABOUR IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Colonial labour policy in the nineteenth century developed as a response to emancipation. It was conditioned in a number of ways: by the tentative ideas of trusteeship that had emerged from the eighteenth century and Burke in particular; by domestic attitudes towards the labouring poor; by the racial views of "armchair" anthropologists, sociologists and of travellers; and by the paternalistic tradition of aristocratic rule.

Historians have seen the beginnings of trusteeship in the great speeches of Burke on the impeachment of Warren Hastings. And of course no one is more eminently quotable than Burke: it is very easy to be blinded to the ambivalence of his philosophy. He used such words as "trust" and "accountable"[1] and asserted

> There is but one law for all, namely, that law which governs all law, the law of our Creator, the law of humanity, justice, equity - the law of nature, and of nations.[2]

But he was also the father of the colonial devolutionists who were to discover that the law of nature was not the law of humanity, justice, equity. Although he briefly took up the mitigation and ultimate suppression of the slave trade in 1780, he dropped the issue for, as John Morley wryly put it, "his sympathy was too strongly under the control of the political reason".[3] Humanity and justice for the slaves was

tempered by the need for justice for the owners.

Another favourite quotation from this period of incipient trusteeship is that from the Parliamentary Committee on the East India Company Charter of 1833:

> It is recognised as an indisputable principle that the interests of the native subjects are to be consulted in preference to those of Europeans whenever the two come into conflict.[4]

But no conflict was recognised where Europeans set out to decide what was good for their Indian subjects, whether the subjects liked it or not. Moreover, no such unequivocal statement was ever made for Australasia or North America, and not until the twentieth century for Africa. G.R. Mellor's attempt[5] to find a fully revealed and adopted policy of trusteeship in the first half of the nineteenth century is unconvincing. The sentiments undoubtedly existed and received mention in policy statements, but for most of their history they were invariably ineffectual and often intermittent. After Sir James Stephen[6] there was never again so great a humanitarian at the Colonial Office, but the idea of imperial responsibility survived even when high officials in the Colonial Office were in league with the great capitalists of the day, as Edward Fairfield was.[7] The establishment of the High Commission territories in South Africa is evidence of this, although their subsequent perilous history is equally evidence of the tenuous nature of that trusteeship.

In short, British colonial policy has always been, like Janus, two headed. It was not just that there was administrative division - the India Office, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office for protectorates - nor was it just that there was an alternation of two different political parties in power. It was the dual nature of the philosophical strands that made up the attitudes to the colonial possessions. The Colonial Reformers had taken over Burke's concept of the necessity of devolution and allied it with their own ideas on Systematic Colonization, organised emigration financed by land sales. The humanitarians distrusted them because they rode roughshod over the rights of indigenous peoples which were part of the metropolitan trust. In different ways they both denied laisser aller, the first on an individual level, the second on a collective basis. Later in the century, Herbert Spencer's sociology reveals excellently the inherent conflict in British nineteenth century thought. He attempted to unite the utilitarian concept of the greatest happiness of the greatest number with the doctrine of laisser faire and Lamarckian evolution, supplemented later by Darwin's theories of natural selection. His conclusion that the interest of each individual automatically complies with the interest of the aggregate of individuals hardly coincided with the utilitarian faith in the power of beneficial legislation imposed from above. Nor did it fit the political realities when the aggregate included

different social classes or different races. Just when social Darwinism appeared to be turning laisser faire into something more than just a commercial policy, it was overtaken by German metaphysics - Carlyle, their apostle, described Spencer as "the most immeasurable ass in Christendom".

Carlyle provides a magnificent link in nineteenth century colonial thought, by his longevity and by the scope of his influence. In Past and Present he argued the efficacy of systematic emigration as a safety valve for democratic agitators - "instead of staying here to be a Physical-Force Chartist, unblessed and no blessing!"[8] - as Rhodes was to do later in an oft-quoted incident.[9] Remove the malcontents and ease population pressure at one blow. His Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question[10] revealed the extent of his contempt for "inferior peoples" and for "Exeter Hall Philanthropy". In the discourse, he attacked the West Indian negroes for their tropical indolence (a familiar theme in nineteenth century colonial labour theory), their refusal to adhere to his doctrine of work, which he so exalted in Past and Present. In his preoccupation with the hero in history, from Cromwell to Frederick the Great, and with German philosophy, he created the antecedents for the heroic labours of the great imperialists of the turn of the century.

The difference that has been observed in racial attitudes between the first and second halves of the nineteenth century

has frequently been expressed in a far too simplistic way. The process was extremely subtle. The racism of the second half of the century did not involve any real change in the attitude of the European to the non-European: it involved a change in attitude of the European's - and in particular the Northern European's - attitude towards himself. The terminology of "savage societies", "lower societies", "barbarism" and so on was as prevalent at the beginning of the century as it was at the end. Darwinian concepts of evolution applied socially provided an explanation for the different "levels" of society and civilization, and tended to favour the more liberal monogenesis arguments over the polygenesis idea that had exercised the anthropologists in debate for most of the century.[11] The notion that an "advanced" civilization would automatically wipe out the representatives of a more backward civilization was as common before Darwin as after him. In his celebrated inaugural lecture[12] of 1841 Thomas Arnold, for example, applied in effect a survival of the fittest argument to the glory and ultimate destiny of the Saxon race.

This concept reached its height later in the century when Social Darwinism took on what has been described as its external or collectivist guise[13] (as opposed to Social Darwinism applied to an internal economic <u>laisser-faire</u> situation). The ideas of Benjamin Kidd[14] and even more so the extraordinary

eugenics of Karl Pearson[15] entered into the fabric of imperial ideas, and greatly influenced notions of colonial labour, Pearson wrote both of the replacement of "dark-skinned tribes" by "a capable and stalwart race of white men" and of the exploitation of colonies by the use of indigenous labour. However, external Social Darwinism was directed not so much against the colonies as against other powers. Hence, for example, the Latins were looked down on with considerable distaste. When the United States was seizing Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines from a jaded, inferior people, the Spanish, Anglo-Saxon superiority was expressed in Joseph Chamberlain's panteutonism. There was a new high respect for the United States to the extent that Britain was willing to give her support in the war with Spain and was willing to kow-tow to her over boundary disputes, even when the dispute involved one of Britain's own colonies, as in the case of the Alaska-British Columbia dispute.

But even more important was the changed attitude towards Germany. The establishment of the German Empire and of Bismarckian state socialism had a profound effect in Britain. Fashionable intellectuals followed now in the footsteps of Carlyle in his adoration of German philosophy and statecraft rather than in the footsteps of Bentham and utilitarianism. The Fabians in their concern for socialism by existing means and their dislike of the muddle of the House of Commons

reflected this, (and it must be remembered that Sidney Webb was to some extent a follower of Pearson). So did the concern for the Education Act of 1902, state socialism passed by an unwitting Balfour, prompted by a justifiable respect for German education and technical advance. So too did Alfred Milner[16] with his German background and early education.

Thomas Arnold's Saxon destiny reached its climax at the end of the century - it was behind that whole series of remarkable wills of Cecil John Rhodes. Arnold's son, Matthew, forms an interesting connection between his father's generation and fin de siècle imperialism. While it is true that he called for more Hellenism rather than Romanism in public life, he expressed contempt for the "barbarians, philistines and populace" and the now familiar dissatisfaction with laisser faire and laisser aller.[17] He was in fact one of the apostles of the meritocracy. Thomas Arnold's Saxon, Carlyle's hero and Matthew Arnold's meritocrat combined in the imperial idealists. Both Rhodes and Milner dedicated themselves to a life of public utility in surprisingly similar phrases. Rhodes wrote "The wish came to render myself useful to my country"; Milner declared himself ready for a life of public usefulness.[18] There can be little doubt that Rhodes's "mystic duty" was much more important to him than either money-making or politics. His first will expounding his idea of a secret society to further the ends of the Anglo-Saxon race was written when his fortune was

still unmade. The Oxford of Benjamin Jowett and James Anthony Froude - the biographer of Carlyle - had created a sense of divine right, divine right in being English, divine right in being a member of the intelligentsia. It was a view espoused by Lansdowne, Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and reached its apotheosis in Curzon. Given this divine right and the obsession with heroic personal labours, it was natural that colonial labour policy should be based on the view that indigenous peoples must be the handmaidens of that divine will.

Imperial statecraft was Germanic: the Germanic tradition of the mailed fist in the velvet glove entered colonial labour policy while the humanitarian ideals of Stephen and Merivale[19] were still remembered. It was also Roman. Not only were the imperialists educated in the classics, they consciously adopted and took pride in Roman attitudes. Again Rhodes is an excellent example of this: he carried the Thoughts of Marcus Aurelius around with him, and was greatly flattered when likened in looks to a Roman Emperor. He had an ill-concealed contempt for the Latin peoples - witness his bullying tactics with the Portuguese - just as Romans and Saxons alike had swept aside the Celts.[20]

If racial attitudes emerged from a grand design of European destiny, they fed on fear. The fear of replacement dominates much of human activity - its most basic and perennial expression is in the fear of the older for the younger generation. The

Anglo-Indians discovered fear after the Mutiny, as have colonials of the growth of African nationalism produced by their own capitalist concentration and political repression. The Aliens Act of 1905 was a Unionist sop to the fear of the British working class towards immigrants. The attitudes of organised labour towards indigenous peoples in Southern Africa have above all expressed it. In nineteenth century Britain fear was a characteristic of attitudes towards the domestic working classes (plural at the beginning of the century, singular by the end). And that fear was as great before the First World War as it had been immediately after the Napoleonic Wars. By 1914 the labour movement had reversed the setbacks of the Taff Vale and Osborne decisions and the prospect of the "triple alliance" revealed the greatest obstructive power the unions had yet exhibited. The safe image of the liberal elite unions had gone. It is not surprising that colonial labour policies should envisage strict control. In the colonial situation itself, fear was naturally experienced more intensely by the "man on the spot". It was one of the causes of friction between colonials and the imperial authorities.

Working class phobias were strong too. Their radical supporters were often the loudest proponents of the theory of the destruction of inferior races. The radicals frequently attacked concerns with colonial labour as distracting attention from the plight of those at home - often with complete justification. The fear that has already been described had ample

expression in the domestic situation - in inter-union rivalries, hatred of Irish-Catholic immigrants and so on. It was thus ripe for turning into Jingoism and Racism at the turn of the century. There was very little identification of the oppressed at home with the oppressed in the colonies. Between the days when the Lancashire cotton workers could sacrifice themselves for the slaves of the American South or a working men's meeting in Clerkenwell burn Governor Eyre in effigy in 1866[21] and the days when the imperial party became identified with dearer bread and Chinese "slavery", the working classes were wooed by the ideas of social imperialism. The "Critics of Empire" were either intellectual radicals or journalists pandering to a minority taste.[22] The Independent Labour Party, as exemplified by Ramsay MacDonald, advocated not so much anti-imperialism as ethical imperialism.

In 1897, it would be difficult to find a working class meeting that would burn Rhodes or Jameson in effigy after the fiascos of the Raid and the Ndebele and Shona rebellions in Rhodesia. Liberal Imperialism had already created the atmosphere in which Chamberlain could play the tune of a "forward" colonial policy to considerable public acclaim. He of course was the political opportunist <u>par excellence</u>. At home he, the aloof, humane capitalist radical, imagined he could spike the guns of the socialists; in the colonial setting he thought he could spike the guns of the humanitarians

by providing a popular imperialism and a benevolent capitalism. His idea of training his son, Neville, was to send him to a remote West Indian island to establish a plantation and find manhood in toil and the control of negroes.[23] Even after the failure of Chamberlain and the return of the Liberals to power, the Colonial Office retained its combination of liberalism and Hegelian statecraft. They were fused in a paternalism that would take to itself the supreme arrogance of the Dual Mandate, which Hobson exposed even before it was properly formulated.[24] The Governor Eyre controversy in the 1860's had produced two factions - the Jamaica Committee of John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, T.H. Huxley and others, and their opponents in Carlyle, Ruskin and Tennyson.[25] In the Colonial Office bequeathed by Chamberlain, both factions would have found some sentiments with which to sympathise.

The richest vein of influence on colonial labour policy is paternalism. So pervasive is it that it has already been touched on at several points. Paternalism in its various forms is quite clearly not unique to the Balliol and Toynbee Hall school of the late century. Paternalism has been an extremely strong thread throughout the past few thousand years of history. It is a deeply psychological instinct that has not wanted for social expression. It has varied only in quality, from severity to benevolence. It has always been inextricably bound up with religion. It was clearly a most extraordinary

type of paternalism that produced the Pyramids of Egypt or Silbury Hill in England or the great ship burials of Scandinavia, and incidentally these examples are amongst the early instances of organised labour on a large scale. Paternalism is evident in Plato's Republic, the paternalism of the philosopher ruler, the paternalism of the idea - which the Existentialists have struggled to escape. The paternalism of the medieval church and feudal aristocracy has given way in turn to the paternalism of the monarchy, of the army, of the aristocracy, of the middle classes, and of the party and the state. The liberal ideal has never achieved fulfilment.

Paternalism is an integral part of African cultures - the paternalism of the tribe as embodied in the chief and above all as disembodied in the departed ancestors. In the colonial setting we see a severe paternalism, the tribal, in conflict with a paternalism that was in fact a running action between the severe and the benevolent. The result was colonial anger and African confusion. African paternalism ran right through social and kin relationships. The African male when he married retained his dependence while accepting new obligations that fitted him more actively into the paternalistic framework. The Victorian family was also paternalistic, but with important differences. For one thing it was the nuclear family rather than the extended, and for another its

components on maturity were hurled off to make their own way in the world. The Native Commissioner from such a background often succeeded in finding a place in tribal paternalism, usually to the detriment of the chief. He interpreted his paternalistic duty as being to advise or coerce the Africans to enter by means of their labour the European economic system and adopt the cash criterion of social acceptibility. In other words he set out to force on them the individual fragmentation and traumatic break with family life which was such a feature of his own society.

The Emancipation struggle had been a conflict of severity and benevolence, the negroes' subsequent so-called indolence a terrible lesson. Indolence was a fearful word to the Victorian mind, as it is in a different way in the twentieth century. Tennyson was fascinated by Ulysses' encounter with the Lotos-Eaters and the sailors' attraction to their life - "Should life all labour be? Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil". But his sonorous sentiment in the last line of the poem Ulysses - "To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield" - is much more characteristic. There is the same conflict in William Golding's Lord of the Flies: one group of boys wish to organise the collection and distribution of food while the others set off for a life of indolence and sport at the other end of the island. The problem could be seen as man's fall from grace - the primeval ancestors cast

out from Eden and forced to work by the sweat of their brows; or more scientifically as proto-man's emergence from the forests to the harder life of the plains. Some have seen a distinction between work and labour. Lewis Mumford in his recent The Myth of the Machine presents a picture of neolithic life where all had to work and none had to labour.[26] The Victorians turned work into a moral imperative, and it so happened that work meant labour to satisfy the needs of capitalist production. It is not surprising that the reaction was the worship of the romantic rural idyll, by Morris in his distinctive brand of socialism, by Voysey in his architecture and by Hardy in his novels. In Africa the contrast was immediate and unromantic - between iron age tribes with their village agriculture and village "industry" (pottery and smelting principally) and the labour of European farm or mine.

To the Victorians the end was not in doubt: man must work and work equalled labour. The origins of this moral imperative have been seen in the Protestant Reformation, but it should be remembered that the ideal of medieval monastic life was hard work as well as contemplation - the Cistercians in particular pursued the ideal of laborare est orare. The moral need was enshrined in British poor law enactment from Tudor times and received its apotheosis in the Poor Law of 1834. Idleness must be made unattractive. The mercantilists

had espoused the need for reasons of state. It was at the bottom of the ideas of the colonial reformers, the systematic colonists. The Victorians turned it into an individual moral need, but it was nonetheless a reason of state, and nowhere was this more evident than in the colonial situation. The removal of the physical compulsion of slavery made the moral need imperative. The notion that labour was inviolable property to be disposed of only at the owners' wish fell before the paternalistic onslaught that labour was not property, but a social duty, a moral obligation. The fact that West Indian negroes had been permitted to lapse into sloth was a moral crime that had to be avoided in the future. In the imperialism of the late century labour had the continuing justification of being an alternative to the domestic slavery and external slave trade found everywhere in the advance of explorers, missionaries and pioneers. It was transformed into a moral justification for exploitation to satisfy the most fervent capitalist, the most romantic pioneer, the most "improving" missionary.

Paternalism was particularly attractive because it satisfied two philosophical worlds. Basically it was deterministic. Given the religious content it could hardly be otherwise. Yet the severity-benevolence debate revealed a considerable scope for human tinkering - free will within a deterministic framework. Moreover, it was a tremendous,

though almost unwitting, make-weight to the laisser faire economists. While they were expounding their essentially deterministic view of the free market, the legislators were refusing to permit the social market to be free. Nowhere was this more true than in the realm of colonial labour. While free trade was only approaching its zenith there were constant attempts to control colonial labour - laisser aller was destroyed long before laisser faire. It should be noted that in the colonial situation there is a two-pronged attack on the colonial labour market. It is attacked by the colonists because it does not produce - they wish to force labour. It is attacked by the Colonial Office under pressure from the humanitarians because it creates abuses.

We have distinguished paternalism as important because it forms the megastructure of all nineteenth century colonial (and domestic) labour thinking, because it is a vantage point from which to view Victorian conceptions, conscious and subconscious, and from which to see the attack on the ranks of laisser faire. On the individual plane, paternalism could take a variety of forms. The paternalism of the third Earl Grey,[27] the first great colonial formulator after Emancipation, was the benevolent paternalism of aristocratic obligation; the paternalism of Lord Milner the more arrogant paternalism of the meritocracy; that of Sydney Olivier[28] the paternalism of the intellectual Fabian, more benevolent, more sympathetic, but

no less paternalistic.

So far, the general intellectual framework in which a colonial labour policy was constructed has been reviewed. It is now necessary to examine that policy itself.

It is impossible to separate out labour policy from more general attitudes to indigenous peoples. For this reason it is interesting to begin with a comparison of two influential statements of 1841 - Herman Merivale's lectures delivered at Oxford as Professor of Political Economy and Thomas Arnold's inaugural lecture as Professor of Modern History. Merivale provides a good starting point because he became the Permanent Under Secretary at the Colonial Office during one of the most seminal periods for colonial labour policy, the secretaryship of state of Lord Grey. After the inadequacy of Robert William Hay,[29] Sir James Stephen had firmly established the power of the Colonial Office's principal executive officer. But Stephen was the representative of an older strain. From the moment he entered the Colonial Office he was dedicated to Abolition. This was his life's work. Once accomplished, events ran against him. He was implacably opposed to indentured labour, seeing it rightly as controlled slavery under another name. In insisting on the most rigid controls on indentured labour he firmly laid down the Colonial Office humanitarian tradition. It fell to Merivale to maintain that tradition and yet live with

the political fact of indentured labour.

Merivale's lectures[30] are remarkable both for their breadth of view and for their liberality of outlook. In some of his views the world has hardly caught up with him to-day. He believed in complete amalgamation of the races, though he expressed it in the language of his time, "the only possible Euthanasia of savage communities".[31] He had no objection whatever to miscegenation - indeed he asserted the "superior energy" of half-castes.[32] It is not surprising that he admitted that his "views must undoubtedly appear somewhat wild and chimerical".[33] In the same year that Merivale's Lectures were published, Thomas Arnold delivered his inaugural lecture. He dated the beginning of English history from the Saxon invasions and not before; he regarded the supremacy of the Germanic race as the ultimate in world history. His was the most influential statement yet of the disappearance theory:

> ...the mass of mankind have no such power; they either receive the impression of foreign elements so completely that their own individual character is absorbed, and they take their whole being from without; or being incapable of taking in higher elements, they dwindle away when brought into the presence of a more powerful life, and become at last extinct altogether.[34]

When Herman Merivale became Stephen's successor at the Colonial Office he affirmed a tradition of humanitarian watchfulness that the Colonial Office never gave up, even when the children of the Oxford that Arnold had helped to create ruled the Empire

and the great capitalistic enterprises set up as new monopolies in the age of the so-called New Imperialism, the Chartered Companies. It is possible to trace Merivale's views right through the nineteenth century debate. His vigorous and optimistic conception of trusteeship with all its obligations becomes the warp to the woof of the colonial reformers' and all their successors' hopes for an orgy of devolution and a displaced trust.

Three main themes run through the colonial labour debate of the nineteenth century - tropical indolence, land and artificial stimulants (usually taxation). The three are clearly closely connected. An excess of the second could produce the first, and could likewise cancel out the effects of the third. Ideas about tropical indolence and land developed from West Indian experience, but as the frontiers of colonised Africa were pushed inwards - in the earlier period particularly in South Africa of course - Africa drew increasing attention. Opinions derived from the West Indians tended to be passed over to Africa. Clearly this was inadmissible, for slavery had atomised tribal society in transplantation, whereas the tribes in South Africa were of course largely intact. It was not until the end of the century that more sympathetic observers began to point out two facts - firstly that the position of the male in tribal society was largely a

defensive and ritualistic one, and secondly that African agriculture was even more seasonal than elsewhere with a rather obviously "slack" season.

Merivale accepted the notion of tropical indolence, as did most subsequent commentators, including J.A. Hobson[35] and Sydney Olivier,[36] although Olivier did point out that "loafing" is both more pleasant and more noticeable in the tropics. The basic question then was how was this indolence to be overcome. Merivale's answer was simple and total - there had to be complete amalgamation, promoted above all by education, including of course religious and moral instruction.[37] Education ought to be a government concern so that its importance might be fully appreciated. Here Merivale was clearly far in advance of domestic policy, and equally clearly reveals his debt to the utilitarians.

The obvious corollary of this view was that reserves could not be permitted. To create reserves was to commit the same error that had been committed in North America - the abdication of responsibility. Reserves simply postponed the evil day. The colonists

> will complain, and with perfect truth, of the economical disadvantages which attend the interposition of uncultivated or half-cultivated tracts between populous districts; of their own suffering by the proximity of the natives, and of the political mischiefs produced by these little inert republics, stagnant in the very centre of society. And government will find itself, as it has

> always done, unable to resist these importunities, and cajoled by the thousand implausibilities advanced in favour of removing these unfortunates a further stage into the wilderness, it will comply with the exigencies of the times, and the natives will be transported to some other region, to be followed there again with sure and rapid steps by the encroaching tide of European population.[38]

It might be argued that Merivale was in fact advocating a different form of extermination, that like the utilitarians he had little respect for the institutions of other peoples. This is not strictly the case. He pointed out that certain institutions were highly amenable to advancement into western civilization - again an ethnocentric view, but a prophetic one. He saw the irresistibility of western commerce and technology, and in the above passage he incidentally prophesied almost precisely what was to happen in Rhodesia. (The Land Commission of 1916 that had been expected to increase African reserves in Rhodesia in fact decreased them).

Merivale's conclusion was an extremely optimistic one. It would be interesting to discover whether it remained so after he became Permanent Under Secretary.

> .....we may be satisfied with the improved prospect of our relations with those much abused members of the human family, that there is now little fear of their being treated with injustice and oppression by the founders of colonies, armed with the authority of governments. We have at all events outlived the days in which they were considered a lawful prey for the ferocity of the zealot, or the cupidity of the adventurer.[39]

While not so prophetic here, Merivale does reveal the total absence of real racist thought in his position. In this he followed Stephen of whom Knaplund writes that "the humanitarianism and egalitarianism cropping up so frequently in his official minutes and memoranda were rooted in the religious conviction that before God all men are equal".[40]

The same could not be said of another important figure in the Colonial Office whom we must now examine. Sir Henry Taylor had a most remarkable career.[41] He served in the "commonplace brick house at the end of Downing Street"[42] that was the Colonial Office for almost half a century, 1824 - 1872. On the retirement of Stephen, he was offered the Permanent Under Secretaryship by Grey, but declined on the grounds that the post was compatible neither with health nor with his literary pursuits (he was an indifferent poet and playwright and the friend of many of the leading literary figures of his day). His racist feeling is revealed at the time of the Jamaican uprising and Governor Eyre controversy. In a letter to Sir Charles Elliott he argued that he could not agree

> ....that the value of human life is identical in all races, civilized and barbarous. ....The destruction of life of a high order produces great sorrow and distress amongst relatives and friends. But as you descend the scale, the suffering occasioned is more light and transitory.[43]

To revert to the Emancipation period, we find that he took up the indolence view in its most extreme form:

> But to apply what is called 'the voluntary system' to the negro populations is about as reasonable as it would be to call upon a flock of sheep to find themselves a shepherd.[44]

He produced a most extraordinary idea for mitigating the effects of immediate emancipation. It was based on his conventional belief in the inviolable nature of property (it was he who proposed the twenty million pounds compensation[45]). He suggested that each slave ought to be able to buy himself out by instalments. He could be given enough to buy himself for Monday and Tuesday. He could then work on Monday and Tuesday to buy Wednesday for himself, and so on! In this way emancipation would be achieved and the virtue of work inculcated at one and the same time. Taylor insists in his Autobiography that his proposal was turned down for purely political reasons,[46] but the mind can hardly grasp the chaos and abuses that would have resulted from such a scheme. It certainly reveals Taylor for the archetypical paternalist that he was.

And yet Taylor was completely unequivocal in his conception of the nature of the trust the imperial responsibility conveyed.[47] In this, like Stephen, he was entirely opposed to the colonial reformers' devolutionary ideas. In a letter to Grey, dated May 6, 1852, he defended Grey's policy of meddling while at the Colonial Office, for

> ....even where the welfare of ignorant and unrepresented populations does not require the Home Government to control the local legislatures, there is another

> consideration which may require it, which consideration is the honour of the Crown (his italics) and that so long as the Crown is a branch of the legislatures - that is so long as the Colonies are Colonies - it must be the duty of the ministers of the Crown to prevent the Crown from becoming a party to acts of injustice and dishonesty and bad faith.[48]

And again in his Autobiography he wrote

> With regard to the Cape which has hitherto been the extreme case of military expenditure for the protection of a colony, I think the question should be regarded as purely philanthropic - a question whether this country thinks it her duty to save and civilize barbarous tribes, whatever be the cost, or is prepared to let loose upon them the barbarous passions of civilized men. If the former, warfare must be conducted at the Cape by British troops under British control and at the cost of the British Treasury. If the latter, it is essential to this country's good name that irresponsibility should be established by separation.[49]

This was at the same time the essence of trusteeship and of paternalism. The sentiment came from a man who could write "I do not like the American people or any other people",[50] that of a series of dangerous courses the 1832 Reform Bill was the least dangerous,[51] and that the American Civil War was a lesson to all in the evils of democracy.[52] It betrays the paternalist dilemma that will provide protection but not respect.

The importance of Taylor in the Colonial Office has frequently been ignored. He had a considerable influence on three permanent under secretaries, Stephen, Merivale and

Rogers,[53] and a much larger number of secretaries of state, as well as helping in the training of two future permanent under secretaries, Herbert[54] and Meade,[55] and an important principal assistant under secretary, Edward Fairfield.

While the Colonial Office officials had a very considerable influence on the day-to-day running of the Office and on the continuity of policy over a long period, a truly effective and doctrinaire Colonial Secretary like the third Earl Grey could have a greater influence on the direction of future policy. The examination of Grey must also begin with Emancipation. Just before Emancipation, Grey, then Viscount Howick, was parliamentary under secretary to Lord Goderich at the Colonial Office in his father's administration. It was then he first produced the idea that was to have most effect on colonial labour policy - the idea of the direct tax. He proposed the imposition of a land tax on the emancipated negroes.[56] When his view failed to find favour (and Taylor for one opposed it), he resigned. When he became Colonial Secretary in 1846 his chance of putting his ideas on direct taxation into practice had arrived. His creed was based on familiar principles - the responsibility of the British imperium, the need for labour based on taxation, the Pax Britannica, public works, and the need for a total amalgamation of the races.

Taxation was for him the great solution, "the motive

to exertion",[57] the stimulant that tropical indolence required. When Governor Sir William Winniett of the Gold Coast expatiated in a despatch of May 22, 1850,[58] on the necessity of forced labour, Grey's reaction was one of suspicion. Instead he saw to it that Winniett's successor secured the co-operation of the chiefs of the Gold Coast to a poll tax of one shilling on every man, woman and child. This symbolizes Grey's policy. But before the Gold Coast case arose he had already begun the application of his ideas in Ceylon and Natal.

His concept of the stimulant was an old one. Hugh Murray in his Enquiries Historical and Moral Respecting the Character of Nations and the Progress of Society (Edinburgh, 1808)[59] had postulated that the optimum condition of progress occurs where the environment is neither too hard nor too easy and so stimulates the right quantity of labour for the pursuit of the arts. He answered Malthus by arguing that population pressure could present a necessary and beneficial challenge to labour.

In a celebrated despatch to Governor Torrington in Ceylon, Grey expressed this view in terms of the colonial situation:

> In all European countries, the necessity of supplying their daily wants is, to the labouring classes, a sufficient motive to exertion; indeed the difficulty which they experience in obtaining the means of a comfortable subsistence is so great that it has generally been considered (as it always ought to be) the great object for

> the Governments of these countries, in their financial arrangements, to avoid aggravating this difficulty by the imposition of taxes calculated to enhance the cost of subsistence.
> But the case is very different in tropical climates, where the population is very scanty in proportion to the extent of the territory; where the soil, as I have already observed, readily yields a subsistence in return for very little labour and where clothing, fuel, and lodging, such as are required, are obtained very easily. In such circumstances there can be but little motive to exertion, to men satisfied with an abundant supply of their mere physical wants; and accordingly experience proves that it is the disposition of the races of men by which these countries are generally inhabited, to sink into an easy and listless mode of life, quite incompatible with any high degree of civilization.[60]

In Ceylon too he promoted his idea of public works in the Road Ordinance of 1847. It enacted that every male inhabitant of the Island between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five years should be required to perform six days labour on road construction and maintenance, or commute the service for a payment, the value of which varied, but was nowhere more than three shillings. These roads were required to enable the planters to transport their coffee from the high lands of Ceylon to the coast for export. The Road Ordinance imposed in effect a direct tax. Fear of its effect when it came into operation in 1849 contributed to the insurrection of that year.

But by far the most significant area for the imposition

of Grey's ideas was South Africa. There the annexation of Natal in 1843 and of British Kaffraria to the Cape in 1847 brought British administration into contact with the Bantu on a scale hitherto unknown in Cape Colony. Sir Harry Smith was sent to pursue a similar policy to that effected in New Zealand, for

> ....although no doubt there are some important points of difference in the character of the natives of New Zealand and of the Kafirs, yet in the main, human nature is everywhere the same, and the latter are far less completely barbarous than the former were forty or fifty years ago.[61]

Like Merivale, and unlike such radicals as Roebuck, Grey regarded the destruction of indigenous peoples as unthinkable, even if it were possible, which in the case of the Bantu was soon obviously not the case.

> For my own part I confess I should grieve to think that the ultimate occupation of Southern Africa by a civilized population were only to be accomplished, like that of North America, by the gradual destruction of the native races before the advancing tide of a white occupation of the soil. I believe that, instead of this, the civilization of the Black, and the ultimate amalgamation of the two races, is not impracticable, if the superior power of this country is wisely and generously used to enforce on both sides a respect for each other's rights and to foster all those germs of improvement which are already showing themselves among the aboriginal population.[62]

Amalgamation and respect were indeed an unusually idealistic combination, doomed to failure when the true size of the African

population became evident, and when the diamonds of Kimberley and the gold of the Rand created their insatiable thirst for African labour from all over Southern Africa. But given this view it was natural that Grey was opposed to the idea of reserves. He proposed for the settlement of Natal a large number of locations scattered amongst the European population. By this means the Europeans would be supplied with local reservoirs of labour, while Africans would be greatly and gently encouraged to enter the European economy and indeed way of life. Like Merivale he prescribed education in the habits of civilized life. The result he envisaged was to become a familiar shibboleth of the civilizing mission school - the growing demand for the manufactured articles of Europe which would increase the trade and revenue of the colony and the wealth of the Mother Country. Needless to say, a direct tax completed the picture of the African inhabitants of Natal being led along the road to civilization.

Both the nature of the tax and the principle of the locations began the debate between Grey and Shepstone, the diplomatic agent who was to become Natal's first Native Administrator. Shepstone insisted that the tax of seven shillings which was first imposed in 1849 should be a hut tax rather than Grey's preference for a cattle or land tax. Moreover, Shepstone disagreed with Grey's location policy. He disliked the idea of amalgamation, and held that Africans

could only be administered through their chiefs by an entirely separate administration on reserves. The conflict of the "imperial factor" and the "man on the spot", already of long standing, was carried over into the establishment of a native policy.

Grey's creed was a surprising mixture of severe paternalism and idealism. In a despatch to Sir Harry Smith, November 30, 1849,[63] he regretted that the Natal tax was not high enough; had it been imposed earlier, it could then have been increased. He went on to suggest that the compulsory labour levied in lieu of tax should be deployed on road works. On the other hand he asserted that he looked to the day when there would be uniformity of taxation for both Europeans and Africans. Such a hope was, to use Merivale's word, chimerical, but Grey's principle of direct taxation of native peoples became the norm in most parts of the dependent empire.

A further application of Grey's tax was in the Mauritius Labour Ordinance of 1847, designed to meet the problems created by the influx of indentured labourers to the Island. Since Grey was also important in the establishment of indentured labour on a regular footing, it is now necessary to survey the institution of indentured labour and its effect on labour attitudes.

The indentured labour principle developed from the practice of indenturing European servants for work in the American and

West Indian colonies in the seventeenth century.[64] In the eighteenth century it had largely given way to slavery - it had been attacked both on the grounds of expense and of humanity. It was resurrected now as part of the slavery and free labour debate. As early as 1829 the French island of Bourbon in the Indian Ocean had received labourers from India.[65] In 1834 immigration began to Mauritius. Later British Guiana and to a lesser extent Jamaica and Trinidad were to participate. It became in fact part of the general upsurge of migration of the period - Portuguese from Madeira, Scotch and Irish, Germans and Maltese, liberated slaves from the squadrons on the West African coast, and Chinese throughout the entire Pacific area.

The Chinese indentured labour system reveals very well the fashion in which indentured labour appeared as a substitute for slavery. It began - like slavery - surreptitiously, from several ports, of which Amoy was the most important. The first full-scale operations were undertaken by the French for Bourbon in 1845 and by the Spanish for Cuba in 1847. Like slavery it swiftly set up a large network of vested interests - British, American, French, Spanish and Dutch shipping interests, agents in the foreign communities of Canton, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Macao, and Chinese business men in Singapore, Penang, San Francisco. It created abuses - like kidnapping - which forced the Chinese authorities to recognise its existence and attempt

to regulate it from the 1850's (it had hitherto been illegal). The credit-ticket system had already produced the widespread serfdom of debt-peonage, even more intolerable than the system that had prevailed in South America. Indentured labour moreover helped to create the Chinese xenophobia for Europeans, fanned by the communities in Shanghai, Canton and the other treaty ports, that became such an important feature of twentieth century Chinese history. It created a reciprocal xenophobia firstly in Australia and later in British Columbia and California, that produced first of all control and then exclusion. Chinese were scattered by it throughout the Pacific area (the continuation of an age-old migration) and into such far-flung places as the silver mines of Peru and the plantations of Cuba and British Guiana. Many fell out of sight of the European conscience, but that conscience was powerfully aroused by the Rand Chinese immigration (of which more in Chapter 2) and the indentured system in Western Samoa as late as the early nineteen twenties.[66]

But to return to the Indian indentured labour that had actually preceded the Chinese, the first burst of ill-controlled migration of Indians, high mortality rates, and accusations of inhumanity not surprisingly soon raised the cry of a new slavery. In 1838 Brougham in the Lords attacked the traffic, and shortly the Times followed suit.[67] From 1839 to 1843 the migration was banned. Meanwhile, emigration from Sierra Leone was permitted from 1840 and Wakefield produced a variant on his

systematic colonization ideas. Immigration from Africa ought to be encouraged, supervised by a public authority, and financed from a tax on land in the West Indies.

Inevitably, the labour question became inextricably bound up with the question of the West Indian monopoly. In Peel's administration, Stanley at the Colonial Office began agitating for a renewal of Indian immigration. Russell too believed that the colonies ought to be bolstered by immigration rather than protection. By 1843, West African, Indian and Chinese schemes under the supervision of responsible government officers, were in the air. The West African was only a partial success, the Chinese a failure, but the Indian was to become the pattern for the rest of the century.

Mauritius became the symbol of the good and evil of indentured labour. Mauritius was helped through the post-emancipation difficulties by the immigrants, but on the other hand was provided with a large vagrant problem. It was to combat this, and the habit of employee and employer of frequently changing jobs and workers respectively, that Grey made his new taxation proposals. He suggested to the Governor that there ought to be a tax on immigrants not under contract and a stamp duty on contracts. These were incorporated in Ordinance 22 of 1847, along with provision for a duty on departures of less than five years' residence, and an increase in the penalty for absence from work.[68]

The equalisation of the sugar duties made the conflict between slave and free labour a genuine one, in that slave-grown sugar from Cuba and South America could now compete equally with West Indian sugar. The colonies seemed to lose all round. The absence of immigrants raised cries of distress; the cost of the immigrants helped the colonies to the financial crashes and bankruptcies of 1847-48. Despite imperial aid,[69] the colonies, thoroughly disillusioned, became extremely reluctant to bear the cost of repatriation. Grey espoused the principle of permanent transportation - of complete village communities if need be - but this was not acceptable to India House. It is not surprising that Stephen at one time expressed himself "completely baffled" by the whole labour issue.[70] What is important about the resurgence of indentured labour is the attitude of mind that, even after the end of slavery, labour could be drawn on from a reservoir and returned at will, subject to restrictions and controls.

From the time of Grey onwards the migration was firmly established. It was extended to other nations. When the Palmerston government wished to stop the French taking free African labour from West Africa in 1858 - because it looked too much like slavery - Sir Frederic Rogers was sent to Paris to negotiate for Indian indentured labour. As Rogers himself said, the charge of quasi-slavery was simply transferred from the Foreign Office to the India Office.[71] Thereafter, as

well as to French possessions, Mauritius, British Guiana, and the West Indies, Indians would go to Natal and East Africa, Chinese to the Straits Settlements, Borneo and South Africa. A whole range of migrations of increasing eccentricity would be proposed - Arabs to Rhodesia,[72] Assyrians to Borneo,[73] Jews to Uganda[74] - before indentured labour was finally discredited between the two world wars. The migrants who stayed contributed to the plural societies that Russell and Stephen in the beginning had feared as one of the results of indentured labour. As an interesting footnote to transport history, the movements of large numbers of indentured labourers helped to keep sailing ships alive at a time when all other passengers were travelling by steam.[75]

On the issue of indentured labour the Colonial Office and the Colonial Reformers could find some common ground. Moreover, both Grey and the reformers reveal a basic Victorian dilemma. Grey was a convinced free trader at the same time as he espoused metropolitan responsibility and social control of labour. The Colonial Reformers on the other hand attacked the notion of responsibility and demanded self-government all round (social freedom), while creating the systematic colonization plans which denied the free market in land sales.

The Colonial Reformers have usually received a good press. They normally took up the usual Radical position that there must be no more extensions of territory and devolution of existing

colonies, but they drove their principles to an absurd, if logical, conclusion. They refused to see any difference between the Cape and Canada. Above all they insisted that it was an unavoidable law that indigenous peoples must disappear. Roebuck attacked the humanitarians for their fear of colonial rule (i.e. local rule). The lesson of history was that the savage must disappear in face of the relentless advance of the superior race, and it was futile to talk of justice and humanity when confronted with such an immutable law.[76] They failed to see that the lesson of history was no iron law, but simply Merivale's "ferocity of the zealot" and "cupidity of the adventurer". The humanitarians did see this and before the arguments of Cobden, Gladstone, Roebuck, Adderley, Wakefield, Molesworth, and Hume, they clung to the view that was later to be rationalised into a full-blown doctrine of trusteeship. Their tragedy was that the activities of the Boers on the "turbulent frontier" led them ever further into commitments and warfare.

Sixteen years after Grey's publication of his Colonial Policy, C.B. Adderley (parliamentary under secretary at the Colonial Office, 1866-68 and chairman of the celebrated Select Committee of 1865) published his Review of the Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration by Earl Grey and of Subsequent Colonial History. Needless to say, he was highly critical of the imperial government's paternalist attitude and

was sceptical of the civilizing influence of direct taxation. Of Natal he said that "better relations with the natives cannot be expected while the Colony is so kept in childhood".[77] The rest of his argument can be expressed in three basic beliefs - that English colonies could only thrive with English freedom;[78] that Crown colonies were not extensions of Empire, but merely occupations for use; that it was neither necessary nor possible to attempt to civilize indigenous peoples. Adderley's most damaging criticism of Grey was that his policy faltered between the only two possibilities in South Africa - control of native peoples through their chiefs or the destruction of the chiefs and tribes altogether,[79](as institutions that is). Adderley was right - although as we have seen Grey's policy had been obstructed by Shepstone - and it was a faltering that was to continue into the twentieth century. The groundwork of a colonial labour policy was formed in the shifting sands of the conflict between the elements symbolized by Grey and Adderley.

Late nineteenth century colonial attitudes towards labour reflected all the conflicts enumerated above: humanitarianism or severe paternalism, forced labour or free labour supplemented by immigrant indentured labour, direct stimulants or indirect stimulants, reserves or no reserves, maintenance of tribes or destruction of tribes, imperial responsibility or colonial freedom. And suffusing all were notions of the dignity of labour, of labour as a great civilising force, of labour as

the key to economic progress, as the principal prop of an imperial policy. These ideas and these conflicts had their greatest expression in South Africa, and were passed on, as will be seen, in particularly acute form to Rhodesia.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 1.

1 In his speech on Fox's East India Bill, Dec. 1, 1783, quoted in G.R. Mellor, British Imperial Trusteeship, 1783-1850, (London, 1951), p.22.

2 The impeachment of Warren Hastings, May 28, 1794.

3 John Morley, Burke (London, 1888), p.187.

4 Quoted in I.M. Cumpston, Indians Overseas in British Territories, 1834-1854, (London, 1953), p.2.

5 Mellor, op.cit.

6 Sir James Stephen, 1789-1859, son of James Stephen, abolitionist but otherwise Tory die-hard; called to bar, 1811; legal adviser to the Colonial Office, 1813-1836; Permanent Under Secretary, 1836-1847; Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, 1849.

7 Edward Fairfield, 1845-1897, assistant under secretary, Colonial Office, 1892-1897; principal assistant under secretary, 1897. His complicity in the Jameson Raid is well known, and is amply evidenced in the so-called "missing telegrams" printed in J.G. Lockhart & C.M. Woodhouse, Rhodes (London, 1963), appendix.

8 Extract printed in George Bennett, The Concept of Empire, Burke to Attlee, 1774-1947 (London, 1962), pp. 139-140.

9 "I was in the East End of London yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for 'bread! bread!' and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism.... My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists." Quoted in V.I. Lenin's Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism (Moscow, 1968), p.74. Also in Bernard Semmel, Imperialism and Social Reform (London, 1960), p.16.

10 Fraser's Magazine, December, 1849.

11 For a discussion of the monogenesis and polygenesis arguments, see Curtin, op.cit.

12 Thomas Arnold, Inaugural Lecture on the Study of Modern History, (Oxford, 1841).

13 See Semmel, op.cit., chapter III for a consideration of the Social Darwinism of Kidd and Pearson.

14 See particularly Benjamin Kidd's The Control of the Tropics, (New York, 1898).

15 Karl Pearson's ideas on "Socialism and Natural Selection" and on eugenics are contained in a large number of works. See particularly The Grammar of Science, (London, 1900).

16 Alfred Milner, 1854-1925, educ. Tubingen, King's College, London, and Balliol College, Oxford; called to bar, 1881; assistant editor of Pall Mall Gazette under Stead, 1883; joint secretary of University Extension Society in Whitechapel; private secretary of Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1884-1889; director general of accounts in Egypt, 1889-1892; chairman of Board of Inland Revenue, 1892-1897; High Commissioner in South Africa and Governor of Cape (Later of Transvaal), 1897-1905; Colonial Secretary, 1919-1921.

17 Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, (London, 1869).

18 Lockhart & Woodhouse, op.cit., p.68, the Rhodes quotation and the Dictionary of National Biography for the Milner (it was a diary entry). See also, Cecil Headlam, The Milner Papers (2 vols., London, 1933).

19 Herman Merivale, 1806-1874, educ. Oriel and Trinity Colleges, Oxford; called to bar, 1832; Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, 1837-1847; assistant under secretary, Colonial Office, 1847; permanent under secretary, 1848-1859; permanent under secretary, India Office, 1859.

20 The recent upsurge in interest in Celtic history and archaeology is interesting historiographically. It dates entirely from the discrediting of the exaggerated views of Saxon destiny.

21 This incident is mentioned in the Dictionary of National Biography entry on Eyre.

22 Bernard Porter, Critics of Empire (London, 1968).

23 For this interesting incident, see Keith Feiling, Life of Neville Chamberlain, (London, 1944), pp.17-31.

24 vid. inf., Chapter 2, pp.82-84.

25 Eyre's brutal suppression of the Jamaican insurrection of 1865 is well-known. For years after his recall he was hounded by the humanitarian Jamaica Committee, whom Carlyle called "a knot of nigger philanthropists".

26 Lewis Mumford, The Myth of the Machine (New York, 1967).

27 Sir Henry George Grey, Viscount Howick, third Earl Grey, 1802-1894; educ. Trinity, Cambridge; entered House of Commons as Whig, 1826; parliamentary under secretary for the colonies, 1831-1833; secretary for war, 1835-1839; secretary of state for the colonies, 1846-1852.

28 Sydney Olivier, first Baron, 1859-1943; educ. Corpus Christi, Oxford; entered Colonial Office, 1882; Fabian, 1885; honourary secretary of the Fabians, 1886-1889; Colonial Secretary, British Honduras, 1890-1891; Auditor General, Leeward Islands, 1895-1896; Colonial Secretary, Jamaica, 1900-1904; Governor of Jamaica, 1907-1913; permanent under secretary to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, 1913-1917; assistant comptroller and auditor of the exchequer, 1917-1920; Secretary of State for India, 1924.

29 For a comment on Robert William Hay see the Autobiography of Sir Henry Taylor, p.231.

30 Herman Merivale, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies, (London, 1841), 2 vols.

31 Merivale, op.cit., Vol. II, p.181.

32 ibid., p.201.

33 ibid., p.181.

34 Arnold, op.cit., p.39.

35 J.A. Hobson, Imperialism: a Study, (London, 1902), Chapter 4, Imperialism and Lower Races.

36 Sydney Olivier, White Capital and Coloured Labour, (London, 1906), passim.

37 Merivale, Lectures XVIII and XIX.

38 Merivale, Lecture XVII, p.176.

39 Merivale, Lecture XVIII, pp.153-154.

40 Paul Knaplund, Sir James Stephen and the British Colonial System, (Madison, 1953), p.20.

41 Sir Henry Taylor, 1800-1886; educ. by his father, an ardent admirer of Godwin; entered Colonial Office, 1824; refused offer to succeed Staphen, 1847; responsible to the secretary of state alone, 1859.

42 Taylor, op.cit., p. 34.

43 Taylor to Elliot, June 12, 1868 in Edward Dowden (ed.), The Correspondence of Sir Henry Taylor (London, 1888), pp.284-285. Two more interesting insights into the mind of Taylor - and indeed into the Victorian mind - arise in two other letters in the same volume. In one, p.302, he argues (1870) that corporal punishment does not brutalise the public mind, but instead provides it with a sense of moral satisfaction. In another letter, p.396, he attacks vehemently (1881) the practice of vivisection.

44 Taylor, Autobiography, p.265.

45 ibid., p.127.

46 ibid., pp.127-129.

47 But he wished to throw off Canada, the damnosa hereditas, altogether, because of the dangers of war with the United States. ibid., p.234. See also Taylor to Earl Grey, May 6, 1852, Correspondence, pp.199-200.

48 Taylor, Correspondence, p.199.

49 Taylor, Autobiography, p.236.

50 ibid., p.231. This was in reply to a letter from Merivale who had expressed "American partialities", preferring an organisation constructed to an organisation constructively evolved.

51 ibid., p.222.

52 ibid., p.223.

53 Sir Frederic Rogers, Lord Blachford, 1811-1889; educ. at Oriel, Oxford; friend and pupil of Newman and Hurrell Froude; sympathetic to tractarian movement; leader writer on the Times; helped to found the Guardian, 1846; Commissioner for Emigration,; mission to Paris re. indentured labour, 1858-1859; permanent under secretary at the Colonial Office, 1860-1871.

54 Sir Robert George Wyndham Herbert, 1831-1905, grandson of First Earl of Carnarvon; educ. Balliol; private secretary to W.E. Gladstone, 1855; Colonial Secretary, Queensland, 1858; assistant secretary, Board of Trade, 1868; assistant under secretary, Colonial Office, 1870; permanent under secretary, 1871-1892.

55 Sir Robert Meade, 1835-1898, permanent under secretary, Colonial Office, 1892-1897.

56 For his proposals on Emancipation, see Henry George, third Earl Grey, The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration, (London, 1853), Vol. I, p.76, Taylor, Autobiography, p.125, and W.P. Morrell, The Colonial Policy of Peel and Russell, (Oxford, 1930), p.201.

57 Grey, op.cit., Vol. II, p.260.

58 C.O. 96/18. Quoted in Curtin, op.cit., p.454.

59 Ibid., p.248.

60 Grey, op.cit., Vol. I, p.81.

61 Grey, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 204.

62 Ibid., p.253.

63 Printed as an appendix to Grey, op.cit., Vol. II, pp.494-508.

64 A good description of this is in Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery, (Chapel Hill, 1944).

65 For Indian indentured labour, see Cumpston, op.cit., Mellor, op.cit., and Morrell, op.cit.

66 P.C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration to Countries within the British Empire, (London, 1923).

67 Cumpston, op.cit., pp.19 & 22.

68 Grey, op.cit., Vol. I, pp.71-75.
Grey to Governor Gomm of Mauritius, Sept. 29, 1846.
".....I am of opinion that, instead of encouraging the Indian labourers to enter, before they arrive at Mauritius, into contracts of labour for several years for particular employers, and then endeavouring by stringent regulations to enforce the performance of these contracts, under

circumstances in which it is in the interest of the immigrants to break them; the true policy would be to adopt regulations, of which the effect would be, to make it the decided and obvious interest of the immigrants to work steadily and industriously for the same employers for a considerable time....." He goes on to connect his ideas for Mauritius with his proposals for immediate emancipation and taxation of the slaves of 1833.

69 Two loans were offered by the imperial government - one of £200,000 to British Guiana and Trinidad in 1846, and another of £500,000 to the West Indies in 1848. Both Grey and Russell regarded aided immigration as a quid pro quo for the equalisation of the sugar duties.

70 Cumpston, op.cit., p.89.

71 G.E. Marindin (ed.), Letters of Frederic Rogers, Lord Blachford, (London, 1896), p.171.

72 vid. inf., pp. 245-252.

73 K.G. Tregonning, Under Chartered Company Rule, North Borneo, 1881-1946, (Singapore, 1958), p.154. The Assyrians eventually went to British Guiana. I am purposely blurring the distinction between indentured labour and permanent migrant labour because it was so often blurred in practice. Only the Transvaal Chinese operation was carried out with such thoroughness (mainly by confining the Chinese to compounds) that there was a hundred per cent return.

74 In 1903, Joseph Chamberlain suggested Uganda to the Jewish leader, Herzl, as a place of settlement to which he could lead the Jews from the persecution of Eastern Europe.

75 E.H.H. Archibald, Travellers by Sea, (London, H.M.S.O., 1962), p.27. Note that migrant labourers were regarded and priced as freight.

76 Hansard, 3rd. series Vol. CXVI, 1851, pp.273-275. Roebuck advocated that colonists of superior intelligence ought to be planted in Kaffraria. To cries of NO! NO! from members he said, "It was absurd to say you could attain the end without incurring the consequences..... The end justifies the means."

77 Adderley, op.cit., p.186.

78 Peel in 1849 had described this reverence for the colonial legislature as "a high and haughty spirit of liberty". Taylor (Autobiography, p.269) described this sentiment as preposterous. Taylor had no patience with West Indian colonial legislatures in particular.

79 See Morrell, op.cit., p.286. When Palmerston turned out Russell's administration in 1852, Adderley was waiting with a motion of censure on the government's colonial policy and was confident of victory. Palmerston forestalled him. Grey was sorry he had no chance of defending himself.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOUTH AFRICAN BACKGROUND

It is impossible to interpret nineteenth century British history in terms of an oscillation in policy of two alternating parties in power. Certainly from the 1860s, it is not possible to discover a pro-imperial party ranged against an anti-imperial one.[1] There were important differences in policy, such as the successive attempts at federation in South Africa, culminating in Kimberley (with help from the Boers) reversing Carnarvon.[2] In India, the successive viceroyalties of Lytton, Ripon, Dufferin and Lansdowne exhibited considerable reversals of policy. But what is more remarkable is the accommodation between the parties. Each chartered two imperial companies. Neither a Tory like Curzon nor a Whig like Minto could consider ceding any real power to Indians. In South Africa, Rhodes, while always distrusting "the imperial factor", found he could work almost equally happily with a Liberal Imperialist or a Unionist government. When Campbell-Bannerman set out to reverse Unionist policy in South Africa, he was not pursuing a little Englander policy, but simply a different sort of Empire.[3]

All this served to obscure the importance of the native peoples. In India Congress was not given sufficient notice: Curzon was prophesying its total downfall at the opening of the century when his own acts - and particularly the Partition

of Bengal - would provide it with effective rallying ground.[4] In South Africa the problems of Bantu, Boer and Briton escalated, but it was the Boer-Briton confrontation that exploded, and in doing so served to obscure the Bantu problem. The fact that Africans remained so docile while Europeans fought each other, unfortunately fostered the impression - aided too by their subsequent unwillingness to go to work - that they were of little political importance.

The Liberal Government swept to power in 1906 saw the triumph of devolution. In 1906 Balfour revealed once more that the opposition to imperial responsibility had always cut across party lines. He argued that

> If any one Colony insisted upon enslaving its hewers of wood and drawers of water, it would have a perfect right to do so, and to request Great Britain or the colonies, if they interfered, to mind their own business, as it was only exercising its right of self-government.[5]

Balfour was providing a hypothetical case that few in that period believed would ever come about. J. Ramsay MacDonald, writing in 1907, argued in favour of South African Federation because he believed that the Cape would never give up its "native policy" and that with federation, the state and its white population would be more civilized, and would ultimately extend the Cape policy to the rest of the country.[6] This helps to explain why W.P. Schreiner, no less than a former

Cape premier, who saw the dangers and led a delegation to reveal them, was ignored.[7] And so the Liberal Party, remembering its past colonial radicalism, rushed into South African devolution. While its left hand encouraged the rise of democracy and social justice at home, its right hand denied them abroad.

What the Boer War had obscured to the Liberal Government, to Balfour and to MacDonald, was Adam Smith's concept of the conflict between defence and opulence. This conflict has been seen[8] as the key to all South African labour policy, and it has never been more obvious than in the present day. At first the problem of defence was external. Hottentots and Bushmen were never seen as a real defence problem. They simply provided further evidence for the "anthropologists" laws of the disappearance of the savage races. It is ironic that the Cape 49th Ordinance of 1828 permitted the entry of Bantu to work, while the more celebrated 50th of the same year gave the Hottentots equality before the law. The arrival of the Bantu to work combined with the annexations of Natal and British Kaffraria turned the external defence of the Boer commandoes into an internal one. It took time for its magnitude to be fully appreciated, just as the Rhodesian pioneers arriving in Mashonaland in 1890 grossly underestimated the African population because of the scattered nature of the small Shona settlements.

Grey's Natal policy has already been reviewed in its wider imperial context. It is now possible to add a fresh consideration to the policy of small reserves and assimilation - defence. Small scattered locations would inevitably break up the tribes. In the future the policy of assimilation would proceed side-by-side with defensive measures. In 1855 Sir George Grey in his opening address to the Cape Parliament announced that the Africans were to become

> a part of ourselves, with a common faith and common interests, useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue; in short a source of strength and wealth to this colony, such as Providence designed them to be.[9]

Yet at the same time defensive restrictions were placed on the mobility of African labour. In 1853 the right of taking out a pass to visit a friend was withdrawn. In 1856 a central office of registration was to be set up at King-williamstown. In 1858 six acts were passed to control immigration. One very revealing act was described as "An act for preventing Colonial Fingoes and certain other subjects of her Majesty [the Fingoes were a Bantu tribe from the North-East Cape] from being mistaken for Kafirs, and thereby harassed and aggrieved". As the Transkeian territories were added to the Cape, the pass laws for immigrants ceased to apply, and instead their African inhabitants came under the jurisdiction

of the Masters and Servants Laws. The tradition of Masters and Servants legislation making breach of civil contracts a criminal offence was firmly established in 1856, based on an earlier Masters, Servants and Apprentices Ordinance of 1841.

It should be noted that this sort of defensive legislation was also the norm in Britain for most of the nineteenth century. The combination laws may have been repealed in 1825, but any activity outside a narrow area of wage and hours negotiations still carried criminal liability. The very phrase Masters and Servants was not abandoned in Britain until the 1875 Employers and Workmen Act. While the problems are obviously very different, the motives behind the legislation were by no means dissimilar. The fact that domestic and colonial policy diverged widely in the twentieth century help to confirm the thesis that "Imperialism and the Rise of Labour" (to quote the title of Halevy's study) were incompatible. While Labour sentiment was often imperialist - witness some of the Fabians, and J.H. Thomas's celebrated remark to the officials of the Colonial Office, "I'm here to see there's no mucking about with the British Empire"[10] - it provided an example at home that was not lost on the nationalists abroad.

From the 1850's onwards, as the demand for labour in South Africa increased, legislation had to be a compromise between defence and the "motive to exertion". Natal reveals this well. In 1854 the Natal Native Affairs Commission

advocated an increase in tax, reduction in the size of locations and exemptions from tax for labourers. In 1855 an Ordinance forbade Africans from squatting on Crown or private land; in 1857 Africans in employment were made exempt from tax; but the tax was not raised from Grey's figure until 1875 when it went up to fourteen shillings. Indentured Indians were introduced between 1860 and 1866. There was more Indian immigration from 1874, and Indian population figures rose rapidly until the end of the century. Meanwhile in the Transvaal labour was regarded by the Boers as a tribute to conquerors. Here in the Natal legislation and the Transvaal attitudes we already have the precedents for the Rhodesian experience. And all this before the appearance of the large capitalist undertakings of the diamond and gold mines.

The mines are only of interest to this thesis insofar as they provided competition for Rhodesia later in the century. In a sense the Rhodesian experience was more akin to that in South Africa before the discoveries of mineral wealth, for labour deployment in Rhodesia was always extremely scattered, and never highly concentrated as in Kimberley or on the Rand. With the growth of the mines however, we do have a great increase in the importance of two factors. Firstly, wants became a greater stimulant to labour - chiefs sent out their men "to earn a gun". Secondly, the recruiting net was cast ever wider. A table[11] of new registrations at the Kimberley

and de Beers Mines in 1884 best reveals this:

Shangaans	681
British Basutos	195
Sekukuni Basutos	2215
Zulus	815
Portuguese Zulus	446
Bakhatlas	56
Matabele	120
Colonials	375
Bakwenas	33
Batlapings	277
Swazis	11
Bamangwatos	56
Barolongs	115
Transvaal Basutos	47
Others	34
	5476

Already the labour network stretched throughout Southern Africa, into the furthest corners of Bechuanaland, into the South West of what was to become Southern Rhodesia, and into Mozambique. The opening of the gold mines cast the net even further, and introduced the practice of organised recruitment.

As the need for labour on railway construction and the development of towns increased, increasingly severe measures were taken to ensure that squatting on Crown land was not a comfortable activity. In 1869, Cape Colony imposed a rent of ten shillings per hut on Crown land. In 1884, a rent of one pound per hut was levied in Natal. The 1876 Cape Location Act was designed against the similar practice on private land. A tax was imposed on landowners for tenants not in bona fide employment. In 1880, the brief British administration in the Transvaal repealed the differential Boer taxation, and imposed a uniform tax of ten shillings. These were the stimulants,

but the continuing need for defence is revealed in the strict vagrancy law of 1879 at the Cape, which greatly discouraged the movement of Africans, and therefore impeded their efforts to find work.

In the 1890's the labour thirst of the gold mines of the Rand saw the establishment of greater organisation in recruitment and distribution. In 1893 a Native Labour Commissioner was appointed; in 1896 a Native Labour Supply Association was set up; in 1895 recruitment in Portuguese East Africa was successfully centralised; in 1889, 1896 and 1897 there were combinations of employers to reduce wages; and the 1895 pass law by which the employer kept the pass during the period of service was designed against desertions. Taxation continued to play a vital role. A hut tax levied in the Transvaal in 1895 was in effect a poll tax. In 1898 there was a new departure in policy when these taxes were levied for the first time in towns. The Orange Free State already had a poll tax of ten shillings, and in 1893 and 1898 enacted squatters laws limiting squatters to five families on private land. Despite the organisation of labour recruiting, the evils of private touting continued, and the dispute between the farmers and the mining community - which will become very familiar in Rhodesia - became increasingly acerbic as demand increased.

In the Cape the Location Law was amended in 1892, increasing the tax on landowners to one pound for every male African not

in employment. Many were turned off the land as a result. In 1894 the Glen Grey Act of the Cape widened the explicit dependence of labour on taxation. A tax of ten shillings was imposed on all those not in work - labour for three months provided exemption for a year; continuous labour for three years gave exemption for life. The Act also encouraged Africans to take up land by quit-rent under the European system of survey and individual tenure, another attempted attack on communalism. Rhodes in introducing the bill into the Cape Parliament openly asserted that it was hoped the measure would cause an improvement in the labour supply.[12] In fact the labour tax sections of the Glen Grey Act never worked and were repealed eleven years later, but the philosophy behind them is important to subsequent South African and Rhodesian labour policy.

After the Boer War, South Africa experienced a dearth of labour. The War had diverted labourers elsewhere or kept them at home; the army had paid high wages to scouts, messengers, labourers during the War, so providing the means to stay at home for a while; and the mine owners took their first step towards encouraging labour by combining to reduce wages. In 1904 the Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission[13] revealed the nature of the debate in the Transvaal mining community regarding the encouragement of African labour or its replacement by European labour. Defence has been stressed as an important

part of South African native labour policy from its beginnings: we now find an interesting variation on this theme. In his evidence before the Commission one witness, Rudd, said

> Could Mr. Kidd replace the 200,000 native workers by 100,000 unskilled whites, they would simply hold the Government of the country in the hollow of their hand. I prefer to see the more intellectual section of the community at the helm. ....The Native is at present, and I hope will long remain, a useful intermediary between the white employer and employee.[14]

The Africans were here seen as a buffer between the capitalists and their fear of democracy. It was a question of lesser evils - the Scylla and Charybdis of South African policy.

The introduction of Chinese labour was the expedient adopted to solve the problem of the refusal of Africans to work and the refusal of the mine owners to use Europeans instead. A total of 60,000 Chinese arrived on the Rand before they were all returned by 1912. The project helped the Unionist Government to its fall in 1905; the attempted confinement of so many Chinese in compounds and the resultant highly publicised evils of gambling, male prostitution and violence helped to discredit the whole system of indentured labour. By this time, however, the much-vaunted free labour market had been destroyed.[15] At a critical moment, African labour had been undercut by the Chinese, who, although paid more than Africans, were obliged to stay longer and were

more effectively under the owners' control. In South Africa, Chinese indentured labour confirmed an established pattern of migrant labour. In Britain, the Chinese labour issue was seen not as an attack upon the interest of African labour but as an attack upon the interest of white labour, not so much as a humanitarian issue but as a conflict between Unionist Imperialism and Liberal Imperialism.

With the growing power of the European unions before and after the First World War, defensive provisions loomed ever larger in South African labour policy, until to-day the Nationalist Government is attempting the well-nigh impossible task of returning Africans to their Bantustans, glorified reserves. In Adam Smith's conflict of defence and opulence, defence has become pre-eminent.

For the sake of unity South African labour policy has been briefly reviewed over some hundred years of its history. It is impossible to understand the Rhodesian experience without reference to South Africa. Rhodesia's ordinances were largely based on those of the Cape and of Natal, her administrators were from South Africa, the native commissioners were invariably from the Natal native administration. Under the High Commissioner for South Africa, Rhodesia was treated administratively as an extension of South Africa; as the brainchild of Rhodes this was an inevitable mental attitude, particularly as federation or union with South Africa was

throughout the pre-First World War period a distinct probability. For the duration of the Central African Federation, Rhodesia looked briefly North and East. In recent years the old orientation has re-established itself. Although the attitude was uppermost, it is the purpose of this thesis to establish the different conditions that prevailed in Rhodesia, and above all the nature of the power exercised by the imperial authority over the British South Africa Company.

In his evidence to the Transvaal Labour Commission, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick said

> I started with and clung to the belief that we had an unlimited supply [of labour] in Central Africa if we chose to extend our organisation and incur the expense, and I several times discussed with him [Rhodes] the possibility of pushing on the Cape of Cairo railway with the object of pushing up the supply.[16]

The push to the North has been seen as the search for a golden Eldorado, as a pursuit for the further expansion of the Saxon race. Here is some evidence at least that another commodity was sought, a commodity required to exploit the known riches of Kimberley and the Rand: labour. Labour recruiters were already trying their luck in the North from the 1870s. They were part of the romantic but arduous pioneering in Central Africa that inspired in Rhodes and Sir Harry Johnston[17] their dreams of the Cape to Cairo link. These pioneers, missionaries, hunters, explorers, had a great effect on the formation of

views on Africa and Africans, for their works had an extremely wide and eager public.[18] Undoubtedly the most prevalent view of the African that emerged was the child view, an idea current and influential from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. There are a thousand possible expressions of this, but that of Lugard is effective in its succinctness and interesting as the opinion of a great Governor. To him the African

> holds the position of a late born child in the family of nations, and must as yet be schooled in the discipline of the nursery.[19]

Given nineteenth century conditions in Africa and the exhausted and fever-ridden state of the travellers, it is perhaps not surprising that they derived an extremely poor opinion of Africans. What is curious is that so many of them wished to impose on Africans concepts of work, of punctuality, and of the cash economy that were brutalising their own society at home, and that so many of them had set out to escape. David Livingstone had himself escaped from the world of sweated mill labouring. In his ideas for massive European emigration to Africa he wished to alleviate the lot of the working class at home, but it never seems to have occurred to him that the arrival of the European economy might have a similar effect on the African.[20] It is possible that in the midst of Africa home society itself took on a romanticised impression and nothing could seem worse than the slavery and warfare that

Africans suffered from. At any rate, the arrival of the European economy was regarded as the salvation of the African, and if, like a child, he had to be disciplined to work, it was entirely for his own good.

Early missionaries frequently had difficulties in finding labour, simply because, according to the current realities in Africa, any self-respecting man would provide himself with slaves, and moreover because the more warlike tribes, accustomed to having slaves themselves, were quite unwilling to serve in a menial capacity for Europeans.[21] For many pioneers the answer was forced labour. One of them, James Stewart, who travelled in the Zambezi area in the early sixties, believed this was the only possible approach. On viewing the destruction of Nyanja villages by Yao raiders, he wrote

> After all the loss of an African village is little loss to the owners, and none to the world generally. They can soon rebuild and anything that compels them to work is rather a blessing than a curse.[22]

Another, more illustrious, Sir Samuel Baker, adopted forced labour while Governor of Equatoria, believing it to be necessary to overcome instinctive idleness.[23] In his book, The Albert N'yanza, he wrote in a vein highly reminiscent of Earl Grey, though more extreme:

> The natives of tropical countries do not progress: enervated by intense heat, they incline rather to repose and amusement than to labour. Free

> from the rigours of winters, and the excitement of changes in the seasons, the native character assumes the monotony of their country's temperature. They have no natural difficulties to contend with-no struggle with adverse storms and icy winds and frost-bound soil; but an everlasting summer, and fertile ground producing with little tillage, excite no enterprise; and the human mind, unexercised by difficulties, sinks into languor and decay.[24]

Of course Stewart and Baker were writing about very different parts of the Continent, but their views derived from the same technologically orientated contempt. They could understand "backwardness" (Baker actually placed it at the level of animal existence), but they were quite unable to comprehend that Africans might have suffered relative retrogression. In this they reflected their age, when Improvement was the principal norm.

Baker was an administrator, though of a highly unorthodox kind. Other more conventional administrators also wrote copiously of their views of the African and his future. It is interesting to start with Sir Bartle Frere[25] because he represents so well a school whose views would be taken over and modified by the principals in the period covered by this thesis. Towards the end of a life of long experience in India, South Africa and Zanzibar, Frere read a paper <u>On the Laws affecting the Relations between Civilized and Savage Life, as bearing on the dealings of Colonists with Aborigines</u>, to

the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland on June 28, 1881.[26] Frere maintains in this paper that while it is usual for savage races to be destroyed, expelled or driven back in the face of a civilized power, this law does not hold for more vigorous races like the Bantu. Their savagery is destroyed by another means, namely by proximity to the European civilization and by anxiety to approximate to this civilization. "There are no practical limits to the changes that may thus take place." But there are certain necessary conditions for these changes to take place, of which the most important is "Such a peace as Romans and English have ensured to subject races as a consequence of civilized sovereignty", a peace bringing with it

> protection for life and property, practical equality before the law, substitution of individual property for tribal commonage, abolition of slavery and private rights of making war and carrying arms, education in the arts of civilized life, legislation against the manufacture and sale of intoxicating substances that ruin health and retard material welfare of the native community.

To secure all this an equitable form of taxation is required to meet the expenses of the administration.

This is an extremely succinct and illuminating description of the policy of the "civilizing mission" school of administrators on the threshold of the so-called New Imperialism. In some ways the discussion on the close of Frere's paper is even more interesting for contemporary views than the paper itself.

One speaker criticised Frere for his use of analogies from the Roman Empire. The Britons that the Romans met in England were much more civilized than the natives of South Africa, and they were after all Aryans! The second speaker began by criticising the lumping together of the Bantu race as a chimera, and then went on to criticise the Roman analogy from the opposite end. The pax Britannica is not like the pax Romana. Our civilization is stiff. The Romans intermarried. We impose an uncongenial religion. Rome became the great melting pot of the Empire - peoples went there from all over the known world. But negroes do not come to meetings of societies like ours.[27] Another speaker, still desperately trying to find laws, postulated the law that native peoples disappear in face of Europeans in temperate climates, but not in tropical climates. In this discussion we see the extremes of pseudo-scientific racism juxtaposed with the most enlightened opinion of the day.

In the year that Frere delivered his paper, Alfred Milner was called to the bar and started writing for the Pall Mall Gazette.[28] He had written in his diary that he felt himself destined for a life of "public usefulness", a symbolic paternal idealist sentiment.[29] His bright contemporaries at Balliol, Lyttelton Gell[30] and Henry Birchenough[31] - both future directors of the British South Africa Company - were also in London, Birchenough actually sharing rooms with Milner. Rhodes was at Oriel, dreaming dreams. Sidney Webb entered

the Colonial Office, and Sydney Olivier would follow him in 1882. The British North Borneo Company[32] was granted its charter, the first of the new monopolies, the first chartered company to administer a territory since the East India Company had lost its charter in 1858. Colonial exploitation had entered a fresh phase. As Frere was reading his paper that revealed so much of past experience, the stage was set for the imperialism of the great paternalists ready to apply Germanic methods to the problems Frere described. There was little opposition. Chauvinistic imperialism cut directly across party lines. The Independent Labour Party was as yet weak. The majority of the Fabians were as imperialist as the Unionist Party itself (Sydney Olivier a notable exception). Opposition came principally from without, from the societies, the "Exeter Hall faction" that had taken to itself the duty of being the irrepressible conscience of the nation. The cries of a new slavery, of forced labour, of the need for imperial protection for indigenous peoples would be heard again - principally from the British and Foreign Aborigines' Protection Society - and coupled with war and rebellion in Rhodesia, would see to it that Joseph Chamberlain's administration at the Colonial Office was not only a more vigorous approach to colonial policy, but also a more firm espousal of the notion of imperial responsibility.

It is appropriate at this stage to consider the attitudes to African labour of Cecil Rhodes himself. He was after all

the Colossus, in some ways almost the oracle for administrators in Rhodesia. Like most things about the man, his attitude was entirely paradoxical. He urged the most shady dealings with African chiefs like Lobengula[33] ; he fell wholeheartedly into the slaughter and reprisal that followed the Ndebele and Shona "rebellions"[34]; yet he could win immense African respect in personal relations, as in the parleying after the Ndebele "rebellion". He adhered wholeheartedly to the "child view", yet could express the celebrated high-flown statement of "equal rights for every civilized man south of the Zambezi", the civilized man being "a man whether white or black who has sufficient education to write his name, has some property or works, in fact is not a loafer".[35] "Loafer" was a favourite word of Rhodes. It reflects well his attitude towards work as a moral virtue. He drove himself unmercilessly and expected others to do the same. If Africans insisted on "loafing", they could not be civilized, and therefore to make them civilized, they had to be persuaded to work.

Rhodes's "child view" was apparent in his support of the "strop bill" of 1891, which proposed corporal punishment for Africans. It was dropped. It was apparent also in his sponsoring of the Glen Grey Act[36]. He pleaded that his own school education was more in the nature of slavery than the work expected of an African. He spoke too in terms of an "inexorable law":

If you are really one who loves the

> natives, you must make them worthy of the country they live in, or else they are certain, by an inexorable law, to lose their country. You will certainly not make them worthy if you allow them to sit in idleness and if you do not train them in the arts of civilization.[37]

The paradox is perfectly revealed by Woodhouse in the Rhodes biography. Having attempted to show how much more enlightened Rhodes was compared with the Boers, Woodhouse writes,

> The best that could be said of him in this matter - and he often said it himself - was that he regarded the natives as children, who might one day attain the adult level of the white man, but were still far from it. Even that was only true of him in theory. In practice it would be truer to say that he regarded them as domestic animals: which is not to imply cruelty, for Englishmen are usually kind to domestic animals. But unlike children dogs are not expected to grow up into human adults; and unlike children dogs may be shot when they get out of hand. That was certainly Rhodes's attitude to the Matabele [Ndebele] in the early weeks of the Rebellion.[38]

The domestic animal view fits Boer opinion of the period rather well; yet the Boers regarded Rhodes as a negrophilist. The paradox has been established, it is true, by reference to Rhodes's opinions at different points in his career, but these points are separated by no more than a few years, and his ambivalence is symptomatic of much of Southern African opinion.

Rhodes certainly did nothing to allay the fears of the British and Foreign Aborigines' Protection Society, as expressed in Fox Bourne's pamphlet <u>Matabeleland and the Chartered Company</u>,[39] or in the British and Foreign Aborigines'

Protection Society's Outlines of a Suggested Charter for Natives under British Rule in South Africa,[40] which had proposed that the Africans should be wards of the Crown; that reserves should be under Crown control; that there should be more power for the chiefs, education and advancement for the natives, regulation of interference from outside, for example with regard to labour; that taxes ought to be restricted to hut tax, agreed with the natives; that the pass system ought to be limited to a single passport to help the Africans; that there ought to be complete freedom of action to seek labour, no curfew and no intoxicating liquor; and that the natives who have completely left the reserves ought to be admitted to some rights and privileges as fellow subjects with the whites.

This was what Lord Milner was quite unprepared to do. His views on labour are revealed in countless despatches from South Africa. They coincided rather too accurately - for the taste of the Colonial Office officials, and indeed of his Resident Commissioner in Rhodesia, Sir Marshall Clarke[41] - with those of the directors of the British South Africa Company and the men on the spot. He took a favourable attitude towards forced labour, particularly for public works. He felt it was the duty of native commissioners to put positive moral pressure on the Africans to work, and as his justification he sought refuge in the old tropical indolence argument - "The

black man is naturally inclined, much more than the white, to do nothing at all".[42] He certainly realised the embarrassment such views caused the government and even attempted to suppress on occasion an offending sentence of a despatch that was to appear in a parliamentary paper.[43] Milner, burdened as he was with the Briton-Boer problem and the resulting war in South Africa, lacked a doctrinaire "native policy". He made little contribution to the reserves-amalgamation debate. And of course his downfall and censure came about because he permitted, almost inadvertently, the illegal corporal punishment of Chinese labourers. All was subordinated by this time to his reconstruction, his development of the mining economy, and consequent encouragement of British immigration.

The British and Foreign Aborigines' Protection Society Charter (vid. sup.) had expressed a curious mixture of respect for African institutions, more power to chiefs, and the notion of amalgamation, equal rights. Rhodes too had spoken of equal rights; he has also been described by his most recent biographers as a reserves man, believing that they would protect the African from the vices of the European, permit him to cultivate his own plot of land in peace, and give him a rudimentary political education.[44] It is a dilemma that runs right through the labour policy of the period. Neither South Africa nor Rhodesia wanted a permanent labour force for

security reasons. There was a fear of what would happen when the mines, a wasting asset, would no longer provide work. But the reserves on the other hand provided too much scope for lethargy, for the backward rule of chiefs (cf. Herman Merivale on reserves) and above all insufficient labour for present needs. The backwardness of the reserves was as much a matter for concern for the humanitarians and missionaries as for the officials of the Chartered Company. The fashion in which Rhodesian Africans were forced into a state of great insecurity on, or actively expelled from, Crown land, private property, urban locations, and even the reserves themselves (when alienation took place as the result of inadequate survey), will be recounted in greater detail later.

This insecurity resulted from the establishment of a powerful anti-reserves lobby. H. Wilson Fox,[45] in his copious memoranda of 1910 and 1912 drawn up for the Board of the Company, attacked reserves and tribalism.[46] He did however reach the logical conclusion that there had to be a permanent local labour policy.

> It would also seem preferable to arrange that the circumstances of the relations between the two races should, as far as possible, be such that they should be able to regard each other from some other point of view than the economic one.[47]

It was a fine sentiment, but the mineowners seemed unwilling to work it. There were advantages as well as disadvantages in a quick turnover of labour without wives and children.

Obviously wages could be kept down, and there was always the possibility - particularly acute under Rhodesian conditions - that a mine might be worked out and closed. It was the farmers, with much less danger of working out their properties, who most strenuously advocated a pool of local labour. Wilson Fox quoted their congress of 1911, which resolved with regard to "foreign" labour that

> the boys be allowed to bring their women with them, so that they may, if they choose, settle for a number of years, or permanently, if they wish, in Southern Rhodesia.[48]

But the farmers were nonetheless unwilling to pay the wages necessary for such a permanent settlement.

The most important convert to the anti-reserves position was Lord Gladstone,[49] High Commissioner in South Africa, 1910-1914, whose despatches seem to indicate that he was to a large extent converted to his European environment in South Africa. With regard to the Southern Rhodesian Commission on Native Reserves, he wrote to Lewis Harcourt, Secretary of State,[50]

> I expressed the hope to Mr. Malcolm[51] that some arrangement would be made to prevent the natives from wandering over the reserves far too large for their present requirements. The practice is demoralising and prejudices improvement in agriculture.
> Mr. Malcolm asked me whether objection would be taken to some curtailment of the area now allotted. I said that I did not think there would necessarily be objections to curtailment, provided that it could be justified by the clear

> advantage of the whole scheme to the natives.
> We agreed that it would be desirable to adopt the principles of the Natives' Land Act - that natives should be prohibited from holding land in territory under white occupation and vice versa.[52]

This despatch was met with a chorus of disapproval in the Colonial Office. The extension of the Union Land Act to Rhodesia was regarded as "impossible and quite unacceptable".[53] Later, another official wrote, "It is clear that the reserves constitute the only real means of safeguarding the native interest".[54]

In a despatch of the previous week, Gladstone provides an excellent insight into current opinion of the African. On a visit to Rhodesia, he went to Zimbabwe, that essential of the African Grand Tour, and wrote

> The greatest factor in the irresistable attractiveness of Zimbabwe is the mystery of its origins. The flame of controversy has played round each feature of the ruins during the last ten years. The only result is that the doctors differ. But there is one conclusion that forces itself on the mind of the layman, with the weight almost of conviction, and that is that no Bantu or negroid races were ever capable either of such a stupendous conception or of its masterly execution.[55]

As early as 1906, an archæologist had asserted that Zimbabwe had been built by Africans,[56] and now there is no doubt whatever among archaeologists that the "stupendous conception" is indeed the work of Bantu peoples.[57] As this passage makes clear, it was not just that Gladstone could not believe that

Great Zimbabwe had been built by Africans, but he did not want to believe it: such a possibility would upset his conception of the Africans' place in the colonies. He had been sent as a great Liberal statesman to be the first Governor General of the Union of South Africa, and therefore implicitly accepted the colour bar enshrined in its constitution.

If these be the sentiments on land and culture of a Liberal statesman of some stature, it is reasonable to ask where the mantle of Stephen and Merivale had fallen during this period. Was their humanitarian spirit continued only by Exeter Hall philanthropy? An examination of works by a liberal, a Fabian and a leading member of the Independent Labour Party will attempt to discover the nature, the strength and the influence of the opposition to the "official opinion" of the day, with particular reference to Southern Africa.

J.A. Hobson's Imperialism: A Study[58] is celebrated for his attack on capitalist imperialism. His premises with regard to investment have now been largely refuted,[59] but less notice has been taken of his section on "Native Races". He expressed a belief in the civilizing mission - "The resources of the tropics will not be developed voluntarily by the natives themselves".[60] White men could

> only organise and superintend the labour of the natives. By doing this they can educate the natives in the arts of industry

> and stimulate in them a desire for material and moral progress, implanting new 'wants' which form in every society the roots of civilization.[61]

He accepted the analogy of the education of children, but attacked the chartered companies as "little else than private despotism rendered more than usually precarious in that it has been established for the sake of dividends",[62] and was too dependent on the whim of the Managing Director. In a prophetic remark, he feared the political ambitions of the imported rulers. He saw through some of the basic contradictions of paternalism, pointing out that the kind of civilization to be imposed depended entirely upon the "civilizing nations"; that there was no attempt to understand the active or latent progressive forces of the subject race; that the international agreements of 1885 and 1890, carving up territory, cast a strange light on the trust theory. But, like all his contemporaries, he failed to see the dramatic rise in nationalism. He regarded less interference in independent Indian states as a good sign, and moreover he was very complimentary about Basutoland as an example of sane imperialism in the midst of insane imperialism. He failed to see the immense problems the one would cause to a twentieth century state, and the dangers economic underdevelopment would cause to the freedom of the other. Insane imperialism he classified as handing over "these races to the economic exploitation of white colonists who will use them as 'live tools' and their lands as repositories

of mining or other profitable treasure".[63]

So far as labour is concerned, Hobson's sole legitimate pressures are the pressure of rising population, of new needs, and of increasing consumption. All taxation is forced labour; so is the bribing of chieftains to use their influence, as advocated by "the philanthropic Earl Grey" (the Fourth Earl).[64] He attacked the alliance of administration and capitalism to be found most blatantly in South Africa, in Rhodes, on the Rand, and in Grey. At least, he argued ironically, the Transvaal had the virtue of being methodical - they took away all land, broke up the tribal system, and gave the African no alternative but to work. This had a bearing on the idea of the permanent labour force in the locations, advocated by the President of the Rand Chamber of Mines in 1898[65] and again by the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1905, (which is treated in Hobson's second edition in 1906). To Hobson, such an idea would turn Africans into hostages to capitalism, virtually <u>ascripti gloebi</u> (remembering the South American and Portuguese African methods), simply breeding the next generation of labourers. He felt that white communities in these capitalist situations could never escape the taint of parasitism.[66]

With remarkable clarity Hobson saw all the contradictions of the revealed policy of his day. But in their place he set up a new set of contradictions, based on his conception of the civilizing mission through the medium of indirect rule. While

he had plenty of strictures about the nature of western capitalism and of trusteeship, he failed to question the quality of rule that indirect rule would produce.

Sydney Olivier was, as George Bernard Shaw in his lively memoir of him pointed out,[67] a rare character. He was a colonial administrator who attended to all the pomp and trappings of a colonial governorship at the same time as questioning the very existence of the imperial power. His White Capitalism and Coloured Labour[68] is a curious book. Several chapters of it are devoted to attacking bad race relations in the United States, and extolling the better conditions in the West Indies. When he does come to the point, he espouses the old friend, tropical indolence: the African

> has no mechanical habit of industry. He has no idea of any obligation to be industrious for industry's sake, no conception of any essential dignity in labour itself, no delight in gratuitous toil.[69]

He agreed with the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1905[70] that if the African is paid more he will simply work less, but he did make the attempt as we shall see to establish a cultural explanation for this phenomenon.

He provided an excellent ironic description of "the theory" behind colonial exploitation.

> Tropical countries are not suited for settlement by whites. Europeans cannot labour and bring up families there. The black can breed and labour under good

> government, but he cannot develop his own country's resources. He is brutish, benighted and unprogressive. The principal reason of (sic) this condition is that his life is made so easy for him by nature that he is not forced to work. The white man must, therefore, in the interests of humanity make arrangements to induce the black man to work for him. To him the economic profit which the black man does not value and cannot use; to the latter the moral and social advancement and elevation. To effect this development is the 'White man's Burden'; in this way must we control the tropics; along these lines alone can the problem of racial relations in our new possessions be solved.[71]

The core of his argument rested on five propositions. Firstly, the only distress caused by the lack of labour in South Africa was the distress of the foreign investor unable to obtain what he regarded as an adequate return on his investment. Secondly the disaffection between European and African was not the disaffection of race prejudice, but the disaffection of capitalism to labour and of industrial jealousy. Thirdly, where he cannot force the tropical peoples to labour for him, the capitalist turns to countries where the population is under great restraint, namely India and China. Fourthly the capitalist who pleads a missionary motive is in effect a liar. If he really felt this he would be a missionary. Fifthly, the negrophilist is he whose judgement has not been distorted by the economic demands of the capitalist industrial system.[72] In his attack on the indentured labour system he pointed out that the West Indian

negro thought that the coolie was more of a slave than official opinion did. He went on from this to describe the negro in the West Indies as more free and independent than the industrial proletariat at home.

He was not averse to a sharp thrust at a fellow colonial administrator,

> The distinction in sensibility, in industrial standard, between an alien race and the white, is deemed by such an authority as Lord Milner, a Providential dispensation. Such a doctrine reacts upon the temper of the employer in industry, and on his conception of suitable methods for dealing with coloured workmen.[73]

Milner's doctrine, he went on, is the product of the industrial relation - it has grown rapidly wherever capitalistic enterprise has been extended. It followed that the colonialist capitalist's fears are the fears of the capitalist everywhere, fears of the ill-effects of Christianising the population, fears of educating them to ideas above their station. Olivier revealed a remarkable sympathy for the African ethos. The African is more conscious of the unformulated powers of life and less under the dominion of the formulated; his consciousness is more open to what is beneath the superficial raft of established means of survival and less accessible to rational economic motive, and consequently unreliable as a wage earner. And so the African is regarded as a child, yet he is taxed and expected to work. But as soon as he takes up the attitude of a Wat Tylor or a Hampden he is vilified and killed.[74] With one single

obvious blow, he knocked Arnold's, and all his disciples', devotion to the Saxons on the head - he pointed out their tribalism and their savagery.[75] He could indeed have gone further and pointed to the remarkable similarities between Saxon notions of crime and punishment and those of, say, the Ndebele.

Olivier's arguments were certainly damaging, but although he later briefly became the Secretary of State for India, he had very little effect on the course of events, at least in the short term. His friend, Sidney Webb, was later as Lord Passfield to enunciate unequivocally the trust for native peoples in East Africa, but Olivier, theoretically destructive, was unable to construct an alternative. He believed that Europeans should go to Africa since it was underpopulated, and an African land monopoly was as intolerable as any other.[76] How an administrative accommodation could be reached on such a basis, he was silent. He had nothing to say on the forces of African nationalism, although the precedents were already there in India and in embryo in West Africa. Olivier in short was firmly caught in the paternalist web. He could see that the notion of "upbringing" was wrong; that the manner of that "upbringing" was wrong; but he could find no channel by which to treat the subject as an adult.

J. Ramsay MacDonald in his Labour and the Empire[77] did have a prescription -

> the democratic principle of native administration is to develop native civilization on its own lines - the educational method; the imperialist method is to impose on it an alien civilization - the political method....[78]

The English merchant is celebrated for seeking to sell what the customers ought to have, rather than what they want, and this has been applied to the theory of British colonialism. In a partial preview of Schumpeter,[79] MacDonald found imperial administration the preserve of the upper class - "the most narrow visioned of our social classes".[80] Like other critics, he sought, and easily found inconsistencies - there can be membership of the Empire without responsibility to the imperial life; the man on the spot conception of the imperial responsibility is a negation of the imperial idea. And he added that in fact no one is regarded as being on the spot unless he belongs to the majority. He argued that the imperial authorities ought to retain control over native affairs until the franchise is granted - South Africa should know that a liberal policy is imposed upon it not by Downing Street, but by the Empire. However, his dictum, "We require residents rather than governors", revealed another convert to indirect rule, a remarkable position for a man of the Left.[81]

Hobson, Olivier and MacDonald all accepted some of the suppositions of the labour theory of their day. They failed to unravel the complications of colonial race-relations, administrative problems and labour policy. Moreover, Hobson

and MacDonald were converts to the developing fashion of indirect rule, a policy which could indeed blink at indigenous forms of forced labour and slavery. The Lozi of Barotseland, for example, probably maintained slavery longer than Northern Rhodesian administrators liked to think.

The greatest exponent of the policy of indirect rule was of course Frederick Lugard,[82] who was between 1900 and 1906 actively imposing it throughout Northern Nigeria. Although he had no direct concern with Southern Africa after his early career, his policies and views repay examination because of the enormous influence they enjoyed. To what extent did his policy fit the idealised view of Hobson and MacDonald? Recently, Eric Stokes has pointed out[83] that Lugard pursued his policies not because of the exigencies of the situation - as has often been argued - not in other words from a position of weakness, but from a position of strength. Where there was a position of real weakness, as in the Niger Coast Protectorate or in Malawi, the extension of authority was a "more gradual process, and in the end one more destructive of indigenous political forms".[84] In other words, Lugard's policy did not necessarily arise from any respect for the Muslim emirates, but from a desire to extend authority swiftly and effectively by means of knocking out "the military resistance of the emirates with a few swift blows, oust the old rulers and instal pliant successors".[85] The acclaim with which Lugard's policy has been

received may indeed have been based on the wrong premises. Yet this was to become the principal gospel of colonial policy in Africa with enormous effects on reserves and labour policies.

When we examine Lugard's approach to labour, we find all the difficulties and inconsistencies of colonial labour policy. His Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa[85] was published outside our period, but the views contained in it are merely a systematization of ideas current in theory and practice for some years. On the one hand he had a tendency to favour the peasant cultivator, but adopted a modified form of the tropical abundance and tropical indolence theory. He felt that taxation was a stimulant to productive industry because it tended to diminish the large surplus of grain crops that would otherwise be used for beer-making and as an excuse for laziness in the following season.[86] Thus he saw the function of taxation to be the creaming of the surplus that led to indolence if it were not forced into a market economy. On the other hand, he was prepared to admit the educative influence of forced labour, though he insisted it should only be sanctioned as an emergency act, provided it was made attractive enough to stimulate voluntary recruitment subsequently.[87] He was prepared to mix the direct stimulant with the indirect. Both these positions had been assailed ever since the slavery-free labour debate of a hundred years before, the one because direct

taxation was so little known to the domestic working class, and because it was so often linked with a confused or indefensible land policy, the other because it smacked so much of the slavery it intended to replace. It is possible that at a time when the state in Britain was entering more and more into the private lives of its citizens, such methods of controlling colonial labour did not seem so unacceptable.

While Lord Lugard, in an extremely moderate way, rode both horses of the colonial labour policy - and they were indeed ridden for most of the inter-war period - Sir Harry Johnston was, as he had always been, more direct. He insisted in the History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races[88] that it was absolutely necessary for Africans to work or be trampled underfoot. This would be even more likely if medical science made sufficient advance that the unhealthy areas of Africa could be made habitable for Europeans, for "a rush may then.....sweep away the pre-existing rights of inferior races".[89] He prophesied rightly that in Southern Africa the black man would continue to be the source of cheap labour for a long time, and that he would gradually be pushed off the high on to the low veld. It was the disunity of the African that had permitted the entry of Europeans in the first place, and it was in his continuing disunity that hope lay for the European:

> And just as it would need some amazing and stupendous event for all Asia to rise as one man against the invasion of Europe, so it is difficult to conceive

> that the black man will eventually form one united negro people demanding autonomy, and putting an end to the control of the white man, and to the immigration, settlement, and intercourse of superior races from Europe and Asia.[90]

But like the invasion itself - and Johnston appears not to have considered this - it could be done piecemeal. Johnston's ultimate vision was of a race of Europeans in Africa with dark skins -

> Great white nations will populate in course of time South Africa, North Africa, and Egypt; and rills of Caucasion blood will continue, as in the recent and remote past, to circulate through Negro Africa, leavening the many millions of black men with that element of the white-skinned sub-species which alone has evolved beauty of facial features and originality of invention in thought and deed..... No doubt, as in Asia and South America, the eventual outcome of the colonization of Africa by alien peoples will be a compromise- a dark-skinned race with a white man's features and a white man's brain.[91]

By what miracle of eugenics this would happen, he is silent. The end of European rule was to Johnston unthinkable. This is one of the most important facts to remember about the vast majority of policy-makers in Africa during our period.

In one sense, however, both Lugard and Johnston arrived at a corner of the truth about the future, (and the view of the future of any society is vital to how it handles the present). The vortex of twentieth century technology, industrialism, and education would claim all societies. How was this process to be facilitated? It could be done gently,

by the creation of reserves to provide some communal security, but just enough land hunger to provide a stimulant - along with taxes and developing wants - to work. Or it could be effected by the destruction of tribal entities, by the breaking up of reserves in the name of land improvement, by a sort of African Highland Clearance designed to force "backward" peoples into the modern economy. The first would produce the familiar, inefficient, but gloriously cheap, migrant labour system, which left women and children conveniently beyond the pale of education and social services. The second might create a more efficient labour force, but the inhumanity by which this would be accomplished offended the humanitarians, and the social and political dangers offended the political realists. The first became orthodoxy, and so attention was paid neither to the efficiency of the labour force, nor to the social and political future of the Africans, nor to the development of the peasant cultivator.

The conflict had been continuing in South Africa for a century. The British after much introspection and debate in effect adopted the first policy. With less debate, the Afrikaans people had always adopted the clearance method, though not at first for industrial ends of course. When Rhodes set out to outflank the Boers, he opened up a vast new area where the same problem would be faced.

African tribal societies in Central Africa faced a

dynamic nationalism, convinced of its own divine right, in the late nineteenth century. It was a nationalism full of internal conflicts, that spoke with many voices, the exploiter, the missionary, the humane administrator. It carved out blocks of territory and attempted to turn them into labour units, while at the same time carving them up again for the sake of indirect rule. It established a labour melting pot, and then tried to keep the ingredients apart. The only response possible was another nationalism, developed in the seed-bed of capitalist production. Western European society divided against itself encountered fragmented societies, and created within the Pax Britannica (or whichever pax it might be) an economic, a social and eventually a political ferment. It is now necessary to turn to the origins of this process in Rhodesia.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 2.

1 A point confirmed by W. David McIntyre in his recent The Imperial Frontier in the Tropics, 1865-1875 (London, 1967).

2 A. Keppel-Jones in his South Africa (London, 1949) denied the effect of the alternation of parties in domestic politics on the South African situation, but both Sir Henry Taylor (Autobiography, pp. 131 & 241) and Cecil Rhodes (Lockhart and Woodhouse, Rhodes, p.69) felt that this alternation was extremely important in vacillating colonial policy.

3 For a discussion of the different attitudes to empire of Campbell-Bannerman and of Milner, see A.M. Gollin's Proconsul in Politics (London, 1964).

4 In 1900 Curzon said that Congress was "tottering to its fall", quoted in R.J. Moore, Liberalism and Indian Politics, 1872-1922 (London, 1966), p.78. This was of course part of Curzon's conviction that he was working for all Indians, and that Congress was of a purely sectional nature.

5 Quoted in J. Ramsay MacDonald, Labour and the Empire (London, 1907), p.37. Balfour said this with regard to the South African Chinese Labour Ordinance.

6 ibid., p.58.

7 W.P. Schreiner, 1857-1919; called to Cape bar, 1882; attorney general in Rhodes's second ministry, 1887; premier of Cape Colony at outbreak of the Boer War; preferred to defend an African, Denizulu, in a case brought against him by the Natal Government rather than attend the South African National Convention of 1908-1909; favoured a federal constitution for South Africa.

8 Sheila van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa (London, 1942).

9 Quoted in van der Horst, op. cit., p.17.

10 Quoted in Lyman, R.W., The First Labour Government, 1924 (London, 1957), p.106.

11 van der Horst, op. cit., p.84.

12 Lockhart and Woodhouse, op. cit., p.197.

13 Cd. 1897.

14 ibid., p.65.

15 See D.J.N. Denoon, "The Transvaal Labour Crisis, 1901-1906", Journal of African History, VII, 3 (1967), pp.481-494.

16 Cd. 1897, p.124.

17 Roland Oliver, Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa (London, 1957) stakes the claim of Johnston to be one of the originators, if not the originator, of the Cape to Cairo idea.

18 See H.A.C. Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, British Reactions to Central African Society, 1840-1890 (London, 1965) for an interesting and full discussion of these early contacts.

19 Frederick D. Lugard, The Rise of Our East African Empire (Edinburgh & London, 1893), vol. I, p.74.

20 J.P.R. Wallis (ed.), The Zambezi Expedition of David Livingstone 1858-1863 (London, 1956), 2 vols.

21 Cairns, op.cit., p.31. These remarks are culled from the diary of J.S. Moffat, 1864.

22 J.P.R. Wallis (ed.), The Zambezi Journal of James Stewart 1862-1863 (London, 1952).

23 T.D. Murray and A.S. White, Sir Samuel Baker: a Memoir (London, 1895), pp. 150-153. Every tribe was to be compelled to produce a certain amount of corn and cotton - it sounds rather like the rubber policy of Leopold's Congo.

24 Samuel Baker, The Albert N'yanza (London, 1958), p.xxiii.

25 Sir Bartle Frere, 1815-1884; educ. Haileybury; writership in the Bombay civil service, 1834; assistant collector at Poona, 1835; assistant commissioner of customs, 1845; political resident to the Raja of Sattara, and then commissioner when Sattara was annexed; 1850, commissioner for Sind; 1859, member of the Governor General's council; 1862, Governor of Bombay; 1872, sent to Zanzibar to negotiate a treaty with the Sultan; 1877, Governor of the Cape, and set about Carnarvon's plan for the federation of South Africa; recalled, 1880.

26 Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. XI, (June 28, 1881), pp.313-352.

27 There is a fascinating example of this reluctance to permit the subject peoples of the Empire to come to Britain at the time of the coronation of Edward VII. Lewanika, King of the Barotse, announced that he wished to attend the coronation. All the official of the Colonial Office hoped that he would stay away. As one put it, a whole host of native chiefs would then wish to come, "and the prospect is rather appalling". The permanent under secretary, Sir Montague Ommanney, felt that invitations ought to be confined to "representatives of the ruling face". Lewanika eventually did come, and Chamberlain ordered that he be provided with a uniform with plenty of gold lace! (minutes 15/1/02 & 16/6/02, C.O. 417/343 & 344).

28 He wrote firstly under John Morley and later under W.T. Stead, though he eventually disagreed with the latter's sensationalism, and resigned in 1885.

29 See Eric Stokes, The Political Ideas of English Imperialism. Inaugural lecture at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, (London, 1960).

30 P. Lyttelton Gell, 1852-1926; educ. King's College, London, and Balliol College, Oxford; first chairman, Council Universities Settlement in East London, 1884-1896; Director of the Guardian Insurance Company and of the British South Africa Company from 1899.

31 Henry Birchenough, 1853-1937; fellow of the Royal Empire Society, Chairman of Rhodesia and Mashonaland Railway Companies from 1925; President of the British South Africa Company, and Director of the Imperial and Continental Gas Association; Government special trade commissioner to South Africa, 1903; member of the Tariff Commission 1904; member of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Committee on Commercial and Industrial Policy, 1916; Chairman, Advisory Council to the Ministry of Reconstruction, 1918.

32 For the history of the British North Borneo Company, see K.G. Tregonning, Under Chartered Company Rule, North Borneo 1881-1946, (Singapore, 1958).

33 Quite apart from the shady diplomacy, see Rhodes's agreement with Frank Johnson of 1889 to overthrow the Ndebele by a midnight raid. Cairns, op.cit., p.236, and Eric Stokes & Richard Brown, The Zambesian Past, p.88.

34 Olive Schreiner's novel, Trooper Peter Halket in Mashonaland is an indictment of Rhodes for his activities at this time. The frontispiece shows several Rhodesian pioneers grinning beside the bodies of several Africans hanging from trees.

35 Lockhart & Woodhouse, op.cit., p.444.

36 vid. sup. p.65.

37 Lockhart & Woodhouse, op.cit., p.197.

38 ibid., p.348.

39 H.R. Fox Bourne, Matabeleland and the Chartered Company (London, 1897). H.R. Fox Bourne was the Secretary of the British and Foreign Aborigines' Protection Society.

40 London, 1900.

41 Sir Marshall Clarke, 1841-1909; A.D.C. to Sir Thomas Shepstone; played an important part in the federations attempts of 1877-1881; Resident Magistrate, Basutoland, 1881; Resident Commissioner, Basutoland, 1884-1893; Acting Administrator, Zululand, 1893-1898; Resident Commissioner, Southern Rhodesia, 1898-1905. He was by far the best Resident Commissioner that Rhodesia had. Ramsay MacDonald in Labour and the Empire p.101, held him up as an example of an enlightened native administrator. The Resident Commissionership was an office created under the Order in Council of 1898 which imposed tighter controls on the British South Africa Company administration.

42 Milner to Chamberlain, Oct. 4, 1901. C.O. 417/321.

43 Tel., Milner to Chamberlain, Aug. 8, 1902. He asked that the first paragraph of a despatch be not published. In fact he was too late. C.O.417/345.

44 Lockhart & Woodhouse, op.cit., p.196.

45 H. Wilson Fox, 1863-1921; M.P. (Unionist), North Warwicks, 1917-1921; educ. University College, London, Trinity College, Cambridge, and Lincoln's Inn; editor of South African Mining Journal, 1892; public prosecutor, Rhodesia, 1894; director of transport and commissariat, Mashonaland, 1897; manager, B.S.A.Co., 1898; Director of B.S.A.Co., 1913; Vice President of Royal Geographical Society, Fellow Royal Colonial Institute etc.

46 Memorandum on the Constitutional, Political, Financial and Other Questions concerning Rhodesia (printed for the information of the Board, 1910).
Another (1912).

47 Memo., 1912, p.245.

48 ibid., p.246.

49 Herbert John, Viscount Gladstone, 1854-1930; son of W.E. and his father's private secretary 1880-1881; Liberal whip, 1881-1885; under secretary at the Home Office (1892-1894); First commissioner of Works (1894-1895); Chief Liberal Whip (1899); Home Secretary (1905-1910); First Governor General, South Africa, 1910-1914. "In effect he abandoned Gladstonian liberalism". (D.N.B.)

50 Lewis V. Harcourt, 1863-1922, Son of Sir William Harcourt, little Englander, private secretary to father; First Commissioner of Works, 1905-1910; Colonial Secretary, 1910-1915.

51 Dougal O. Malcolm, 1877-1955; educ. Eton & New College Oxford; Fellow of All Souls (1899); entered the Colonial Office (1900); private secretary to Lord Selborne (High Commissioner in South Africa), 1905-1910; Secretary to Lord Grey in Canada, 1910-1911; joined Treasury, 1912; Director of B.S.A.Co., 1913; President of the Company, from 1937. In 1939 he published a eulogistic account of the exploits of the Company to celebrate the Fiftieth anniversary of the Charter. The British South Africa Company, 1889-1939, (London, 1939).

52 Gladstone to Harcourt, Nov. 13, 1913. C.O. 417/526.

53 All who minuted the above were agreed.

54 Minute on Gladstone to Harcourt, Nov. 20, 1913, C.O. 417/526. The official was Vernon who was commenting on the eviction of Africans from alienated land when they would not pay the grazing fees imposed by the landlord.

55 Gladstone to Harcourt, Nov. 6, 1913, C.O. 417/526.

56 The first man to say that Zimbabwe was of Bantu origin, and not Ethiopian or Carthaginian or any of the other romantic possibilities was Randall-Maciver in Medieval Rhodesia, (London, 1906). He was not believed. In the late twenties the excavations of Miss Caton-Thompson and Miss Kathleen Kenyon established authoritively that the ruins are indeed of Bantu origin. To this day it is very difficult to convince European Rhodesians of this fact.

See G. Caton-Thompson, Zimbabwe Culture,(Oxford, 1931), and K.R. Robinson, R. Summers & A. Whitty, Zimbabwe Excavations, 1958, (Bulawayo, 1961).

57 The problem of Zimbabwe has unpleasant repercussions in Rhodesia under the Smith regime. The grant of the government to the Historical Monuments Commission has recently been reduced, and although the economic condition of the country would appear to justify this, there is also the suspicion among archaeologists that their findings are unpopular simply because they are finding more history for the Africans of Rhodesia than the pioneers ever gave them credit for.

58 J.A. Hobson: Imperialism: a Study (London 1902)

59 A recent excellent collection of documents well illustrates the development of and the attacks upon the theory of capitalist imperialism. D.K. Fieldhouse, The Theory of Capitalist Imperialism, (London, 1967).

60 Hobson, op.cit., p.239.

61 ibid., p.240.

62 ibid., p.243.

63 ibid., p.259.

64 Albert Henry George Grey, Fourth Earl, 1851-1917, nephew of Third Earl (vid. sup.); in House of Commons, 1880-1886; became a liberal unionist; friend of W.T. Stead, who introduced him to Cecil Rhodes, "who impressed him the most of any man that he had known" (D.N.B.); joined Board of B.S.A.Co. in 1889, though Joseph Chamberlain tried to dissuade him; administrator of Rhodesia, 1897; keen to introduce Glen Grey type of measure; Governor General of Canada, 1904-1911.

65 Hobson, op.cit., p.298. Cd. 9345.

66 Hobson, op.cit., p.295.

67 Margaret Olivier, Letters and Selected Writings of Sydney Olivier, (London, 1948). George Bernard Shaw writes "Some Impressions". Sydney Olivier's description (in a fragment of autobiography included in this volume) of the state of the Colonial Office when he entered it in 1882 is as fascinating and illuminating as Sir Henry Taylor's description of the defence of the Colonial Office against the Chartists in 1848 in his Autobiography, pp.35-36.

68 Sydney Olivier, White Capital and Coloured Labour, (London, 1906).

69 Olivier, op.cit., p.82.

70 Cd. 2399.

71 Olivier, op.cit., p.2.

72 ibid., chapters XI, XII and XIII passim.

73 ibid., p.127.

74 ibid., pp.149-151.

75 ibid., p.163.

76 ibid., p.138.

77 J. Ramsay MacDonald, Labour and the Empire, (London, 1907).

78 MacDonald, op.cit., p.18.

79 Joseph Schumpeter, Imperialism and Social Classes, Tubingen, 1919); first English edn., 1951.

80 MacDonald, op.cit., p.27.

81 ibid., p.101.

82 Lord Frederick Dealtry Lugard, 1858-1945; educ. Sandhurst; Afghan War, 1879-1880; Sudan Campaign, 1885; Burma, 1886-1887; Lake Nyasa, 1888; administrator of Uganda, 1889-1892; Royal Niger Company, Borgu Treaties, 1894-1895; Lake Ngami (British West Charterland), 1896-1897; Commissioner, Hinterland, Lagos and Nigeria; High Commissioner & Commander in chief, Northern Nigeria, 1900-1906; Governor, Hong Kong, 1907-1912; Governor, North & South Nigeria, 1912-1913; Governor General, Nigeria, 1914-1919; British member of Mandates Commission at the League of Nations, 1922-1936.

83 Stokes & Brown, op.cit., p.354.

84 ibid.

85 ibid.

86 F.D. Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, (London, 1922). 5th edn. with intro. by Margery Perham, 1965, p.235.

87 ibid., p.423.

88 H.H. Johnston, A History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races, (Cambridge, 1899); 2nd edn., 1913. Sir Harry Hamilton Johnston, 1858-1927; educ. King's College, London & Royal Academy of Arts, 1876-1880; explored North Africa, Portuguese West & River Congo, 1879-1883; scientific expedition to Kilimanjaro, 1884; H.M. Vice-Consul in Cameroons, 1885; acting consul, Niger Coast Protectorate, 1887; Consul, Mozambique, 1888; founding British Central Africa Protectorate, 1889; Commissioner and Consul General, British Central Africa Protectorate, 1889-1896; Consul General, Tunis, 1897-1899; Special Commissioner and Consul General, Uganda, 1899-1901.

89 Johnston, op.cit., 1913 edn., p.445.

90 ibid., p.450.

91 ibid., p.450-451.

CHAPTER 3

THE MOBILISATION OF LABOUR WITHIN RHODESIA

In discussing the beginnings of labour migration in Rhodesia, it is important to remember that both the Shona and the Ndebele peoples had been on the move until comparatively recently. The Shona had been driven North East by the invading Ngoni, and later by the Ndebele, who had themselves been driven northwards from the Transvaal by the Boers. The Ndebele had soon suffered a harrowing succession dispute upon the death of Mzilikazi,[1] and Lobengula was hardly installed before he faced the concession seekers, convinced of a Northern Eldorado long before even the Rand was discovered.

One of the best-known of the early explorer-prospectors was Thomas Baines.[2] He surprisingly proposed that the activities of Europeans could be restricted to advising and trading, that the Ndebele could work the gold for themselves.[3] Clearly there were two fallacies in this idea - in the first place the Ndebele had no experience of mining, unlike the Shona, and secondly they had neither the technological nor capital base on which to conduct mining operations that would satisfy European middle men.

In 1870, a concession was granted to the London and Limpopo Mining Company at Tati, long the subject of dispute among the Ndebele, the Bamangwato, the Boers, and the Imperial Government. It was never very successful and its labour force

was always small. The Company never succeeded in securing its relationship with the Ndebele, and reacted hysterically at the outbreak of hostilities in the Matabele War.[4] But it did show the way, both metaphorically and geographically, (being on the way to Kimberley for the Matabele), to paid labour for Europeans.

Ndebeles were already finding their way to Kimberley during the late 1870s. They took the journey to the mines probably more for communal reasons than personal. A period of labour at the mines had become a means for a man to prove himself, and more important to earn enough cash for a gun or some other trading articles that would benefit his chief and his tribe. Such labour was remote, an experience wholly external to the man's tribal life, and withdrawal was comparatively easy. The table quoted in chapter 2 reveals as many as 120 Ndebele recruits registering at Kimberley in 1884. Ndebele society was divided into three strata: the Zansi, the original Zulus who had departed from Natal under Mzilikazi; the Enhla, peoples who were assimilated on the way North; the Holi, the peoples whose lands they eventually occupied. The Holi outnumbered the other two groups together. It is impossible to discover from which stratum of Ndebele society these men derived, and it is true that many asserted themselves to be Ndebele even when they were not.[5] Lobengula appears to have been anxious to help recruiters at this period, and one

would expect that he would order men from the Holi or Enhla strata of his society to go to work, and not from his regiments.[6]

The first evidence we have of a recruiting expedition is that of Alexander Baillie, sent North by the Griqualand West administration in 1876.[7] His account reveals the Ndebele method one would expect. Lobengula sent out two strong patrols. One returned with twenty four men, but the other was caught by the rains in a sickly part of the country, and so to fulfil his agreement, Lobengula provided Baillie with fifty of his own attendants.

The Ndebele came into contact with labouring in a different way after 1890. When the Pioneer Column made its way into Mashonaland - saved by the restraint of Lobengula - its members had the promised grants of land to look forward to, but it was the gold claims that principally interested them. The long tradition of a Northern Eldorado and the recent gold fever in the Transvaal had seen to that. It was not long before the Ndebele found themselves excluded from raiding and levying tribute from their neighbouring peoples. Indirectly this had been a tribute of labour. These Shona peoples now found themselves exposed to a new form of tribute, a tribute of direct labour for the Europeans who established farms or claims in the vicinity. In the border area around Fort Victoria, there can be little doubt that some at least of

the local Africans accepted labour as a form of protection from their former Ndebele overlords.[8] However, such labourers were just as liable to flee to their granite kopjes at the slightest hint of the arrival of an Ndebele impi.[9]

This early Chartered period is extraordinary in many ways. The Colonial Office positively went out of its way to avoid responsibility. When a petition from the settlers - an early example of settler-Company friction - was forwarded to the Colonial Office by Labouchere, Knutsford, the Secretary of State, declared that he could not involve himself in the Company's ordinances.[10] Moreover the Colonial Office had refused to appoint a Resident in the chartered territory.[11] The first real administrator,[12] Jameson, acted - to put it in the words of a Colonial Office official in 1897 - as a beneficent despot.[13] It is hardly surprising then that the early labour policy should be entirely haphazard. The Company made its own ordinances, and supplemented them with extra-legal administrative activity. Pioneers staked out their grants of three thousand acres and made informal agreements with the inhabitants of any African villages that happened to lie upon them. The Company swiftly seized upon two well-established labour practices - locations near towns strictly controlled for African migrants only, and the stimulant of taxation.

It is clear from the Company's Salisbury Native Rules and Regulations of 1892[14] that we are already encountering

the security provisons that were the basis of labour policy in the provinces and states to the South. On February 22nd, 1892, notice was given that an office for the registration and protection of servants and natives had been established in Salisbury; that Mr. Garrett Doyle had been appointed Registrar of Natives, and that rules and regulations would be strictly enforced. On September 26th of the same year rules and regulations were posted which claimed to create a balance between the protection of Africans and of their employers. All Africans seeking work in Salisbury had to report to the Registrar to secure a pass permitting them to remain in Salisbury a certain number of days. If an African were found in the township without a pass or a contract of labour, he could be fined by the magistrate £1 or given 14 days imprisonment with or without hard labour. The employees required a written pass to be outside the location between the hours of 9.0 p.m. and daylight, subject to a penalty of £2 and/ or 14 days imprisonment. The Registrar of Natives was to assist Africans in finding employment and "to aid, advise and protect them", his activities being financed by a stamp of one shilling for each month of labour covered by the contract. These provisions "for the better protection of native labourers and for the suppression of vagrancy within the limits of certain townships" were incorporated in the Registration of Natives Regulations of 1895, which extended their operation to

Bulawayo, Umtali, Fort Victoria, Gwelo, as well as Salisbury.[15]

While the protection of African servants and labourers is stressed, it is clear that the township pass system and the curfew were designed to protect the European inhabitants. Moreover, there appears to be no provision whatever for wives and families and for visits to and from the location. The principle is clearly laid down that the location is to be the temporary abode of an employee who is bound to leave on the date specified by his pass or by his contract. At Umtali, for example, the police were described as over-zealous. They had begun to arrest Africans before they had time to reach the native commissioner's office and obtain a pass.[16] This had an adverse effect on the supply of labour in the town.

Secondly, the Company took up a taxation policy. In the National Archives of Rhodesia, there is a record of an interesting conversation between Rhodes and Jameson on taxation, a conversation that took place on May 15, 1892:

> Mr. Rhodes: As my suggestion, please consider we are strong enough to put on a hut tax for the following reasons - we don't sell liquor to the natives, and they must be choke full of beads and calico. The result is a steady drain on any gold in the country, which is either buried or taken to the Portuguese to buy liquor with. A hut tax taking money, produce or labour will at any rate save us some of our gold carted out of the country; the only doubt is whether we are strong enough.
> Dr. Jameson: I quite agree, and I am sure we are strong enough. The only difficulty will be the collection.....[17]

The labour motive is here conspicuous by its absence, but

it was not to remain so for long.

When the Company did set about a taxation policy, it created a draft ordinance at a singularly unpropitious time, the middle of the Matabele War.[18] This ordinance was of course intended for Mashonaland only, and the Company attempted to move with considerable haste. The Colonial Office, however, refused to be hurried. When the Company made fresh efforts in July of 1893,[19] the need for settled industry and for inducements to go to work were explicitly mentioned. The ordinance was postponed until the following year, and Rhodes impatiently gave orders for the tax to be collected before the Colonial Office had actually given its assent.

This was typical of Rhodes, but the whole issue is most interesting from the point of view of the Colonial Office reaction. It marks the temporary victory of a Company faction within the Colonial Office. When the tax had originally been proposed, Sydney Olivier, true to his socialist beliefs, and flying in the face of Colonial Office as well as Company policy, wrote:

> The further concession they desire is a concession of forced labour. They employ the Pecksniffian argument with which we are so familiar in South Africa, that it is the holy mission of the white man to teach the native habits of settled industry: the industry, bien entendu, being always contemplated under the form of wage labour for the white man in the mines or on the land which he cannot work for himself.[20]

They want to kill two birds with one stone, he went on - expropriate the land, starve the natives into working for the white expropriator on their own former property. His superior, Edward Fairfield, produced all the conventional arguments on the benefits of taxation and labour.[21] But in 1894, Fairfield was prepared to go further. While admitting that the Company's administration had been collecting tax wholly illegally, he advised that it would be better not to quarrel with the Company over the issue.[22] Rhodes had "squared"yet another useful contact. Fairfield did in fact conduct a private correspondence with Bourcher Hawksley, the Company's solicitor in London, who was to loom large in the Jameson Raid. In July of 1893, Fairfield had written

> My dear Hawksley,
> In re. the hut tax, you will have an answer in a day or two, not closing the door of hope, or damning the tax eternally, but pointing out that as Lendy and the Matabele have been unhappily corrupted by the example of the House of Commons and taken to banging one another about, this is hardly the moment to proceed with the consideration of the subject, <u>inter annos leges (fiscales) silent</u>.
>
> Rhodes' argument that the necessity of paying the tax will compel the Mashonas to work for the mining companies is all well enough in a Stock Exchange Luncheon Room, but it is hardly a <u>Parliamentary</u> argument.....[23]

Taxation to stimulate labour had indeed been a parliamentary argument in the past, and by the end of the century it was to be one again.

During the years of the uneasy truce in Rhodesia before the Matabele War, the Company probably had hopes that the Ndebele would fragment as a result of labour migration.[24] Labour migration would attract young warriors anxious to acquire the trading goods that had been exhibited in Matabeleland for decades. The residue would be a broken tribal system and an ineffective warrior remnant. But demand was neither so great nor conditions sufficiently attractive for this vision to be in any way realistic. In any case there were sufficient Holi peoples to satisfy early demand in Rhodesia and even in Kimberley and the Transvaal.

The conclusion of the Matabele War saw the extension of the Company's irregular policies to Matabeleland. The settler combatants had been enticed, like the pioneers, with promises of grants of land - this time 3,000 morgen or about 6,000 acres. The Company was anxious also to extend its taxation, though the Colonial Office insisted that reserves should first be set up, and were duly placated by the Shangani and Gwaai reserves, even although these were totally inadequate in terms of water and soil resources. By and large the Ndebele stayed put. Jameson's agreement with the indunas after the War was relatively liberal, and one of the conditions imposed was that the chiefs should send their men out to work.[25]

Out of town, labour was simply exacted by owners of land or claims from the Africans who happened to live on their

concessions. This practice was to a certain extent regulated by the High Commissioner's proclamation No. 14 of 1896. Not less than seven heads of families could be established as a private location, and rent could be levied after the first year if the Chief Native Commissioner were satisfied that there was sufficient land for all, except those leaving as labour-migrants.[26] But the proclamation was purely permissive, and throughout Mashonaland and Matabeleland there were other informal, extra-legal arrangements. The South African Native Affairs Commission of Enquiry of 1905[27] declared that as unalienated land was disposed of, the Africans on it were "left to make the best terms they could with the owners and are generally permitted to remain upon condition of paying rent, furnishing labour, or both".[28] These arrangements clearly had obvious benefits for the labour-hungry settlers, and in effect created tiny reservoirs of labour attached to each European enterprise, a concept that would probably have appealed to the third Earl Grey. But it was to create problems and abuses.

Throughout this early period mines were as scattered as the farms. In the first place, concessions for the pioneers or for those participating in the Victoria Agreement[29] had of course been on an individual basis. Secondly, the gold deposits had turned out to be extremely scattered. There certainly was no reef in Rhodesia as on the Rand. Hence the

country was much more favourable to the small man, and prospectors always had the hope of fresh discoveries. Although the Chartered Company insisted on the flotation of companies for the exploitation of the gold, enterprises remained extremely small until the early years of the twentieth century. Since claims were usually associated with the grant or purchase of a large tract of land, mines in the early years supplied themselves with labour very much as the farms did. In other words the assumption in this period was that European enterprise, whether mining or farming, could simply be superimposed on the existing pattern of African kraals, and labour exacted in return for the right to continue working a portion of the land.

This assumption ignored however a number of important considerations. Firstly, enterprises would not remain so small that such a labour policy would continue to be feasible. Secondly the imperial government would insist on the creation of reserves. Thirdly, villages were not static, but were accustomed to move on when the soil became exhausted. Fourthly the absence of traditional raiding for cattle, the official sanction for the custom of lobolo,[30] and the creation of new markets, would all lead to a vast increase in African stock, which would soon become a "nuisance" to European farmers. And fifthly, increasing labour migration would deplete the number of potential labourers for the land or mine owner. Eventually,

indeed, those people whose kraals were near to a mine were the last people to go to work there, simply because they were able to make an adequate living selling their produce or providing other services.[31]

Elsewhere, the native commissioners simply instructed the headmen to turn out some labour. Whether or not this was forced labour became the great question when the Company was faced with the rebellions not only of the Ndebele but also of the Shona, and the Imperial Government set about investigating its causes. The debate about whether or not there was forced labour is however something of a red herring. It is, as some one in the Colonial Office said, largely a matter of definition, and whatever was the nature of the physical compulsion, there was compulsion of an indirect type throughout the period - taxation, evictions from land, compulsion by headmen or fathers anxious for cash. Forced labour was found to be one of the causes of the rebellions by Sir Richard Martin,[32] and it was a sufficiently emotive subject to be a useful tool in the hands of the Company's enemies. Certainly it existed in one form or another, but it was just one of several causes, and by no means the most important. The rinderpest killings, the tyranny of the African police, the sense of being conquered peoples, and above all the tremendous influence of the tribal religious authorities,[33] were more important.

What is surprising is that the Company and contemporary observers were so unaware of what was coming. One writer, E.F. Knight,[34] gave a glowing and optimistic account of a visit to Rhodesia in 1894. He contrasted the pre-Matabele War period with the period of his visit. Then the Shona had frequently fled to their granite kopjes to escape the raiding Matabele. Now they had come down to the plains, and were even inhabiting the former No Man's Land between the Matabele and the Mashona.

> In Mashonaland there is now no difficulty in obtaining a sufficiency of that cheap and efficient native labour without which the land, despite all its natural wealth, would remain a wilderness.[35]

He felt that the swiftness with which the administration had been restored after the war was remarkable. He was opposed to the establishment of reserves, arguing that the then current system of permitting kraals to remain scattered amongst the white population would be the most productive of labour. He attacked the notion that there was any forced labour in Rhodesia and insisted that indunas were simply induced to supply voluntary labour. In July of 1894, just a few months after the War, 800 Ndebele entered Bulawayo to work on the brickfields and in other capacities. But he feared that there was a danger of the natives becoming too rich, so prejudicing their will to work.[36]

Knight's view of Rhodesia in 1894 reveals a large number

of attitudes that must have been present among the settlers. They had achieved what they wanted, the destruction of the Ndebele nation and army; they had a considerable optimism about the future now that they were no longer menaced by a warrior power.

This euphoria was just possible in 1894, but it is surprising that the administration was so unaware of the rebellions that were to come almost until they broke out. F.C. Selous, the explorer and hunter who had guided the pioneer column up to the Mashonaland plateau, wrote of the rumblings before the storm in Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia (1896).[37] As Knight had done, he praised the magnanimity of the settlement after the war. The Ndebele were permitted to go on occupying their lands, and most of their indunas were left in power provided that they supplied through the native commissioners labourers for the farms and mines. These labour "regulations", Selous went on, proved extremely irksome to the Ndebele because they were so indolent, with the result that African police were sent to the kraals to see to it that labourers were sent out, "and these policemen, I fear, sometimes exceeded their duties, and used their position to tyrannise over the people".[38] An induna, Umlugulu, who had been one of Lobengula's indunas, complained to him of the trouble caused by the African police.

There was undoubtedly and inevitably strain between the

Ndebele and the Shona in the early period. Before the Matabele War, we have seen that the peoples around Fort Victoria several times sought refuge from the Ndebele impi either by joining the Europeans or by fleeing to their granite kopjes. This antagonism did not die overnight, particularly when it was exacerbated by European ideas of equality before the law. However the rebellions revealed the way in which both Ndebele and Shona could combine in the common object of casting out the Europeans, influenced as they were by the religious authorities which the Ndebele had largely taken over from the Shona.[39]

There is evidence also that early strain in labour relations was caused by the divisions within Ndebele society. The privileges of a warrior class died hard. H.C. Thomson in his Rhodesia and its Government, normally extremely hostile to the Company, explained that the forced labour between the Matabele War and the rebellions was partly an attempt on the part of the administration to equalise Ndebele society and stamp out indigenous slavery.[40] The Zansi class had, according to him, been using the Holi and the Enhla to earn their tax for them. There is very little other evidence for this, but there is no reason to disbelieve Thomson, and it is certainly true that the Ndebele system was quite a rigid caste system, and inter-marriage for instance was discouraged until comparatively recently.[41] So it would probably be surprising

if such social strains had not existed.

An early tradition of labour migration from outside had been set up in the realm of domestic labour. Domestic servants were recruited from the Cape and Natal, from Portuguese East Africa, the British Central Africa Protectorate, and even from as far away as Kenya and Uganda.[42] These aliens were sometimes resented by the indigenous Africans, particularly when - as with those from the Cape - they received much higher wages.[43] A considerable number of Cape Africans had been recruited for the Pioneer Column, and not unnaturally received the best jobs.

At first the hut tax had not been too onerous. The native commissioners had accepted stock or produce during the first year, a form of tribute that was quite familiar. In 1895 however, the Chief Native Commissioner proposed that the profits from the sale of stock (usually to the white market) should accrue to the native department rather than be accredited to the village that had supplied them, so that the African taxpayers would realise the very real disadvantage in handing over stock and grain rather than cash.[44] At least one native commissioner reported that this policy was highly successful in inducing Africans to go out to work.[45] On the other hand, taxation did not arrive in every part of the country at once. It was not until after the rebellions that tax was levied on some of the northern areas of the country,

near the Zambezi Valley.[46]

Lewis Gann has pointed out that the small and pioneering nature of the native administration meant that officers were frequently moved around.[47] They had thus little chance of becoming truly cognisant with the peoples of any one district. Moreover, many of the early officers of the native administration were of indifferent quality. They frequently had little or no administrative experience. One for example had been a trooper in the pioneer corps, and then a trader before becoming a field cornet and later a native commissioner.[48] Their English in the early handwritten reports[49] is often poor - the Chief Native Commissioner frequently made spelling and grammatical corrections in red ink - and they ignored specific instructions from the Chief Native Commissioner as to policy, the arrangement of their reports, and so on. Of course, Company posts of this nature did not have the prestige nor the security of imperial appointments; the country was still unsettled and hardly developed at all; and many of the native commissioners were to lose their lives in the "rebellions" of 1896 and 1897. But even while the rebellions were in progress, native commissioners continued to display an unsympathetic arrogance and an exaggerated duty to turn out labour. One wrote (referring to the method used of attacking the Shona in their granite kopje strongholds), "the Mashonas express their great

objection of (sic) being dynamited";[50] another, "I have just received an order from Mr. Baden for a hundred mine boys and am collecting them";[51] and a little later another wrote, "It seems to be feared that the rate of pay could not be brought down again owing to some supposed peculiarities of the native mind".[52]

The answers of the native commissioners of Mashonaland to a circular issued by the Chief Native Commissioner in 1895 are very revealing. This circular enquired about the native commissioners' views on labour and the necessity to introduce legislation to regulate the same. The six replies (from Charter, Hartley, Marondellas, Salisbury town, Salisbury district, and Umtali) all unreservedly supported forced labour.[53] They produced various schemes for the operation of a quota system of extracting labourers from each kraal, taken out for periods of three months at a time, and returned in place of another batch; there should be a tax or punishment (preferably corporal) on those who did not comply; there should be more police to chase up deserters; kraals were becoming too scattered because of the new-found security, and ought to be centralised in a location where they could be better supervised; there should be a register of all labourers. One made it clear that he was actually attempting such a policy in his district. Only two felt that there ought to be some improvements in the conditions at the places

of work, and singled out the practice of employers flogging their labourers as a current abuse.

In 1898, so soon after the end of the "rebellions", the old labour recruiting methods are still in evidence. Some of the flavour of these activities can be derived from the rather lurid quarterly reports of the native commissioners of that year. They still talk of "collecting", of "forwarding" and of "delivering". All 76 labourers delivered to the Confidence Reef mine early in that year ran away; 38 were "sent back". In Victoria, "pressure" was brought to bear on account of arrears in tax. But at the same time the native commissioner reported that labour migration was getting a bad name because of the numbers who died en route.[54]

As might be expected from such a raw administration labour policy was by no means uniform in this early period. But the basic points of a colonial labour policy had already emerged. Direct taxation was the cornerstone of the policy of stimulants. As Knight reveals, the dispute between those who desired reserves for the Africans and those who preferred at least territorial integration had been joined. As a quid pro quo for the Matabeleland taxation, the Colonial Office had insisted on the establishment of reserves, even if, in the absence of any adequate supervision, they were to be totally unsuitable as the Gwaai and Shangani reserves were. The Company pursued very much its own policy. There was no

imperial officer on the spot. The High Commissioner in South Africa was a remote and hardly effective figure. Conditions may have remained so had not the Jameson Raid and the Ndebele and Shona rebellions produced a massive attack on the Company's Charter, the Martin Report on the Company's Native Administration, and the need for the Colonial Office to bail the Company out, in Rhodesia in the shape of imperial troops, and in London, support for the continuation of the Charter.

Subsequently, the mobilisation of labour became a more complex and a more controlled operation. But while the dual economy developed, the principles by which labour might be legitimately mobilised became a continuing dispute.

One of the best known documents in Rhodesian history is Sir Richard Martin's Report on the Native Administration of the British South Africa Company, 1897.[55] Its findings on, inter alia, the question of forced labour, are so well-known that it is unnecessary to deal with them at any length here.[56] Its importance lies in three factors - the nature of the reception it was accorded in the Colonial Office, the deep distrust of officials of the native department that it engendered there, and the distinction it continued to make between indirect and direct means of compulsion.

Needless to say, the Company expressed self-righteous shock at the findings of the new commandant general and deputy

commissioner, and they made every attempt to delay Chamberlain in presenting it to Parliament and to the Select Committee on the British South Africa Company then meeting.[57] The Colonial Office promptly introduced two problems of definition - whether or not the Company or its officials were at fault, and at what point forced labour ceased to be forced labour.[58] Lord Grey produced an extended reply to Martin's Report,[59] which was in fact favourably received by Chamberlain, although his own officials were by no means so convinced. Of course, by the very nature of the subject, it was as possible to produce a corpus of evidence denying the existence of forced labour as it was to discover a body supporting it. Chamberlain indeed felt that Martin had not made sufficient allowances, and went so far as to assert that some form of forced labour was necessary to the spread of civilisation in Africa.[60] "Sir Richard Martin has been too unbending, but his report should not be belittled or thrown over", was the reply of one of the Company's most vigorous critics, Hartmann Just.[61] The furthest Mr. Chamberlain should go, Just went on, was to agree that encouragement to labour by hut tax was necessary for the natives' civilization.[62] It is evident from this that because of Chamberlain's outright support for the Company - particularly in the shape of the honest and charismatic Grey - the Colonial Office officials had, in order to restrain the Secretary of State, to move

closer to his position. So far as the forced labour issue is concerned, about which so much paper and argument was wasted, one has sympathies with another official, Frederick Graham, who wrote "The matter is now merely of academic interest".[63]

While the new constitutional formula was being evolved, the officials followed their natural propensity to attack the Company; Edward Fairfield, the Board's most faithful supporter, died when they most needed him. The attacks were directed against the whole South African basis of the Company:

> "Mr. Hawksley is the Company in London, as Mr. Rhodes is in Africa, and a pretty mess they have made of it. The most urgent reforms required are to place Mr. Rhodes under control, and to so constitute the London Board as to make it something more than a mere machine to register the dicta on complicated administrative questions of a man whose function is to advise on legal technicalities."[64]

Of course, the Charter was safe. The usual glib reasons of Treasury parsimony and Chamberlain's own implication in the Jameson Raid are plausible enough. But there was a more fundamental reason, which Milner expressed in a letter to H.H. Asquith:[65] that nothing would unite Boer and Briton more effectively against the imperial authorities than if they took a strong line against the Company "for the protection of the Blacks". "This is the whole crux of the South African position."[66] (It is interesting to consider to what extent the Transvaal felt less outflanked by a commercial rather than an imperial interest, even when that commercial

interest had instigated a violation of its territory.) Milner expressed the hope of being able to maintain a humane and progressive system in Rhodesia with the control he had over the administration.

> The great thing here is to secure the appointment of honourable and capable men as magistrates and native commissioners. If that can be done, I think the lot of the natives may be a very tolerable one and that even a system of compulsory labour indeed, under fair conditions and proper safeguards, may be turned to their advantage.[67]

These are the two basic clues to the future of labour mobilisation in Rhodesia. Rhodesia's future lay administratively, commercially, and ultimately politically with the rest of southern Africa, despite the fact that she would have an independent link with the Indian Ocean in the not-too-distant future. The Charter had to remain in being because it suited Milner's South African policies. The future of Rhodesian Africans was obscured as effectively as that of their cousins in the South by the Boer-Briton dispute. Milner's second assertion that the principal labour safeguard ought to lie simply in a corps of able magistrates and native commissioners was to create, by the Colonial Office's unwillingness to accept it, the most contentious and obscurantist issue amongst the various parties, Africans, settlers, Company, High Commissioners and Colonial Office. The Colonial Office was to insist instead on a somewhat unreal exclusion of native

commissioners from the whole business of labour recruitment.

The Boer War had a very considerable effect on the development of labour policy in Rhodesia. It held up for several years the definition and the execution of the Colonial Office attitude. Naturally, Milner, faced with war and the culmination of his South African policies, could only regard Rhodesia as a minor fringe problem during these years. Reports of the Resident Commissioner (a post set up by the new Order-in-Council of 1898) had to run the gauntlet of the High Commissioner's over-worked office, and this meant either delay, or as on one notorious occasion, loss for over a year.[68]

The role of native commissioners in the recruiting of labour was to bedevil policy throughout our period. The ill-repute earned by the native commissioners before the 1897/1898 reconstruction resulted in a Colonial Office insistence that labour recruiting ought to be in the hands of an independent labour bureau, despite the fact that the newly-appointed Resident Commissioner (whom Chamberlain described in a traditional phrase as his "eyes and ears") now had access to all native commissioners' reports. Just such labour bureaux were set up in 1898 and 1899 when Mashonaland and Matabeleland each received a labour board. These had however little effect on the activities of native commissioners, who continued to play an active part in recruitment, and indeed

the Mashonaland board had no recruiting agents at all, being solely concerned with distribution.[69] The work of the boards was sabotaged by the facts that their tariffs were not adhered to, and that there was continuing competition between the two provinces.

The labour supply and demand fluctuated violently in these closing years of the century. In 1898, two mines had to close for lack of labour,[70] although the Resident Commissioner was later to imply that the mines often closed for other reasons and used the labour supply as a scapegoat.[71] In 1899, on the other hand, the native department insisted on the hut tax being paid in July, and refused to give a period of grace as had been the practice hitherto.[72] The result was a glut of labour: a large proportion of the intending labourers had to be sent home, and within a very short time there was a renewed labour famine. Conditions remained exceptionally poor at the mines, and those which offered better pay, better food, or slightly better treatment had no difficulty in obtaining labour.[73]

Meanwhile, Colonial Office suspicions had again been aroused by the activities of the two Chief Native Commissioners, Taylor and Taberer, in a whole series of indabas they held in the course of 1899.[74] These indabas were held with a considerable show of European power: local Europeans, native commissioners, missionaries, police were present. In

Mashonaland, the Bishop of Mashonaland and a detachment of fifty mounted British South Africa Police took part. In Matabeleland, the recruiting agents of the new labour board were introduced to the assembled headmen. In their addresses to these indabas the Chief Native Commissioners insisted that it was the duty of the people to go out to work, that other peoples like the Fingoes (a Cape Bantu tribe who were currently being settled in the Bembezi district under an agreement with Rhodes) would come in and take their land, that Mr. Rhodes would be very angry with them, that it was a white man's country and that the Africans had to work like white men, that the local reserve would be taken from them if they did not work, and that although there would be no force used, it would be the indunas' duty to turn out labour. At each indaba there was stress on the idea of batches of men going out to work for three months at a time. In one district, Taylor asked how would they like it if he were to send the police and messengers around the kraals to turn people out to work.

The assembled headmen were far from inarticulate at these meetings. On two occasions (at Insiza and Bubi) headmen expressed bewilderment that they were told in one breath there would be no forced labour, and in the next that they would have to turn out labour. There were complaints also of poor wages, of injuries and deaths at the mines, that

there were not enough men left to work the land, of the fact that bureau recruits earned less than those recruited independently, that "boys" from the Cape received much higher wages, that they were sometimes sent back when there was no work for them. They resented also the fact that the administrators attacked those parts of their custom, such as witchcraft and certain beer and dance festivals, to which they objected, but upheld other parts such as lobolo, which served their purposes. Taylor announced that fathers-in-law should insist on receiving lobolo for their daughters. It will become clear later why there was this insistence on lobolo.

The reports of these indabas caused the biggest stir in the Colonial Office since the Martin Report. The officials referred to Chamberlain's insistence to Rosmead (then High Commissioner) in 1896, that labour was not to be extorted through indunas as this smacked of forced labour. And the Secretary of State himself wrote that the Chief Native Commissioners' inducements were "directly calculated to lead to forced labour".[75] The Colonial Office brushed aside the attempts of the Company and of Taylor to defend the indabas.[76] Taylor insisted that it was necessary to act in this way in order to uphold the authority of the indunas, and referred to the decline in labour recruitment during the past year, and the ineffectiveness of the low hut tax in getting men out to work.

The Colonial Office continued to send some of its sharpest letters to the Company, insisting that the draft native regulations would have to be forwarded before they were produced as a fait accompli in the Legislative Council (also set up by the 1898 Order-in-Council), that some alternative on the lines of the Cape Glen Grey Act[77] would have to be found, and refusing to accept the Board's excuse that it was too busy.[78] If any further evidence were needed to confirm the Colonial Office in its suspicion of the native department and in its continuing conviction in the need for an independent recruiting organisation, this was it.

In 1901, the Resident Commissioner, Sir Marshall Clarke began to play an important part in the Company-Colonial Office debate. A whole series of reports arrived from him during this year, many of which had been held up for a considerable period in the High Commissioner's office. Clarke felt that in the case of ill-treatment, it was easier for labourers to desert than to apply for redress to the official who had recruited them. He reported that "the duties of the native commissioners to induce the natives to work and afterwards to collect taxes from their wages unwillingly earned, make their position difficult and detracts from their influence".[79] He went on to take up the attitude that the only true inducement to labour was the development of "legitimate wants", that tax was an unsatisfactory way of getting people out to work, and

that he disapproved of any application of the Glen Grey Act.[80] This was a more "liberal" attitude than even the Colonial Office was willing to take up. But his most damning piece of information was that "pressure little short of force" had again been used by the native commissioners in the recruiting of labour.

The Colonial Office set about a tighter reining in of the Company on the labour issue than had ever been exerted before. The Company was informed that in future recruiting within the country had to be on an independent basis, but on an official basis outside (in fact this distinction never really operated);[81] that if the native commissioners did not behave, they would have to be appointed by the High Commissioner and be directly responsible to him, though paid by the Company; that "a state of things which has been tolerated too long cannot and will not be allowed to continue".[82] The Company reacted with considerable pique.[83]

Meanwhile there had already been further half-hearted attempts to set up a new labour supply association, but these had been thwarted by inter-provincial rivalry,[84] and when a new labour board was eventually set up, it lasted hardly more than a year from its inauguration on July 1st 1900.[85] The whole situation was greatly blurred by the fact that the Colonial Office was acting upon reports of the Resident Commissioner that were months or even over a year old. Imperial

impotence was revealed when, just as a sterner line was being taken with the Company, native commissioners had again to be used for recruiting because of the failure of the 1900 board. Sir Marshall Clarke, to the annoyance of the Colonial Office, appeared to indulge in a volte face by declaring that in the establishment of a labour bureau the Company was simply being permitted to shuffle off complete responsibility from itself on to a quasi-independent board dependent for its success on government officials.[86] His judgment was, however, as will be shown below, as shrewd as it usually was.

Milner supported the Company in its predicament by telegraphing on the veto on official activity

> We must not ride the principle to death in ignorance or in disregard of local circumstances..... We must not go too far ahead of colonial sentiment and lead them to suppose we are sacrificing their substantial interests for the sake of a hard and fast rule.[87]

Sir Marshall Clarke acquiesced in the instructions to the native commissioners that they were only to make requirements known and register recruits who presented themselves.[88] He eventually had to agree also that in collecting tax, the native commissioners would have to inform those who could not pay that labour was available in other districts.[89] They had still not escaped the basic problem of semantics, what constituted direct or indirect pressure.[90]

That remarkable asset of the Company, Albert, fourth Earl

Grey, was able again to tide the Company over, and by private communication with Joseph Chamberlain, persuade the Colonial Office to agree to this interim arrangement.[91] The Company pleaded that the business community was not yet sophisticated enough to sustain a truly independent labour bureau,[92] and miners and farmers combined for once to attack the Colonial Office for meddling in what they regarded as the perfectly legitimate work of the native commissioners.[93] The President of the Chamber of Mines in his address to the Annual Meeting in 1902[94] was able to make a good case for the reintroduction of more strict government control in recruiting in view of the reappearance of the private labour "touts", concerned only with numbers and capitation fees, who had been such a bane in the early period. But his pleas for the greater protection of Africans were not unnaturally regarded within the Colonial Office as special pleading.

Two new labour bureaux were in fact to be set up before 1914. While they lasted longer than their predecessors, they experienced precisely the same difficulties. First and foremost, they failed utterly to break the seasonal cycle of labour so familiar throughout Africa. When labour was plentiful after the harvest, the mines could supply themselves adequately from independent private recruitment, and the bureau was left with its recruits on its hands, and since it was too expensive to keep these recruits in the depots,

they were sent home or forwarded to the Rand.[95] When the seasonal shortage occurred, the bureau had no recruits like everyone else. The bureaux contributed to the jealousy between the various communities in Rhodesia: between Bulawayo and Salisbury, which had swiftly established an inter-city acerbity, between the larger and the smaller mines, and between the miners and the farmers.

The Labour Fees Ordinance of 1906 (which imposed a tax of one shilling per month on all labourers, regardless of whether bureau recruits or not, levied on the mineowners in order to help finance the bureau) antagonised a number of mines who felt that the bureau was an organised charity for supplying labour to poorer, less well-organised mines. The mines were moreover disappointed with the standard of recruit the bureau sent, for experienced and healthier recruits preferred to travel independently. Moreover, it was well-known that dishonest mines applied for more labourers than they required in the hope of getting the right number when scarcity prompted the imposition of a strict quota system.[96]

So far as the farmers were concerned the bureau was constantly suspected of being virtually a mining preserve. The capitation fees were too high for the farmers. When the Labour Tax Ordinance of 1911 was passed (a similar measure to that of 1906 except that it was imposed on the farmers also) they indulged in widespread refusal to pay.

Several were fined or sent to prison before the ordinance was repealed. Finance was indeed the never-ending worry of the various bureaux. The stipulations that were laid down by the imperial authorities with regard to medical examinations, food, clothing, transport, acclimatisation in depots and so on, cost more money than the bureaux were ever able to afford or raise in capitation fees. The setting up of great chains of rest houses, a day's march apart, was another immense capital cost. (These regulations will be reviewed in a later chapter.)

Above all, the bureaux were extremely unpopular amongst the Africans themselves. They disliked the loss of freedom implied in the bureaux' shunting of them around; they disliked being sent to mines that were unpopular, being separated from their friends; the bureaux African employees frequently came into disrepute; and labourers found that bureau recruits invariably received a lower wage at the mines than those who had presented themselves independently.[97] Moreover, the ticket or coupon system of payment, used throughout the mines, was very unpopular, and militated against labour recruitment. Under this system, the African labourer was paid not by the calendar month, but by the number of shifts he completed, thirty shifts or endorsements on his ticket being the usual number. This was clearly open to abuses, and in addition gave a completely misleading impression about wage rates to

the Colonial Office, where it was widely assumed that a completed ticket amounted to one month's labour. In fact, it could be much more. The Chief Native Commissioner attacked this system,[98] recognising its dangers, but neither the native department nor the bureaux succeeded in destroying it.

There was another immense problem in the Colonial Office's insistence on this policy. And that is to what extent the bureaux were genuinely independent and successfully excluded the members of the native department from recruiting. At the beginning, the board did so not at all. In the longer-lasting bureaux it is still questionable whether the native department was excluded. Both in 1899 and in 1903, native commissioners became general managers of labour bureaux;[99] some of the agents were recruited from the native department (five in 1899); the Chief Native Commissioners and other Company officials (such as mining officials) were on the boards of the bureaux. The 1903 bureau was empowered to arrange for recruiting agreements with the British Central African Protectorate, Portuguese East Africa, and the Transvaal. It is here that the ultimate irony emerges. The idea that the bureaux were independent concerns merely under goverment supervision was a fiction. The bureau of 1903 was, despite its public share issue, virtually a department of the administration in terms of personnel and of policy control.

But other administrations, such as that of Nyasaland, actually refused to deal with it because it was not an agency of the Rhodesian administration. Native commissioners continued to collaborate with its agents, and indeed its agents frequently acted as pass officers for the issue of permits to go to work.[100] While this covert collaboration went on, the Administrator, Sir William Milton, determined to placate the Colonial Office on the issue. When a Rhodesian committee appointed to enquire into native labour reported in 1906, it recommended that the native commissioners should again be permitted to do the recruiting, but Milton scotched the idea at once.[101] Yet the bureau's unpopularity and difficulties were such that toward the end of its life, it ceased to recruit in Rhodesia all together, and began to concentrate on the Company's vast estate and reservoir in the North, leaving the South to independent recruiting, and, presumably to native commissioner "influence". In 1908, the Company administration had taken over the recruiting operations in Northern Rhodesia,[102] leaving the bureau to operate in Southern Rhodesia only. But in 1912, the new bureau set up in that year, operated only in Northern Rhodesia.

While the various labour bureaux were succeeding in alienating most sectors of Rhodesian society, black and white, the Company was of course continuing its policy of stimulants. We have seen that in the indabas of 1899, the Chief Native

Commissioners set out to persuade Africans to insist on lobolo. This was eventually given statutory expression in the Native Marriages Ordinance of 1901. There is no question that a further stimulant to labour was one of the principal considerations behind this ordinance. The Administrator said so in a despatch to the Resident Commissioner,[103] although he pointed out that there were the additional reasons of avoiding contentious litigation with regard to forced marriages, infant betrothal and so on. Lobolo was made compulsory, except for Christian marriages, and limits were set on the number of cattle that could be transferred. The Colonial Office pointed out that the custom of lobolo, though universal in Mashonaland, was not universal throughout Matabeleland, and had indeed died out in some places.[104] But the High Commissioner telegraphed that the administration could reserve powers of suspension in certain districts.[105]

The missionaries had of course opposed lobolo for a long time, failing to see that it had precisely the moral effects they would have desired. There is an interesting missionary reaction in the Zambezi Mission Record, the magazine of the Jesuit Mission in Central Africa. Father Richartz of the Chishawasha Mission wrote that whenever the boys left school, the "pernicious custom of lobolo" lured them off to town to earn more wages than they could possibly earn at the mission. And there they relapsed into paganism.[106]

Discussion on the raising of the hut tax continued over a considerable number of years. But the Colonial Office made any increase conditional upon the formal settlement of reserves. Under the 1898 Order-in-Council, the native commissioners were simply authorised to set aside such land as they deemed necessary for the needs of the natives in their districts. The result was a completely confused and heterogeneous policy. Some native commissioners set aside vast tracts of land, suitable and unsuitable; others allocated small reserves scattered throughout their districts - again reminiscent of the policy of the third Earl Grey. When lists of reserves were submitted to the Colonial Office in June of 1901, officials were able to detect certain chopping and changing from previous lists.[107] Description and surveying were usually inadequate, and Sir Hartmann Just concluded that "this is very unsatisfactory".[108] In 1903, the Colonial Office received information that land on reserves was being alienated to private farmers,[109] which served to accentuate the Colonial Office's disquiet at a time when the Secretary of State was about to give approval to a tax increase.

The Company did however proceed with its attempted adaptation of the Glen Grey Act (which involved remission of tax for work done). But since the Glen Grey Act had encompassed at the same time another important principle, sale of land to Africans by quit rent, which was not going to be included in

the Rhodesian ordinance, the Glen Grey provisions were not acceptable to the Colonial Office.

The amount mooted for the increased tax was £2. A deputation consisting of the President of the Chamber of Mines, the President of the Rhodesian Farmers' and Landowners' Association, the President of the Bulawayo Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the Legislative Council, went to see Milner in Johannesburg in January of 1903. They demanded a tax of £4, an increase of 700 per cent. Milner informed that he was willing to consider a tax of £2, which was the same as the Transvaal tax, for he felt "legislation for the colonies should not be entirely guided by home sentiment".[110] Having taken up this position, Milner stubbornly adhered to it, even after the Resident Commissioner had decided that a £2 tax was excessive.

The Resident Commissioner combined with missionary opinion, including most notably Father Richartz of the Chishawasha Mission and John White, General Secretary of the Wesleyan Missions. Between them they argued that the Africans would be unable to meet such a tax, that it would involve hardship for African women, that it was in effect an indirect tax on Europeans, that the employers who could only pay low wages (which included the missions) would be seriously affected, that the recent bad harvest aggravated native unrest, and that the labour shortage was spurious.[111] Richartz argued

that even although his mission was only fifteen miles from Salisbury, his men would have difficulties earning enough to pay the tax.[112] The Administrator tried to buy him off by offering special consideration for his tenants.[113]

Milner was adamant that the hut tax would involve no hardship; "Nothing can shake my conviction on this subject".[114] He even wrote to the Administrator that he was embarrassed by the opinion of the Resident Commissioner, and that if Milton went on with the ordinance he would give it his support.[115] The ordinance was in fact eventually disallowed by the Secretary of State on the grounds of fears of further African unrest. The Company was instead authorised to introduce a tax of £1, and the first collection of this began in 1904 after the usual announcements in indabas.[116] There is good evidence that the Colonial Office fear of another rebellion was justified, for reports of unrest after the tax was introduced constituted something more than simply rumour.[117]

The higher tax appeared to solve the labour problems temporarily. In succeeding years there were reports of surpluses, of recruits being sent to the Rand, of a demand for skilled labour which the Bureau could not meet, since experienced labourers found their own way to work.[118]

Hence the rent which the commercial branch of the Company began to levy on its unalienated land in 1908 had more the appearance of a producer of revenue than of a stimulant.

Of course the settlers refused to accept the Company's view of unalienated land as its own private property, and even the native commissioners complained that the new rent was a tactless and unnecessary further burden on the Africans.[119] It was however the natural corollary of another piece of legislation that came into force in that year, the Private Locations Ordinance.[120]

This added to the insecurity of Africans on the land by bringing into the open the problem of whether Africans ought to be moved on to the reserves. The South African Native Affairs Commission of Enquiry of 1905 had recommended it, and those farmers who attacked "kaffir-farming" or who objected to their tenants' stock wanted it. On the other hand the Chief Native Commissioner of Mashonaland wished to encourage Africans to live on private land so that they would not sink into the apathy of the reserves, and farmers who found tenants to be their best source of labour went so far as to demand that Africans involved in a labour agreement under the 1896 Proclamation (see p. 113) should not be permitted to have passes to go to work. The ordinance the Company proposed involved a tax on tenants, location agreements registered with the native commissioner, and a guarantee of sufficient land for the tenants' needs. It aroused considerable opposition among those concerned with the labour supply. The Secretary of the Chamber of Mines

wrote to the Administrator that the Private Locations Ordinance would lead to the destruction of

> a valuable source of the labour supply of the territory by releasing the native of the necessity to earn the £30,000 per annum, which is the amount now paid to landowners in respect of rent. It will in short, tend to drive them on to reserves where they can exist rent free, in sluggish indolence and barbarism.[121]

This was the case of the absentee landlords, such as the mining companies, against whom the ordinance was partly directed.

Opposition was such that the Legislative Council succeeded in emasculating the bill. The tax that emerged had to be paid only on those Africans who were not in bona fide employment and who paid rent. In other words, a landowner could keep a potential labour supply on his land and not pay tax, provided he charged no rent from them. It would appear that the farmers' faction within the Legislative Council had won, for as the bill emerged, it was designed almost solely against absentee landlords. And the protective clauses for the tenants - such as that the native commissioner had to approve the land as sufficient for the tenants' needs - were excluded. Moreover, in one district at least, Melsetter, landowners levied labour from their tenants, and succeeded in avoiding the payment of tax. Moreover, the reserves in Melsetter were particularly unsuitable, and there were no reserves at all in the adjacent district of Inyanga.[122]

Thus it can be seen that the non-availability of a suitable reserve could constitute a considerable constraint upon Africans' freedom of choice with regard to labour and land. There were circumstances under which this distraint could occur fortuitously. For example a rinderpest outbreak might result in a ban on the movement of cattle. Africans might then have no option but to stay where they were, and this might incur some labour agreement with the landowner.[123]

Insecurity for the African then seems to have been the main result of the Company land policy in effect if not in intention. The regulations with regard to Africans in towns remained burdensome. Both the Native Urban Locations Ordinance (which included the mines) of 1906 and the Salisbury Native Location Rules and Regulations of 1907 caused considerable concern within the Colonial Office. The regulations were regarded as "elaborate and vexatious" and their "aim is of course to make life on the location as burdensome as possible".[124] The development of a powerful anti-reserves lobby (described in chapter 2) contributed to this insecurity. And the relationship of this to the need for a labour supply is obvious.

The Private Locations Ordinance is an excellent example of a measure that could slip through the net of the Resident Commissioner. The Colonial Office appears to have been

totally oblivious of the practices that could exist under its aegis. The labour boards also reveal how tenuous was the control of the Colonial Office over the substance of labour recruiting. The problem of the reserves reveals the inevitable ignorance of the Colonial Office, which had to accept a fluid policy until the Coryndon Land Commission reported in 1916. While the Colonial Office could be spectacularly successful on such clear issues as the raising of the hut tax or the improvement of conditions on the mines, it permitted land and labour policy to drift.

This drift is revealed in a number of ways. In 1907, an extraordinary system was set up in the Mrewas, Mtokos, and Victoria districts, whereby the native commissioners acted as forwarding agents,[125] which seemed yet again to vitiate the attempts to create an independent recruiting system. In 1911, by Ordinance 16 of that year, private recruiters had to be licensed by the Government, but their continuing existence served to make the bureaux' task impossible.[126] In 1911, the Chief Native Commissioner of Mashonaland suggested that an officer should be appointed in each district, "continually on the move visiting chiefs and kraals and preaching the gospel of labour".[127] In 1912, he spoke of "stirring up the natives to a sense of their obligations to the state",[128] In the same year, the Chief Native Commissioner sent out a memorandum to all his native commissioners enquiring what

they thought of a proposed system whereby, after a careful census, Africans' certificates would be examined annually, and they would be spoken to severely if no work had been done. Of twenty-one native commissioners circularised, eleven agreed (some proclaiming that this was already standard practice), four disagreed (mainly because of absence of legal sanctions) and six had reservations. All except one agreed that recruiting ought to be on a personal basis and not done through the chiefs. Only one considered that this could amount to forced labour, observing that if the native commissioner did the ordering, he might also find himself punishing disobedience.[129]

By the outbreak of the First World War, Rhodesian labour demands were being satisfied because of the insecurity on the land, taxation, rents, the custom of lobolo, and the creation of such "legitimate" needs as ploughs, broken teams of oxen, clothing, and even bicycles. But while wants increased, the opportunities for alternatives also increased, in the sale of stock, grain, and market gardening produce. It is this "grass roots" operation of labour stimuli which will be examined in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1 Richard Brown, The Ndebele Succession Crisis, 1868-1877, Central African Historical Association, 1962.

2 NA, Baines MSS. And L.H. Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia, Early Days to 1934. (London, 1965), pp.55-57 J.P.R. Wallis, (ed.), The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines. (London, 1946).

3 Baines to Windus, April 24, 1874. BA 7/1/2

4 C.7196 for the Tati Company's demands for imperial protection.

5 A.J.B. Hughes, & J. Van Velsen, The Ndebele. (London, 1955).

6 Hughes & Van Velsen, op.cit. H.J. Taylor, A Short History of the Native Tribes of Matabeleland written for the information of the South African Native Affairs Commission. Annexure to minutes of Board of B.S.A.Co., Feb. 17, 1904. C.O.417/397.

7 Gann, op.cit., p.60.

8 C.7171 & C.7555.

9 E.F. Knight, Rhodesia of To-day, (London, 1895), chapter 1. K. Bradley in The Diary of a District Officer, (London, 1943), pp.19-21 describes how the Cewa similarly built their villages up hillsides as defence against the Ngoni.

10 C.7171. And Claire Palley, The Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, 1888-1965, (Oxford, 1966), p.105.

11 In 1892, the High Commissioner's representative at the court of Lobengula in Bulawayo, J.S. Moffat, was moved South.

12 A.R. Colquhoun, sometimes referred to as the first administrator, was styled Acting Resident Commissioner for Mashonaland. He resigned in 1891.

13 Minute, June 17, 1897. C.O. 417/231.

14 It is significant that these Rules and Regulations, together with the Registration of Natives Regulations of 1895, were not transmitted to the Colonial Office until 1897. C.O. 417/232.

15 ibid.

16 Report of the Native Commissioner, Umtali, March 31, 1901 NA N9/1/7

17 NA A 1/3/10

18 B.S.A.Co., to C.O., May 17, 1893. C.O. 417/110.

19 B.S.A.Co., to C.O., July 7, 1893. ibid.

20 Minute to above, July 8, 1893.

21 ibid.

22 Minute, June 29, 1894 C.O. 417/136.

23 NA CT 1/3/1

24 Moffat to Harris, Feb. 17, 1891 MO 1/1/5/4.

25 There are several testimonies to this informal arrangement. F.C. Selous, Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia, (London, 1896), p.x. Knight, op.cit., p.17 Percy F. Hone, Southern Rhodesia, (London, 1909), p.41.

26 This assumption that labour migrants would be permanently lost to the land is odd considering the Company's other policies.

27 Cd. 2399.

28 Cd. 2399, p.31.

29 This was the enlistment agreement entered into by Jameson and the prospective combatants in the Matabele War.

30 The Native Marriages Ordinance of 1901.

31 Hone, op.cit., p.64.

32 He was sent to Rhodesia after the Jameson Raid and the outbreak of the Matabele Rebellion, styled Commandant General and Deputy Commissioner.

33 T.O. Ranger, The Role of Ndebele and Shona Religious Authorities in the Rebellions of 1896 and 1897 in E. Stokes & R. Brown, The Zambesian Past, (London, 1966), pp.94-136. There is more expansive treatment in Ranger's

recent monograph on the rebellions, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-97, (London, 1967).

34 Knight, op.cit.

35 ibid., p.4.

36 ibid., p.17. He pointed out that Africans in Rhodesia could earn more than domestic servants in Britain, which was of course perfectly true, although there was less security in Rhodesian employment. Moreover, the relative earnings of African and European were closer at this time than they were at any subsequent period.

37 Selous, op.cit., preface.

38 ibid.

39 Hughes & van Velsen, op.cit. & Ranger, op.cit.

40 H.C.Thomson, Rhodesia and its Government, (London, 1898), p.186. p.196: "Jameson had assured Gambo /one of the leading indunas/ that the Holi would still have to be the servants of the Matabele, but the Matabele were forced to work alongside the Holi." See also Hone, op.cit., p.41.

41 Hughes & van Velsen, op.cit., p.74.

42 Hone, op.cit., p.17. Hugh Marshall Hole, Old Rhodesian Days, (London, 1928), p.45: "For domestic purposes we relied mainly on boys imported from the territories of the East Coast, where they had long been accustomed to work for slothful Portuguese employers and had become fairly efficient house servants."

43 A considerable number of Cape Africans were recruited for the Pioneer Column, and not unnaturally obtained the best jobs in Rhodesia. In 1899, a headman complained to the Chief Native Commissioner of Matabeleland about the influence and wages of these "Cape boys". Indaba at Fort Usher. Annexures to the minutes of Board of B.S.A.Co., Oct. 18, 1899. C.O. 417/276.

44 Circular of Chief Native Commissioner, April 19, 1895, NA N4/1/1.

45 Report of the native commissioner, Chilimanzi and Chibi, Dec. 1895. NA N9/1/1.

46 The native commissioner's control was not fully exercised over the Wankie district for example until at least 1903: NA NB 6/1/4. Even nearer the centres of white population, the native commissioners often had difficulties collecting the tax. The native commissioner of the Bubi district reported in 1898 that he could not collect hut tax in the wilder parts of the district: NA NB 6/1/1. And the native commissioner of the Makoni district complained in 1899 that he might have a chance of collecting all the hut tax if his district were half the size: NA N9/1/4.

47 Gann, op.cit., p.127.

48 NA N9/2/1.

49 Moreover the reports have been very badly kept. They appear to have been variously soaked, eaten by termites, and just rescued from fire.

50 Native commissioner, Hartley Hill, NA N9/2/1.

51 Native commissioner, Ndanga, ibid.

52 Native commissioner, Victoria, NA N9/2/2.

53 NA N 1/2/2.

54 All these reports are in NA N9/3/2.

55 C.8547.

56 Martin found that forced labour had indeed existed in Matabeleland, though he was less sure about Mashonaland (he clearly had no access to the reports described on p.122 supra). But in extenuation he found that native commissioners had at first endeavoured to obtain labour through the indunas, and when this was not forthcoming they had resorted to force.

57 B.S.A.Co., to C.O. Mar. 24, 1897, expressing great shock at the allegations and pleading that the Report be not submitted to the Select Committee until they had prepared a reply. Since the letter was not marked "immediate", it was not opened until Chamberlain had already taken the Martin Report to the Select Committee. C.O. 417/231.

58 Minutes to the above.

59 Enclosure B.S.A.Co. to C.O. July 21, 1897, C.O.417/232.

60 Chamberlain to Frederick Graham, n.d. C.O. 417/232.

61 Minute to the above. C.O. 417/232.

62 ibid.

63 Minute of Graham, ibid.

64 Minute of Graham to new native regulations, June 17, 1897. C.O. 417/231.

65 Cecil Headlam, (ed.), The Milner Papers, (London, 1931), pp. 177-179. Milner to Asquith, Nov. 18, 1897.

66 ibid., p. 178.

67 ibid., p. 179.

68 Report of Sir Marshall Clarke on Labour for the Mines, n.d., but appears to refer to 1899. Arrived at the Colonial Office in April 1901. Enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain no. 353 of 1901. C.O. 417/319. F. Perry (the imperial secretary) to Hartmann Just, Mar. 21, 1901, enclosing what he described as a "great bundle of arrears". Again in 1904, we find that two dispatches of the Resident Commissioner of Dec. 1902 were not transmitted to the Colonial Office until July of 1904. Milner to Lyttleton, July 30, 1904, C.O. 417/392.

69 The Salisbury Bureau itself said, "We are convinced that the native commissioners in this province have heartily and cordially co-operated with the labour bureau to obtain labour for the mines, and that all possible moral and legal pressure has been exercised by the native commissioners to induce the natives to work on the mines. Enclosure in Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, Mar. 12, 1900, enclosed in Kitchener to Chamberlain, May 31, 1901. C.O. 417/320.

70 There is a description of the closing of the Bonsor and Dunraven mines in Howard Hensman, A History of Rhodesia, (Edinburgh, 1900), p. 285. But he does point out that an explosion at the Bonsor Mine causing loss of life had contributed to the acute labour shortage there.

71 Clarke to Milner, May 3, 1904, enclosed in Milner to Lyttelton, June 6, 1904, C.O. 417/392.

72 Clarke's report which arrived in the C.O., long overdue, in April of 1901.

73 Clarke, enclosure in Kitchener to Chamberlain, May 31, 1901. Thomson, op.cit., p.51 describes the comparative ease with which an employer who paid and treated well could obtain labour at a time of very considerable shortage.

74 Reports of indabas held throughout Rhodesia in 1899, annexures to minutes of board of B.S.A.Co., Oct. 18, 1899. C.O. 417/276.

75 Minute of Chamberlain to the above, Dec. 20, 1899.

76 B.S.A.Co., to C.O., Feb. 22, 1900. C.O. 417/208. B.S.A.Co., to C.O. July 12, 1900. C.O. 417/310, and Taylor to Milton, May 26, 1900, ibid. Taylor's appointment to the post of under-secretary for native affairs was vetoed by the Colonial Office in 1902. Sir Richard Martin wrote on that occasion, "I do not believe in Taylor as a Chief Native Commissioner" Martin to Graham, August 6, 1902. C.O. 417/363.

77 vid. sup., p.65.

78 C.O. to B.S.A.Co., July 12, 1900. C.O. 417/308.

79 Clarke's Report which arrived in the Colonial Office in April of 1901. See also Cd. 1200.

80 ibid.

81 C.O. to B.S.A.Co., Oct. 3, 1901 C.O. 417/320.

82 The quotation is from Sir Montague Ommanney's minute on the need for a strong letter.

83 B.S.A.Co., to C.O. Oct. 10, 1901. C.O. 417/338 Ommanney wrote in a minute of a visit by Grey and Lyttelton Gell to the Colonial Office, complaining of the tone of the Colonial Office's correspondence. "I understand that Mr. Gell, who appears to be rather

an impulsive person, told Lord Selborne that the white population of Southern Rhodesia were much irritated and were sulking about Downing Street interference. No doubt they would like an absolutely free hand as regards native labour, but so long as the Secretary of State is responsible for the native labour policy, they must submit to reasonable regulations". It is interesting to note that Milner also frequently referred to the importance of not offending colonial sentiment. He was of course a great friend of Lyttelton Gell, corresponded with him weekly for many years, and actually offered him the Imperial Secretaryship when he (Milner) first went to the Cape (Gell private papers currently being catalogued at the National Register of Archives, London).

84 Clarke to Milner March 12, 1900, enclosure in Perry to Just, March 21, 1901. C.O. 417/319.

85 Clarke to Milner May 8, 1901, enclosure in Kitchener to Chamberlain May 31, 1901. C.O. 417/320.

86 Clarke to Milner Aug. 30, 1901, enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain Oct. 24, 1901. C.O. 417/321. Of the earlier reports, Graham had written "If these reports are published there will be a pretty kettle of fish. It was in consequence of a similar report that Sir R. Martin's position in Rhodesia became intolerable". Minute, May 31, 1901. C.O. 417/320.

87 Tel., Milner to Chamberlain, Nov. 27, 1901, C.O. 417/321.

88 Clarke to Milner Aug. 30, 1901, enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain Oct. 24, 1901. And B.S.A.Co. to C.O., Nov 29, 1901. C.O. 417/338.

89 Clarke to Milner Nov. 7, 1902, enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain Nov. 24, 1902. C.O. 417/345.

90 "How are we to discriminate between nice degrees of moral suasion." Minute, July 26, 1901, C.O. 417/320.

91 Chamberlain to Ommanney Nov. 29, 1901, enclosing a private letter from Earl Grey, Nov. 28, 1901. C.O. 417/321.

92 B.S.A.Co., to C.O. July 28, 1902. C.O. 417/364.

93 Enclosures Milner to Chamberlain, Jan.17, 1902, C.O. 417/343, and April 4, 1902, C.O. 417/334. There is also a private letter P. Lyttelton Gell to H.W. Just, Dec. 16, 1901, C.O. 417/343, pointing out the annoyance of the Rhodesian public opinion, and claiming that the new policy stood in the way of Africans seeking "spontaneous individual contracts".

94 Enclosure, Milner to Chamberlain June 20, 1902 C.O. 417/344.

95 Clarke to Milner May 3, 1904 (C.O. 417/392), enclosure Milner to Lyttelton June 6, 1904, reporting that 50 recruits had had to be sent to the Rand, and that more would follow. In another dispatch (Feb. 16, 1905, enclosure in Milner to Lyttelton Mar. 13, 1905, C.O. 417/407) the Resident Commissioner reported that 1,736 Rhodesian recruits of the Native Labour Bureau had been sent to the Rand between May 1st and August 31st of 1904.

96 Hone, op.cit., pp.70-74 has a good description of these practices.

97 This is a grievance that appears in a very wide variety of sources. It was mentioned several times at the indabas of 1899 (vid. sup.). The unpopularity of the bureau amongst Africans is a recurrent refrain from all sections of Rhodesian society.

98 Report of Chief Native Commissioner, Mashonaland, 1907. NA N9/1/10.

99 W.H. Moodie, a native commissioner became chief labour agent of the 1899 bureau. Val Gielgud became the general manager of the 1903 bureau: he too was a native commissioner at the time of his appointment. Five agents of the bureau of 1899 were recruited from the native department. B.S.A.Co., Reports, 1899.

100 Gielgud to Clarke Dec. 22, 1904, enclosure in Milner to Lyttelton, Jan. 1, 1905. C.O. 417/407.

101 Milton to Chamber of Mines, Feb. 21, 1906, enclosure in Selborne to Elgin, Jan. 1, 1906. C.O. 417/422.

102 See B.S.A.Co., Reports, 1908.

103 Milton to Clarke Mar. 18, 1901, enclosure Perry to C.O. May 8, 1901. C.O. 417/320.

104 Tel., Chamberlain to Milner 10th May, 1901. The Colonial Office was also concerned about the justice of making non-compliance a punishable offence.

105 Tel. Milner to Chamberlain, June 15, 1901, ibid.

106 Zambezi Mission Record, Vol. I, No. 11, Jan., 1901.

107 There is a vast correspondence on the reserves in Kitchener to Chamberlain, June 14, 1901, C.O. 417/320. The Resident Commissioner observed that certain reserves had disappeared or been reduced in area. One which had originally been described as "very good" was now described as "unsuitable".

108 Minute to above.

109 Milner to Chamberlain, March 23, 1903. C.O. 417/371.

110 Milner to Chamberlain, Jan. 12, 1903 C.O. 417/371.

111 Lawley to Chamberlain, Aug. 10, 1903, C.O. 417/373, containing large number of enclosures from the Resident Commissioner on the latter's objections to the tax increase.

112 Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, July 7, 1903, ibid.

113 Milton to Clarke, July 6, 1903, ibid. Within the Colonail Office it was Sir Hartmann Just who most vigorously opposed the £2 hut tax.

114 This quotation comes from Milner's comments on the immense correspondence with the Administrator and the Resident Commissioner. Milner again asserted his belief in the beneficial nature of "every form of healthy, open-air, manual labour". He forgot that labour in the mines could be neither open-air nor healthy.

115 Milner to Milton (confidential) June 16, 1903. Throughout the hut tax controversy there was a great deal of direct correspondence between the Administrator and the High Commissioner. Had the Colonial Office not upheld Clarke his position would have appeared ludicrous. Milner subsequently suggested that the post of Resident

Commissioner could be dispensed with, but the Colonial Office would not hear of it. Tel., Milner to Lyttelton August 12, 1904. C.O. 417/392.

116 Annexures to minutes of Board of B.S.A.Co., March 29, 1904. C.O. 417/398.

117 Milner to Lyttelton (confidential) April 11, 1904 on rumours of unrest in Inyanga. And also the report of the native commissioner, Charter district, that messengers from the Mlimo were inciting rebellion because of the increased tax. African spies heard that the rebellion was to take place throughout Mashonaland. Report of Feb. 17, 1904, annexure 6 to the Board minutes of March 29, 1904. C.O. 417/398.

118 Gielgud pointed out the bureau's dilemma as to what to do with Africans who came from the North of the Zambezi during the glut. Should they be given preference over Rhodesian Africans or be permitted to return home with news of their ill-fortune. Letter of Gielgud to the Rhodesia Herald, Feb. 6, 1905.

119 Report of the Chief Native Commissioner for Mashonaland, W.S. Taberer, 1908. N9/1/11.

120 For most of my material on the Private Locations Ordinance I am indebted to an unpublished paper of Mr. J. Keith Rennie, "The Private Locations Ordinance (1908) and the Melsetter Labour Agreements."

121 Secretary of the Chamber of Mines to Administrator, June 15, 1906 NA A8/21/11.

122 Milner to Lyttelton, Aug. 29, 1904 (C.O.417/392) pointing out the absence of a reserve in Inyanga. One was eventually provided when a mining company surrendered its holding for the purpose.

123 Native commissioner Bulilima-Mangwe, 1910. NB 6/1/11.

124 Minute of Grindle on Selborne to Elgin, Nov. 25, 1907. C.O. 417/438.

125 Report of Chief Native Commissioner, Mashonaland, 1907. NA N9/1/10.

126 See report of Chief Native Commissioner Mashonaland, 1912, for effect of this NA N9/1/15.

127 Report of Chief Native Commissioner, Mashonaland, 1911. NA N9/1/14.

128 Report, 1912. NA N9/1/15.

129 All the replies to the circular are in NA N3/22/9.

CHAPTER 4

LABOUR FROM THE DISTRICTS

MASHONALAND

Before investigating the initial response of Africans to the money economy of their European overlords, it is necessary first to examine the nature of the sources. They are, almost without exception, of European provenance. The most detailed local sources - and for the purposes of this study the most illuminating - are the native commissioners' reports. These provide interesting sets of statistics about population, kraal and hut concentration, crops, stock, trading, labour, and the response of tribal society to ordinances and regulations. But these figures have to be approached with great caution. Native commissioners were obliged to supply figures each year, but the means of obtaining them accurately were seldom at their disposal. The chief native commissioners were frequently confronted with figures that in the aggregate made an obvious nonsense. The Chief Native Commissioner for Mashonaland viewed the statistical difficulties of labour with mounting despair as the native registration ordinance of 1903 (which had provided that Africans going to work required to take out a pass) became increasingly unenforceable.[1]

Although the figures have to be approached with caution, it is however possible to discern the internal logic of the

figures for any one district. Even here the native commissioner's prejudices have to be taken into account: his conviction that "his" people were lazy, or alternatively that they supplied quite enough labour consistent with the requirements of indigenous agriculture. And such an attitude would clearly be related to his respect or lack of it for that indigenous agriculture.

The difficulties of population statistics are threefold. Firstly, the boundaries of districts continually changed; secondly, the country was insufficiently surveyed to produce anything like an accurate area for each district; and thirdly the land and fiscal policies of the Company administration caused the African population to be continually on the move. It is therefore impossible to make comparisons from year to year unless it is clear that boundaries were constant and little movement took place, although such movement is in itself highly significant. Reasonable accuracy can be presumed in taxation statistics, and these provide a good index of population (provided tax was levied effectively from the whole district). In this way, the de jure population can be (and was) used as an indication of the de facto population, although to do so we have to use a conversion factor derived from the native commissioner's observations.

Statistics of kraal density and of kraal size can be presumed accurate at least in absolute terms, whether kraals

were large or small, scattered or concentrated. The native commissioner could not fail but be aware of population distribution in this crude way. The same applies to the incidence of stock rearing, whether cattle sheep or goats. The native commissioner appears to have spent a considerable amount of his time on his travels simply counting, people and animals. While his sums could not bear the detailed analysis of a modern economist, they do provide historical pointers to the nature and scale of the accommodation between the European and the indigenous economy.

The statistics of trading in any given district are extremely important as an indication of alternative methods of entering the cash economy and as a correlative of the success or failure of labour recruiting. Here again it is possible to make judgments in absolute terms to satisfy the numerically less rigorous, though different, demands of historical analysis.

The economist has been interested in whether the Africans' response to the European economy has been a rational or an irrational one, whether he has set out to maximise his real income or simply respond to the pressures, moral and fiscal, placed upon him; whether he has seen the wage earning part of his labour as supplementary and complementary to his village agriculture, or simply an external experience imposed upon him as a form of tribute and bearing

little relation to his traditional economic life. Central to this discussion is the question of the backward sloping labour supply function, whereby the supply of labour declines as wages increase, since the labourer's ceiling of want is reached more rapidly and he is able to withdraw his labour after a shorter period. This is of course quite the opposite to what happens in a sophisticated economy.

It should be noted that in one important respect the demands of the European economy coincided with the preferences of the African labour force. An economy in this incipient state required a large, but highly flexible and highly mobile labour force. In almost every sector of the European economy we find the demand for labour is for large numbers for short periods. This was obviously true of the construction industry, particularly in the case of railway or telegraph construction. It was true of farming, for irrigation works, for the highly seasonal nature of the Rhodesian climate and growing potential, for the demands of a specialised crop like tobacco, already coming into vogue by 1914. Less obviously, it was true of the mining industry. Rhodesia was prospectors' country, more suited to small workers than large concentrations, particularly after the Company's relaxation of the conditions on the establishment of such smaller concerns. If mines swiftly appeared, they also swiftly disappeared.

This chapter sets out to give a resume of the labour situation in each district during the period 1898-1914. The date 1898 has been chosen since from that date the native department was completely reorganised, and it is only from that date that virtually the whole country came under its jurisdiction, although it was another few years before the authority of the Company administration was carried to the extreme edges of the low veld in the North or the South. The districts will here be treated in the two provinces of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, since until 1913 each had a different Chief Native Commissioner with somewhat different views on labour, conditions were different in each, and the tribal concentration was different in each. In 1913, the two native administrations were combined under Sir Herbert Taylor, the man whom the Colonial Office had refused to consider as under secretary for native affairs because of his activities in the 1899 indabas.

In 1905, the South African Native Affairs Commission (Cd.2399) had reached the conclusion that the maximum man-power figure which could be extracted from the indigenous economy without occasioning its breakdown was 50% of the male population between the ages of 15 and 40. This became the guideline in Rhodesia, and it soon became something of a magic figure in the reports of Rhodesian native commissioners. It appears so frequently that it is difficult not to suspect

that native commissioners felt under some obligation to produce the "right" figure. However, the figure was sometimes genuinely exceeded, and occasionally the figures are detailed enough to show that not all the officers were simply anxious to please. In this connection, it must be remembered that we are dealing with a labour force in a constant state of flux, working from one to twelve months in the year. A 50% labour figure for any one year does not therefore mean a 50% withdrawal from the indigenous economy at one point in time, although as the length of time worked greatly increased later in the period, this became increasingly the case.

The following review of all the native department districts in Rhodesia attempts to examine the relationship of a number of different factors at district level to the performance of that district as a labour supplier. These factors are the pressure of population, the type of land tenure, the incidence of stock holding, the amount of trading, the proximity to centres of employment, and the nature of the indigenous economy of the area. All of this must necessarily be seen through the eyes of the native commissioners, although they must be treated as participants as well as observers. However, as far as possible, all these factors will be examined from the African point of view.

The province of Mashonaland is treated in this chapter; the province of Matabeleland in the next. Mashonaland was the first area taken over by the pioneers in 1890. The capital was established at Fort Salisbury on the high plateau, almost exactly in the centre of the province. Mines were established to the North, North West and South West of the town. Farms spread out on the high veld, and later on to the low veld, when tobacco was developed early this century.

The Shona peoples of the province were generally regarded as poor labourers because of their supposedly inadequate physiques and unwillingness to leave the indigenous economy. But Mashonaland was close to the main supplies of external labour from North East Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Mozambique. Salisbury was the goal for the labour routes via Feira and Tete and for the railway line from Beira.

A number of tables follow for which some explanation is required. The three familiar divisions of land will be stressed: the reserves as they existed in their somewhat fluid state up to the Southern Rhodesian Native Reserves Commission of 1916; unalienated land which the Company regarded as its own, and therefore as land on which it could levy rent; and alienated land, taken up by farmers, mines, and absentee companies, upon which the provisions of the Private Locations Ordinance operated.

The category of able bodied men, which will be encounter-

ed in the tables, usually consisted of tax-payers between the ages of 18 and 40, excluding kraal heads whose duties kept them at home. Where kraals tended to be small, there would be a larger number of headmen, and therefore a smaller potential labour supply, quite apart from the fact that smaller kraals could supply fewer men because of the reduced possibility of division of labour. Domiciled aliens were those aliens (labourers from outside Southern Rhodesia) who had been in the country long enough that they had to pay tax.

There follows the review of each district of Mashonaland.

MAZOE

The Mazoe district was for several years two districts, North and South Mazoe, which stretched from Salisbury right up to the Portuguese East Africa frontier. North Mazoe was eventually largely incorporated in the Darwin district, and there were in fact so many other boundary changes that it is quite impossible to compare figures over any period of time.

The entire area North of Salisbury, East of Lomagundi and West of Mrewa and Mtoko, had a population of from 20,000 to 30,000 during the period 1898-1914, clustered in very large villages. The area's agriculture was primitive; there were very few cattle; in any good harvest there was a tendency to overtrade. In 1906, it was reported from North

Mazoe that the Makorikori and Chikundi people preferred cash for lobolo purposes, although stock for lobolo increased in subsequent years.

During the early years labour was turned out rigorously. In 1899 and 1900, 1,000 men from each district were "sent" south. In 1899, the clerk-in-charge of South Mazoe sent all those out to work who had insufficient money for tax. Touts operated up to the Zambezi, and a steady stream of "aliens" from the British Central Africa Protectorate (Nyasaland) and Portuguese East Africa soon became a feature of the district. Most of these preferred to go to the bigger mines of the south, some even as far as Kimberley, although some stayed, often for long periods. In 1913 there were 1,800 domiciled alien taxpayers in the southern part of the region (by then the Mazoe district).

Bad harvests and attacks of locusts had a demoralising effect on the local inhabitants, as had the considerable competition of northern labourers. In 1903, it was reported that fewer and fewer Shona came out, and that was in a year of bad harvest, although there was abundant labour from the north. When this northern labour declined in numbers, the area faced an acute labour shortage. In 1911, the native commissioner reported that he was impressing on the chiefs the need for labour to turn out, and on European newcomers the need to treat Africans well.

In 1910, the native commissioner described his fiscal policy. His messengers watched assiduously for all boys who reached taxable age; he felt that there ought to be remission of tax for six months' work; aliens ought not to be taxed, since they left as soon as the time for their first taxing came round. By 1910, still less than 40% of the able bodied population worked. The effect of the British South Africa Company rent had been simply to send most Africans on unalienated land to the reserves swiftly created for them. Agreements under the Private Locations Ordinance were almost entirely for labour, and in 1913, Drew reported that the stringency of the agreements varied according to the proximity of the reserves. Landowners close to a reserve could not risk so severe an agreement as those further away, a clear admission that the motive of many landowners was to extort as much rent as possible consistent with retaining their labour supply.

In 1912, he submitted the following labour return.

	1 able bodied men in district	2 no. who worked	3 period months	4 2 as % of 1
reserves	1,753	845	3	48
unalienated land	80	55	3	69
alienated land	619	600	4	97

The figure for those on alienated land reveals the extent of labour agreements binding labourers to their landlords, and

inflating the total labour figure. These figures apply to the smaller Mazoe district not far North of Salisbury.

DARWIN

The Darwin district was created out of the Mazoe district in 1909 and lies to the North of Salisbury. The population rose rapidly from 10,855 in 1909 to over 15,000 in 1913, almost all in reserves, apart from a small number on mines.

The area was poor in stock; there were no ploughs; and harvests varied widely over the period. In 1911, the crop was damaged by unusually heavy late rains and the native commissioner reported that the Africans were too short handed to save it, despite the fact that only a small percentage went to work.

The demand for labour expanded during the period because prospectors were actively at work, and because the border at the north was closed due to smallpox on the Portuguese side. Immigrant labourers tended in any case to pass through the district to the richer lands of the south. The native commissioner attacked private touting and regretted the closure of the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau agency in 1911.

There were no people at all on alienated land and the few who were on unalienated land moved into the reserves or into Portuguese territory after the imposition of the British South Africa Company rent. All the inhabitants were therefore in

reserves and in 1912 of 4,500 able bodied men, only 1,372 worked an average of 4½ months (31%). However, this extremely low figure may have been based on the issue of passes, a notoriously bad guide to the actual numbers going out to work. But the area does appear thoroughly depressed. The mines in the district had difficulty in finding labour, and they also had difficulties in obtaining meal (1911 report), so communications may have been an important part of the problem.

SALISBURY

The Salisbury district was largely superseded in 1909 by the Göromonzi district, lying immediately to the north and east of the city of Salisbury. The population increased from 11,836 in 1900 to 15,715 in 1908. Two acres per head of population were cultivated, and crops were invariably good (despite frequent reports of locust damage), except for failures in 1903 and 1907. Employment in the district was on European farms and on a few mines like the Arcturus, Joker, Kambongo and Red Dragon. Almost all the local labour supply remained in the district from preference, despite the fact that wages were lower.

Labour fluctuated as widely as is usual in such a district. The figure never reached 50% of the able bodied population until 1907 when the crop failed and the approach of hut tax

collection brought out an unemployable glut on to the labour market, and there was a corresponding decrease in wages. There were few cattle in the district, and to this fact the native commissioner in 1901 attributed the poor labour supply.

GOROMONZI

Goromonzi was created in 1909, incorporating the Salisbury district. The population rose rapidly from 15,880 in 1909 to 18,928 in 1913, the increase being general on both reserves and alienated land, there being little evidence of much movement from the latter to the former. In 1913, the population was distributed 15,000 on reserves, 3,309 on alienated land, and 619 on mines.

There was a reasonable amount of stock, but no ploughs, for heavily wooded land was used. As might be expected in a district so close to Salisbury, there was a large opportunity for trading, although there was a tendency for this to decrease as European farmers began to go in for extensive mealie growing, which was of course the Africans' most marketable crop. So much did the local inhabitants prefer to be their own masters that they actually employed others from other districts to work for them at 10/- per month. Moreover, those villages near the mines could make money from beer-making and prostitution. On a visit to the Chikwakwa

Reserve in 1909, the native commissioner, R.C. Nesbitt, could see few young women, and was told that they were at the mines making money.

The labour performance was described as poor right up to the end of the period, although the figures tend to belie this view. There was employment for some 12,000 in the district (1909), made up mainly of aliens and "indigenous" Africans from other districts. In 1910, of an able bodied population of 3,666, 1,340 worked (37%), and in 1913, 1,869 of 3,980 worked (47%), but these were pass statistics, which the native commissioner himself described as useless. Moreover, in 1913, he reported that there was insufficient work in the area for the aliens, and that they were going to the mines at Gatooma.

MARANDELLAS

The Marandellas district lies across the line of rail between Salisbury and Umtali on the high veld. In 1901, the population of 13,436 was distributed in 120 kraals of an average of 28 huts and 112 people each. The district became mainly a farming one, although there was eventually some mining employment. With railway and road passing through there was clearly considerable opportunity for employment or marketing in either Salisbury or Umtali, or in the mines to the south west. However, there was the usual

flight to the reserves in the later years, and that meant away from the lines of communication where the land was alienated to European farmers. In 1909, there were 1,300 on private land and 1,410 on unalienated land of a population of 15,341. All those subject to the British South Africa Company rent on unalienated land moved almost immediately after its imposition. By 1913, of a population of 19,301, 18,245 were in reserves, and only 143 and 851 were left on unalienated and alienated land respectively.

Trade fluctuated wildly according to the quality of the harvest. In 1903, a poor harvest brought out large numbers of prospective labourers who headed for Salisbury, Gwelo, Hartley and Mazoe. Not until 1908 and 1909 was there a large amount of trading again, but in 1911 acreages contracted because of the decline in prices. Farming had remained primitive, without ploughs and few draught animals, although there was approximately one head of cattle to every four in the population.

In the early years, railway and road construction proved very popular and paid well. The labour supply subsequently fluctuated with the harvest until in 1912 it reached over 60% (2,365 of an able bodied population of 3,900), working for an average of five months.

MREWA

This district lies to the North of Marandellas. Between 1900 and 1911 the population doubled and by the latter date they were almost all accommodated in reserves (22,947). It is good farming country, though not suited to the plough, and most of the harvests in the period were extremely good. It therefore became an area of considerable trading. In 1909, the native commissioner reported that 12,000 bags of grain were sold at an average price of 5/-. In the same year 80 bulls were sold to Europeans. This alone would account for well over half of the hut tax. There were good sales again in 1911 and 1912, although prices fell in 1913. Stock increased very rapidly: in 1901 there were only 550 head of cattle in the area; by 1906, 2,411, and this had more than doubled by 1911.

The labour supply varied considerably from year to year. Even in seasons of bad harvest, as in 1903 and 1907, it was not good. In 1903, young men stayed at home to hunt for subsistence with the rest. In 1907, the locusts were very numerous and required considerable manpower to protect the gardens. The native commissioner repeatedly pointed out that a young man could earn enough to pay hut tax for his whole family, including father and brothers. The labour supply was however normally able to fulfil local demand, which was entirely farming work, but from the native commissioner's

figures and estimates, it never seems to have reached 50% of the able bodied population. In 1912, it was only 38%, working for anything from one to twelve months. In 1913, it was decreasing. The native commissioner, E. Edwards, saw only one solution to the problem - smaller reserves and higher taxation.

MTOKO

The Mtoko district lies North East of Mrewa and North of Makoni and Umtali, on the main route through the Mozambique enclave from Blantyre. The population increased over the period by several thousand, principally owing to immigration into the sparsely populated northern district, to 22,190 in 1913, all of them on reserves. The soil was extremely light and sandy, unable to bear maize, suitable only for various types of millet, and the population was very widely scattered in groups of just a few huts. There was seldom a crop surplus, and almost no cash trading in grain. There was however a considerable quantity of cattle and large numbers were traded in 1908, 1909, 1910 and 1911. In the latter year, 450 bulls were sold to Europeans, and 300 head were traded for grain.

Employment opportunity in the area was slight. There were two or three mines on the Kaiser Wilhelm Goldfields whose furtunes fluctuated greatly. There was employment as runners, porters, servants and cattle drivers. In

addition, the Anglo-Portuguese boundary commission provided employment for several years for several hundred men. Those who left the district tended to go to Umtali, a movement started by an American contractor called Creech[3] who had taken large numbers from the Mtoko district as well as the Makoni district to Umtali in the late nineties. In 1909 the district was quarantined because of smallpox and the inhabitants were brought together into larger kraals in an attempt to stamp out the disease. It was also hoped of course that this rationalisation would improve the labour supply, although it was hardly suited to the soil and the agriculture of the area. In fact, the labour supply usually seemed adequate, since there was comparatively little opportunity in the district. Towards the end of the period, opportunity did in fact contract, although the native commissioner in 1912 reported that 2,845 of an able bodied population of 4,462 on the reserves had worked (62%).

One of the features of the area was the large number of labourers who passed through from Portuguese East Africa and Nyasaland, although this contracted later in the period. It meant that the district swarmed with touts of whom the native commissioners usually disapproved. The touts waited on the labour routes for hungry gangs whom they would take over and "sell" for capitation fees to the mines of the south. The native commissioner in 1911, Charles Bullock, recommended that

food ought to be provided for such gangs to save them from the touts.

The acting native commissioner in 1913, G.E. Wincel, revealed very well in his report the all-too-frequent contempt for the indigenous economy, and the hope that "wants" would drive labour out:

> The innate indolence which lures them to an agricultural life will not stand against their vanity which makes things that can only be paid off with money absolute necessities.

LOMAGUNDI

The Lomagundi district and the sub-district of Kanyamba (split in 1909-1910) lay to the extreme North of Rhodesia on the bank of the Zambezi, with a boundary with both Northern Rhodesia and Mozambique. It had a large population scattered over an immense area. While agriculture remained very backward and little land was alienated, there was considerable employment opportunity in the district because of the opening of several mines, of which the Ayrshire and the Eldorado were the most important. By 1910, as many as 6,000 were employed in the area.

There was a great deal of trading in smaller stock: in 1910 the Eldorado mine manager estimated that he had purchased during the year small stock to the value of £790. This could account for a lot of tax.

The labour performance of the region continued very poor for a number of years. In 1903, only 10% of the able bodied male population were estimated to have gone to work. Lobolo remained small, and wants low. Moreover, being very much a "pioneer"district, the early settlers gained a bad reputation for ill-treatment of their employees. In 1899, the acting native commissioner, B.B. Talbot, attacked them severely for this, and in 1909 (when 26% of able bodied males went out) W. Selwyn Bazeley still considered that the conditions of labour were an important disincentive.

The district lay astride the most important labour route from the north in the early years. In 1907, 14,813 aliens sought passes to seek work. These came across the ferry at Feira from Portuguese East Africa and Northern Rhodesia. This figure began to decline when the railway reached up into Northern Rhodesia, directing the Bemba and the Bisa down the railway to Livingstone and Bulawayo. But numbers from Nyasaland and Mozambique remained high, and kraals on the road were able to earn their tax by selling beer and mealies to travellers - particularly those returning. Moreover, the men of the region did quite a lot of the work in the indigenous economy, since much tree felling was required, and this was men's work. Rent obligations were not high, both because little land was alienated and because

it was impossible to collect the British South Africa Company rent on unalienated land until 1911. It could not be collected earlier because no reserves had been demarcated, and its collection would have caused large scale emigration across the Zambezi.

Corresponding with a large influx of settlers and small workers to the area, and therefore an increase in opportunity, labour figures rose considerably in 1911, (a year of bad harvest), to 5,000 of an able bodied male population of 7,036 (71%). The native commissioner himself was surprised, but insisted that his staff had carefully checked the figures, and provided a list of reasons: there was a poor crop; less alien labour, and so less kraal sales; selling of beer at mines had been stamped out; and there had been a constant haranguing of chiefs on the need for labour. He advocated that the country should become independent of alien labour. In the following year, the assistant native commissioner was able to write "...the general complaint that the indigenous native will not work is quite unfounded".

This area is a unique example of one of ample alternative opportunities of entering the cash economy, which were knocked away by the government and by changing conditions.

HARTLEY

This was a very large, sparsely populated district,

containing the Gatooma mining area, and some of the country's most important mines, just South of Salisbury. It was some time before a reasonably accurate population figure was arrived at. In 1906, it was stated to be 6,895, and it rose by 1913 to 11,705. An idea of the employment potential of the area can be derived from the fact that by 1909 the labouring force of alien and indigenous Africans from other districts had almost outstripped the total local population, and by 1910 was several hundred in excess of it. Almost all of the local population were in reserves, where stock were plentiful, although agriculture was primitive. There was a lot of trading, but a really good harvest, as in 1911, greatly reduced the amount and the price, for traders were satisfied with the produce of Europeans and of other districts.

The Shona were slow to offer themselves for work and only stayed for short periods when they did. By 1900 a large contingent of North Zambezi labourers was already supplying 40% of the total labour force; another 20% were from Portuguese East Africa, and the remaining 40% were from within Rhodesia. During 1906 and 1907, demand for labour rose rapidly since the Giant and the Battlefields mines began crushing operations, and there was a large increase in the number of small mining concerns. Since large numbers of labourers from the North passed straight through the district on their way to the Rand, the native commissioner intensified

his efforts to turn out local labour. In 1908 he informed the chiefs and headmen that there would have to be an improvement. He also set about stopping the sale of beer to the mine compounds, explicitly because Africans earned too much money in this way. In the same year, however, the British South Africa Company rent sent many Africans off to the reserves. Yet in 1912, the native commissioner, E.G. Howman, reported that 1,590 of an able bodied male population of 2,385 had worked for an average of six months (67%). This may have already been an indication of the quality of the reserves to which almost all the Africans had now been driven.

In his 1913 report Howman attacked these reserves: the Sanyati was "fly" (tsetse) infested; the Ganga was congested; and the Gabaza was only a narrow strip of land wedged between farms. In the same report he provided complete labour figures for the mines, which are so interesting as to merit quoting in full.

month	alien		indigenous	
	1912	1913	1912	1913
January	5,514	5,582	1,763	1,192
February	5,437	5,483	1,760	1,290
March	5,393	5,510	1,833	1,539
April	4,960	5,650	2,106	1,574
May	4,194	5,474	2,488	1,920
June	5,199	4,294	2,460	2,291
July	5,473	5,667	2,463	2,744
August	5,383	5,815	2,347	2,271
September	5,373	6,259	1,818	1,975
October	5,515	6,500	1,620	1,747
November	5,598	6,615	1,349	1,509
December	5,523	-	1,213	-

The average distribution by origin was 1,700 from Southern Rhodesia; 1,300 from Portuguese territory; 2,700 from Northern Rhodesia; and 1,400 from Nyasaland.

These figures reveal extremely well the nature of seasonal employment on the mines, although the differential between the dry and growing seasons is not as great as it had been in earlier years. During the planting season towards the end of the year, alien labour largely compensated for the dearth of local labour. Hence the majority of aliens travelled in winter months, which, particularly for those from the warmer North, could be injurious to their health (see chapter 8). The figures cannot however tell us which form of labour constituted competition for which. Indigenous labourers were able to find work during the period when they were least required in the indigenous economy. On the other hand the differential between the growing periods might have been greater if the local inhabitants had not had the competition of outside labour.

In 1913, Howman pointed out that bad employers alone were short of labour and depended on the bureau, which was very bad for its reputation.

CHARTER

This district lies in Central Rhodesia between Hartley and Victoria, to the East of Gwelo and Selukwe. It was one of the most settled districts during the "rebellions" and

became in consequence an important trading centre for grain while much of the rest of the country was in turmoil. In 1903 there were 46,074 inhabitants in 769 kraals of about 50 people each. A considerable amount of land alienation took place, and by 1913 the vast majority of the population were in reserves. The population distribution between 1909 and 1913 makes a useful comparison.

	1909	1910	1913
reserves	42,500	47,496	48,595
unalienated land	1,500	1,166	200
alienated land	10,000	7,288	9,964

The 1910 figures reveal the extent of movement to the reserves, while the 1913 figures reveal the fashion in which land alienation could catch up with those on unalienated land. The pattern of movement was already set up by 1899, when there was extensive alienation to the Exploring Land and Mineral Company and to Willoughby's Central Estates. In consequence, 2,000 huts had to be moved, and the native commissioner reported that the Africans raised no objection because they were happy to turn over new land. (This might appear as a piece of special pleading, but it is important to remember that Africans of the area were accustomed to movement, both for security reasons and in search of virgin soil.) The population had a tendency to increase naturally on the healthy high veld, but not on the less healthy low veld.

The area remained important in grain and cattle trading,

and in the later years ploughs were rapidly acquired. There were a large number of government subsidised chiefs in this area.

The labourers of the area had some unfortunate experiences in the early years. Quite apart from the bad health record of the Selukwe mines in that period, the Afrikaner farmers of the region were reported in 1898 to ill-treat their employees and cheat them of their wages. Then a contingent recruited by a native commissioner Taylor and Colonel Beal in 1898 for Company road building were never paid (the acting native commissioner, B.B.Talbot, complained that this was bad for the reputation of the Company). Men were not surprisingly deterred by the sickness contracted at the mines, and insisted that the visitations of locusts kept them at home. There were some Shangaans in the south of the district who revealed their customary independence by insisting on working for the mine of their choice.

The sale of grain provided most with their hut tax. In 1906 there were arrears of tax in a year when the labour supply was poor. In 1908 and 1909 the native commissioner, J.W. Posselt, described the communal beer party reaping system and the wishes of the women as the biggest disincentive to labour. Nonetheless, he disliked one of the incentives, the British South Africa Company rent, which he regarded -

quite rightly - as an unwarrantable confusion of the administrative and commercial branches of the Company.

In 1910, he reported that 50% had worked, and in 1912 he ascribed the continuing labour difficulty to the fact that many stayed permanently at work, that many had earned enough for several years, and that others were rich in cattle. In 1913 he recommended a system of indenturing teenagers.

Some 1,500 were affected under the Private Locations Ordinance and rents varied from 10/- to £1, being remitted at the rate of 10/- per month worked. The Exploring Land and Minerals Company put up its rent for 978 men and sued 80 for arrears (although the native commissioner reported that the agent had been lax). The Rhodesdale Estate put up its rent and charged crippling grazing fees which were withdrawn on Posselt's representations.

GUTU

Gutu lies immediately to the North of Victoria. Its population figures are difficult to handle. In 1910, when figures are usually accurate, there was a large over-estimate. In 1913, a population of perhaps 38,100 were distributed 31,250 in reserves, 4,100 on unalienated land, and 2,750 on alienated land. There was very little employment opportunity in the district, and it became perhaps more than any other district, the despair of successive native commissioners.

There was some grain trading, ploughs were used and progressive agricultural techniques were fostered on the lands of the Dutch Reformed Mission at Gutu and Chingombe, but the principal source of wealth was cattle. By 1909 there were 17,600 cattle in the Gutu district. While the people in the adjacent Chilimanzi district avoided selling, the people of Gutu sold in large numbers. In 1907, 2,000 cattle were sold, 400 were slaughtered for food and sacrifice, and in addition, 1,000 small stock were killed and 500 traded. Despite considerable sales, the numbers of cattle never ran down as they did in Victoria (vid.inf.).

At first, the district seemed to provide a very satisfactory labour force. In 1899, 1,822 were sent to Gwelo and Selukwe; in 1900, 3,435 were sent. But during this period health and the death rate at the Selukwe mines can only be described as disastrous. There was a death rate of almost 10%. Much of this ill-health was caused by pulmonary diseases contracted by inhabitants of the hot low veld of Gutu working in unusual and unhealthy conditions at the much higher altitude of Selukwe. The native commissioner, J.H. Williams, reported in 1899 that every kraal in his district (there were 230 of almost one hundred people each) had lost someone at the Selukwe mines, and in some cases there had been several deaths. He added that anyone who had been to the Transvaal mines could not be induced to go to the mines of Selukwe. It seems as though the district never recovered

its confidence after this decimation. On the insistence of the Colonial Office, native commissioners ceased their activity in supplying labour after 1901,[4] and thereafter Gutu supplied so small a number that native commissioners were shy of providing figures at all. The figure provided in 1908 of 1,657 was based on passes issued and is therefore suspect, since so many travelled independently and since pass figures were regarded as useless in most parts of the country, but if it is in any way accurate it can reflect only about 24% of the able bodied male population, and this was certainly a year of high cattle sales.

In 1910 the native commissioner, E.T. Kenny, attacked the employers, but in 1911 he suggested that the Government ought to take over all recruiting, and that all boys of 14 to 18 years should be apprenticed. Even in the bad harvest year of 1912 there was little improvement, and in 1913 the Africans would not turn out for fear of another bad harvest, but when it turned out well, they stayed to enjoy its fruits!

CHILIMANZI

The Chilimanzi district lay adjacent to Gutu, East of Charter. For a period from 1902 to 1908 it was coupled with the Gutu district and in 1910 it was enlarged. It is therefore impossible to compare population figures, especially as those in the early years were admitted to be guesses. Two

groups of figures are however useful and trustworthy.

	1911	1913
reserves	6,800	11,979
unalienated land	1,700	-
alienated land	5,500	4,391

The 1913 figure for the reserves was inflated both by movement within the district and by the immigration of some 2,000 who moved in from the Victoria district to escape the effects of the Private Locations Ordinance.

The number of ploughs in use, the numbers of stock, and the extent of trading greatly increased in the later few years. Between 1909 and 1911 cattle increased from 4,000 to 13,000 (only a fraction of this can be attributed to the enlargement of the district), and unlike Victoria or Chibi very few were sold. Moreover, most young men provided work for their lobolo. In 1908, the native commissioner reported that the people of the district preferred to work for their tax; some 144 cattle were killed for food and sacrifice, some were exchanged for grain, but none were sold.

There was employment opportunity in the district on small mines and farms. Labourers also travelled to Gwelo and Selukwe. 1,102 were sent out by the native commissioner's office in 1899, when he reported that Africans preferred to be sent through the office because they were well-treated, fed on the journey, and sure of employment on arrival. By 1903,

however, the local inhabitants were reported to prefer travelling out independently, for they had developed a dislike for the Bureau and its agents. They turned out well for surface work, particularly when wages were high (as in 1901), but they stayed for short periods. They were unable to compete with the Shangaans and "North Zambezis" who were prepared to stay longer. Local demand was met, especially on the farms where most Private Locations Ordinance agreements were for labour, but in 1912, despite the poor crop, labour figures still appear to be very low

	1 able bodied men in district	2 no. who worked	3 2 as % of 1
reserves	3,300	750	23
alienated land	1,173	600	51

No period of work is mentioned.

In 1913, work opportunity was expanding: the railway from Umvuma to Victoria was being built; the small Falcon mine required labour; and Afrikaner farmers were trekking into the district, although the native commissioner reported that the Boers did not understand the local African and treated him badly.

VICTORIA

The Victoria district was a large, important and extremely populous region around Fort Victoria, now on the main route from Salisbury to the Transvaal. The population increased

between 1899 and 1909 from 22,395 to 43,000. Thereafter, the Gutu and Ndanga districts were carved out and the population declined to 31,552, distributed (1913) on reserves 14,300, on unalienated land 8,250, on alienated land 8,052, and on mines 950. In 1903, only 10% were reported to be on reserves, already described as thickly populated. The levying of rent on British South Africa Company unalienated land began a movement which was continued by the Private Locations Ordinance. There was little mining in the area, and the alienated land was taken up by Dutch farmers "of the lowest class". A lot of the alienated land remained unoccupied. Under section 3 of the Private Locations Ordinance rent was charged on the latter, and rent and labour or labour in remission of rent exacted on the occupied land.

The most important feature of the area was stock-holding. By 1906, there were almost as many cattle as people. But in succeeding years the numbers, unlike anywhere else in Rhodesia, actually declined. There was little in the way of surplus crop; there was only limited employment opportunity in the area; and so the sale of cattle formed the only alternative to enter the cash sector to earn tax. Moreover, it was a district in which many cattle were killed for food, and many more for sacrificial purposes. In 1908 1,700 head were sold, almost 600 were killed for food, and 235 were sacrificed.

These figures were kept up in succeeding years, and even more were killed for food in years of bad harvest like 1911 and 1912. By 1912 the native commissioner was reporting a considerable drain in cattle and expressing the hope that in future the local inhabitants would have no alternative but to go out to work. In 1909, he had described an instance at a village where a party were actually ready to leave for work when a cattle buyer arrived: cattle were sold and no one left.

Crops were invariably good, and ploughs were progressively used, but the nature of the harvest appears to have had little effect on the labour supply. The poor crop of 1908 meant that there was insufficient beer-making for the following season, and hence there was little of the communal harvesting linked with beer consumption common to the region. Instead, it was each man for himself, with a resultant adverse effect on the labour supply. In 1912, the disastrous harvest kept men at home to help with the gathering of edible veld foods. An unusual feature was the cultivation of rice, which the native commissioner in 1901 recommended ought to be encouraged in view of the possibility of Chinese immigration!

There was very little labour opportunity in the district. Most had to go to Umtali, Gwelo, Selukwe or indeed to the Transvaal. The native commissioner in 1901 insisted that there was too much land, and suggested that headmen should be

ordered to apportion land only to those who went out to work. When a few hundred were required for mining operations in the district, there was never any shortage, which suggests that the lack of opportunity was the greatest disincentive. A more sympathetic native commissioner, observing that several hundreds went to the Transvaal, attacked the wages and conditions at Rhodesian mines. In 1911, it was pointed out that the Bureau's efforts were in vain because of the independent spirit of the local Africans who preferred to return to old employers wherever possible.

The native commissioners were shy of providing figures. In 1909, however, Jackson reported that 10,450 were on the tax roll, and estimated that 4,400 went to work. Reducing the tax roll by 10% for headmen and aged, this provides a figure of 47% of the able bodied male population.

CHIBI

The Chibi district lay in the extreme South and South East of the country, South of Victoria, on the low veld. In many ways it resembled Victoria. The population increased rapidly from 1901 to 1909 when it reached 41,000. Thereafter it declined to 30,205 in 1913, of whom 26,725 were on reserves, 2,727 on unalienated land, and 753 on alienated land. There were the usual movements as a result of the British South Africa Company rent and the Private Locations Ordinance, and

moreover the severe famine of 1912 caused a large number of deaths among the children and old people, and caused many others to move out of the district in search of food. The population was in large kraals and owned a very large quantity of cattle, the figure rising rapidly to 29,300 in 1911, after which it contracted just as rapidly.

There was even less employment opportunity than in Victoria, and even less trading of cash crops. Cattle were by far the largest single entry to the cash sector of the economy, although in years of bad harvests traded cattle were mainly bartered for grain. In 1908, 700 cattle were sold, in 1909, 1,350, in 1910, 800, in 1911, 1,800, and in the famine years 1912-1913 the astonishing figure of 13,000 cattle were disposed of. In addition, cattle were moved around in large numbers (900 in 1911) for lobolo purposes.

For labour migrants the district was as close to the Transvaal as to the Rhodesian mining areas. In the early years, when native commissioners "sent" labourers to the native commissioners in the Gwelo and Selukwe districts for distribution, over 1,000 were sent each year. Attempts were made by the police to stop Africans going across to the copper mines at Messina or on to Johannesburg. At the turn of the century there were a number of other disincentives. Selukwe gained a bad reputation because of accidents and the health record, and high prices were paid for cattle in 1900

and 1901. As a result, in 1901, the native commissioner reported that the only Africans to go to work were 180 he sent to road-making, 170 to the Globe and Phoenix mine, and 269 sent by the bureau agent Posselt to Selukwe.

This disinclination to go to work remained in later years. The Bureau was disliked because its recruits received poorer pay than "independents"; in 1906 it was reported that the shortage of food "compelled men to remain with their families until their means of subsistence was assured"; in 1910, the native commissioner declared that the women kept the men at home, and insisted on the sale of cattle; in 1912, the native commissioner, P. Forestall, suggested that a government station should be built at the south of the district to stop men going to the Transvaal; but in 1913 of 1,000 who went to work, at least 400 went to Messina. Other features of the area were that 2,000 to 3,000 Mozambique Africans passed through the district annually; that white recruiters from the Transvaal operated illegally in later years at the junction of the Sabi and the Lundi rivers; that indigenous crafts did not die in the area as rapidly as elsewhere because of the absence of stores.

NDANGA

The Ndanga district lay between Gutu and Melsetter and had an extremely large population of both Karangas and

Shangaans, the one a Shona and the other an Nguni people. Very little land was alienated, but by 1911, the imposition of the Company rent had driven all of the Shangaans North to the reserve, leaving the South East largely uninhabited. In 1909, no less than eight chiefs refused to pay the rent, and in 1910 the native commissioner reported that it was uncollectable. In 1913, 47,719 inhabited the reserves, 21,039 were on unalienated land, and 265 were on alienated land.

The inhabitants set up interesting relationships in the indigenous economy. In 1907, some areas had a bad harvest, and grain was bartered for cattle within the district. The Shangaans experienced a chronic shortage because of the predations of locusts and birds such as guinea fowl. The Shangaans were however the more advanced agriculturists and bought ploughs, breaking their excellent cattle to the yoke. The Karangas hired the Shangaans to do their ploughing for them, and by 1910 there were almost thirty such itinerant ploughs. There was also some cash employment among the Africans, the usual wage being 10/- per month.

There were a number of bad crop failures. In 1908, the failure was almost complete and the Africans were living on milk, game, and whatever they could forage in the bush. In the following year, despite the excellent harvest, they were unwilling to trade because of the recent memory of the

famine. In 1911 and 1912 there were serious crop failures and deaths from starvation, but most stayed at home to help in the search for subsistence. In 1913, an abundant harvest kept men at home to reap and enjoy the beer.

By 1907 there were over 20,000 cattle in the district, of which the Shangaan cattle were much praised. In succeeding years 2,000 to 3,000 head were sold to Europeans annually.

The people of Ndanga also suffered from the early disastrous conditions at the Selukwe mines. The native commissioner, J.W. Ekstein, complained of the shortages of food at the mines, the closures there in 1898, the dismissals without wages, the sick being driven away from the mines to die on the way home or at their kraals. Not surprisingly, in 1901, no one would go to Selukwe, using the locusts as an excuse to the native commissioner. But the Shangaans went to the Transvaal and even to Kimberley in large numbers, often journeying for long periods. Johannesburg, to which Shangaans had been going for many years, had become, according to one native commissioner, something of an Eldorado in the Africans' minds. In 1907, the native commissioner, E.G. Howman, attacked the Rhodesian mines for "screwing the native down to the lowest possible wage". Nonetheless, the labour figure for Ndanga invariably passed 50% of the able bodied male population. In 1911 independent labourers going to Selukwe had another bad experience. There were too many

labourers that year; many had to return home or engage for a pittance. Some fell into the hands of unprincipled employers who "sold" them to others. Despite the Bureau's coupon system, introduced in 1910, whereby Africans working six months received a 10/- coupon towards tax, and those working nine months a £1 coupon, the Bureau was never popular.

MAKONI

This district lies to the North of Umtali, West of Inyanga. After an initial low estimate of population, the figure rose only slowly until 1913 when there were 22,011 in the district, of whom 16,741 were on reserves, 5,220 on alienated land, and 50 in mines and towns. Kraals were very large, often of over 100 people.

Although there were lots of cattle and small stock in the district, there was little advance in agriculture. There were no ploughs. Yet, despite a series of poor harvests, the locals could satisfy part of the tax demand from the sale of grain. Even in a very poor harvest year, as in 1911, still there was trading.

The district was an exceptionally poor supplier of labour; there was little incentive and mining was disliked. In 1908, the clerk-in-charge reported that two thirds of the able bodied men were at the kraals, "lolling about and drinking".

In 1910, the native commissioner, L.C. Meredith, hoped for a large increase in European agriculture to outclass the African producer and force him to work. During the next three years however, well over 50% went to work, and locally the period worked was invariably six months. In 1913 there was a large drop in the labour supply which the native commissioner attributed to the fact that most of the men had had to work in 1912, but it may also have had something to do with the unsettling effect of the Private Locations Ordinance and the movement to the reserves. This movement had begun after the imposition of the Company rent in 1908 (in that year alone 45 kraals moved), and continued after 1910 from private land when farmers were demanding rents of £5 or that Africans quit the land. Paradoxically, farmers soon noticed the loss of labour through the movement to the reserves.

Theoretically, an area of large kraals ought to be able to supply more labour than one of smaller, but this is not necessarily the case, as Makoni illustrates.

UMTALI

The Umtali district lay north-south across the town of Umtali, south into the Vumba mountains, and originally included the highlands of Inyanga. The population of the district experienced a considerable move to the reserves between 1910

and 1911, a movement of which the native commissioner, T.B. Hulley, greatly disapproved. Since his 1910 figures were later admitted to be an overestimate in every case, this move might have been greater than is immediately apparent from the figures.

	1910	1911
reserves	7,200	9,319
unalienated land	1,500	2,180
alienated land	13,500	6,389

An unusual feature is the increase of population on unalienated land.

Despite the considerable trading possibilities, agriculture remained backward, a situation which Hulley attributed candidly to the insecurity of tenure. There were relatively large numbers of cattle and several hundred were killed for Umtali butchers annually, at least from 1910. Lobolo too was paid in cattle.

It was of course a district of high labour opportunity, having one of Rhodesia's most important towns on the line of rail from Beira to Salisbury. But as such, it also attracted large numbers of immigrants, particularly for the mines, from North Zambezia, Portuguese East Africa, and Shangaans from the Melsetter district, who did not suffer from the unsettling effect of the proximity of their homes. In the early years, the native commissioner reported that the high wages paid by the railway construction had an

unfortunate effect on the labour supply. Chief Mtasa, who ruled over 8,000 people, had supplied labour for the railway and to carry food from the rail head. In subsequent years the local inhabitants found alternatives for maintaining their independence: they burnt charcoal for the mines, and hawked vegetables to the town dwellers of Umtali. This independence was revealed also in the Africans' careful choice of employer. As Hulley put it, "In other words the pressure of economic circumstance is not sufficient to compel the local native to work for all and sundry". His surprise at such a rational response is fairly typical of many Rhodesian native commissioners' attitudes to their charges.

In 1912, he provided a labour return:

	1 able bodied men in district	2 no. who worked	3 period months	4 2 as % of 1
reserves	2,025	672	5	33
unalienated	320	108	7	34
alienated	3,250	2,070	5	63

and in 1913 he averred that no young man stayed continuously at the kraals. The Private Locations Ordinance produced in this area several agreements with a few hundred men to provide free labour, and only two thirds of these were given the opportunity of rent in remission.

INYANGA

The Inyanga district was separated from Umtali in 1903. By 1909, 90% of the population of 17,000 were already on

private or Crown land (an interesting slip - he referred to British South Africa Company land). By 1913, there were 1,500 on reserves, 3,500 on unalienated land, and 12,000 on alienated land. The native commissioner over the entire period was W.H. Moodie, whose reports are extremely uninformative and whose figures are obviously unreliable.

An indication of the requirements demanded of the inhabitants is provided by Moodie's estimate of 1909 that £10,000 was paid per annum in tax and rents. In that year he recorded that almost 300 cattle had been sold and £300 to £400 worth of grain traded. The rest was acquired by work. Moodie expressed himself baffled, considering there could be little over 4,000 able bodied men in the population. In 1908, he had described a sort of "shift" system at the kraals whereby about five men went out each year to work for the fiscal and rent requirements of the whole kraal, but by 1913 very few young men were able to stay at their kraals for lengthy periods. In 1912, Moodie produced a labour return - complaining of the necessity to do so - the detailed figures of which provide precisely the same percentage worked for each type of land tenure (33%). The return is clearly manufactured.

MELSETTER

The Melsetter district is an elongated area South of Umtali, running along the border with Portuguese East Africa. Its populations more than doubled between 1900 and 1913, even allowing for some emigration into Portuguese territory in 1908 to avoid the Company rent. In 1909, the native commissioner, W.M. Longden, reported that the rent had caused dissatisfaction and distress, that many could not afford the £1 and wished to move, that land in the Sabi valley was so poor that it was not worth paying rent for. The population distribution changed between 1910 and 1913 according to the table below. The large increase in the reserves population is partly explicable by some immigration from the Ndanga district.

	1910	1913
reserves	11,017	16,079
unalienated land	1,704	740
alienated land	10,996	9,071

There was very little trading and very few cattle in the district. The area was afflicted with locusts in some years, and even when a good crop was reaped on the high veld, the crop in the Sabi Valley was invariably poor. The labouring population, of whom many were Shangaans, had already considerable experience of travelling to work by 1898, when the native commissioner reported that some 2,000 had been to Johannesburg or Kimberley at one time or another. Most had

a distinct preference as to employment, and both the Bureau and public works in the area were unable to secure labour. An indication of the extent of labour emigration is provided by the fact that farmers insisted on their tenants staying on the land, and gave them just enough to pay their tax. Under the Private Location Ordinance some 1,321 males were party to agreements for labour in lieu of rent. It was the worst example (along with Umtali) of a system which it is difficult not to describe as forced labour.

In 1912, the native commissioner revealed the difficulties in labour statistics when he reported that only half his circulars were returned by employers. But he submitted nevertheless a detailed labour return.

	1 able bodied men in district	2 no. who worked	3 2 as % of 1
reserves	1,339	961	72
unalienated land	101	80	79
alienated land	1,166	830	71

While the figures tally with the general impression of the district as one where there was little alternative to labour in entering the cash economy, it should be noted that his figures of able bodied men do not appear to fit the population figures adequately.

This concludes the examination of all the districts of Mashonaland. The conclusions will be drawn in a comparative way at the end of the next chapter on Matabeleland.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1 Reports of the Chief Native Commissioner, Mashonaland, NA N9/1/10 - N9/1/15.

2 The native commissioners' reports for Mashonaland are in NA N9/1/4 - N9/1/16. Individual references will not be made in this chapter since all the material is to be found in those reports and in some others cited in the bibliography.

3 See H.C. Thomson, Rhodesia and its Government (London, 1898), p.51 and also reports of the native commissioners, Mtokos and Makoni, 1898. NA N9/1/4.

4 See chapter 3, pp.131-132.

CHAPTER 5

LABOUR FROM THE DISTRICTS

MATABELELAND.

The province of Matabeleland was of course annexed by the Company only after the war of 1893. It seemed like the richer prize: although less densely populated, the population seemed more willing and more able to come out to work; mines quickly sprang up; Bulawayo developed more rapidly than Salisbury; Rhodes's projected Cape to Cairo line ran through the province and made it more accessible to the Wankie coalfields and, later, to the reservoir of labour in the North. Great labour depots were soon set up in Bulawayo, and Mashonaland had to rely for northern labour either on the declining routes through Feira and Tete or on labourers (who had already travelled down the line from the North West), sent North East from Bulawayo by train.

The districts of Matabeleland were diverse, and rich in labour migrant opportunity. Each is examined in detail below.[1]

GWELO

This was one of the most important labour opportunity districts in Rhodesia, where the demand from within the district exceeded the possible local supply. The population

rose rapidly, and by 1910 40% was in the reserves, although this proportion changed again during the following year owing to the addition of an area where much of the land had been alienated. The figures for 1912 and 1913 reveal how swiftly the land was alienated.

	1912	1913
reserves	3,550	3,750
unalienated land	4,000	1,750
alienated land	4,360	6,750
towns	2,210	2,200
	14,120	14,450

It was an area in which Africans cultivated light sandy soils, and agriculture tended to remain traditional. They introduced few ploughs, probably because of the nature of the soil and because there were insufficient cattle for draught purposes. However, immediately after the marriage ordinance of 1902 quite high lobolo was demanded, invariably in cattle. In a good season Africans tended to over-trade their grain, necessitating re-purchase at prices often advanced by 100%.

The local labour supply was able to satisfy most of the demand in the district for surface and domestic work, but mining work was almost exclusively the preserve of "foreigners". By 1904, 70% of the total labour force consisted of Africans from Nyasaland, Portuguese East Africa and in particular Shangaans from Gazaland. The proximity of mining compounds had two effects. Since mining workers were richer, social intercourse with them increased the imitative wants of

the locals, although since the district was elongated and some areas were far from the mines, this leavening effect was restricted. Secondly, the co-habitation of the local women with the transitory mining population caused serious disaffection between the traditional authorities and the European economy. The chiefs and headmen disapproved of the withdrawal of the women from their traditional place in village social and agricultural life, and of the fact that no sanction was provided to order the women back from the mining compounds. These effects become familiar in this type of district.

INSIZA

The Insiza district is a very instructive one because it lies on the line of rail mid-way between two high employment areas, Bulawayo and Gwelo-Selukwe, and there were also some mines and a few farms in the district itself. Land was swiftly taken up by Europeans throughout the district, charging rents of from 10/- to £1 per hut, and already in 1899 the native commissioner, A.A. Campbell, was stressing the need for a reserve. In 1910, only 2% of the population was in a reserve and by 1913 this had gone up to only 7%. This meant that kraals were scattered and small, and 80% of all Africans in the district were "squatters" on European land.

The district is also interesting in that it had a very mixed population of Shona and Ndebele peoples. Its native commissioner almost throughout the period, A.A. Campbell, could be sympathetic and shrewd, though highly paternalistic, and wrote excellent reports. He pointed out that the Shona worked less in the cash economy than the Ndebele not because they were lazy (as many of his colleagues suggested), but because they were better agriculturists and cultivated more land. The Shona responded to the new dietary regulations for the mines introduced in 1907 (see chapter 8) by growing and marketing more beans and monkey nuts. Despite the fact that the marriage ordinance never really worked (because women greatly outnumbered men) there was a large increase in the number of cattle, and correspondingly in the number of ploughs used. By 1910 there were 300 ploughs in the district and these were extensively loaned out among the Africans.

Campbell shrewdly observed that the immediate effect of the Private Locations Ordinance was to cause a great deal of unrest and a resultant drop in the labour supply. The imposition of grazing fees was particularly irksome given the Bantu attitude towards cattle as a semi-sacred symbol of wealth.

Like many other native commissioners, he placed great confidence in the younger generation, and was beginning to find by 1910 that some young men had become habitual workers. On the other hand, he disapproved of education as a disincentive

to work, and he held that the missions corrupted the morals of the Africans.[2]

As in other districts, the locals invariably tended to fill jobs other than mining. His labour return for 1912 is extremely interesting.

	1 able bodied men in district	2 No. who worked	3 period months	4 2 as % of 1
reserves	255	108	4	42
unalienated land	1,000	600	5	60
alienated land	2,270	1,200	5	52
domiciled aliens	643	643	11	100

Campbell's successor in 1913 attacked the Private Locations Ordinance as pushing the people to the reserves.

MZINGWANE

This district was joined with Insiza until 1908. Within the district there were several mines, and the vast majority of the land was alienated - so much so in fact that by 1913 there were scarcely any people living on reserves or unalienated land. Being on the edge of Bulawayo, the district's agriculture advanced rapidly. By 1909 the native commissioner could write that "almost every native owns a few cattle, some donkeys, and a plough" and there was a keen desire to own carts and wagons. Several Africans became market gardeners on the outskirts of Bulawayo, and as in other districts ploughs were hired out (with their oxen) at 10/- per day. Cattle were

demanded for lobolo, although male partners of marriage contracts complained of the women leaving for the mines.

By 1909-1910, the native commissioner was claiming a work figure of 80% able bodied men working an average of six months in the year. This figure, even if exaggerated, undoubtedly reflects the demand in an area of almost complete alienation, and must include many "squatter" labour agreements. The Matabele Gold Reefs Company secured labour from its own properties at Essexvale for the Geelong and Ancient Mines which were outside the district, thus reducing the supply for the district itself.

Considerable numbers were affected by the Private Locations Ordinance under section 3, and the usual complaints were made to the native commissioner about harsher labour agreements, higher rents, and grazing fees. By 1913 many were informing him of their desire to move out of the district to the reserves.

1912 labour return:

	1 able bodied men in district	2 No. who worked	3 period months	4 2 as % of 1
reserves	38	15	5	39
unalienated land	9	5	5	56
alienated land	2,116	1,500	6	71
domiciled aliens	540	500	12	93
	2,703	2,020	7	75

BELINGWE

This district was close to areas of high employment opportunity and some labour was also required within the district. Already by 1899 some Africans were becoming accustomed to travelling to Bulawayo, Insiza, Gwanda and Selukwe. It had a very large population which increased rapidly (24,451 in 1898 to 38,039 in 1912), inflated temporarily by Chief Mpefu and his people from the Transvaal. It was a highly mixed population, including Ndebeles, Shonas, Basutos, and many smaller groups.

The inhabitants were, like those in many adjacent districts, described as highly independent, a poor field for the labour bureaux, largely preferring the indigenous economy and their rural crafts of pottery and basket making. In 1899, the native commissioner Jackson reported that the natives were the most industrious he had come across in Southern Africa, but that they preferred devoting their energies to agriculture rather than to serving a master. A large trade soon established itself and grain was sent as far as the Insiza and Filabusi mines and Bulawayo. Ploughs were used as labour saving devices, but the large trading demand appeared to have little effect on the extent of the acreage under cultivation.

Labour was always slow to come out in the area, mainly because the vast majority of the Africans lived on reserves.

By 1912 the figures were 31,610 on reserves, 4,060 on alienated land, 1,895 on unalienated land, and 474 at the mines, although the reserve population dropped the following year due to overcrowding. A whole series of native commissioners passed through the district and took up various attitudes to the labour problem. As has been seen, involvement in agriculture was stressed. In 1902 the native commissioner, J.W. Posselt, insisted that the depression in the European economy of that year was not due to the labour shortage. In 1903 496 young men turned out for the Globe and Phoenix Mine at the request of the labour agent, Nielsen, and later in the year at hut tax collection 250 turned out for the Red and White, and Rose and Killarney Mines. It was hoped that the large numbers of Shangaans who passed through the area would act as an example to the local inhabitants. In 1906, a more sympathetic native commissioner suggested that one of the problems was the lack of classification of labourers as to their experience and ability. In the following year, there was a poor harvest, high prices for grain, and very few turned out. Yet another native commissioner, C.L. Carbut, suggested there should be a £3 tax on idleness. But in the following season when there was again a poor harvest, his successor claimed that 2,172 had worked for an average of 3 months from an able bodied population of 5,000. A similar figure of 40%

persisted in subsequent years.

The Private Locations Ordinance affected only a few hundred, although the Anglo-French Matabeleland Company decided to forego rents on its tenants, and insisted instead on each able bodied man working for them for four months. In 1913, A.A. Campbell, more paternalistic and less sympathetic than he had been in Insiza, found that the labour situation in Belingwe "has emphasised my conviction that the true interests of the natives cannot be better served than by compulsory labour, disguised under some more attractive name to make it acceptable to the shouters of the 'liberty of the subject'". He hoped that the Ndebele, who were more willing to leave the reserves to work, would influence the Shona. It is curious that he failed to make the distinctions between the Ndebele and the Shona which he had been prepared to make at Insiza, and that he failed to observe that the vital difference between Belingwe and Insiza was that different proportions of the population lived under the various modes of land tenure in each.

SELUKWE

The Selukwe district, adjacent to the Gwelo district, is another district of high labour opportunity. The demand within the district was far in excess of the potential supply, which meant, like Gwelo, that the local inhabitants had to compete with large numbers of immigrant labourers from North

Zambezi and Portuguese East Africa, willing to remain longer periods in employment. Because of the ready availability of land, the period 1910-1913 revealed only a slight movement to the reserves.

Agriculture progressed very slowly - better seed was introduced nearer European farms, but the plough was slow to appear and there were very few cattle. Nonetheless, there was considerable trading in the area. As early as 1899 there were six trading stations and ten mine stores. Even using traditional methods, the locals were able to market large quantities of grain and - after the new dietary regulations - monkey nuts and beans.

As in other similar districts, the local inhabitants tended to offer themselves mainly for farm and domestic labour, although it is reported that the social life of the mines was more attractive. It is not unreal to talk of outside competition, for in 1904 there was actually a surplus of labourers offering themselves and employers tended to favour those from outside because of the longer periods they were prepared to work. It is interesting to note that the native commissioner, C.T. Stuart, reported in 1910 that schools away from the mines had a tendency to reduce the labour supply, while schools on the mines (as at the Tebekwe Mine) positively attracted labour.

Labour returns for 1912 and 1913

	1 able bodied men in district		2 no. who worked		3 period months		4 2 as % of 1	
	1912	1913	1912	1913	1912	1913	1912	1913
reserves	2,090	2,182	1,300	1,454	3½	4	62	68
unalienated land	820	640	540	426	4½	5	66	67
alienated land	723	1,042	482	728	4½	5	67	70
domiciled aliens	1,515	1,871	1,500	1,800	11	11		

These labour returns never include the large nos. of foreign labour not paying tax.

MATOBO

This district to the South of Bulawayo was, like Insiza, rapidly alienated to European farmers. The result was that the population actually declined, particularly after the Private Locations Ordinance when there was an exodus to the Gwanda and Mzingwane districts amounting to 3,709 out of a total population of 19,823 in 1913. By 1902, most of the land had been taken over and rents of £1 per hut were being charged. It was a mixed population of Ndebele and Karanga people.

Although there was little employment opportunity in the district itself (only 400 were employed in 1904 and 824 in 1912), Bulawayo to the North and the mines of Gwanda and Sebakwe to the East were not far away.

Despite the extensive land alienation, this was a district in which the indigenous economy responded rapidly: there was an exceptional growth in stock-holding; by 1907, 800 oxen had been broken for ploughing; by 1910, 590 ploughs were in use; there were many marriage agreements under the ordinance and lobolo was high; trading was considerable. In 1913, the native commissioner, F.G. Elliott, was able to report after the crop failure of 1912 and the ensuing famine which was general throughout Rhodesia, the inhabitants of the Matobo district were rich enough to buy grain to tide them over the bad period.

The influence of ploughs is instructive in examining the relationship between the indigenous and the European economy. They were a most important want not just because of their cost, but because they also required of course a team of oxen to work them. Since cattle were introduced in this way to break the soil, ploughing became men's work. But in this as in other districts, ploughs were used mainly as labour saving devices rather than as means to increase acreage. The native commissioner reported that men stayed behind to do the ploughing, but then went to work, leaving the women to perform the rest of the agricultural cycle.

At first, the native commissioner of the district was somewhat defensive about the labour performance of his district. In 1906, H.M. Jackson shrewdly observed that "the natives do

not follow the law of supply and demand (in labour), but act on sound economical grounds, for better wages in the planting season do not compensate for the loss of crops". Here he was attributing a rational economic response, the maximisation of real income, which was very rare indeed in the native commissioners' reports of the period. Nevertheless, his successor, F.G. Elliott, was claiming by 1909-1910 that 65% of adult males were going out to work, that young men were beginning to work almost continuously, and that wants were increasing rapidly. So was the tribute levied by the European.

In 1907, Jackson had written that Africans took great pride in bringing tribute to the government "as establishing their right to protection and consideration", but by 1909 Elliott was describing the mounting dissatisfaction at the ever-increasing alienation of the land. In 1912 he could write that young men were expected to pay in addition to their £1 hut tax as much as £2 in rent, plus grazing fees, for land that he had no time to use. The landowners had already decided that it was better to pay labour than keep it on the land. As we have seen, in 1913 alone, as a result of many irksome agreements under the Private Locations Ordinance, as much as 20% of the African population moved out of the district.

NYAMANDHLOVU

This district lies to the North of Bulawayo in excellent cattle country. It was created out of the Bubi district (vid. inf.) in 1910. Between 1910 and 1913 there is a familiar pattern of a population shift to the reserves, although the numbers on alienated land did not appreciably decline because of continuing alienation.

	1910	1913
reserves	329	2,275
unalienated land	2,215	770
alienated land	8,160	8,649

2,500 Africans were affected under the Private Locations Ordinance, and in 1912, the native commissioner, Leo G. Robinson, reported that those under labour agreements were anxious to leave for the reserves. Like Matobo, this was a district well endowed with both cattle and ploughs. To this day along the line of rail, tracts of this country are uninhabited because they are in the possession of absentee landlords, often large companies with little connection with the land.

Labour statistics are unsatisfactory - the figure of 50% working for 4 to 5 months is simply bandied about over these years.

BULAWAYO

The Bulawayo district was combined with Bubi in 1902

and recreated from parts of Bubi, Mzingwane and Bulilima in 1910. It was one of the most devastated districts during the rebellion (of 5,850 cattle before, only 130 remained after), but because of its proximity to the town of Bulawayo, it made a swift recovery. Cattle were sold to the inhabitants and a large trade was soon established. Already in 1899, 20% of the "kaffir corn" crop was sold, 20% of the Nyaute (a form of millet) crop, and fully 50% of the "mealie" (maize) crop, a performance which was maintained as more stores and hotels appeared. There was good employment opportunity also, on mines, of which the most important were the Morven and Queen's, and on farms. Almost the entire district was alienated, and by 1912 the Africans lived entirely on alienated land or on mine and township locations. In consequence African acreage diminished during the period.

The early native commissioner, R. Lanning, advocated a rigid state controlled labour policy, and requested permission to be able to stop Africans going to the city of Bulawayo so that they could work in the district. A considerable number of aliens established themselves, many of whom became habitual labourers and formed the usual transient relations with local women.

Because of the massive alienation of land, many Africans were affected by the Private Locations Ordinance. The acting native commissioner in 1912, H.N. Homans, was extremely critical

of the farmers who charged "exorbitant" grazing fees, "caused friction for want of tact and consideration", "kicked natives off the land to avoid building dipping tanks", and raised rents knowing that Africans could not leave because of restrictions on the movement of cattle.

BUBI

The Bubi district was also close to Bulawayo, though later cut off from it by the Bulawayo district. Despite the fact that the Nyamandhlovu district and part of the Bulawayo district were cut out of it in 1910, the population did not decline between 1903 and 1913. Land alienation proceeded rapidly.

	1910	1913
reserves	4,885	9,420
unalienated land	1,546	1,605
alienated land	12,418	10,216
mines	181	879

The district's agriculture improved rapidly during the period. There was an immense increase in stock-holding with a corresponding increase in draught animals and in ploughs, although the acquisition of the latter outpaced the former. There were several extremely good crops during the period and there were sales of cattle, monkey nuts (from 1908), tobacco, and vegetables (from 1909), and considerable quantities of mealies.

In 1898, Val Gielgud, the native commissioner, advocated

the compulsory introduction of lobolo since the custom was dying out. He suggested £15 for a Zansi, £12 for an Enhla, and £10 for a Holi, pointing out the different levels of Ndebele society, and that the Holi were more expert in agriculture than the Zansi. This would have a beneficial effect upon the labour supply because it fell entirely on the younger men, unlike the tax. The marriage ordinance that emerged in 1901 at first created large lobolo figures for the district, although as elsewhere they rapidly declined. Young men insisted on the customary birth of a child before the payment of lobolo, and for this there was no provision in the ordinance. This reveals well the artificial nature of and the ulterior motive behind, the marriage ordinance.

As early as 1899 the native commissioner reported that the rent charged on alienated land was helping the labour situation, and the extent of land alienation seemed to provide the area with high labour statistics from the beginning. A figure of 50% was reached in 1903, and in 1906 the native commissioner reported that 2,983 had worked a minimum of 3 months out of an able bodied population of 5,000. In 1912, the native commissioner claimed that 100% worked as long as 8 months, although this was greatly inflated in that year owing to the disastrous harvest. Since the 1913 figure tended to be low throughout Rhodesia, his labour return for that year is very useful.

	1 able bodied men in district	2 no. who worked	3 period months	4 2 as % of 1
reserves	2,856	2,060	7	72
unalienated land	390	243	7	62
alienated land	1,886	1,350	7	72
mines	479	469	10	98

BULILIMA-MANGWE

The Bulilima-Mangwe district was an elongated area in the extreme South West of the country along the border with Bechuanaland. From 1902 to 1910 the population increased from 36,429 to 44,500, but in the latter year there was a fresh delimitation of boundaries. In 1913 the population of 36,778 was distributed 22,200 in reserves, 1,806 on unalienated land, and 9,772 on alienated land. The country was excellent for stock, and there were plenty of ploughs. In 1904, there was a large crop surplus and the proceeds were used to buy stock. But in 1907, an excellent harvest resulted in extremely low prices and had an adverse effect on the payment of tax. The native commissioner observed over the years that men took a larger part in agriculture than they used to, although ploughs were used only to save labour.

W.E. Thomas, who had been born at the London Missionary Society at Inyati, was the native commissioner throughout the period from 1899 to 1912, and being himself a "native"

of Matabeleland appears never to have gone on leave. In 1899 he was rapturous about the labour potential and performance of the area, but by 1902 he was gloomy about the labour situation. He failed to see that the depression in the European economy of that year was cause rather than effect of the poor labour turnout. In 1903 there was a poor crop and Thomas felt that the mines ought to seize their opportunity to make work attractive. The proximity of the Bechuanaland border meant that large numbers crossed to the Rand labour agent at Francistown for work on the Rand, where, they claimed, conditions were better and the rock softer. This exodus to the South and the size of the district made accurate labour figures impossible.

Almost 3,000 people were affected by the Private Locations Ordinance, but agreements seem to have been not particularly onerous - there were no agreements for labour alone - and very few moved.

WANKIE

Wankie is an extremely interesting district. Government authority spread through it only slowly; very little land was alienated; agriculture hardly developed at all in the light sandy soils of the region where ploughs were useless; in the absence of trading stations there was no inducement to produce more than was necessary for domestic consumption;

there were few cattle, and small amounts were offered for lobolo. Moreover, the district was plagued with locusts which caused widespread crop destruction. The population was small (still only 5,700 in 1913) and consisted of peoples who had been raided by both the Lozi and the Ndebele and had given tribute to both. In the early years, what outside influence there was was bad influence according to the assistant native commissioner in 1904, Andrew Dale, who wrote, "The inhabitants of the district have not benefited by the influx of white and coloured (i.e. Cape Coloured) workmen during the year; owing to the class of foreigner they have come chiefly in contact with, a class little superior to their own, their respect for the European has distinctly decreased...."

Yet there swiftly developed considerable employment opportunity, firstly on the railway construction to the Victoria Falls, and most importantly, on the Wankie Colliery. The latter provides the best instance in Rhodesia of a concentrated labour force in the earlier period.

As many as 3,500 were employed on railway construction in 1904, although this rapidly declined. Foreign contractors treated the Africans unscrupulously, and in 1907 the railway company reduced wages. As a result, old hands left, new ones would not enlist, and by 1909 when wages were still only 15/- per month plus meal and salt, the railway had a very

serious labour shortage.

Wankie Colliery provided labour mainly for immigrants, although some locals were employed there. In 1904, the assistant native commissioner reported that 17 tribes were represented in the colliery's labour force which was expanding rapidly. The local inhabitants sold tobacco to the labourers; there were the usual problems with women; and significantly enough, domiciled aliens tended to come under tribal control. The local labour figure expanded very slowly, and the effect of the 1912 famine was to keep men at home in search of edible roots to support their families.

The famine in fact set off one of the first strikes in Rhodesia. In view of the food shortage, the native commissioner, T.R. Jackson, urged headmen to send out up to 50% of their men to earn the cash to buy grain. This was accomplished in May on condition that the men would be home for hoeing, and the headmen were given a highly successful tour of the colliery. When the rainy season came round however, the colliery wished to keep the labourers, and to compound the difficulties, a temporary compound manager was in charge since the permanent one was on leave. In December, 180 African labourers struck because of what the acting native commissioner describes as "legitimate grievances" against a compound manager about whom he himself had misgivings. The management insisted on the prosecution of the strikers, and the native

commissioner was obliged to comply, imposing sharp fines. Yet the native commissioner's sympathies were clearly with the strikers (while deprecating their actions for the benefit of his superiors), and he criticised a "management, in certain quarters of which somewhat quaint notions appear to prevail re. the functions of a court of justice".

Neither this nor the earlier bad accident record of Wankie was liable to endear it to the labouring force, and the native commissioner insisted that the only way out of the labour problem was to develop a permanent labouring class.

SEBUNGWE-MAFUNGABUSI

This district is quite unlike the others so far examined since it lies along the bank of the Zambezi, covering a very large area (much of which is now inundated by Lake Kariba), far from labouring opportunity. The peoples of the district were Tongas, Shankwes and Lozi, people who held only small stock, and whose agriculture scarcely progressed during the period. Not one plough was introduced.

Nevertheless, the population more than doubled between 1901 and 1912, from 12,892 to 25,870. The earlier estimate was certainly too small, and the population was inflated by immigration from North West Rhodesia as well as by natural increase.

Not surprisingly, opportunity and wants were few in the

early years. But an interesting trading pattern rapidly developed. The locals disposed of large numbers of small stock and in addition, produced tobacco which they sold to both the Ndebeles and to traders. This was the only surplus crop of the district.

Employment opportunities expanded in adjacent districts. Both the Victoria Falls extension of the railway and the expanding Wankie Colliery provided extensive employment. Moreover, so primitive was the area that carriers were required right up to the end of the period. Some Tonga travelled down to Bulawayo and to the mines in the northern part of the Gwelo district. In 1906, the native commissioner, W.E. Farrer, criticised the incompetence of mine management for the labour difficulties of the country, and reported that Africans frequently told him that they would rather work for less wages for a sympathetic master. This is the kind of unquantifiable factor so often absent from economic analysis.

Despite the comparative poverty of the area, considerable sums were exchanged for lobolo. Between the promulgation of the marriage ordinance (no. 2 of 1901) and 1905, lobolo of no less than £2,425 value was exchanged. Moreover, there existed the Kalila and the Garidzella systems, whereby a young man worked for his in-laws at their kraal for up to three years. But by the end of the period the number of marriages was in decline because of the absence of many of the

young men.

By 1910, a labour figure well in excess of 50% is being mooted for the area. In 1912, the figure of 60% is stated categorically, although this may have been increased by the poor harvest of that year. In 1913, the reserves were reported to be uninhabitable because of tsetse fly.

GWANDA-TULI

This district lay along the Limpopo in the extreme South of the country. The population was a mixture of Bechuana, Barenga, Karanga and Shangaan. There were never any reserves in the area, and land was alienated particularly in the last few years. In 1912, the population of 15,577 was distributed 5,271 on unalienated land, 8,806 on alienated land, and 1,500 on mines. Although cattle increased in numbers, and ploughs were used, particularly by the Bechuana, there was little increase in wants, and while most local labour demand could be met, very few left the district, Those who did went to the copper mines at Messina in the Transvaal, just across the Limpopo.

The labour performance was always poor. In 1904, the bad harvest kept men at home to look after their families, and at the poor harvest of 1908, 600 cattle were sold to pay for grain. In 1909 there was some increase in the labour supply because of the British South Africa Company rent on

unalienated land (the proceeds of which amounted in 1910 to £2,433). Even in 1912, the famine year, only 50% able bodied men worked. There were the usual problems of women at the mines.

Labour returns for 1912 and 1913:

land	1 able bodied men in district		2 no who worked		3 period months		4 2 as % of 1	
	1912	1913	1912	1913	1912	1913	1912	1913
reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
unalienated	1,506	2,708	750	1,000	3	3	50	40
alienated	2,516	2,122	1,260	1,100	3	3	50	52
domiciled aliens	1,012	938	1,012	938	9	9	100	100

This is an example of figures whose proximity to the 50% norm call their accuracy in doubt.

CONCLUSIONS

This examination of the districts has revealed that stimulation to labour was affected by a whole series of incentives and disincentives which varied widely from district to district. The labour performance of each district depended on the nature of the interaction of these incentives and disincentives.

The most obvious conclusion which can be derived from this district mosaic is on a provincial level. Mashonaland was notorious throughout the period as a poor supplier of labour. In 1904, the statistical returns of Mashonaland and Matabeleland revealed that 21% of the able bodied population in the former

province and 46% in the latter had been to work for a minimum of three months.[3] Before this the discrepancy had been even greater, and, despite the difficulties in compiling figures, it was assumed to continue thereafter. This distinction between the two provinces can be attributed - as it was by many contemporaries - to the inherent laziness of the Shona, or it can be attributed to a less effective body of native commissioners, or to inaccurate statistics. None of these is satisfactory.

It is clear that the Shona were a more agricultural people, more closely wedded to the soil, than the Ndebele. Moreover, the Ndebele lost far more of their cattle in the "rebellions" of 1896-1897 and there is evidence that their better response to paid labour was prompted by a desire to recoup their herds. The Ndebele also, like the other Nguni tribe the Shangaans, had a longer tradition of contact with, and work for, the Europeans. They seemed to take more kindly to mining, despite the fact that it was the Shona in the past who had worked the gold of Rhodesia, though by very different methods. There can be little doubt too that the Ndebele were a physically stronger and more resilient people. After all, in the earliest years, the "warlike" Ndebele had been described as extremely lazy. Moreover, the Shona appear to have been more easily demoralised by the influx of labour from outside. Their attachment to their

native village (which largely persists to this day) precluded them from competing with immigrants in the length of time they were prepared to work. There is also some evidence that they found the movement to the reserves a more distressing and unsettling experience.

In addition, it can be tentatively suggested that the factor of population growth in Matabeleland was greater than that in Mashonaland. Between 1902 and 1912, admittedly using only the most crude population figures, there would appear to have been a growth factor of 56% in Matabeleland and of 38% in Mashonaland.[4] However, the relationship of cause and effect to the labour performance is almost impossible to establish.

Population figures do however point to another obvious conclusion - that with more settled conditions, some good harvests, a vast increase in stock, and rudimentary health provisions, the first effect of European rule was to facilitate the survival of larger families. In the period 1898-1914, the African population of Rhodesia doubled, although it should be remembered that early estimates may have been too low, and that European operations in the Matabele War and the "rebellions" of 1896 and 1897 had slaughtered large numbers of the population. In 1898 the Chief Native Commissioner of Matabeleland reported that females outnumbered males by 4 to 1.[5] The larger factor of growth can thus be seen as a re-establishment of the balance.

Possibly as a result of the respective performance of their two provinces, the chief native commissioners of Matabeleland and Mashonaland assumed somewhat different stances over the reserves issue. W.S. Taberer in Mashonaland was uncompromising in his attack on the reserves system. He regarded them as a means of demoralisation, of excluding the Africans from the "beneficent influence of the white man", maintaining the position of chiefs whose substantial power had been taken over by the government.[6] The chiefs were no longer able to order labour, and the government could not. He established a myth of the "good old days", when "gangs came out laughing and singing", and recommended that an extra government officer be appointed for each district, who would travel around constantly "preaching the gospel of labour".[7] In 1908 he provided another insight into his dislike of reserves, when in an attack on "negrophiles", he implied that all Shona were potential murderers.[8] Accordingly, he attacked the imposition of the British South Africa Company rent and the European farmers who threw Africans off their land and then complained of the shortage of labour. The reserves in his mind became almost hostile territories within the colony.

Taylor in Matabeleland, on the other hand, having burned his fingers in the Colonial Office fire over the forced labour issue, attuned himself more to Company policy as modified by

known Colonial Office attitudes. In consequence, when Taberer left Rhodesia in 1913, Taylor became the Chief Native Commissioner for the whole country.

He attacked the backwardness of the reserves, but not their existence. In 1912, he wrote to the administrator, "The development of the reserves, thereby increasing the wants of the natives, is the true solution of the labour difficulty."[9] He wrote this at a time when the bulk of the African population of Rhodesia were withdrawing further from the centres of European employment, further from the stores and mining compounds that stimulated such wants, further in many cases from the best agricultural land. The process would eventually be reversed by the gross overcrowding of reserves, but in a very real sense, it was the moderate party, complying with the desire of the Colonial Office for a haven for the African population at a time when eventual African political power was unthinkable, which most successfully pushed forward the development of land segregation, and the mortgaging of the Africans' political future.

The ambivalence inherent in Taylor's attitude is clear from the remarks in his report of 1909 on the 4,000 Africans of all tribes who had become habitual labourers at the mines. This he said was a class that ought to be encouraged, by the provision of some land nearby and the construction of married quarters.[10]

As has been seen, the two actions which most aided the process of movement to the reserves were the imposition of the Company rent on land which was later adjudged by the Privy Council not to belong to the Company at all, and the Private Locations Ordinance, the one an administrative act of the Company, the other an ordinance heavily influenced by settler desires. It is certain that the first was not intended to have such a result, and the second was only partially designed towards that end. The first was intended purely to raise revenue for the hard-pressed Company, and the argument that it might turn out more labour was used in its favour. The second was designed to give settlers the right to remove "tenants" if their presence or that of their stock was annoying to them, or to impose labour or rent agreements if they preferred. The first was a signal failure (in Mashonaland in 1909 only £3,619 was collected);[11] the second relied too much on the good offices of settler farmers given neither to negotiation nor compromise.

The figures in our review of the districts make it abundantly clear that the rent obligations on alienated or unalienated land did succeed in turning out a far higher proportion of labour, but they reached the point where they became intolerable to so many Africans that the reserves became in their minds as never before a refuge from the constant cash demands of the European.

If the European created the demand for labour, he also provided the means of avoiding it. He created the demand for grain, for vegetables, for meat, which provided another, and for many a more attractive, avenue into the cash sector of the economy. In early days produce had been bartered for tax or for the baubles that then constituted "wants". But as Africans began to appreciate the possibility of a bridge between the cash economy and the indigenous economy, cash trading became the accepted norm.

Our examination of the districts has revealed however that the simple syndrome that a good harvest equals much trading and little labour and vice versa does not stand. An over-abundant harvest could produce a large drop in prices and a net loss in trading income. An extraordinary bad harvest could keep the men at home to help their families through the famine. A lot also depended on the nature of the crop. There is some evidence of a conscious switch to maize, the most marketable crop, and the response to the government's dietary regulations in the growth of more monkey nuts and beans in certain districts reveals another rational link between the world of the mine and the world of the soil. And of course this diversification depended upon the versatility of the soil and of the tribe in any one district.

Cattle provide a much more enigmatic role in the discovery of alternatives. Cattle were of course to the Southern Bantu

the most important visible form of wealth, a sacred area of tribal life surrounded by taboos of sex and fertility. It is not surprising that their acquisition should provide a positive incentive to work. The lobolo ordinance was designed to maintain the importance of cattle. In some districts however, the cattle relationship with the European economy was seen to be reciprocal. Their sale could provide the money for tax or for the grain for subsistence. In only one district, Victoria, was the sale of cattle seen as almost the only entry to the cash economy, and, drained by the exigencies of famine, they proved a swiftly wasting asset. It seems that this district acquired so many head of cattle that the incentive for fresh acquisition was lost. It might not have been had there been closer employment opportunity.

The arrival of the plough and the acquisition of cattle were clearly related. The plough required the breaking of large numbers of oxen. Since cattle were always the preserve of male activity, men became important in the physical act of breaking the soil, which had seldom been true of hoeing. But the evidence is that ploughs were used - where the soil and terrain were suitable - almost solely as a labour saving device, rather than as a means to increase acreage. As such, their effect on the labour supply, despite the few itinerant ploughmen, seems to have been positive rather than negative. In the light sandy soils where ploughs were useless, the scattering

of kraals greatly reduced the potential labour supply, particularly where cultivation required constant pollarding of trees, a man's task.

Undoubtedly one of the most important effects on the labour supply was the proximity of employment opportunity. To those far away, the difficult and sometimes dangerous journey was not unnaturally a disincentive, particularly after the disastrous accidents, death rates, and closures at certain of the mines. If there was the alternative of trade to hand, it was an easy way out. On the other hand, if there were no alternative, the journey had to be undertaken if the tax were to be met. Thus poor and remote districts could reveal quite a high labour figure. This is also true of the labour from the North of the Zambezi which will be examined in the next chapter. Others had a population where the habit of labouring was already established, as in the Shangaan areas of Ndanga and Melsetter.

To be close to the labour source could be a disincentive because the alternative was all the more simple. Beer and food could be sold, grain and meat traded. The existence of a large body of unmarried labourers in a district could create a market, could create a social problem, but it could also create a desire for the social life of the mine compound or town location, and the pay to procure from the store the means of imitating to some degree the culture of the European overlord.

The area which supplied the optimum amount of labour was therefore the area which was close enough, but not too close, to the employment opportunity, that possessed the means of an interaction with the European economy in cattle or trade, not too much competition from immigrant workers, and the right balance of population on alienated land, unalienated land and reserves.

This examination of the available data has revealed that in a situation where so many unquantifiables are present, it is not possible to prove or disprove any sort of labour supply function. The experience of the Umtali railway construction appears to indicate that a ceiling of want could be more rapidly reached with a high wage and have an adverse effect on the labour supply. But Rhodesia never had a fixed minimum or a fixed maximum wage; there never was the kind of employer combination that the Rand saw, and when wages were reduced, as on the Victoria Falls railway construction, the drop in supply was not only immediate, but lasted for at least two years.[12]

Essentially Rhodesia had a free wage system, and this could produce some hard bargaining in the labour market place, sometimes giving the edge to the Rand with its guaranteed minimum (and its less severe liquor laws). It also produced a highly complex wage and labour situation in which, given the inadequate statistics, it is not possible to establish any wage-labour connection. By maintaining this free system, Rhodesian

employers provided considerable difficulties for themselves, not least of which was the damage to the Bureaux. They lost labour to the Rand, created disincentives to work within Rhodesia, and had themselves to seek labour from outside.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1 The native commissioners' reports for Matabeleland are in NA NB6/1/1 - NB6/1/12 and N9/1/16. Again, specific references will not be given.

2 "There are no mission stations in this district, and to this fact I attribute a marked growing improvement in the morals of the natives." Report of native commissioner, Insiza, 1898. NA NB 6/1/2.

3 B.S.A.Co. Report for 1904.

4 The population figures are derived from a combination of the B.S.A.Co. Reports and the native commissioners' reports.

5 Report of Chief Native Commissioner, Matabeleland, 1898. NA NB 6/1/1.

6 Reports of Chief Native Commissioner, Mashonaland. NA N9/1/10; N9/1/13.

7 Ibid. N9/1/14.

8 Ibid. N9/1/11.

9 Taylor to Milton, March 5, 1912 NA N3/22/9.

10 Taylor's report in the B.S.A.Co. Report of 1909.

11 Report of Chief Native Commissioner, Mashonaland, 1909. NA N9/1/12.

12 There are descriptions of labour difficulties at several mines after reductions in wages in the B.S.A.Co. Reports for 1901-1902, p.176.

CHAPTER 6

LABOUR FROM OUTSIDE

INDIAN OCEAN AND NORTHERN ZAMBEZIA

In 1904, when the Administrator and Chief Native Commissioners of Rhodesia were attempting to refute the arguments of the Resident Commissioner on the availability of labour, it was pointed out that almost 75% of the country's labour force consisted of "foreign" labourers. The country's wealth, the Administrator wrote, is scattered over Africa.[1] This proportion remained true for most of our period. It is important to examine this outside labour because of the effects it had firstly upon the African inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia, secondly upon the peoples of its places of origin, thirdly on the relations between Rhodesia, the surrounding territories and the Colonial Office, and above all on African and European attitudes towards labour as only a temporary link between the indigenous and the cash economy.

There were three different forms that labour from the outside could take. The Rhodesian administration encouraged tribes from Mozambique, the Cape, the Transvaal and Bechuanaland to immigrate permanently to form a quarry for a potential labour supply. They attempted to bring in labour from further afield, from Ethiopia, Somaliland and South Arabia, from India and from China. And they encouraged a large body of temporary migrant labour from the surrounding territories, most

from the Company's own domain in the North, the remainder from Nyasaland and Mozambique.

It is a feature of the period that the Company and the settlers were concerned to keep up the African population; any desire for racial balance was subordinated to the desire to create as large a potential labour force as possible. Thus, not only were whole tribes encouraged to immigrate, but measures were taken to stop emigration. The British South Africa Company rent levied from 1908 on unalienated land was not imposed on border areas lest the inhabitants decided to move off across the border into neighbouring territory. A considerable fluidity over the borders existed throughout the period.

The Fingoes were the most interesting example of an immigrant tribe. They were a tribe from the Transkei who had had a long history of co-operation with the British in the nineteenth century. The initiative for their move to Rhodesia came from Rhodes himself. The need for their labour was overtly expressed in a verbal agreement between Rhodes and the chiefs. He is reported to have said

> We do not love one another so much as to give land without any return. ..... Having come to your reserves and your titles I ask you to give at least three months' work a year.[2]

There would be no tax on the production of a work receipt, but otherwise there would be a tax of £3. In this way, a portion of the Cape Glen Grey Act was in effect transplanted

to Rhodesia by means of a private agreement between Rhodes as landlord and the Fingoes as tenants.

The Fingoes began to arrive at their location at Bembesi North East of Bulawayo in 1898. The superintendant of their location reported that they were coming for labour purposes and to assist in the defence of the country if ever the Ndebele should rise again. The number of the Fingoes in the location never exceeded 1500 and by 1907 their numbers were dropping rapidly. The experiment was a failure, largely because of a whole series of bad harvests, ill-health, the death of stock from African coast fever, and disagreements regarding the levying of wage-free compulsory labour for the fencing of the location.[3]

In 1898 there were several other schemes afoot to bring African immigrants into the country. In that year a chief, Mpefu, a refugee from the war conditions in the Transvaal, was permitted to cross the border with some 3,000 followers and settle in the Belingwe district, and precautions were taken to stop the Boer police following.[4] This immigration was even more short-lived than the Fingo. In 1902, it was reported that he had returned to the Transvaal.[5] More important from the point of view of mining labour was the rather secretive scheme to entice Shangaans of Gungunhana's nation in Gazaland to re-enter the Melsetter district.[6] The Administrator was anxious to resettle them along the Sabi

River, which was reported to be able to support 15,000 Africans. In fact there was no systematic immigration, and it should be noted that only a few years later the Sabi Valley area was being described as particularly unproductive for its inhabitants.[7]

Africans had been coming in too across the Bechuanaland border. Some under Chief Banaame settled in a location which had been allotted to Raditcladi, the brother of Chief Khama.[8] In February, 1901, Temba chiefs from Cape Colony visited Rhodesia with a view to settling, looked over available land and returned to bring up their followers "as soon as military exigencies permit".[9] In fact this scheme does not seem to have materialised.

At first the Resident Commissioner, Sir Marshall Clarke, disapproved of this immigration on the grounds of infringement of the rights of the indigenous inhabitants of Rhodesia. Milton set out to convince him of the need for more labour in view of the costly importation from the North, and Clarke later modified his position.[10] The Colonial Office were sceptical of the Company's ability or desire to provide these people with sufficient land - labour was clearly the primary motive - and so Chamberlain informed Milner that all immigrants must be made aware of the land and labour situation.[11] Colonial Office susceptibilites to the rights of the indigenous peoples of Rhodesia were aroused by the veiled threats of the

Chief Native Commissioners for Matabeleland and Mashonaland in the indabas held in 1899: if the local peoples would not go out to work, then other peoples would be brought in and would take their land.

This type of immigration is important because it reveals most clearly the land-labour syndrome. Such an agreement as that with the Fingoes makes it abundantly clear that land is to be a system of outdoor relief to underpin the migrant labour system and maintain the cheapness of labour. Moreover, this system confirmed the Colonial Office's conviction that the only means of protecting Africans' rights was by means of reserves.

The second type of immigrant labour, an extension of the indentured labour from afar movement examined in chapter 2 repays study because it reveals the bizarre lengths to which the Rhodesian administration was willing to go to secure labour, and because it reveals inter-imperial attitudes between Rhodesia and the Indian Empire and between Rhodesia and the other South African colonies.

When recruiters turned their attention to the North East of Africa and to South Arabia, it was in more ways than one a reaction to the Boer War. The War meant the disruption of Rhodesia's communications southwards; it raised the fear that the mines would have to close, and that the Africans, seeing the discomfiture of the Europeans, would revolt. It offered

an opportunity to Rhodesia to prove its independence by means of the link with the Indian Ocean through Beira.[12] By chance, it involved acquiring a recruiter called J. Kusel, originally briefed by a Rand Company.

The efforts to obtain labour from the Red Sea - Gulf of Aden area take on in all their wild activity and complete futility something of the air of pantomime. Kusel had proceeded to Abyssinia to obtain labourers for the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa. On the outbreak of the Boer War he offered his services to the Labour Board at Bulawayo and an agreement was signed on 21 September 1900.[13] Kusel had submitted the detailed proposals he had drawn up for the Rand Company, including not a little shady business.[14] He described conditions in Abyssinia, in Somaliland, and in the Yemen, the establishing of agents, the bribing of governors. Kusel promptly returned to the Red Sea area accompanied by a Rhodesian settler, A.Tulloch, to act as paymaster for the British South Africa Company.

At the end of November the Company informed the Colonial Office that agents had proceeded to Abyssinia and that the Aden authorities required notification from the Colonial Office.[15] The Colonial Office were surprised and submitted the letter to the Foreign Office who replied that the enterprise should be stopped until King Menelik's views could be obtained. The usual questions were asked, "Why does Milner

know nothing of this? Has Sir Marshall Clarke reported?"[16]

Having established this Abyssinian smoke-screen, the recruiters next turned up in Djibouti, where trouble arose at a very early stage of the operations. The French regarded it as a breach of neutrality (with reference to the South African War) to permit Somalis to be shipped from Djibouti to Southern Africa.[17] Notwithstanding, a group of recruits were moved from Djibouti to Zeila by Tulloch and then illegally shipped to Aden, carefully avoiding Berbera where Tulloch had been ordered to report by the superintendant of customs at Zeila, and where the British consul had powers to stop the shipment. In subsequent correspondence to the Foreign Office this consul claimed that had he had an opportunity to explain their contracts to them hardly any of the Somalis would have gone. Moreover he announced that Tulloch's action had caused great excitement in Djibouti and "people inimical to Britain made much of it to the Abyssinian King".[18]

But this was not all. When this batch arrived in Beira Tulloch had difficulties keeping them together, firstly because Portuguese labour touts offered them higher wages and secondly because the Portuguese abducted seventy of them. There was even worse trouble with Kusel's party which followed. They rioted on arrival at Beira and clashed with the Portuguese police. It was reported in the Mozambique newspaper that the crew of the "Herzog" of the Deutsche

Ost-Afrika shipping company had told them that they would be chained and sold as slaves.[19]

After all this the labourers proved useless. However, the consultant engineer at the Surprise Mine found the few Arabs among the contracted labourers useful and asked for more.[20] And this set in train a yet more pointless round of recruitment. The trouble and expense to which the Company was willing to extend, despite these inauspicious beginnings, is a measure of the administration's belief in the inadequacy of the domestic supply. Tulloch submitted a detailed report on labour prospects all the way up the East African coast.[21] Even Lord Cromer played his part, telegraphing that Harrington in Addis Ababa did not consider that Abyssinian labour would be suitable, though King Menelik consented to the enlistment of labourers at five dollars (Maria Theresas) a head.[22] The Foreign Office laconically communicated to the Colonial Office that it agreed with Colonel Harrington's opinion.[23]

Following Tulloch's confidence that an unlimited supply of labour could be obtained from the Aden area provided the permission of the Indian authorities could be obtained for the establishment of a depot, a sort of labour entrepot, in Aden itself, the second act of the Red Sea farce was played out. (Aden and the adjacent protected states were under the jurisdiction of the presidency of Bombay at this time.) H. Marshall Hole, a senior official of the Rhodesian administ-

ration, was dispatched along with Kusel to begin recruitment on a large scale through Aden. Every precaution was taken to see that Hole would be given a co-operative welcome. At the request of the Company, the Colonial Office asked the India Office for an opinion and duly received a memorandum from Sir W. Lee Warner.[24] The India Office apparently saw no objection and did not regard the India Emigration Act of 1883 as pertaining to the protected states. The Colonial Office contented itself with seeking assurances from the Company that the Rhodesian administration would be entirely responsible for recruitment, shipment, protection in Rhodesia and repatriation.

Meanwhile, Hole in Aden was encountering difficulties. The new British Resident, General Maitland, refused to act until he received orders from his superiors in India. Arrangements went ahead; contacts were made with sultans in the interior; an island in Aden harbour with the unfortunate name of Slave Island was chosen as a depot.[25] But still Maitland refused to permit actual recruitment to begin. Bombay was raising difficulties. Unlike the India Office, the presidency regarded the India Emigration Act restricting the emigration of Indian indentured labourers as applying to the protected states. Correspondence was protracted and voluble. In August Rhodes himself personally cabled Curzon complaining of the delay, to which Curzon replied that he was

not aware of any delay.[26] The Resident persisted in ignoring both the India Office and Curzon - he would take his orders only from Bombay, and he was advising non-co-operation.

In London, the issue of the Protector of Immigrants had arisen, for should Hole's efforts ever be met with success, such an officer would have to be appointed. This minor controversy reveals perfectly the difficulties in Company rule and the exacerbated state of relations between the Colonial Office and the Company. It also reveals an interesting distinction in Company attitudes towards the Secretary of State and the permanent officials of the Colonial Office.

The questions were who should appoint the Protector of Immigrants, and, more important, who should pay him. The permanent under secretary, Sir Montague Ommanney, felt that the Protector should be paid by the High Commissioner - he did not like the idea of "the contractor paying the inspector".[27] Other officials, well aware of Treasury objections, suggested the method used for native officials: the Company paid, but the appointment was subject to the approval of the Secretary of State.[28] Finally, it was decided that the appointment should be made by the Secretary of State from nominees of the Company and paid by the Company, and this decision was communicated to the Company in August of 1901.[29]

Wilson Fox, the manager of the Company, reacted strongly

to the proposal - "It is monstrous that we should have the paying and the Colonial Office the patronage". It was furthermore,

> derogatory to the position of the Company to take the appointment of its officials out of its hands. It tends to give our enemies a handle against us, as furnishing official proof that the Govt. still regards us with suspicion.[30]

And in a most revealing postscript he added

> If future discussion is to take place upon this matter, I think it would be wise for Lord Grey to approach Mr. Chamberlain direct. It is not much use arguing such a point with subordinate officials.

Little did he know that Mr. Chamberlain had already produced the most cunning idea of all, namely that "payment should be made by us, but recovered from the Company".[31] And it was the "subordinate officials" who thought that this was going too far.

At last after many months of waiting, Hole was informed by the London office that Curzon had telegraphed that the recruiting could begin;[32] but only for the first thousand, for Bombay had decreed that Aden was not to be used as a permanent depot.[33] A most remarkable network of connections had been set up; journeys had been made to Lahej and Shagra; sultans had been tipped; agents and recruiters had been appointed. But the difficulties were only beginning. Sultans and sheiks who had glowingly promised large numbers of recruits (with an eye to their own pockets) failed to comply. Recruiting in the Yemen as hoped was impossible since trouble had broken out on the border and British troops had been sent to quell the insurgents.[34]

Fantastic stories about Rhodesia circulated in Aden, Sheikh Othman, and even in the interior: one of those who had "mutinied" (Hole's word) in Beira in the previous recruitment was in Aden assiduously spreading tales. Moreover, the rate of disappearance of recruits was remarkable. Kusel's first party from Lahej consisted of 338 Arabs; of these 150 deserted on the way to the medical inspection centre at Sheikh Othman, 60 refused to submit to the medical examination, 32 were rejected as medically unfit, leaving 96, one of whom was claimed by his mother.[35] Later Hole discovered to his astonishment that on the way from the medical centre to the island depot some more deserted and others were picked up owing to the lack of vigilance of the police. Eventually, 129 were despatched on a German steamer as deck cargo in the charge of a member of the British South Africa police, the whole journey to Beira to take over six weeks.[36]

The ludicrous end to the operation was in sight. The Arabs went up to Rhodesia; they refused to go underground; the mines had a surplus of surface labour; they and another group which followed with Hole were returned; and Kusel was ordered to wind up recruitment in Aden. There were recriminations, bitterness, and not a little wasted expenditure.[37]

Despite all, a renewed cry went up for labour from India itself, citing the many precedents for Indian indentured labour. In March of 1900, William Ewing of a firm of Glasgow agents had submitted a detailed report to Jones, Secretary of the British South Africa Company, on India emigrant labour.[38]

He provided figures for the 1890s of emigration to Mauritius, Natal, Fiji, Jamaica, Demerara, Trinidad, Dutch Guiana, Mombasa and the Seychelles, which reached a peak total of 19,613 in 1898-99. He argued that it was better to recruit in Calcutta the impoverished Indians coming down the Hooghly from Bihar and other perpetually depressed states.

Again Rhodes was behind the renewed pressure. He would not propose it himself, but he advised Milton to request Indian labour and then he (Rhodes) would lend his support.[39] It was over a year before the Chamber of Mines in Bulawayo took up the cry, requesting an exploratory recruitment of one thousand.[40] There ensued much discussion as to whether India could afford any mining labour herself and where the best area for recruitment would be. An answer to the latter question was provided by the Rhodesia Land and Mine Owners' Association early in 1903 when they began to advocate strongly the suitability of Mopla labour.[41] Sir G.S. MacKenzie, whose company, the British India Steam Navigation Company, had been involved in the transportation of the indentured labourers for the Uganda Railway, submitted costs involved in the transporting of such labour to Rhodesia.[42]

The Rhodesian case was greatly prejudiced by two facts, quite apart from the disastrous Aden experience. Firstly, German East Africa had recently applied to be included on the list of countries to which emigration was permitted under the

1883 Act. Secondly, the Bloemfontein Conference on customs, the Native Question, and Alien Immigration, called by Milner, was to meet in March of 1903, and the Colonial Office insisted on adhering to its espoused policy that Rhodesia was an integral part of South Africa, and could not be permitted to introduce labour against South African opinion. The British South Africa Company corresponded with the Transvaal Chamber of Mines urging that British Indians would be the most acceptable form of Asiatic labour to public sentiment.[43]

Milner corresponded directly with Curzon on the issue, and by way of refusal Curzon simply sent to Milner a copy of the dispatch he had sent to the Secretary of State for India, Lord George Hamilton, with regard to the German request. He argued that the undeveloped nature of the country exposed Indians to greater dangers and that it was difficult for the administration of a newly opened territory to ensure that abuses were checked. He went on,

> The pioneers of colonial enterprise are naturally and necessarily masterful men, not very squeamish or tender hearted. It is probable that for the control of Africans sterner measures than are needed for Indians are absolutely necessary; and there is always a risk that the distinctions between the two races may not be recognised when both are labouring side by side, and that the similarity of colour may be held to justify similarity of treatment and may obscure the fact that the native African and the native Indian stand on entirely different levels.[44]

By such an extraordinary piece of racist - though perhaps sadly practical - argument did Curzon temporarily scotch demands for Indian labour. Very temporarily, for within a few months the Company was making renewed enquiries to the Colonial Office, but that department stood by its strictures that Rhodesia was to wait to see what the Transvaal would do and had to prove conclusively that every supply of African labour had been tapped.[45]

Milton dispatched a point by point reply to Curzon's reasons for refusal,[46] and late in 1903 the Colonial Office agreed to suggest to the India Office that an official of the Indian Government might be sent to South Africa to examine present conditions.[47] Early in 1904, the Company submitted a letter to the Colonial Office which perfectly expresses the difference of opinion between them on the relationship between Rhodesia and South Africa:-

> The position of Rhodesia as a separate territory, progressive and emphatically British in sentiment, with great natural resources sterilised for want of an adequate industrial population, is exceptional, and since it is of the utmost importance, it is hoped that the solution of the comparatively simple problems to which the employment of Indian labour in Rhodesia give rise, will not be delayed while the far more complex questions which must attend the employment of similar labour on the Witwatersrand, are being investigated.[48]

The geographical isolation of Rhodesia was also stressed, and

particularly the fact that Rhodesia had her own port of entry through Beira. Despite these repeated arguments, the Colonial Office refused to attempt to persuade Curzon to change his mind for the reasons that Chamberlain had expressed in a minute of June 1903, that it was impossible to try Indian labour in Rhodesia first because it was not under direct imperial control, that the recent incidents of ill-treatment of Africans on Rhodesian mines had reduced confidence, and that the handicaps on Indians in South Africa were a bone of contention.[49]

Throughout this period a yet more bitter controversy was that with regard to Chinese labour. Again it was sprung on the Colonial Office quite suddenly. In August of 1900 the Company communicated that the Board, the Administration and Mr. Rhodes were now in favour of the introduction of Asiatic labour and enquired whether the High Commissioner could authorise this by proclamation. "The British South Africa Company, as usual, shoot a bolt from the blue and expect to get what they want without delay."[50] This was the reaction of Hartmann Just, and the High Commissioner was promptly instructed to decline to issue such a proclamation.[51] During the next few years the Chinese labour question had a remarkable effect on the protagonists of the Rhodesian labour issue. Chamberlain himself was an early convert. In 1901 he minuted, "Personally I think that the labour difficulty in Africa can

only be solved by the immigration of Asiatics under proper conditions such as those adopted in the West Indies".[52] The Colonial Office became divided between those who favoured Chinese labour and those who preferred Indian. The settlers divided from the administration and the mine owners, a polarisation similar to that which took place on the Rand. And the Resident Commissioner became divided from the High Commissioner with unfortunate effects on the system of imperial control in Rhodesia. To confound all, Rhodes (and Jameson also) eventually came out against Chinese labour.

As always, the Company was well briefed. In 1899 and 1900 H. Wilson Fox had received memoranda from London agents, Harvey Bros. & Co.[53] These stressed the advantages of Chinese - thrift, frugality, hard work, and since they were not British subjects they could not claim to stay in Rhodesia as Indians could. Examples of satisfactory exportation of both Chinese and Japanese were quoted - Chinese labour in British Guiana, on the silver mines of Peru, and Japanese on the coal mines in Mexico, and in Hawaii. Still seeking information, the Salisbury Chamber of Mines asked that a report might be sought from the consul general in China on coolie labour, food, the cost of shipment.[54] It is interesting to note that Milton in his request that the question might be opened, pointed out that the recent

Fingo scheme had not produced enough labour to satisfy requirements,[55] and one of the Harvey memoranda described the Fingo scheme as a fiasco.

For two years the arguments continued. In a dispatch of July 1902 even the Resident Commissioner admitted that the labour supply was not dependable and that Asiatic labour might have to be introduced. Clarke was to regret this dispatch, for it was published in a blue book and later quoted against him by the Rhodesia Land and Mine Owners' Association when he had become an ardent opponent of the introduction of Chinese labour.[56]

The arguments for and against Chinese labour eventually polarised on the question whether or not there was or could be an adequate supply of labour within the Rhodesias. On the one hand the mines complained volubly of their difficulties; when the Boer War was over, it was felt that the best miners - the Shangaans for example - were being drained south to the Rand; and in any case both Shangaan and Ngoni labour cost a considerable amount to introduce, and then only for a short period.[57] On the other hand, the Resident Commissioner based his objections on two main arguments. Firstly, he claimed that the local supply was adequate, and certainly would be now that the railway was pushing North into North Western Rhodesia. Secondly, he argued that only some mines were experiencing difficulties, and this was because conditions

there were unattractive.[58] There were even voices within the Chamber of Mines that had argued similarly.[59]

Meanwhile, Milner had been converted to an ardent supporter of Chinese labour. Wilson Fox advised Milton of this in a confidential telegram and instructed him to whip up support.[60] In reply, Milton announced that there was no popular support and that the elected members of the legislative council were firmly opposed.[61] Fox replied in exasperation that he could not understand this popular attitude combined with the frequent complaints about the shortage of labour.[62] What Fox apparently failed to realise was that Rhodesia was experiencing one of its first European class struggles. Those citizens who were not mineowners or administrators had no desire to be swamped by Asiatic immigrants, and hence resolutions from public meetings opposed were evenly matched with those from meetings in favour.[63]

Just a few days later, Fox in a private letter to Milton cast a new and extremely interesting light on the Rhodesian Chinese labour agitation, when he wrote

> I quite agree with you that there are not many places in Rhodesia at which we could at present usefully employ Chinese labour, though I believe that there are some; e,g, the Globe and Phoenix and the Wankie, but the point is not so much to get Chinese labour for ourselves as to help get it for the Transvaal and thus to relieve the pressure upon our sources of supply of kaffir labour.[64]

This is ample evidence not only of the interconnectedness of

southern African labour recruitment of Africans, which is obvious, but of the knowledge that Rhodesian mines were unable to compete with those of the Rand.

The rift between Milner and Clarke grew. The High Commissioner informed the Colonial Office that Clarke's arguments were "based on the prejudice that low-class Chinese and Indians are morally and intellectually lower than Africans," (cf. Curzon), and that the native would have unfair competition.[65] According to Milner, "a little competition is exactly what the natives need". His argument is a curious variant of the second Earl Grey's theory of the need for a challenge in a tropical climate, a theory formulated some fifty years earlier. The Colonial Office, faithful as ever to its position that Rhodesia was an integral part of South Africa, refused to countenance Chinese immigration until it was approved for the Transvaal. Ironically of course, the Transvaal did eventually have Chinese immigration, perhaps to the detriment of the fortunes of its African inhabitants,[66] while Rhodesian opinion against waxed strongly enough to be successful. Whether or not the relieving of Transvaal pressure on labour from the North redounded to the advantage of Rhodesia, taking Fox's view, must be examined later.

All of these flirtations with indentured labour are illustrative of a number of important points with regard to the Rhodesian labour question, and also to the broader topic

of Company rule. We find the idea of a labour reserve firmly entrenched in the minds of Rhodesian policy makers. The concern with indentured labour only tended to underline this idea, that labour was something to be introduced temporarily and then returned. It helped to confirm the notion that labour in Africa could only be in a perpetual liquid state rather than a permanent force, and no real attempts were ever made to establish the latter. This led in part to the insistence by many parties that the domestic supply was entirely inadequate. Certainly, Sir Marshall Clarke was correct in seeing a direct correlation between desertions, the length of stay at a mine, and the conditions at the mine. He was prepared to recognise the operation of disincentives, of repulsion from work, where others were only capable of thinking in terms of compulsion.

The indentured labour issue also tended to confirm the relationship of mutual suspicion between the Company and the Colonial Office, and suspicions of the Company were even stronger when another imperial agency was concerned. Lord Curzon was not prepared to see any distinction between an East African territory administered by Germans and a South Central one administered by a British Chartered Company. Moreover, the method of imperial control by High Commissioner through a powerless Resident Commissioner tended to aggravate the already strained relationship.

We find too that some of Chamberlain's beliefs have become enshrined dogma within the Colonial Office. Rhodesia is an integral part of South Africa and may not be regarded as an entirely separate growth as the Company at times argued. Only one Colonial Office official can be found who was prepared to argue that Rhodesia should be treated separately - Frederick Graham.[67] Another dogma was that the Company must be permitted to develop its estates, and these estates included Northern Rhodesia, even if development there meant only to be an effective labour reservoir for the South. That the Colonial Office tended to be far less obstructive here than in the issue of indentured labour must now be considered.

LABOUR FROM NORTHERN ZAMBEZIA

Northern Zambezia (which in the earlier period included the Lake Nyasa region) was marked out from the earliest days of European rule as an important source of labour. The explorer and treaty hawker, Joseph Thomson, wrote in 1891 of the dense population between the Loangwa River and Lake Nyasa, of the large numbers of men controlled by chiefs Mpeseni and Mwasi. The Ngoni were already descending on Blantyre "to hoe the fields which it was their wont, only a few years ago, to devastate with fire and spear". And this would soon be true of the followers of Mwasi: indeed

more so, "for being in the first place less warlike, and in the second, occupying a somewhat poorer country, they would the more readily turn their war axes literally into pruning hooks".[68] In 1898, the first administrator of North Eastern Rhodesia, while still administering from Blantyre, wrote in his report, "The export of labour to Mashonaland is one of the most obvious directions in which we can contribute to the development and prosperity of Rhodesia, and our preliminary experiments in this direction seem likely to be successful".[69]

Conditions preceding large scale labour migration in Northern Zambezia differed from the South in that the Arab slavers had introduced a whole network of economic and political relations in which the bloody labour migration of the slave trade formed at the same time a means of exchange, an important export, and a pretext for alignments, alliances and warfare. These connections will be examined more closely in the last chapter, "Labour and the African", but it is important to remember that labour migration in Northern Zambezia constituted more a replacement for the slaving and trading economy than in the South. Of course, the two systems overlapped. In the 1880s the movement of Ngonis to the Shire Highlands had already begun,[70] and both Sir Sydney Shippard (the imperial commissioner in Bechuanaland) and Francois Coillard (the missionary to the Lozi) recorded

Africans travelling from Barotseland to Kimberley during that decade.[71] On the other hand, slave trading was still being mentioned in reports as late as 1913, particularly on the North Western Rhodesia-Congo-Angola frontier.[72]

During the first few years of Rhodesia's development the labour supply from the North remained sporadic and badly documented, largely because it was provided by the private "touting" system of adventurous, speculative, uncontrolled, independent recruiters. Colin Harding on his extensive travels throughout Barotseland frequently provided accounts of labour migrants, of whom there were "more than is generally imagined".[73] He proposed a scheme of officers to check on where the migrants were going, and to assist them to their destinations. But during the 1890s these glimpses remain tantalisingly brief and the numbers difficult to ascertain because as Harding himself reported, they hated being led in a gang and preferred the hazards of independent migration.

In the British Central Africa Protectorate, the campaigns against the slave trade, the imposition of Harry Johnston's hut tax, and the beginnings of large scale migration were closely linked. But in North Eastern Rhodesia and in North Western Rhodesia administrative influence and with it the hut tax, spread very slowly. Hut tax was not effectively levied from the entire region now known as Zambia until after 1904. Its imposition occurred gradually and

unevenly. As late as 1910, it was reported that there was wholesale migration from districts where the tax was ten shillings into those where it was only five shillings, namely the Kasempa, Ndola and Loangwa districts. In 1914 some districts were still paying only three shillings.[74]

In North Western Rhodesia organised recruitment for Southern Rhodesia preceded the levy of hut tax by several years. The Bulawayo Chamber of Mines sent a recruiter called Bagley to Barotseland in 1896 and corresponded with the missionaries Coillard and Jalla seeking their assistance to reassure Lewanika that the recruits would be well-treated.[75] Lewanika was to be paid five shillings for every labourer recruited for six months and local chiefs were also to receive bonuses if it would increase the supply. The Ndebele rebellion greatly hampered the operation of these arrangements, and subsequently the Chamber of Mines dealt directly with the Resident at Lealui, Robert Coryndon.[76] This recruitment was however neither numerically successful nor particularly popular.

By the end of 1897 a scheme had been inaugurated under the joint aegis of the Bulawayo Chamber of Mines and the administration of Southern Rhodesia whereby a recruiting firm, Acutt and Crewe, would supply labour from the vicinity of the Zambezi.[77] By March of 1898 they had brought down 1,200 recruits. In 1899 Acutt and Crewe consolidated their position

when 6,000 acres were leased to them on the Kama River 130 miles North of Bulawayo.[78] Despite the semi-official nature of the scheme it was subject to the customary recruiting abuses. In 1900, four of Acutt and Crewe's African employees, one Zulu and three Ndebeles, were involved in an incident in a Tonga village North of the Zambezi in which three Tonga were wounded (one mortally) by shooting, and one Acutt and Crewe recruiter was wounded by an assegai. To the Colonial Office this incident smacked of a labour levy by a quasi-police force.[79]

Nevertheless, after the failure of the first Labour Board in September 1901, Acutt and Crewe continued to figure in Barotseland recruitment. In 1901 they recruited almost 2,000 men for the mines. Early in 1902 the mines agreed that they should pay £1 per head for labourers brought down by Acutt and Crewe, who were to make private agreements with the various mining companies.[80] The recruiting company established shelters and food supplies on the migrants' route, but they were soon involved in the first of many disputes regarding monopoly recruitment.

De Beers were also recruiting in Barotseland and were offering prospect of far higher wages in Kimberley. Both the administrations of Southern Rhodesia and of North Western Rhodesia had an ambivalent attitude towards De Beers, for obvious reasons. The chief native commissioner of

Matabeleland, Taylor, decided to the Colonial Office's astonishment, that "of course" De Beers did not require a licence.[81] It is clear that commercial association was overriding political considerations. This was not so in the case of the Rand mines. While local interests were determined to preserve Northern Rhodesia for Southern Rhodesia, neither Lagden (Secretary for Native Affairs in the Transvaal) nor Milner was prepared to see the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (W.N.L.A.) cut off from this important source of supply. This controversy must however be examined in the context of the modus vivendi on labour recruitment with Mozambique.

From 1903 to 1908 recruitment in North Western Rhodesia was in the hands of the Labour Bureau which used the W.N.L.A. threat to attempt to win support from all the Rhodesian mines. North Western Rhodesia became in fact the Bureau's most important single source of supply. In 1908, of a total of 14,002 men recruited, 5,679 were recruited in the territory.[82] Its importance both as a labour supply region and as an area of labour opportunity was greatly enhanced by the extension of the railway line northwards. The railway reached Broken Hill in 1906, and continued northwards towards the Katanga Border in the course of the next few years. Thousands of men, all local, were employed as labourers in its construction, and farmers and prospectors followed it North, bringing their

labour demands with them.

A relatively free recruiting system continued, although the administrator frequently complained of the unscrupulous touts (in 1904 many of these were reported to be Greeks).[83] Nevertheless, Coryndon refused to permit the Bureau to have a monopoly of recruitment, and the issue became something of a dispute between Milton and Coryndon. But Coryndon's successor, Codrington from North Eastern Rhodesia, was more compliant towards the Southern Rhodesia administration. He refused to permit Transvaal recruitment while Southern Rhodesia still had a shortage.[84] In 1905, the Transvaal Association had set out to recruit 1,000 men in North Eastern Rhodesia, and it is an indication of the difficulties placed in their way that they only succeeded in gaining 700 before they withdrew.[85]

The comparative success of recruitment in North Western Rhodesia revealed firstly the success of the railway in siphoning off labour, and secondly the declining influence of Lewanika in Barotseland. The controversy surrounding Lewanika's share of the hut tax and the method of collecting it revealed the Company's ambiguity in attitude towards Barotseland in view of its dual administration of administrator and resident, the one at Livingstone, the other at Lewanika's court. The dispute between these two officers, R.T. Coryndon and Colin Harding, reflected Lewanika's growing discontent.

He was at pains to remind the Company that he had not been conquered like the Ndebele.[86]

The North Western Rhodesian native administration was under-staffed, under-paid, and under-privileged.[87] Not surprisingly, this gave rise to abuse. There were complaints of excessive hut and crop burning on non-payment of hut tax, of flogging, of forced labour, of undue influence on the part of the district commissioner in the business of recruiting. In two flogging accusations of 1909, both the Secretary for Native Affairs and the acting administrator defended the right of district commissioners to flog, although they had in fact no such legal right at all.[88] The Colonial Office became increasingly disturbed by the North Western Rhodesia administration and by Selborne's handling of them. The officials in the Colonial Office were furious when Selborne permitted a district commissioner who had shot deserters to resign, rather than charge him with murder.[89] Another district commissioner accused of flogging and of forced labour was not suspended by Selborne until it was discovered that he was indulging in concubinage, hardly an unusual practice for the time. Moreover, Selborne refused to listen to the complaints of a settler called Venables - who in a long and acrimonious correspondence attacked the North Western Rhodesia administration - simply on the grounds that he too

had an African mistress.[99]

The Colonial Office repudiated Selborne's acceptance of the North Western Rhodesian administration's apologia, his assumption of the position of censor of private morals, and criticised "Selborne and his entourage" for failing to be "as watchful as they should have been".[91] The Colonial Office was particularly worried that these incidents took place near the Congo border. The parliamentary under secretary, Seeley, remarked, "The pro-Leopold gang will soon get hold of this".[92] The Colonial Office also noted that the High Commissioner had very little power under the North Western Rhodesia Order in Council, and had no effective adviser in the territory.

By 1910, work opportunity was growing in North Western Rhodesia. In that year, 1,000 labourers were recruited by the Kansanshi Mine in North Eastern Rhodesia.[93] But in 1911, when the hut tax was to go up to ten shillings uniformly in the north of North Western Rhodesia, some headmen complained that their men had little chance of working for their tax. Southern Rhodesia was too far away, and the routes to the Kambwe and Star of the Congo mines were closed because of the sleeping sickness outbreak.[94]

In 1911, North Eastern Rhodesia was weaned from the care of the Foreign Office, and the two Northern Rhodesias were united. The united territory will be examined after North

Eastern Rhodesia.

The story of recruiting from North Eastern Rhodesia reveals many of the strains present in that of North Western Rhodesia. Relations between the Southern Rhodesian and North Eastern Rhodesian administrations were seldom perfect, abuses occurred, there were some disastrous recruiting experiences, and the quality and health of the recruits were seldom good.

Soon after the establishment of the administration in North Eastern Rhodesia, Codrington, the administrator, gave a graphic account of the means by which labour was sought out.[95] (His description was, surprisingly enough, in answer to allegations of ill-treatment by the police, made by two settlers.) When a European required labour, he applied to a village acknowledging his protection. If no one were forthcoming, he might try elsewhere or he might send presents as a bribe to the chief, and ultimately he might threaten to withdraw his protection. When a chief repeatedly failed to comply, he was then brought to the boma (government office) and ordered to help the white man, to which his answer was invariably that he had no control over his young men. Codrington denied that this was forced labour, but went on to describe the "slovenly young men loafing in the squalor of unswept villages". Meanwhile the telegraph construction was at a halt, tracks were overgrown, and thousands of loads lay

rusting and rotting at Karonga at the North end of Lake Nyasa.[96] Nevertheless, no less than 1,500 of Mpeseni's Ngoni had migrated to Mashonaland in 1899.

A three shilling hut tax came into force in North Eastern Rhodesia on the 1st of April 1901. One immediate effect of this tax was that the administration, companies and individuals had to start paying their employees in cash instead of in cloth as hitherto.[97] But for a while, as elsewhere, payment was accepted in kind or in labour, This "labour tax" drew the attention of the Foreign Office. Clement Hill, the permanent under secretary, pointed out to the British South Africa Company's Board that no provision was made for such a system in the hut tax regulations.[98] The Company's administration attempted to explain away the term labour tax (which had turned up quite openly and foolishly in reports), but it was clear that they had been indulging in a system of free labour to wipe out tax debts. There was another system too, by which private employers paid Africans' tax directly to the boma on completion of a month's labour.[99] Considering that the tax was three shillings, this was indeed a cheap labour system. Ultimately, Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, insisted that this system smacked of forced labour.[100]

Inevitably, North Eastern Rhodesia became an important centre of recruiting, first of all for the Mashonaland Labour

Board, and later for the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau. Recruits were not only those indigenous to the territory, but also Nyasalanders who succeeded in evading the restrictions of their own administration. There were two main routes into Mashonaland, one via Feira on the Zambezi, where there were ferries, depots on the north and south banks, and a medical centre for examining recruits, and the other through the Mozambique enclave via Tete.

The first became for a while the most important route into Rhodesia. Between April 1903 and March 1904, 6,981 recruits crossed the ferries southwards and 4,298 crossed northwards.[101] Of these the vast majority were from the British Central Africa Protectorate (from 1906 Nyasaland). The busiest months going south were April to June. This means that the majority of northern recruits reached the high plateau of Mashonaland in the winter months, succumbed to pulmonary diseases, and created enormous death rates. The importance of this route did however temporarily wane as the railway pushed north into Northern Rhodesia. After it reached Broken Hill, it was considered simpler to escort recruits from North Eastern Rhodesia to the railhead and entrain them south. But it was discovered that the recruits were even more susceptible to disease by this swifter method. The long walk via Feira had in fact had the advantage of acclimatising the migrants. Moreover, as the needs of

Mashonaland grew relative to those of Matabeleland, the rail route via Broken Hill, Livingstone, and Bulawayo proved too expensive a means of conveying labour to the more northerly province.

The other route via Tete involved long negotiations with the Portuguese for the construction of a road to connect across the Portuguese pedicle with the route from Fort Jameson to the border and from the southern border to Salisbury.[102] The road was well under way by 1904. As the Nyasaland authorities steadily tightened their restrictions on the export of labour to Rhodesia, this route declined in importance for southbound traffic, although it is instructive to note that it remained important for returning migrants even after its usefulness to the Bureau had ended. Later, when there were attempts to centralise the Bureau's efforts in Salisbury, and establish one important route for the North Eastern Rhodesian recruits and the independent Nyasalanders who had continued to migrate despite official strictures, the road via Tete became more-travelled, and the route via Feira declined.

There were as always a whole series of events that could have done little to enhance migratory labour for the African. There were burnings of villages to pay tax (which dismayed even Sir Alfred Sharpe[103]). Villages dispersed and made tax collection and the control of unscrupulous labour touts more

difficult. In 1901, an Afrikaans recruiter working for the Mashonaland Labour Board operated with armed messengers. He was known to have flogged one chief and had another shot.[104] In 1904, there was a considerable surplus of labour in Mashonaland during certain months, and Sir Marshall Clarke, the Resident Commissioner, complained that he himself had seen gangs of destitute Northern Zambezi Africans seeking vainly for work.[105] (In 1906, when there was another such surplus, some had to accept work from the Shona in exchange for food alone.)[106]

In 1903, a recruiter called Hayes brought down 391 Africans from North Eastern Rhodesia.[107] Instead of handing them over for reception and distribution in Salisbury, he disposed of them for his own private advantage, 68 to the Public Works Department at a fee of £3 per head and 323 to the Globe and Phoenix Mine at thirty shillings per head. Almost immediately, 248 deserted and 15 died. Despite these examples of sheer exploitation - or perhaps because of them - officials seldom had a good word for the recruits from North Eastern Rhodesia. In 1904, Val Gielgud, general manager of the Bureau and a former native commissioner, submitted a memorandum to the Company describing at great length the inadequacies of North Eastern Rhodesian Africans and their unpopularity as workers in Southern Rhodesia.[108]

Although the record of the North Eastern Rhodesian administration was scarcely unimpeachable, there was a certain

proprietory attitude towards the indigenous Africans, which communicated itself in official annoyance at high death rates, ill-treatment in Southern Rhodesia, the inefficiency of the Protector of Immigrants (who had been appointed in 1901), and the like. However, during the sleeping sickness outbreaks in the valleys of the Luapula and the Loangwa which halted recruitment during 1910-1912 in certain areas, and involved the closure of certain routes, the North Eastern Rhodesian administration reduced the issue to a discussion as to whether it was safer to recruit for the Congo or for Southern Rhodesia. In either event, the Administrator of North Eastern Rhodesia was determined that recruiting should not cease altogether because of the resultant loss to the revenue, despite the fact that there was a danger of the whole of the Central African labour supply being infected with the disease.[109]

The Bureau was never particularly successful in North Eastern Rhodesia, at least until the eve of its downfall. In 1908, it lamented the fact that only a small percentage of the thousands crossing the Zambezi at Feira did so under its auspices: the vast majority were "independents".[110] In 1908, after the Bureau's organisation in North Eastern Rhodesia was taken over by the Southern Rhodesian administration, there were an inspector, two agents and a forwarding agent in the territory. Within Northern Rhodesia itself,

native commissioners played a larger part in labour recruitment than they were permitted to do in the South. Sometimes the native commissioner even acted as a conductor for a gang of recruits. In 1904 for example, the native commissioner for the North Loangwa district escorted 854 men, chiefly Bemba, to the Kafue District for work with the Northern Copper Company.[111]

The irony of recruitment in Northern Rhodesia is that it brought down in turn each of Southern Rhodesia's labour bureaux. The bureau which operated from 1906-1911 accumulated vast financial liabilities because of the grave difficulties in operating in North Western Rhodesia and North Eastern Rhodesia. Capital expenditure on routes, shelters, food, and so on was immense. The territories were too sparsely populated to permit of intensive recruitment, and the Bureau never had a monopoly. The 50% deferred pay system, which the northern territories insisted upon in order to safeguard their revenues, was extremely costly to operate, and contributed greatly to the unpopularity of the Bureau, for independent recruits had no need to see 50% of their earnings vanish into a bureaucracy for which they not unnaturally had grave suspicions. Moreover, the distribution problems in Southern Rhodesia were very great, for it must be remembered that both mines and farms were widely scattered, and even the largest mine employed just over

1,000 men. The bureaux frequently compared this problem to the ease with which the Witwatersrand Association could so easily send its recruits along the highly concentrated reef at Johannesburg.

The new Bureau established in 1912 eventually concentrated wholly on Northern Rhodesia. It greatly tightened up its operations, succeeded in escaping the deferred pay regulations, changed its office from Bulawayo to Salisbury, and attempted to move the point of ingress for the majority of recruits to the route through Tete into Mashonaland.[112] But it could not escape the severe competition. In 1913 the Bureau was competing with the Northern Rhodesia administration, the Anglo-Belgian boundary commission, various trading firms and mission stations, Messrs Robert Williams, the Star of the Congo Mine, Bwane Mkubwa Mine, Kansanshi Mines, Luano Valley Coal Mines, the Kaombwe Gold Mining Syndicate, and there was even a reported migration of labourers to German East Africa to work on the railway or the rubber and cotton plantations.[113] Soon Northern Rhodesia would cease to be simply a labour reservoir, and experience considerable internal economic expansion. The majority of Africans from the entire Northern Zambezia area continued to travel to Rhodesia independently, One of the Colonial Office officials remarked that the Bureau seemed to be receiving only the residue of labour.

The ultimate irony was that when the Bureau began to

submit much more detailed figures than hitherto it was discovered that bureau recruits from Northern Rhodesia suffered twice the death rate of those who came down independently.[114] The Colonial Office was hoist with the petard of its own policy. So soon after its inception the fourth labour bureau in ten years came under severe criticism, and certain districts of North Eastern Rhodesia were closed to it. The general manager wrote a voluminous defence in which he pointed out that bureau statistics were based on the entire period from recruitment to repatriation, i.e. from home village back to home village, whereas statistics for "independents" were based only on their period in the mines.[115] It was his one most telling argument, but it unintentionally revealed the enormous dangers of labour migration for the individual.

Opposition to the Bureau's activities was emerging in various quarters of Northern Rhodesia in 1912 and 1913. In 1912, the settlers of North Eastern Rhodesia revealed a possessive attitude typical of most settlers in Central Africa. Despite the fact that the bureau recruited for Northern Rhodesian needs also, the settlers wished to see all recruiting for Southern Rhodesia brought to an end, and severe restrictions placed on independent movement.[116] Instead they demanded inter alia a labour levy for their own purposes.

The officials of the Northern Rhodesian native administration also disliked the Bureau recruiting. In the report

of the Serenje district of Northern Rhodesia, September, 1913, the district commissioner wrote

> The natives of the district are obedient and respectful to the Government, but it is becoming patent that a spirit of independence is growing, whilst the constant recruiting of labour is the cause of grumbling. It is not reasonable to expect the natives to be constantly at work and at the same time to provide food for the community and others.[117]

In 1915, the Bureau had an embarrassing surplus on its hands for the third year running. The general manager, Wolfe Murray, had departed for war service. The Colonial Office's policy of an independent recruiting organisation, created because of the early abuses and because of the particular problems of colonial rule by Chartered Company, was discredited by its ineffectiveness and unpopularity with all concerned, not least among those whom it was designed to protect.

This is the broad story, but before leaving Northern Rhodesia it is necessary to recapitulate somewhat to give a more detailed idea of the nature of recruitment there.

In a Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau report for 1911, there is a graphic description of the complications of Northern Rhodesia recruiting. During the first six months of 1911, deferred pay was collected from 18,000 Africans to the amount of £24,000, of which £15,000 was remitted North. Advances of £4,000 were recovered. 3,741 labourers were repatriated.

322 deceased estates were handled. £2,100 was expended on railway travel north of Livingstone, and £3,400 for railway travel south of Livingstone. There were medical examinations at seventeen different points, and rations were issued at 41 different points. There was a total correspondence of 10,000 letters with 700 different employers. The report went on: "At best the business is a risky one, and is at any time liable to contingencies which may very quickly cause great and unforeseen expense". Just such a contingency had been the sleeping sickness outbreak of 1910. In 1911, only 1,689 recruits crossed the Feira ferry, but the bureau tried to turn the outbreak to its advantage by stifling the movement of independents.

The Bureau of 1912 tried desperately to avoid the expenses that had brought down its predecessor. In January of 1912 a conference was held between the Marquis of Winchester (representing the Chartered Company), the general manager of the bureau, Kempster, and the administrators of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, at which it was decided to abolish the deferred pay provisions. Voluntary remittances would continue to be received and forwarded. Very soon, however, the administrator of Northern Rhodesia began to recant, for none of the repatriated labourers seemed to be bringing any money home, and so the deferred pay system was reintroduced.[118]

In March of 1913, another conference was held on the

mortality of Bureau recruits in Northern Rhodesia. The new general manager, Wolfe Murray, and a travelling inspector, set about examining the possibility of establishing a line of food and rest stations along the route Kasama-Mpika-Serenje-Broken Hill, linking up with the already existing route from Fort Jameson at Serenje. They discovered that such a line of stations was impracticable because of the competition in recruiting in Northern Rhodesia, because the recruits hated to feel shepherded, because the stations tended to be unhealthy, and because there were in any case adequate water supplies along this route.[119] Recruits preferred instead to receive a "piso" or grant of calico or salt with which to buy food, and to camp where they pleased on the journey to the railhead. The Bureau succeeded in avoiding dubious capital outlay, and in doing so perpetuated the declining calico system.

Mashonaland was becoming the most important province for bureau distribution. Railway travel for the recruits was unhealthy and costly. The majority of northern recruits came from the extreme north east of Northern Rhodesia. The Portuguese were proving more amenable to the use of the route via Tete by the bureau. The Nyasaland administration had failed in its attempts to block the migration of labourers from the Protectorate. For all these reasons, and to consolidate its organisation, the bureau moved its headquarters from Bulawayo to Salisbury. Bulawayo was piqued at this fresh

evidence of its declining importance, and the white inhabitants of Salisbury drew up a petition complaining of the proximity of the bureau compounds, and what was worse, to windward![120]

But while the bureau sought to escape financial drains, it created by far the most comprehensive organisation seen in Northern Rhodesia. In a circular of January 1st 1912 the bureau announced that the underlying idea of the reorganisation was "closer recruiting, and getting into touch with the native in such a way that he will have the idea of working in Southern Rhodesia constantly before him, even in his own village".[121]

Northern Rhodesia was divided into six circles: the Barotse circle, encompassing Mankoya, Makwanga, Lukona and Balovale, with its headquarters at Sinanga; the Batoka, Mashukulumbwe, Kafue circle with its headquarters at Kalomo; the Loangwa, Ndola, Serenje circle with headquarters at Broken Hill; the Luapula circle, comprising Luapula, Mweru, Chienji, Katwe, Mporokoso and Luwingu, with headquarters at Fort Rosebery; the Bemba circle, Kasama, Fife and Abercorn, with headquarters at Kasama; and the Ngoni circle, Lundazi, Fort Jameson, and Petauke, with its headquarters at Fort Jameson. There were forwarding depots at Ndola, Broken Hill and Livingstone. In Southern Rhodesia, the recruits from the north were detained (for health reasons) at Bulawayo, and forwarded from there, or at Sinoia if they had walked down. Other centres for forwarding and distribution were Gwelo, Selukwe, Hartley, Umtali, Kanyembas,

Mtokos, Umvuma, and Darwin. There were six inspectors in Northern Rhodesia, one for each district, paid on a salary plus commission basis, to whom were attached interpreters and capitaos. There were sixteen agents (Europeans), who received a commission of ten shillings on each recruit, and were supplied with a riding mule or in fly country a bicycle. They were allotted a number of African recruiters who lived in the villages and persuaded the men to go to work, and several conductors who escorted the gangs of recruits to the assembly point for each district.

There were medical centres at Ndola, Fort Jameson and Fort Rosebery, and a sleeping sickness detention centre at Fundu. Those from North Western Rhodesia were railed south and were detained for three days in Livingstone, and for fourteen in Bulawayo. Those from North Eastern Rhodesia were examined in Fort Jameson, and then spent ten days at the sleeping sickness camp at Fundu, from where they walked via the Feira ferry to Sinoia. At Sinoia they were detained for a further fourteen days before distribution. At the detention centres the recruits were provided with a careful diet, examined frequently, and given prophylactic doses of quinine. Each recruit could not leave until he had been given a fitness certificate by the medical officer.[122]

On paper it is a highly impressive system, but there continued to be high death rates on the mines of Southern

Rhodesia, and its effectiveness was largely vitiated by the fact that the majority of migrants still preferred to travel independently and seek work on their own account, without the fitness certificate gained with such difficulty through the bureau's method. In 1912 there were 33,117 Africans from North of the Zambezi in all kinds of work in Southern Rhodesia, and of these 9,446 from Northern Rhodesia worked on the mines, 6,464 of whom were under the aegis of the bureau. In view of the great difficulties of identification, it is probable that the bureau figure alone is not an underestimate.[123]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1 B.S.A.Co. Report, 1904.

2 Quoted by Clarke in Clarke to Milner, September 11, 1904 enclosure in Milner to Lyttelton, October 11, 1904. C.O. 417/393.

3 See reports on the Fingo location, NA NB 6/1/2-8.

4 B.S.A.Co., Report, 1897-98 and Milner to Chamberlain, January 10, 1900. C.O. 417/283. A detachment of police was sent to Tuli to stop the Boers pursuing Mpefu.

5 Report of the native commissioner, Gwanda-Tuli, 1902. NA NB 6/1/3.

6 See the reports of the native commissioners, Ndanga, Melsetter and Umtali, 1899-1900.

7 Report of the native commissioner, Ndanga, 1908. NA N9/1/11.

8 B.S.A.Co. Report, 1900-1902, p.163.

9 ibid.

10 See chapter 3.

11 Chamberlain to Milner, September 26, 1900. C.O. 417/283.

12 During the Indian and Chinese labour controversies the fact that Rhodesia had this independent port of entry on the Indian Ocean was used to press Rhodesia's claims for separate consideration.

13 NA A11/2/8/2.

14 "The Turks do not permit emigration of natives under contract, but cannot prevent the exodus of some by dhow, particularly if the governor is tipped".

15 B.S.A.Co. to C.O., September 29, 1900. C.O. 417/312.

16 Minute to above.

17 NA A11/2/8/2 and C.O. 417/337.

18 Arthur Keyser to Sir Clement Hill, F.O. in B.S.A.Co. Board minutes, April 28, 1902. "The Somalis, a pastoral people, are absolutely unfitted for work in mines". CO 417/399.

19 Milton to Clarke, January 25, 1901. NA A11/2/8/2 and as enclosure in conf. disp., Milner to Chamberlain, May 17, 1901. C.O. 407/320.

20 Consultant engineer, Surprise Mine to Secretary, Labour Board of Southern Rhodesia, April 12, 1901. NA A11/2/8/2.

21 NA A11/2/8/2. Later, Hole was instructed to go to Mombasa to investigate the possibilities of obtaining Swahilis, Kikuyu or Kamba. Hole to Milton, October 23, 1901 NA A11/2/8/4.

22 Cromer to F.O. January 29 1901. NA A11/2/8/2.

23 F.O. to C.O., January 31, 1901, ibid.

24 Minute by Sir W. Lee Warner, June 5, 1901, C.O. 417/337.

25 Whole series of letters from Hole to Milton July to October, 1901, NA N11/2/8/4.

26 Reported in Hole to Milton, August 26, 1901. A11/2/8/3.

27 Minute by Ommanney, July 24, 1901. C.O. 417/336.

28 ibid.

29. C.O. To B.S.A.Co. August 28, 1901, C.O. 417/338.

30 Wilson Fox to Jones (Company Secretary) September 1, 1901. NA N 11/2/8/3.

31 Minute by Chamberlain, July 24, 1901. CO 417/336.

32 Tel. B.S.A.Co. to Hole, September 26, 1901, NA A11/2/8/3.

33 This was largely on the advice of the Resident, who feared that Arab recruits might bring cholera into Aden, and moreover there was insufficient staff in Aden to look after such a depot.
Res. Aden to Governor, Bombay, quoted in Hole to Milton, July 19, 1901 NA A 11/2/8/3. Also in Hole to Wilson Fox., July 9, 1901, C.O. 417/336.

34 Hole to Milton, July 19, 1901, NA A11/2/8/3.

35 Hole has two sets of conflicting figures in different dispatches (20 July and 26 July). These are the later, smaller figures. Also Hole-B.S.A.Co. October 10, 1901, C.O. 417/338.

36 The Colonial Office complained of the language used in labour correspondence - such as "contracts to deliver" - and pointed out that it also fitted the slave trade, and that there would be trouble if the Aborigines' Protection Society should come by the correspondence. See minute on Kitchener to Chamberlain, August 16, 1901, C.O. 417/320.

37 The figures of the very first contingent of Somali labourers only reached the Colonial Office in November. They were: left Aden, 411; reached Beira, 385; left Beira 349; reached Salisbury and Morondellas, 267; sent to mines and road party, 237; reached mines and road party, 200; reached Surprise Mine, 156. By September of 1901, 14 of the latter 156 had died and 36 had deserted. Grindle in the C.O. exclaimed "Extraordinary how the Somalis have melted away", and Sir Montague Ommanney ordered that the figures be sent to the India Office, who would "have a good deal to say about them". Milner to Chamberlain, October 24, 1901, enclosure Clarke to Milner, October 7, 1901, and minutes thereto. CO 417/321.

38 Ewing to Jones, March 23, 1900, NA A 11/2/8/5.

39 Rhodes to Milton, March 27, 1901, NA A11/2/8/8.

40 Secretary, Chamber of Mines to Milton, July 2, 1902, ibid. See also Milner to Chamberlain, August 23, 1902, C.O. 417/344.

41 B.S.A.Co. to C.O. January 6 1903, C.O. 417/382.

42. MacKenzie to Jones, March 19, 1903, referring to a letter of Jones on Indian labour which had appeared in the Financial Times of March 9, 1903, C.O. 417/382.

43 B.S.A.Co. to Transvaal Chamber of Mines, March 6, 1903, C.O. 417/382.

44 Curzon to Lord George Hamilton, desp. 20, 1902, enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, May 18, 1903, C.O. 417/372.

45 B.S.A.Co. to C.O. May 6, 1903, C.O. 417/383, and minutes thereto.

46 Milton to B.S.A.Co., August 5, 1903, NA A11/2/8/8.

47 C.O. to I.O. December 24, 1903, C.O. 417/386.

48 B.S.A.Co., to C.O. January 12, 1904, C.O. 4417/396.

49 Minute by Chamberlain June 3, 1903, C.O. 417/383.

50 B.S.A.Co., to C.O. August 18, 1900, C.O. 417/311. Minute by Hartmann Just.

51 Chamberlain to Milner, September 28, 1900, ibid.

52 Minute by Chamberlain, June 8, 1901. CO 417/337.

53 Harvey to Wilson Fox, October 13, 1899 and January 19, 1900, NA A 11/2/8/5.

54 Secretary, Chamber of Mines to Milton, March 7, 1900. NA A 11/2/8/5.

55 Milton to B.S.A.Co., Cape Town office, ibid.

56 Rhodesia Land and Mine Owners' Association to B.S.A.Co., March 19, 1904, enclosed in B.S.A.Co. to C.O., March 30, 1904, C.O. 417/398.

57 Milton to Wilson Fox, November 19, 1903, NA A11/2/8/5.

58 Clarke to Milner, December 11, 1903, C.O. 417/398.

59 Rhodesia Herald, March 16, 1902.

60 Wilson Fox to Milton, November 8, 1903, NA A11/2/8/5.

61 Milton to Wilson Fox, November 7, 1903, ibid.

62 Wilson Fox to Milton, November 12, 1903, ibid.

63 An example of a resolution against Chinese labour is this telegram to the High Commissioner:-
"Citizens protest against proposal introduce Chinese labour Rhodesia as ruinous interest whole inhabitants and subversive morality civilization....." Enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain, July 23, 1900, C.O. 417/283.

64 Wilson Fox to Milton, November 14, 1903. A1/5/5.

65 Milner to Lyttelton, January 25, 1904, C.O. 417/391.

66 Denoon, D.J.N., "The Transvaal Labour Crisis, 1906", Journal of African History, VIII, 1967, pp.481-494.

67 Minute on B.S.A.Co. to C.O. May 6, 1903, C.O. 417/383.

68 B.S.A.Co. Report, 1889-1892, p. 37.

69 B.S.A.Co. Report, 1897-1898, p. 114.

70 Hawes to F.O. February 19, 1885, F.O. 84/1702. I am obliged to Miss Allison Marsden for this and several other references in this section. Her University College of Rhodesia seminar paper, "Labour Migration from Northern Zambezia, 1890-1900", was helpful for some of the earlier period.

71 Coillard to Sir Sidney Shippard, January 8, 1889, enclosure in Smyth to Lord Knutsford, July 26, 1889, C.5918. Sidney Shippard to J.S.Moffat, October 22, 1888, C.5918 (1890).

72 Memo. by F.V. Worthington, March 22, 1913, enclosed in Gladstone to Harcourt, April 9, 1913, C.O. 417/523.

73 B.S.A.Co. reports, 1898-1900, p. 96.

74 Selborne to Harcourt, March 7, 1910, C.O. 417/481.

75 Bulawayo Chamber of Mines to Coillard and Jalla, January 23, 1896, Records of the Bulawayo Chamber of Mines, National Archives of Rhodesia.

76 Bulawayo Chamber of Mines to Coryndon, June 4, 1897 Chamber of Mines report, December 11, 1897. Chamber of Mines to deputy commissioner, Bulawayo, December 71, 1897.

77 B.S.A.Co., report, 1897-1898.

78 Minutes of the executive council, January 13, 1899, C.O.603/1.

79 Clarke to Milner, November 16, 1900 enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain, February 20, 1901.

80 Milton to B.S.A. Co., February 8, 1902, board minutes, C.O. 417/363.

81 B.S.A.Co. to C.O. April 16, 1902, C.O. 417/363.

82 Report of the R.N.L.B. in B.S.A.Co., Report, 1908.

83 Report on the administration of North Western Rhodesia, board minutes, June 8, 1904, C.O. 417/400.

84 North Eastern Rhodesia, native affairs, A.34, January 1906. NA A3/8/30/24.

85 ibid.

86 B.S.A.Co. to C.O. May 8, 1903, C.O. 417/383. See also Tel. Milner to Chamberlain, June 17, 1903, C.O. 417/372, and minutes thereto.

87 Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, F.V. Worthington, enclosed in Selborne to Crewe, April 1, 1908, C.O. 417/453.

88 Enclosures in Selborne to Crewe, May 10, 1909, C.O. 417/466. Crewe to Selborne, June 16, 1909, ibid.

89 Selborne to Crewe, December 6, 1909, C.O. 417/467. No.737. Selborne to Crewe, December 6, 1909, No.746.

90 Tel. Selborne to Crewe, April 11, 1910, C.O. 417/482.

91 Minute by H.W. Just on Selborne to Crewe, December 6, 1909, no. 746. CO 417/467.

92 Minute on Selborne to Crewe, May 10, 1909, C.O. 417/466.

93 Selborne to Harcourt, September 5, 1910, C.O. 417/484.

94 Magistrate, Ndola to secretary for native affairs, Livingstone, September 8, 1910, C.O. 417/484.

95 Codrington to B.S.A.Co., August, 25, 1899, B.S.A.Co. board minutes, December 6, 1899, C.O. 417/277.

96 In this period the easiest route of entry into North Eastern Rhodesia for both goods and personnel was by Lake steamer to the north end of Lake Nyasa and thence by carriers to Fort Jameson.

97 Annexure 25 to board minutes, April 9, 1902, C.O. 417/363.

98 Clement Hill to B.S.A.Co., annexure 23 to board minutes, March 11, 1902, C.O. 417/364.

99 Annexure 15 to board minutes, February 25, 1903, C.O.417/382.

100 Lansdowne to B.S.A.Co., March 16, 1903, board minutes, March 19, 1903, C.O. 417/382.

101 North Eastern Rhodesia native affairs no. A 25, annexure 16 to board minutes, August 10, 1904, C.O. 417/401.

102 Negotiations for this road were begun in 1899 and it could be constructed under article XI of the Treaty with Portugal of 1891. In 1902, negotiations were proceeding and a surveyor was at work, but the local Portuguese commandants were obstructionist with regard to the labour required in its construction. Codrington to B.S.A.Co., July 25, 1902, annexure 8, board minutes of October 8, 1902, C.O. 417/365. It was completed in 1904, board minute, October 4, 1904, C.O. 417/400.

103 Sharpe to Codrington, July 1902, annexure 6, board minutes, October 8, 1902, C.O. 417/365.

104 Correspondence enclosure in Milner to Chamberlain, October 4, 1901, C.O. 417/321.

105 Clarke to Milner, May 3, 1904, enclosure in Milner to Lyttelton, June 6, 1904, CO 417/392.

106 Milton to B.S.A.Co., December 28, 1906, board minutes, January 31, 1907, C.O. 417/444.

107 Correspondence enclosures in Milner to Chamberlain, August 10, 1903, C.O. 417/373.

108 Memo. by Gielgud, December 9, 1903, annexure 38 to board minutes, 13/14 January, 1904, C.O. 417/396.

109 See board minutes, March 17, 1910, and April 21, 1910, C.O. 417/491 and December 8, 1910, C.O. 417/493. Also NA A3/18/30/21.

110 B.S.A.Co. report, 1908, p. 34.

111 Annexure 79, board minutes, October 4, 1904, C.O. 417/400.

112 R.N.L.B. to Milton, October 16, 1913, A3/18/30/29.

113 ibid. See also Gladstone to Harcourt, November 27, 1913, C.O. 417/526.

114 Gladstone to Harcourt, May 9, 1914, C.O. 417/540, mortality figures for year-ending 31 December 1913.

115 Wolfe Murray to Milton, February 14, 1914, NA A3/18/30/29.

116 Protests of North Eastern Rhodesia settlers enclosure in Gladstone to Harcourt, August 3, 1912, C.O. 417/513.

117 Enclosure in Gladstone to Harcourt, December 11, 1913, C.O. 417/527.

118 For the history of the deferred pay controversy, see the chairman's statement at the first ordinary general meeting of the bureau, January 24, 1912, in NA A3/18/30/28. Milton to Gladstone, enclosure in Gladstone to Harcourt, October 30, 1913, C.O. 417/525. Deferred pay was re-introduced for another reason: the Northern Rhodesian administration was beginning to prefer Katanga for labour export, since they received deferred pay from there.

119 R.N.L.B. To Milton, October 16, 1913, A3/18/30/29 and enclosure in Gladstone to Harcourt, June 18, 1913, C.O. 417/524.

120 Petition in A3/18/30/28.

121 R.N.L.B. circular no. 2, January 1, 1912, A3/18/30/28.

122 Circular no. 1, ibid. Also R.N.L.B. to Milton, May 29, 1912.

123 B.S.A.Co. report, 1912, p.75.

CHAPTER 7

LABOUR FROM OUTSIDE

NYASALAND, MOZAMBIQUE AND THE TRANSVAAL

In Northern Zambezia, the Company was dealing with a branch of its own administration. On Asiatic labour, it stumbled upon the Colonial Office's doctrine that Southern Rhodesia could not act independently of South Africa. In the case of Nyasaland, the Company liked to think that it was handling a friendly administration, but in fact it encountered one that became increasingly intractable. And in its relations with the Portuguese in Mozambique and with the government of the Transvaal, the Company found itself increasingly squeezed out.

LABOUR FROM NYASALAND

Labour migration from the British Central Africa Protectorate (known after 1906 as Nyasaland) reveals very well the Chartered Company's belief in labour rights from the northern territories. This belief must be understood in terms of the relationship between Rhodes and Johnston in the days of the Scramble, and in the early administrative and transport connection between the British Central Africa Protectorate and North Eastern Rhodesia. When the Chartered Company failed to establish this unwritten right - and indeed discovered that they took second place to the Rand - the result was considerable inter-colonial strain, and often acerbic diplomacy.

From 1906 Nyasaland was under the jurisdiction of the Colonial Office, but this administrative change only served to aggravate the tensions on the labour issue. The difficult relationship illustrated again settler exclusiveness and thinly veiled suspicion of Chartered Company rule.

As early as 1897 Nyasas were at work in Rhodesia. In that year, 200 from the Port Herald district were working on the Umtali railway.[1] In the early literature there are frequent references to "Blantyre boys" as personal servants and clerks.[2] The Company subsidised Dr. Laws' educational work at the Free Church of Scotland mission of Livingstonia, so that a plentiful supply of clerks might be sent to work in the Company's territory.[3] In 1899, 1,000 passes were issued to recruits from the West Nyasa district who wished to go to Salisbury.[4]

But regulations governing labour migration from the Protectorate were very strict, and there were several prosecutions of recruiters for illegal recruitment.[5] Settler voices were already being raised through the British Central Africa Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce, which expressed concern for the moral welfare of migrants and the high death rates, as well as pure self interest. In 1900, the Blantyre Chamber of Commerce petitioned the Foreign Office seeking that all migratory labour from the British Central Africa Protectorate be banned.[6]

For ten years this did not happen. The Protectorate administration refused to permit overt recruitment, although at various times agents for Southern Rhodesia and for the Rand did in fact operate there, under the fiction that they were merely offering advice. The administration also insisted on dealing directly with the Rhodesian administration and not with the Labour Bureau, and it was largely because of this insistence that the Company administration took over temporarily in 1908 the entire Northern Rhodesian organisation of the Bureau. This insistence fitted ill with the Colonial Office's desire that the Company's administration should remain aloof from recruitment. Voluntary migration from Nyasaland was clearly considerable, and at various times special arrangements were made for the recruitment of specific numbers. Both the "independents" and these organised bands were integrated into the North Eastern Rhodesia system, travelling via Fort Jameson either to Feira or to Broken Hill and thence to Southern Rhodesia. Others took the more hazardous (at least in the earlier period) route via Tete.

The volume of independent migration from the Protectorate rose rapidly. In 1903, 6,000 Nyasas registered at the Zambezi crossing at Feira, and this may well have been only a fraction of the total.[7] Moreover, Sir Alfred Sharpe, commissioner and later governor of the Protectorate, facilitated Rand recruitment of several thousand Nyasas at terms favourable

to the Nyasaland administration (sixteen shillings per head).[8] In order to control the increasing migration to Southern Rhodesia, Sharpe decided in 1907 to arrange a carefully organised system of migration and distribution (but not it should be noted of recruitment).[9] Both Sharpe and Codrington of North Eastern Rhodesia were in England on leave early in 1908, and in correspondence between them it is clear that both distrusted the labour bureau; Sharpe even thought that Milton was in awe of it.[10] He desired therefore that the volume of independent recruitment should be diverted into a government organised system via the railhead at Broken Hill, using the deferred pay system as a revenue producer and as an incentive to repatriation, and with adequate government inspection at the place of work.

The arrangement that emerged for the migration of 1,000 mine labourers in 1908 involved considerable division of responsibility.[11] District residents in Nyasaland were to forward recruits to Fort Jameson; North Eastern Rhodesia officials were to be responsible for the journey to Broken Hill; Southern Rhodesia officials for the journey to Bulawayo; and the labour bureau for the distribution from Bulawayo; the Southern Rhodesia administration again for inspection of conditions at the mines. There were to be three medical examinations - at Dowa, Broken Hill, and Bulawayo - 50% of pay was to be deferred to Nyasaland, and the recruits were to

be repatriated in twelve months.

Considering the numbers involved, there was an enormous amount of negotiation and organisation. Surprisingly enough, Sharpe wished to see an immediate increase in the numbers, but Milton sought to keep them down to a manageable experiment.[12] Recipient mines were carefully vetted by both the chief native commissioner and the medical director in Southern Rhodesia (of whom the medical director was by far the more severe).[13] The Southern Rhodesia administration did in fact have some difficulty in placing all the recruits, since the Mashonaland mines were totally uninterested, both because of the expense and because they arrived at a period when there was a considerable influx of local labourers.

By mid-1909 it was clear that from a health point of view at least, the experiment had been a failure. A minute in the Colonial Office described the mortality as "frightful",[14] and this was something of an understatement. The figures are particularly interesting because Milton had convinced Sharpe in the middle of the operation that the Feira route (i.e. walking) was better both from the point of view of health and of expense.[15] Of the 774 who travelled via Broken Hill and the railway, 126 died, mainly from pneumonia. Of the 697 who walked via Feira, 32 died.

Nevertheless, Sharpe and the Southern Rhodesia administration, with the blessing of Crewe, the Secretary of State,

decided on a further experiment of 1,500 mining recruits.[16] A conference was held in Zomba in July and August of 1909 (at about the time the mortality figures for the previous twelve months were becoming known), at which Sharpe, Wrey (chairman of the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau), H.M. Hole (for the Southern Rhodesia administration), Dr. Casson (Secretary for Native Affairs in Nyasaland), and Hawksley (inspector of recruiting in North Eastern Rhodesia) discussed the arrangements for the new experiment. Sharpe agreed reluctantly to an agent being present at the assembly of the recruits in Nyasaland, insisted on the deferred pay system, even from independents despite difficulties of identification, and expressed the hope for a reduction of independent migration via Feira or Tete, especially as the Bureau were attempting to place the routes through Portuguese territory on a more organised footing.[17] No Nyasaland recruits were to enter Southern Rhodesia before August 1st in order to avoid the Southern Rhodesia cold season.

At this conference, Sharpe expressed himself satisfied with farm labouring in Southern Rhodesia. It is clear from the Feira ferry figures that many thousands of Nyasalanders migrated to Southern Rhodesia farms every year. The High Commissioner in a despatch explaining the lack of regulations in this area, had pointed out that farming was the natural occupation of the African.[18] It is important however to

bear in mind a number of facts. Firstly, there was no inspectorate to review conditions of farm labour; secondly, farmers were notoriously loath to fill in returns; and thirdly, farm labour was enormously dispersed and difficult to check. The satisfaction with farm labouring may therefore have been born of ignorance.

Several thousand Nyasalanders continued to migrate South for farm labour both through the organised system and independently (although many independents headed for the mines where rewards were much greater, and prestige was higher). The problem in this was that the Rhodesian farming industry was coming to rely to a great extent on a labour supply which was renewed annually because of the insistence of the Nyasaland authorities on contracts no longer than twelve months, and was therefore subject to sudden withdrawal. Moreover, the farmers' own policies with regard to "squatters" were increasing their own labour difficulties as was seen in chapters 4 & 5. Late in 1910 during a time lag between repatriation and supply of large numbers of Nyasaland labourers under the official system, Rhodesian tobacco farming in particular suddenly found itself in great difficulties. Milton sought permission to renew the contracts for six months to tide the industry over.[19]

This raised the whole issue whether repatriation was compulsory, despite individual wishes to remain. There was disagreement on this point within the Colonial Office. Seeley,

the parliamentary under secretary, held that repatriation could not be compulsory as this infringed the rights of the individual, but nonetheless, the Board of the British South Africa Company was informed that the wishes of the Nyasaland administration had to be adhered to.[20] Sensing the division within the Colonial Office on this point, the Board informed Milton that he could not compel those who wished to stay to return.[21]

The second group of mine workers who migrated through the official system late in 1909 fared better than the first. 1,560 were distributed widely to 9 large mines and to 22 smaller ones.[22] The Rhodesian administration were however bitterly disappointed with the physical condition of these men. Despite medical examinations at both Fort Johnston (in the Protectorate) and at Feira, of one party of 460 Yaos, the Southern Rhodesia medical director rejected 103 as unfit for mine labour. These were sent on for farm labour.[23] H.M. Hole referred to the recruits as "miserable Yaos", little better than the group from Lilongwe and Dedza sent last year. This proved an important point of contention between the administrator of Southern Rhodesia and the governor of Nyasaland, who suspected that his administration was being accused of sending inferior recruits in order to discredit the recruitment.[24] Another source of disagreement between the two administrations was the many independents who refused to take part in the deferred

pay regulations, and whom the Southern Rhodesian authorities refused to send home.

It is at this point that the Nyasaland policy began to change. Sharpe returned home on leave via Salisbury in April of 1910. While he assured the Southern Rhodesian administration that there was no reason why numbers could not be kept up, the issues were made clearer during his discussions in Salisbury and with Selborne in Johannesburg. On the one hand the deferred pay system was vital to the economy of Nyasaland, and was, as Sharpe freely admitted, the one thing which kept Nyasaland planters sweet.[25] On the other hand, any governor of Nyasaland was liable to meet a growing barrage of criticism from interests, missionary and planter, within the Protectorate. To try to resolve this, labour was used ever more overtly as a bargaining counter in economic horse-trading. Migration could be kept up if Nyasaland products were accepted duty free into Southern Rhodesia and the Transvaal. These two territories could then share the Nyasaland labour export. The word "bargain" was frequently used, and it was in this spirit that Milton offered the duty free import of Nyasaland tobacco in exchange for the right to renew contracts later in the year.[26]

If Sir Alfred Sharpe was thinking in terms of negotiable positions, the Nyasaland Secretary for Native Affairs, Casson, was likewise by no means averse to migration _per se_. He had

good relations with H.M. Hole of the Rhodesian administration and regarded Southern Rhodesia as the natural destination for Nyasaland migratory labour. In his report of a visit to Southern Rhodesia in June and July of 1910, he listed the advantages of Southern Rhodesia farm labour to the Nyasalanders: they had experience of irrigation, ploughing, the handling of mules, oxen and donkeys, herding, milking, even the grooming of horses.[27] They were physically and mentally much improved. While not so rapturous about mine labour, he reported favourably on the hundreds of labourers he found on the many mines he visited, most of whom were independents. He offered a few criticisms of conditions (such as lack of interpreters, lack of sympathy on the part of managers, poor conditions at the Globe and Phoenix Mine, the absence of bath/change houses which were used to such good effect on the Rand), but there was no hint of any severe restriction on the emigration from Nyasaland. Indeed he accepted the Southern Rhodesia argument that there was so much independent migration, it required proper organisation. He referred to the fact that of 80 pupils at Dr. Hetherwick's Church of Scotland mission school in Blantyre, only two wished to remain in Nyasaland. In a letter to Hole, he referred to "the constant shoutings of our unreasonable planters".[28]

It has been argued that Sir Alfred Sharpe favoured the Transvaal over Rhodesia because of the superior financial

advantage to be derived from emigration to the Rand, and that he deliberately exaggerated Southern Rhodesia mortality figures to achieve this end.[29] Against this interpretation must be placed the fact that both Sharpe and Casson were genuinely impressed by conditions on the Rand - particularly by the bath/change house system at the mine head - and that both regarded Rhodesia as the "natural" destination for Nyasaland recruits. Sharpe's position was invariably ambivalent in order to contain the opposition of his local European population.

Despite both Sharpe's and Casson's reassurances in Salisbury in 1910, a dramatic change was in the offing. On November 24, 1910, Harcourt announced in the House of Commons, the imperial policy on Nyasaland migration.[30] It was that the authorities did not encourage migration, that recruiting was not permitted, but that those who wished to go could not be stopped, and that the means of organising them and protecting them ought to exist. Clearly, such a policy largely depended upon the personalities who operated it. The British South Africa Company tried to secure an assurance from the new governor of Nyasaland, Sir William Manning, before he left London. He refused to tie his hands, and he also refused to visit Salisbury on his way to Zomba. Almost as soon as he arrived in Nyasaland he capitulated to the demands of the local settler and missionary population[31]

and announced to the Rhodesian administration in March of 1911 that no further emigration could be contemplated in view of the extension in planting, the increase in the number of settlers, future railway construction, and the general expansion of the country.[32]

In a sense this was not a completely new departure. Sharpe had had his doubts for a long time, and the internal opposition had existed since the beginnings of migration. In 1904, Sharpe and Codrington, the administrator of North Eastern Rhodesia had indulged in a sharp tussle over migration into the latter territory. Codrington refused to take steps to stop it, and despite Sharpe's threat of Colonial Office intervention, it was Codrington's view that was upheld in London.[33] Codrington had pointed out that the British South Africa Company actually subsidised Dr. Laws' mission at Livingstonia on condition that he sent out educated migrants to the Company's territories.[34] In a despatch of July 1909, Sharpe had been extremely critical of Southern Rhodesian conditions, while at the same time authorising organised migration. It was a question of balancing various pressures, advantageous conditions for Nyasaland, and Manning was altogether less subtle than Sharpe.

The strength of Nyasaland settler opinion can be judged from the Nyasaland Times description of October 28th 1909 of one of many public meetings held in Blantyre attended by almost all important interests, including the missionaries, at which

a motion condemning migration was passed unanimously. At this, "the meeting rose in a body and cheered, hats were thrown in the air, and there were other evidences of the satisfaction with which the result was received".[35] While most parties undoubtedly acted from pure self-interest, an enlightened missionary like Dr. Hetherwick of Blantyre could point to the fact that it was lack of opportunity in Nyasaland which most led to migration, and that the solution was the development of a native agricultural industry.[36] His view was not completely adopted until recent times, and even then implemented only half-heartedly.

Manning's positive discouragement of migration produced a storm of abuse, both from Southern Rhodesian interests, which might be expected, and from Lord Gladstone, the new High Commissioner in South Africa, which might not. It also produced a divided counsel within the Colonial Office, although this was not an unusual feature for the time. Soon after Manning had made his position clear in a despatch of March 6th to Milton, and later in a despatch of March 11th to the Secretary of State, Harcourt, all the usual polemical paraphernalia of aggrieved Rhodesian settlers was got up. There were deputations, public meetings, resolutions, protests in the local press, and thinly veiled administrative fulminations. H. Marshall Hole, the Rhodesian administration's itinerant labour diplomat, led a delegation of Rhodesian farmers to see Manning.

He (Manning) brushed their arguments aside and insisted that not one labourer could be spared from Nyasaland.[37] In a private letter to the Administrator in Salisbury Hole wrote of Manning's "extreme discourtesy" and "cold and studied rudeness".[38]

Nor was there any fellow-feeling between the farming element of the two settler communities. The Rhodesian delegates met representatives of the Nyasaland Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce and their case as they presented it could be paraphrased in this way: labour is unwilling to sell in your market, but is quite willing to sell in ours; you prohibit its natural movement which is a dog in the manger policy; your utilisation of labour is so inefficient that we have seen large numbers of natives picking the grass on your golf course with their fingers. But Nyasaland planters were unmoved by these taunts, triumphant as they were that they had at last found a governor who supported their labour exclusiveness.[39]

Lord Gladstone visited Salisbury in September, 1911, and immediately took up the Rhodesian case. He informed a deputation which met him that

> If it is true that 100,000[40] are to be locked up in Nyasaland and practically to be compelled to work on the land there at 5/- or 6/- per month when countries are open to them for similar work at wages three or four times greater than what they can get in Nyasaland, it does seem to me that it is something like the principle of forced labour.[41]

Gladstone proceeded to make strenuous representations to Harcourt,[42] while the Nyasaland Times urged its readers to brace themselves for a fight, for the High Commissioner had been won for the other side.[43] Meanwhile, Rhodesian farmers demanded an end to white immigration unless there was a relaxation of the administration's curbs on the native department recruiting labour.[44]

Harcourt vacillated at first on the controversy his new governor had so soon presented him with. His first reply to Manning was to the effect that he must be careful not to worsen the situation by his policy of discouragement (i.e. by stimulating more independent migration).[45] Gladstone's uncompromising stand had set the Colonial Office by the ears. While it was generally felt that he had been speaking too freely, the officials split into two distinct factions. Henry Lambert attacked Manning: "It would appear therefore that 587 Europeans can find work for 922,313 natives"; the Nyasaland farmers were in a paradise, with labour at 5/- per month.[46] He drafted a fierce despatch to Manning, which was subsequently progressively toned down by Fiddes, Sir John Anderson and Harcourt himself.[47] Nevertheless, the despatch of November 3rd, 1911, remained strong.

> ....It is clear that the Nyasaland Government, insofar as it actively advises with all the weight of the government the local farm labourer to obtain work within the limits of the Protectorate,

> advises him not only to accept considerably less pay than he would receive if he emigrated, but also to work under conditions, which, as appears from your statement of the 1st August, are by no means satisfactory in respect of food.[48]

Manning might be justified in the case of mine labour, but he was not justified in the case of farm labour where the death rate was negligible.

Manning countered with a nineteen page despatch, listing all his arguments in great detail down to the smallest moral point (the emigrant encounters rape in Southern Rhodesia, something unknown in Nyasaland). The pro-Manning faction in the Colonial Office used his more substantial arguments to swing the Secretary of State in favour of the Nyasaland policy.[49] On April 2nd, 1912, Harcourt announced in the Commons in an answer at question time that there was no superfluity of labour in the Protectorate in view of its rapid development, and that the Nyasaland Government was justified in stopping migration since it was "subversive of domestic and tribal ties."[50]

The practical effect of the Nyasaland administration's strictures can be seen in the case of the representative of the Mashonaland farmers called McCulloch who had frequently operated in Nyasaland as a cattle trader and labour "adviser". In 1911 he was active in Central Nyasaland "advising" local inhabitants to go to Fort Jameson to be recruited for Southern Rhodesia. The men he reported were "fretting" to go.[51] But the district resident sent police around the villages ordering

the men not to go. McCulloch's goods had to be sold because the authorities would not permit him to have any porters. He discovered that the Portuguese commandant of adjacent Portuguese territory had been persuaded by Manning to send migrating Nyasas back into Nyasaland. A new ordinance was rushed through the Nyasaland legislative council making it an offence to "advise" Africans to migrate (no.14 of 1911). Moreover, it seemed to McCulloch that W.N.L.A. had an unfair advantage in Nyasaland since their agent there, Knipe, was a former popular district resident at Kota Kota.[52]

In view of Manning's intransigence and Harcourt's qualified support, the London Board of the British South Africa Company decided on a new policy. In a confidential letter, Milton was instructed to make every effort to attract labour out of Nyasaland by all means possible.[53] Manning's position could be destroyed by a barrage of statistics of the numbers of independents emigrating despite the discouragement of the Nyasaland authorities. It was also recognised that his position could be further undermined by ever declining mortality figures.

Manning's insistence in successive despatches that Southern Rhodesia mortality remained excessive, and that there was no general desire to migrate, was indeed undermined by the figures produced by the Company. The Bureau reported that in the first half of 1912, 1,300 Nyasas had presented themselves at Fort Jameson. Early in 1913, there were over 6,000 Nyasas working

in Southern Rhodesia. In 1912, mortality figures for Nyasas on the mines were 35.25 per thousand per annum, very little different from other classes of recruit. Both the Colonial Office and the Nyasaland administration were frustrated in their attempts to have the Southern Rhodesian administration ban Nyasas from working on the mines, and restrict them to farm labour.[54] The Resident Commissioner, Burns-Begg, took the Southern Rhodesian administration's part throughout, and revealed his ineffectiveness as an instrument of the Colonial Office's will.

By 1913, when the Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau was talking in terms of surpluses, Manning's attempt to keep Nyasas within Nyasaland could be seen to have failed. 1911 was just a short interlude in the history of Nyasaland as a labour exporter on a large scale. In this way, free labour migration reasserted itself over embargo. Only genuine development within Nyasaland could ever effectively control it.

LABOUR FROM MOZAMBIQUE AND RELATIONS WITH THE TRANSVAAL

These two topics are indivisible.

Any discussion of labour diplomacy between Southern Rhodesia and the Portuguese authorities of Mozambique must take into account certain important facts. First is Rhodes's open

contempt for the Portuguese, shared to varying degree by succeeding Rhodesian administrations, and by Lord Gladstone (as he revealed in his description of his visit to Beira in 1913[55]). Second is Rhodes's outright aggression against the Portuguese: Sir John Willoughby's celebrated attempted seizure of Beira in 1891, the seizure of Manicaland, and other examples of aggressive frontier policy. Third is the complicated administrative pattern that obtained in Mozambique at that time. Not only was there direct (and usually exceptionally slow) control from Lisbon through the governor general at Lourenco Marques (also referred to as Delagoa Bay), but there were also three important companies with administrative functions, the Mozambique, the Nyasa, and the Zambezi. In addition there were the semi-independent, feudal prazo holders of the Zambezi Valley.

As in other areas of labour diplomacy, Rhodesia was very much over-shadowed by her more highly concentrated, better organised rival, the Rand. In the case of Mozambique the Rand had a special bargaining power. Johannesburg was not as dependent upon the Delagoa Bay railway as Salisbury was on the Beira link. Agreements which ensured that 50% of Johannesburg's traffic would be handled via Delagoa Bay were therefore very much in the Portuguese interest.

During the South African War, Rhodesia tried to seize the initiative in Portuguese East Africa. The number of

Shangaans, a much-praised tribe, increased on Rhodesia's mines, and R.K. Eustace of the labour board set out to place this migration on a regular basis.[56] He negotiated in Lourenco Marques, and investigated the costing in sending up Shangaans by sea from Lourenco Marques to Beira and thence to Salisbury. But late in 1900 the W.N.L.A. was formed, and negotiations began between it and the Portuguese authorities. Rhodesia from this point on was subject to considerable frustration.

Typically, no one revealed that frustration more strongly than Rhodes. During Eustace's negotiations, Rhodes characteristically ordered that he should not worry about who was to pay for repatriation, he should "just get the boys".[57] The required guarantee for the return of the recruits was according to the Administrator in Salisbury purely a matter of form.[58] Early in 1901, Rhodes concluded that the problem at Delagoa Bay was not a political one, but a matter of money. If the Portuguese could be bought, the labour would be forthcoming.[59] He was wrong. At the same time, the London Board authorised a private recruiter, R.H. Crewe, to use every means possible to obtain labour "quietly over the border".[60] The order to stop this clandestine recruiting was not issued until January 1902.[61] It was an activity scarcely calculated to endear the Rhodesian administration to the Portuguese authorities.

Meanwhile negotiations between the Rhodesian labour board and W.N.L.A. produced an agreement whereby W.N.L.A. would have

sole recruiting rights in Portuguese East Africa, provided that 12½% of all the recruits were sent to Rhodesia. W.N.L.A. agents would not operate within Rhodesia, in Zambezia,[62] or in Ngamiland. The 12½% were never sent because, according to the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, none of the recruits wished to go to Rhodesia.[63] Milton declared this to be patently untrue since so many migrated into Rhodesia independently. From the inception of the agreement, both the labour board (which was dissolved in September 1901) and members of the Rhodesian administration were extremely sceptical of its successful operation.

In view of this scepticism, the Rhodesian authorities scored a success in the modus vivendi signed between the British Consul-General in Lourenco Marques and the Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa in December of 1901. This reserved the right of recruitment under licence to Rhodesia. This right appears to have been accepted as purely a diplomatic victory, for Rhodesia never took up licences to recruit under it, although they were to make attempts to do so several years later. But it was the modus vivendi which was to prove the principal bone of contention between Rhodesia and the Transvaal. When the agreement for the 12½% was terminated, partly because the Mozambique Company refused to be bound by the agreement of the Portuguese colonial authorities (the Company had not been consulted), but mainly because of a

simple disinclination on the part of W.N.L.A. to implement it, the acrimonious correspondence accompanying the breakdown set the tone for Rhodesia-Transvaal relations.[64]

The basic problem was that the Rhodesian and Rand mining industries were in direct competition with each other. At the beginning, the Rand interests feared that Rhodesia would steal a march on them because of the war. Moreover they resented the fact that Rhodesian wages were at this point higher than those on the Rand. Col. d'Andrade, Governor-General of Mozambique, also resented the high Rhodesian wages, which he claimed were having the effect of pushing up wages in Mozambique.[65] Rhodesia did not retain this advantage for long however. While admitting that the high wages had been encouraging Shangaans into the country, Philip Wrey of the labour board organised a general reduction of wages, and Milton agreed with him.[66] Such were the inconsistencies of Rhodesian labour policy.

Another important factor was the difficulties inherent in the pattern of colonial administration. The High Commissioner in South Africa was also the High Commissioner in Rhodesia, ultimately in control of two territories which on the labour issue at least were almost inevitable rivals. This was accentuated by the swift constitutional developments in South Africa. With the creation of responsible government in the Transvaal and later the Union, the High Commissioner

as Governor-General was bound by the wishes of his ministers, which were usually in conflict with Rhodesian aspirations.

Milner's first task after the war was to get the Rand mines back into operation. To do this he had to tap every available labour source. When the Bulawayo Chamber of Mines suspected that he and Chamberlain were in collusion to open up North Eastern Rhodesia and North Western Rhodesia to Rand recruitment, they set up a howl of disapproval.[67] Milner did indeed consider that Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia should be opened up to the Rand, for the introduction of Chinese labour was justified only if it could be proved that no more labour was forthcoming from Southern Africa.

In 1907, the Transvaal opened negotiations for a new agreement with Mozambique. The Rhodesian administration was anxious to preserve its rights secured under the previous agreements and under the modus vivendi. As before the Company attempted to outflank the Transvaal by means of a direct approach to the Portuguese, but ultimately the issue was reduced to a direct Rhodesia-Transvaal confrontation since the Portuguese authorities preferred to deal with one party. All requests to the High Commissioner, Lord Selborne, from Rhodesia were promptly communicated to the Transvaal ministers.[68] They demanded that if Mozambique were opened to Rhodesia, Rhodesia would have to be opened to the Transvaal. The Rhodesian Chambers of Mines could never contemplate their

sacred labour preserves thrown open in this way, and it was indeed an unreasonable request, since it implied an inadmissible proprietory right to Mozambique labour on the part of the Transvaal.

When the Rhodesian administration made another attempt to recruit in 1909 in districts recently taken over by the Portuguese authorities from the Mozambique Company because of an African rebellion there, the Portuguese demanded the right to recruit in Rhodesia as a quid pro quo.[69] Moreover, Selborne informed Milton that the ubiquitous Rand recruiters were already in these districts.[70] Milton complained to the British South Africa Company Board that Selborne was dictatorial and favoured Transvaal interests.[71] In fact, the High Commissioner permitted Smuts and Botha to thwart Rhodesia. Not even Villiers, the British ambassador in Lisbon, who attempted under instructions from the Foreign Office to get recruiting licences for Rhodesia, could move the Portuguese colonial authorities. He used the customary bullying tactics of British labour relations with Portugal,[72] and insisted that Rhodesia's position was strong under the modus vivendi of 1901, but to no avail.[73]

All three territories, Rhodesia, Mozambique and the Transvaal, used obstructionist tactics. Both Rhodesia and the Transvaal attempted to prevent migration across the Limpopo, and indulged in mutual recriminations when each was

found out. The administrations of both North and Southern Rhodesia successfully obstructed Transvaal recruiting agents, and in 1908 Rhodesia succeeded in disrupting the W.N.L.A. organisation for the passage of recruits through Rhodesia (a practice long opposed by Rhodesian employers) by making Umtali the sole point of ingress. This W.N.L.A. found too awkward and switched their organisation to transporting the recruits by sea down the coast.[74] A W.N.L.A. gang of recruits was actually stopped at Feira on the Zambezi and refused entry to Rhodesia on the grounds that it was not under the control of a European conductor. Nevertheless, a curious note of inconsistency was struck by the fact that the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau was compelled from time to time to send a surplus to the Rand because of fluctuating demand within Rhodesia.[75]

A note of paranoia crept into Rhodesian sentiment on the labour recruiting issue. Rhodesia seemed ringed by the W.N.L.A. recruiting system. In May of 1911, Philip Wrey secured an agreement in Lourenco Marques for the passage of Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland recruits through Mozambique,[76] but the new 1912 bureau's agent at the forwarding camp of Chemba in Mozambique found this agreement to be worthless.[77] The route through Mozambique had always been hazardous for northern recruits. There were instances of robbery and murder, and of arrest by the Portuguese, which usually

resulted in being sent to forced labour on the plantations. Now Paul Scott of the bureau found that all Africans from North Eastern Rhodesia and Nyasaland encountered a cordon of W.N.L.A. agents, agents of the Manica and Sofala Labour Board, of the Sena Sugar and Estates Co., of the Villa Fontes Sugar and Estates Co., and of the local Portuguese commandants. The camp at Chemba was burned down, the Portuguese commandant intercepted all of Scott's letters, arrested his messengers, and demanded hut tax receipts of Nyasaland recruits before he permitted them to proceed. These were usually left at home.

Scott pointed out that 7,074 Portuguese Africans were employed in Rhodesia in 1912, and argued that the only way out of the impasse was to secure licences to recruit in Mozambique territories. Obstructionist practices and the difficulties in identifying northern recruits made agreements as to free passage valueless.

Late in 1912, Kempster, the general manager of the new bureau set out to secure licences in Lourenco Marques. He was met with more encouragement than his predecessors, while still revealing the same disdain for the Portuguese authorities in his letters. He declared that "the officials were unwilling to take responsibility and were inexperienced in colonial administration".[78] This time by the beginning of 1913, Rhodesia was successful in obtaining licences.

The Rand had ceased recruiting north of the 22nd parallel because of the high death rate among recruits from more tropical regions, and so no longer feared competition there. The Mozambique-Transvaal Convention of 1909 was used as a model for the new agreement, although the fees collected by Mozambique on each recruit were to be higher. As another aid to the revenue of Mozambique, deferred pay clauses were retained, despite the enormous unpopularity of these regulations amongst recruits and in the labour associations of both Rhodesia and the Rand. Rhodes's conviction that the Portuguese could be bought had proved right after all, once the political impediment were removed.

After over a decade of bad relations, Mozambique was to become an important source of Rhodesian labour. And in 1915, the new Administrator of Rhodesia was to be Drummond Chaplin, who had been President of the Rand Chamber of Mines during the period of greatest Rhodesian-Transvaal strain. It was the beginning of the drawing together of mutual interests in Southern Africa, cemented by the fight against the Germans in the war in South-West and in East Africa.

The concern with outside labour reveals a number of important points about attitudes towards labour in Southern Africa. It is clear that a theory very similar to that which operated in the West Indies after emancipation was current in Rhodesia in the period. A Company administrator might have

expressed the argument in this way. The potential labour we have could be adequate if we were permitted to exercise force and to create enormous land hunger. We are forbidden to do either; therefore it is necessary that we import labour, either from the territories around us or from Asia where there is a considerable population surplus.

Chamberlain himself used the West Indian analogy in accepting the necessity of indentured Asiatic labour for the development of Southern Africa. And the system fitted perfectly the settlers' desire for social and political exclusiveness. The labour force depended so much on outside transient labourers that the situation of those from within Southern Rhodesia became identical with those from without. Whether the labourers came from a few miles or a few hundred miles away they were transient, and their positions were indistinguishable. This was the principal effect of the outside labour policy.

The whole issue reveals too the dangers and the difficulties of a Company administration. There was an inevitable tendency to regard the administrations of the Rhodesias as the ugly ducklings of colonial administrations. In a conflict between Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the Colonial Secretary, Harcourt, inevitably came - despite his earlier position - to defend and support the direct administration in Nyasaland. He could not admit that his appointment of Manning had been a

mistake. It was much easier to attack the Company. This situation was aggravated by the role of High Commissioner being bound up with the role of Governor of the Transvaal or Governor General of South Africa. Again, the Company's interests were inevitably subordinated to those of the ministers in the South.

During the period 1890-1914, the Rhodesian administrations did in fact attempt an independent labour policy. They attempted to have independent relations with Nyasaland, with the Portuguese, with the Transvaal, even with the Government of India. They demanded the right to pursue an independent policy with regard to Asiatic labour. All these attempts failed. In such independent diplomacy they inevitably came off worst. Their efforts to pursue a distinctive policy fitted ill with the Colonial Office view of Southern Rhodesia in particular as an integral part of a greater Southern Africa.

In this period the Company administrations' attempts to pursue an individual line were in effect frustrated by the Colonial Office and the Transvaal, later South African, ministers combined. The Rhodesia settlers were taught that Southern African interests were indivisible.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1 Sharpe to F.O., December 1, 1897. F.O. 2/128.

2 H.M. Hole, Old Rhodesian Days (London, 1928), p.46.

3 Codrington to Sharpe, June 25, 1904, annexure 63 to the Board minutes, October 4, 1904, C.O. 417/401.

4 Central Africa Times, October 21, 1899.

5 These regulations began with notice 1 of 1898 (British Central Africa Gazette, Vol. V, no. 5, April 6, 1898). A recruiter, Irwin, was promptly prosecuted under it. B.C.A.G., ibid.

6 Petition from the British Central African Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, enclosure in Codrington to the B.S.A.Co., January 31, 1900, Board minutes April 10, 1900. C.O. 417/309. The British Central African Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture had already been agitating for almost two years, although there were less than 300 Europeans in the Protectorate at this time.

7 North Eastern Rhodesia native affairs, no. A 25, annexure 16, Board minutes, August 10, 1904. C.O. 417/401.

8 Cd. 3993, p.46.

9 All the correspondence on the negotiations and arrangements for Nyasaland labour in 1907-08 is in NA A3/18/30/17.

10 Sharpe to Codrington, January 15, 1908. Codrington to Sharpe, January 19, 1908. NA A3/18/30/17.

11 Milton to Selborne, April 25, 1908, enclosure in Selborne to Crewe, May 11, 1908, C.O. 417/452.

12 Tel. Sharpe to Milton, April 6, 1908. Tel. Milton to Sharpe, April 6, 1908, A 3/18/30/17.

13 Reports on applicants, April 22, 1908, A3/18/30/17.

14 Minute on Selborne to Crewe, October 11, 1909, C.O. 417/467.

15 Milton to Sharpe, July 14, 1908, A3/18/30/17. See also Selborne to Crewe, September 18, 1909, C.O. 417/466.

16 Correspondence on the 1909 group of recruits is in NA A3/18/30/18. Crewe in a minute of September 14, 1909 considered that the arguments that the death rate would drop next time were plausible, C.O. 417/466.

17 This was one of many attempts to utilise the more direct route via Tete. Report of H.M.Hole on visit to Nyasaland, September 6, 1909, enclosure in Newton to B.S.A.Co. September 9, 1909, Board minutes, October 21, 1909, C.O. 417/477. See also Philip Wrey's report on the conference with Sharpe, 1909. NA A3/18/30/26.

18 Selborne to Crewe, November 7, 1908, C.O. 417/458.

19 Correspondence on this issue is in NA A3/18/30/14 Tel. Milton to B.S.A.Co., September 12, 1910, ibid.

20 The members of the B.S.A.Co. board were informed of this at an interview in the C.O. Seeley the parliamentary under secretary, in a minute of April 21, 1910 had considered that repatriation could not be compulsory, C.O. 417/481.

21 B.S.A.Co., to Milton, September 15, 1910, A3/18/30/14.

22 NA A3/18/30/18.

23 Report of the medical director (Fleming) November 20, 1909, ibid.

24 Sharpe to Milton, December 17, 1909, ibid.

25 Memo. on Sharpe's visit by Milton, April 9, 1910, ibid.

26 Sharpe to Milton, April 18, 1910, ibid. Milton to B.S.A. Co., September 23, 1910, A3/18/30/14.

27 Casson's Report, October 14, 1910, A3/18/30/15. See also Casson to deputy governor, Zomba, December 14, 1909 on farm labourers from Rhodesia, A3/18/30/14.

28 Casson to Hole, February 9, 1910, A3/18/30/14.

29 B.C. Krishnamurthy, "Land and Labour in Nyasaland, 1891-1914", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London, 1964. Krishnamurthy did not visit Nyasaland in the compilation of this thesis because the Zomba Archives were burned down in 1919. But he failed to take account of the fact that much of the material destroyed then is duplicated in the National Archives of Rhodesia.

30 Hansard, November 24, 1910, quoted in Bulawayo Chronicle, November 26, 1910.

31 This is certainly a curious coalition for Africa, but the settlers and the missionaries of Nyasaland desired the same end for very different reasons.

32 Manning to Milton, March 6, 1911, A3/18/30/15 Manning to Harcourt, March 11, 1911, ibid.

33 Sharpe to Codrington, June 7, 1904. Codrington to Sharpe, June 25, 1904, annexure 63 to board minutes, October 4, 1904, C.O. 417/401.

34 ibid.

35 Nyasaland Times, October 28, 1909.

36 The speeches were reported in full, ibid.

37 Hole's report on the meeting with Governor Manning, August 29, 1911, A3/18/30/15.

38 Hole to Newton, August 29, 1911, ibid.

39 Hole's report of a meeting between the Southern Rhodesian delegates and the Nyasa Associated Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, August 29, 1911, ibid.

40 A considerable under-statement.

41 Record of a deputation to Gladstone, September 2, 1911, A3/18/30/15.

42 Tel. Gladstone to Harcourt, September 11, 1911, C.O. 417/498.

43 Nyasaland Times, Blantyre, September 7, 1911.

44 Deputation of Rhodesian farmers to the acting administrator, September 22, 1911, A3/18/30/15.

45 Harcourt to Manning, May 19, 1911, ibid.

46 Minute by Lambert on Gladstone to Harcourt, September 18, 1911, C.O. 417/498.

47 Minutes by Fiddes, October 20, Anderson, October 21 and Harcourt, October 26. Lambert made a counter-blast on October 31, ibid.

48 Harcourt to Manning, Nov. 3, 1911. C.O. 417/498, also in NA A3/18/30/15

49 Manning to Harcourt, Dec. 22, 1911. NA A3/18/30/16.

50 Hansard, April 2, 1912, quoted in Reuter telegram, April 3, 1912, ibid.

51 Correspondence on McCulloch is in NA A3/18/30/15. See also Gladstone to Harcourt, Nov. 13, 1911, C.O.417/500.

52 McCulloch to Gladstone, Oct. 24, 1911, enclosure in above despatch.

53 B.S.A.Co. to Milton, April 19, 1912, private and confidential. NA A3/18/30/16.

54 Burns-Begg to Gladstone, April 25, 1913. C.O.417/524.

55 Gladstone to Harcourt, Nov. 6, 1913. C.O. 417/526.

56 Correspondence in NA A3/18/30/23.

57 Tel. Charter, Cape Town, to Milton, Nov. 26, 1900, ibid. Charter was the Company's telegraphic address in Cape Town. Such communications invariably emanated from Rhodes or quoted him. Several start, "Rhodes says....".

58 Milton to Charter, Dec. 5, 1900. NA A3/18/30/23.

59 Tel. Charter to Milton, Jan.1, 1901, ibid. However, the Company in Cape Town did regard the problem as a political one in Dec., 1900. Then, it was felt that the London Board ought to approach the Portuguese Government direct. If the request were passed through the High Commissioner, then the Rand mines would hear of it and would object, for they regarded Delagoa Bay labour as their preserve. In London, Wilson Fox asked Abercorn and Grey to make representations to Lansdowne. Wilson Fox to Milton, Jan. 11, 1901. NA A1/5/3.

60 Charter to Milton, Feb. 9, 1901, transmitting the London Board's "strictly confidential" cable. NA A3/18/30/23.

61 Milton to Longden, civil commissioner, Melsetter, Jan. 12, 1902, ibid.

62 Later there was a dispute as to whether Zambezia included the British Central Africa Protectorate or not. Correspondence in NA A3/18/30/24.

63 Correspondence on the breakdown of the Agreement is in NA A3/18/30/24.

64 There is a brief description of the modus vivendi and the Transvaal Agreement negotiations in James Duffy, A Question of Slavery (London, 1967).

65 Report of Nourse, general manager of W.N.L.A., April 28, 1902. NA A3/18/30/24.

66 Wrey, general manager of the Labour Board, to B.S.A.Co., March 19, 1902. Wrey to Milton, March 20, 1902. Milton to Taylor, chief native commissioner, March 25, 1902, etc. NA A3/18/30/23.
Milton informed the Imperial Secretary at Cape Town in a letter of April 14, 1902, that the mines wished to reduce wages, but give a bonus to Shangaans. The Imperial Secretary deprecated this attempt by the mines to get the best of both worlds, and pointed out that the agreement on wages with the Transvaal was on a minimum wage, not a maximum one.

67 Bulawayo Chamber of Mines to Milton, Feb. 10, 1903. NA A3/18/30/24.

68 Selborne to Milton, May 27, 1907. Again in 1909, Selborne wrote at once to the Transvaal premier, Selborne to Botha, April 30, 1909. NA A3/18/30/25.

69 Milton to Selborne, Feb. 5, 1909. NA A3/18/30/25.
Selborne to Milton, Feb. 24, 1909, ibid.
Selborne to Milton, March 11, 1909, ibid.

70 Selborne to Milton, Feb. 24, 1909, ibid.

71 Milton to B.S.A.Co., March 15, 1909, ibid.

72 See Duffy, op. cit., passim.

73 Villiers to F.O., March 8, 1910, and F.O. to Villiers, May 17, 1910, enclosures in Imperial Secretary to Milton, April 19, 1910, and in Gladstone to Milton, June 21, 1910, respectively.

74 Selborne to Crewe, Feb. 10, 1908. C.O. 417/451, and minutes of Board, Feb. 27, 1908. C.O. 417/461.

75 In 1905, Val Gielgud, general manager of the R.N.L.B., actually complained that W.N.L.A. did not want any more

labourers from Northern Rhodesia because of sickness amongst them, and this was an essential outlet for Bureau surpluses when Rhodesian demand fluctuated violently. Gielgud to Milton, May 5, 1905. NA A3/18/30/24.

76 Wrey to Milton, April 20, 1911, and Wrey to Milton, May 11, 1911, and other correspondence, NA A3/18/30/25.

77 Report of Paul Scott, April 18, 1912, ibid.

78 Report of Kempster on his mission to Lourenco Marques, September 16, 1912, and other correspondence. NA A3/18/30/25.

CHAPTER 8

LABOUR AND THE AFRICAN

This chapter deals with the four stages of the African's experience of and response to labour. It examines his attitudes and ideas about work in the tribal environment. He is recruited and he travels to work: an entirely new and hazardous dimension is added to his economic life, although it can still be related to the slaving and raiding economy that went before. He works, within the European-imposed discipline of fixed hours, fixed diet, fixed accommodation, and sometimes harsh punishment. He faces a strange language, and a strange set of economic relations. He is encouraged to be acquisitive, yet often forced to save by means of the deferred pay system. When he returns home, he faces another hazardous journey, a tax-gatherer at the end, and a welcome return to the security of communal life. But it is a security that has changed. He now has a different relationship with it. He may possess what others do not possess. He pays tax for his brothers or his father and sets up a new series of obligations. He sees tribal authority in a different light, and village life in the context of the large compound, the store and all its wares, and large-scale communal entertainment.

This brief description has been placed in the present tense both because it heightens the sense of process, of

gradual accommodation, and because it is an experience still encountered, with the sole exception that the slaving and raiding economy is further off. This chapter seeks to examine the process by means of the chance remarks of contemporary evidence, the studies of anthropologists, a little knowledge of present conditions, and a degree of imagination.[1] In the absence of sources of the migrants themselves, these, and a little oral evidence, are the only sources available. The enormous death rates of the early years are a mute reminder that it was an invariably brutal means by which Africans encountered a modern economy and began to develop towards a modern nationalism.

Human societies have revealed remarkable powers of accommodation, ecological and social. The Bemba and the Lozi in Zambia both demonstrate in their very different ways an ecological accommodation that largely underpins their social and political systems. Another form of adaptation occurs socially when one people has asserted itself over another. And this adjustment has usually been a two-way process. Religion for example appears to have had a territorial as much as a social significance. Hence both the Ndebele in Rhodesia and the Ngoni in Malawi adopted the religion of their subject peoples; the Ngoni tended even to adopt the language. The subject peoples in turn accepted such Nguni institutions as the lobolo marriage payments

system, and hence matrilineal peoples began to adopt certain features of patrilineal society. This was often accelerated by official administrative pressure during the early colonial period. Attitudes towards labour are also clearly modified by a society's environment, and by the pressures brought to bear on it by other societies.

In primitive society labour has always been based on a kin grouping. The first and most important division of labour is division by sex. The woman's position in this has always been conditioned by her comparative lack of mobility, caused by pregnancies and the presence of small children. It has been argued that if horticulture began as an incidental pastime to supplement hunting and gathering, there is every possibility that it was begun by women. It is certainly the case that tasks are shared much more in an agricultural society than in a pastoral one. The greater mobility of men ensured that they would be the hunters and defenders, the herders and the raiders. With the development of trade, it ensured that they would be the traders, often trading articles that had been made by women. Labour migration fitted this pattern.

In Central African societies women were often used as a means to assimilation. Thus when the Ndebele or the Ngoni ravaged tribes in their path, the economic and social value of the women often saved them from the slaughter their men

faced. The extent of assimilation however varied greatly. The Ndebele for example took care to establish their subject peoples as separate castes. Inter-marriage between the castes was disapproved of until recent times,[2] even when European officials regarded them as equal before the law. Perhaps this caste exclusiveness became necessary because the Ndebele subsidiary peoples, the Ehnla and the Holi, soon out-numbered the Zansi, the original migrants who had travelled north with Mzilikazi.

All war-like peoples like the Ndebele, the Ngoni, the Bemba and the Lozi had tributary peoples, whose tribute bolstered the economy of their overlords. The warriors might be brought up as boys as tenders of cattle, but in adolescence they were trained for the most important task of fighting to maintain political and territorial supremacy.[3] They were trained to a sense of superiority, a pride in their strength, an arrogance for the toil of mere subsistence which was the lot of their underlings.

When Europeans arrived in Central Africa there were three main types of tribal economy: the agricultural, the pastoral and the slave raiding. There could of course be combinations of two or of all three of these. The Ndebele and the Ngoni could be said to have practised all three. And of course the type of pastoral, agricultural or slave raiding economy depended on environment and climate, social and political

organisation.

This variety is well revealed by an examination of the slave raiding economies. Both the Ndebele and the Ngoni raided for what might be called demographic reasons: they sought to keep up the strength of their tribes. The Yao raided as a means to political power and consequently to a rich trade with the Arabs. The Lunda of Kazembe likewise raided as an effective entree to the new trading relationships set up by Arab caravans, and they were aided by the rich cassava and fish economy of their Luapula Valley which required little labour to exploit. The Bemba on the other hand raided because their economy was so poor. They were enabled to do so by their strong centralisation of authority, and it was their only possible entry into trade, for they had neither ivory nor rubber nor precious metals. The Lozi raided in order to exploit the great richness of their alluvial valley economy in the Zambezi the more effectively. There are different nuances of objective and response in each case.

There is however one constant in tribal man's activity in any of these societies or in those of their neighbours. Whether he worked on the soil, or tended the cattle, or raided for captives, he could identify his activity completely with his personal well-being and beyond to the well-being of his chief and his tribe. The tribe and the soil,

the tribe and the herds were as one. In participating in such an economy he contributed to a series of fertile relationships past, present, and hopefully future.

Nothing could be more inaccurate, however, than the vision of these tribal economies as static timeless rural cycles, with the occasional exhilarating or totally destructive raid. Each of the raiding economies described above represented an accommodation to the results of political fission and cohesion, or to the new economic relationship introduced by East Coast Arab traders. The raided also accommodated. In Mashonaland they rejected stone in architecture for more flexible and temporary materials; they rejected open terrain for the security of granite kopjes. In the Zambezi Valley, the Tonga dispersed and adapted their mode of village settlement in a vain attempt to stave off economic stagnation. The Ila (or Mashukulumbwe) developed an intense suspicion of and antagonism towards strangers, testified to both by David Livingstone and by early officials in their part of Northern Rhodesia.

The arrival of the Europeans with their wage earning economy involved a readjustment in tribal relationships, and a new and more traumatic accommodation. It is interesting that in almost every case the stronger tribes responded more rapidly. The Bemba for example, traditionally supercilious towards other tribes, became very deferential to

Europeans.[4] Once the military power and political cohesion of the Ndebele and the Ngoni were shattered, they paid their taxes, long accustomed as they were to chiefly tribute, and responded almost too readily to the new economy.[5] The raided on the other hand, particularly in Northern Rhodesia, tended to use their traditional response to new demands: withdrawal and dispersal. While the Bemba, Ngoni and Lunda of Kazembe became - to use an administrator's word - tractable, the Bisa and the Senga dispersed, thereby making hut tax collection difficult, and reducing their capacity to labour migrate.[6]

In order to find the new form of tribute, cash, a man had to indulge in a new form of economic activity, paid labour, in which he could never identify as he had done in the old forms. Taxation could however be seen as a new mode of entry to manhood. There is evidence from at least one native commissioner that adolescent boys came to him to demand to pay tax to prove they had reached maturity. Yet men did respond, in some cases, particularly in Northern Rhodesia, before the exigencies of taxation forced them to do so. Of course the process was more gradual than the time-scale of this thesis tends to indicate. Carriers had been required and paid in calico for several decades. The existence of paid labour in South Africa had been known to the Ndebele and the Lozi perhaps twenty years before they encountered it nearer hand. But it

is still true that there was a swift and large increase in the years immediately succeeding the imposition of European control.

In discussing pressures, it is not possible to assess precisely such intangibles as the love of adventure or the search for a substitute for the military satisfaction of raiding. They may have existed as individual motives. It is however possible to observe that whole societies reponded more readily than others. The Bemba did so, probably for the same reason as they had responded to slaving, their poor domestic economy. The Ngoni responded well because most of their cattle were confiscated after the hostilities of 1898, and moreover they were badly overcrowded. The Toka and Tonga in the Zambezi Valley responded quite well[7] (and this was unusual for oppressed peoples), perhaps as an escape from the raiding of both the Lozi and the Ndebele. Moreover they were well placed for travel to the Matabeleland mines. The heart of the Lozi nation responded less well in the beginning because their political spirit was not broken, and because their rich environment continued to require manpower for exploitation. In addition there might be all the complicated local reasons examined in chapters 4 and 5.

The second section of this chapter is a consideration of the mode of recruitment within the village and the hazards of the journey to the place of work.

The villager might be recruited for work by one of several methods. He might be ordered out by his chief or headman on the request of either an officer of the administration or of a local European settler. He might be inveigled out by a recruiting tout or one of the tout's African messengers with often spurious stories of the wages he could earn. He might be tricked into recruiting by such a tout: one method was to leave a contract in a man's hut in his absence, and then come to claim him later. The tout's or the messenger's rifle was a difficult argument to counter. He might be ordered out by the native commissioner because he could not meet the demand for tax. In this case, he would very probably be recruited by a representative of the Labour Bureau and sent to join a gang of other new recruits. Or he might decide to leave independently, realising he would soon have to find his tax, or encouraged by the trade goods brought back by a brother. He might have an obligation to fulfil, to earn tax for his father or for a brother who had paid his last year.

If he set out with a tout he would be closely guarded in a gang, and would probably seek the first opportunity to escape. If independent, he would probably travel with a few others from his own village or group of villages for protection and companionship. If with the Bureau he would be sent with a messenger to where a large gang was assembling, probably at a

medical centre. The bureau's medical might be his first hazard. He might be rejected after a week's exhausting journey, and sent back to his village. If he were really anxious to go to work however, this was not necessarily final. He could present himself under a different name and perhaps be more successful before the over-worked and cursory medical officer. Or he could send in a more healthy substitute and subsequently exchange documents. Both these methods of evasion are documented.

For some, the next stage might be an exhilarating, but insanitary, uncomfortable and exhausting, ride by train. He would be treated like an animal, placed sometimes in open wagons or in cattle trucks, covered in lime. It was several years before he had the privilege of a wooden bench in a third class carriage. The journey could take several days.

If he walked, his journey might take up to two months. It would very probably be along an accepted labour route, although this would do little to assuage the fact that he was travelling through country of spirits aliens to him, after he had spent his life propitiating the natural spirits near his home. He might be able to use bureau rest centres and food stations; there might not be any. He might be supplied with a length of calico to pay for his food on the way; and calico was a currency of rapidly declining value. Or he might have no money at all, in which case he would live off the land, work

for some food on the way, or simply starve.

Lack of food or water was one hazard; wild animals were another; he might also face hostile tribesmen, rapacious officials (particularly in Portuguese territory), and the fear, very real to an African, of strange territory and strange people. There would be physical obstacles also, of which the most frequent and the most dangerous would be rivers. In some seasons he might be completely blocked by a river that was too high and too fast to ford or swim. In such a season of heavy rains, recruiting figures might actually drop for this reason. At other rivers he would be able to use a ferry. The Hunyani, Loangwa and Zambezi rivers were so provided.

Many died on the way; others were taken ill and returned to the comfort of their villages; some would have second thoughts and "desert" from gangs. For those in good health, keenly anticipating earning some money, there were however distinct compensations. There were communal pleasures, singing and dancing and drinking. There were lengthy discussions as to where to go, the relative merits of different kinds of work, of different employers, of the pleasures of different locations or compounds. There was an extensive intelligence system, by word of mouth, by marks on trees, and even by messages nailed to trees, telling of opportunities or good or bad employers. Casson, Secretary for Native Affairs of

Nyasaland, even saw messages to individuals attached to trees on a labour route when he travelled from Blantyre to Salisbury in 1910.[8]

If he had escaped the attentions of a tout when he left his village, he might fall into the clutches of another when he crossed a frontier or neared his destination. The Mtokos district of Southern Rhodesia in the North East of the country was alive with touts throughout the period, preying on migrants on the labour routes, anxious only for the maximum number of capitation fees. A recruiter might start on an official basis and end up "selling" his recruits on his own account. Such was Hayes, whose activities were described in chapter 6. Many recruiters were former native commissioners, district commissioners or district residents, who had seen the possibility of lucrative pickings and resigned their official position. The existence of such men was naturally a source of great confusion to the African. This could indeed happen on an official basis. Each of the labour bureaux had former native commissioners seconded to their staff as agents.

If a bureau recruit, the migrant would face another medical, and possibly a period in an acclimatisation camp before being sent on to a mine or a farm according to his choice or physical condition. If he fell into the hands of a tout, he would be "sold" for the highest capitation fee. If he remained independent, three areas for work lay open to him. He could go

to a town, to a farm, or to a mine. Town employment comprised mainly domestic, clerical or public works. It was labour of a more permanent kind, for the African experienced in European ways, who knew what he could get and where. The novice would be foolhardy to enter a town location, with all its regulations and the need to find work quickly or be evicted.

Work on farms was familiar in some ways, unfamiliar in others. It was unremunerative. Settlers on the land of the British or Afrikaner breed were hard taskmasters, demanding labour from dawn till dusk, providing little in the way of accommodation or food, seldom filling in government forms, and subject to little inspection.

The vast majority however would head for the mines, large or small, where earnings were greater, stores well-stocked, and a pleasurable life could be led in the compound as an antidote to the toil of the mine. By virtue of numbers and documentation, these labourers receive most attention in this description.

The recruit might go to a mine where he had friends or relatives, to one with a good reputation, to one he stumbled on by chance, or the nearest when his stamina and food ran out. In a few bad seasons he might find no work at all and be forced either to return or to work for the local inhabitants for food. But in most years plenty of work was available. He added his

mark to a contract, the terms of which he little understood, although it was probably explained to him and attested before a local native commissioner or magistrate. During the first few days he might be permitted to build with a few fellows a hut to accommodate himself. Or he might be placed in barracks already built by the mine, of wood and iron, or iron and thatch, or brick and iron, or galvanised iron alone. They would be crowded, insanitary, extremely hot in hot weather, and extremely cold in cold weather. On the other hand the hut built by himself might be more familiar, but as a temporary residence, it might be poorly built and inadequate to withstand the elements. The inspectors of native compounds disagreed as to which was the better system.

The recruit would be put to work either on the surface or underground. If he had previous experience he would probably be aggrieved that little cognisance was taken of it. Surface work was more poorly paid than the genuine underground mining, and was consequently much lower in prestige. It was reserved for the complete novice or the physically weak. Surface work, as well as loading and unloading, tending the crushing batteries, building, also involved cutting wood for fuel in parties perhaps miles from the mine. Those who went underground encountered a strange and terrifying new world. However much they grew used to it, it retained its fears and its dangers, as the numerous accidents testify.[9] Each was

expected to work at the unrelenting rock face for a ten hour shift in each day.

He was paid not by the shift or by the week or by the month, but by the ticket system. A certain piece or work (usually drilling two feet) was allocated as the reasonable amount that could be accomplished in each shift. When he had completed this, he had completed the requirements for one ticket. Not until he had thirty tickets was he paid. The ticket system had one advantage. If he was an exceptionally strong, experienced and skilful worker, he might be able to complete enough for two tickets in any one day, but this was comparatively rare. On the other hand, he might not complete the quota for the shift, in which case he would get no ticket at all. Experienced workers said that they preferred the Rand to Rhodesia because the rock was much softer there.

Basically, the ticket system was designed to protect the employer against the slow worker or the malingerer, so-called. It was also a means to a lower wage, since the worker frequently worked five weeks to secure what was often quoted to the outside world as a monthly wage. Some employers were dilatory in the payment of wages, a practice designed to keep the employee at work as long as possible. This was however a trait of the railway companies who were able to plead remoteness in construction, rather than the mines which were

more open to inspection. In the smaller mines however, the fortunes of the labourers naturally fluctuated with the fortunes of their employers, the tributors (i.e. small workers), who often had a somewhat Micawberish attitude to gold seams. There is at least one instance of a tributor being ordered to pay back wages to his African employees out of his wage in his new job when his little mine had crashed.[10]

The miner's diet was monotonous and often unedifying, unsweetened by the knowledge that it was the food he had toiled to grow, prepared at the family hearth by his womenfolk. Official attempts were made to improve it, and the improvements were designed to keep him alive and healthy and in working condition, so that the statistics of desertions and deaths might look less horrifying. He ate mainly mealie meal, a type of porridge whose consistency varied in different parts of the country, supplemented by beans, groundnuts, pumpkin, and possibly a little fish or meat. Government regulations laid down the precise poundage of each that he was to receive each week. The beer he drank helped to reduce the risk of scurvy, and sometimes he was forced to drink for the same purpose raw unsweetened lime juice, which he loathed because of its purgative effect.

The work was strange, the accommodation was sometimes strange, the sanitary trenches loathesome (the bush was preferred), the food had strange variations and was invariably

badly cooked in his estimation, and the language was strange. He met the roughest conceivable type of European, who expected him to implement and understand at once orders harshly given in either Afrikaans or English. Failure to comply might result in a blow, and even in injury.[11] If the compound were big enough, there might be a compound manager, sometimes sympathetic, usually paternalistic, frequently tyrannical.

When the labourer was sick, he would invariably be accused of malingering, probably because there were some malingerers. As in the army, being sick was made as unattractive as possible for him. He might therefore lie low in his hut in the hope of a natural recovery. He might "desert" and try to reach the comfort of home (and often die in the bush); he might seek his own medicines, or if found he might be sent to a strange and rather terrifying building, the mine hospital. There he knew unusual things happened, and people invariably died for he had seen the bodies carried out. Indeed, if the mine had no mortuary, and few had, there might be a body or bodies lying in the hospital when he was admitted. Inspectors singled this fact out as one of the biggest deterrents to entering hospital. There might or might not be a European doctor, depending on the size of the mine (sometimes several mines shared a doctor). Almost invariably, therewould be an orderly from a different if not

hostile tribe, who might be less than gentle with the patients. When the hospital building had been improved and conditions within it, or had lost its fearsome aspect through familiarity, the labourer might well become a willing patient. The main illnesses of the mine compound were pneumonia, tuberculosis, scurvy, dysentery, and a form of blindness produced by entering workings too soon after blasting when the air was still contaminated by cordite.[12]

The mine had a store, where, if it had a monopoly in a district, the prices were invariably high. Nonetheless, the store was one of the biggest compensations for the mine labourer. He was drawn willingly into the western concepts of consumption and possession. He garnered tangible evidence of his stay at the mine, and incidentally gave the mine the opportunity to win back some or all of his earnings. The acquisitive drive might take him into the "box system of credit". In order to purchase something on credit, he might leave another possession in a box, a kind of surety and pawn system in one. It had the effect of keeping him at work, for if taken to inordinate lengths it could develop into a sort of debt peonage.

Other compensations were the beer and the communal life. An enormous beer-drink would be held almost every weekend. In the larger mines, the tribes were separated, and he would be able to celebrate in a familiar setting so

far as personalities were concerned. The women of the local villages would satisfy his sexual needs, and possibly supply him with a new disease.

The separation of tribes was an acknowledged official policy. It was believed that the labourer was happier amongst his fellow tribesmen, which was probably perfectly true. It did however give the management the opportunity to indulge in divide and rule tactics (as Epstein has shown in his Politics in an Urban African Community[13]) and helped to prevent the growth of union organisation. Needless to say, such combination was impossible in our period; the labourers did not have the techniques or the opportunity, and the administration and managements took care to see that any organisation was nipped in the bud. The temporary migrant labour system was itself an insurance against the organisation of labour. Occasionally there were spontaneous demonstrations of labour solidarity, usually under extreme provocation from cruel or incompetent foremen or compound managers. Such a strike was described in chapter 5 at the Wankie Colliery, and it was seen that such action was regarded as criminal, and the native commissioner, although sympathising with the labourers' grievances, was forced to take prompt measures to punish the offenders. Such action was regarded rather in the light of a mutiny, just as those labourers who left work were referred to as "deserters" and hunted down as such.

When the labourer had a complaint, he might be able to bring it before the attention of one of the inspectors of native compounds. These officers were appointed in 1901, and there seems to have been some confusion in the minds of the administration as to the precise function they should fulfil. At first they were members of the native department; later they were attached to the medical department; and later again, they were transferred to the mines department. These men varied greatly from the sympathetic to the totally unsympathetic. Invariably, they did not speak the labourer's language, although to be fair to them it is true that many languages would be represented in each compound. They had no fixed policy, except the vague improvement of conditions, which each interpreted differently where it was not covered by ordinance. When he made serious complaints about a mine, these were invariably checked by one of his colleagues who might come to quite different conclusions.[14] They disagreed on the most important issues. For example, on the relative merits of the different types of accommodation, some preferred traditional construction, others a European type of construction, and those who favoured the latter disagreed on the best type of wood/iron/thatch/brick combination. They disagreed on the fundamental labour issue, whether or not wives and families ought to be brought to the mine. Some felt the migration of a man's wife and family would help to stabilise

labour, increase efficiency, and reduce quarrels and immorality; others that the mine compound only drew the wives and children into its vicious life.[15] (Incidentally, those wives who did go often made a lucrative living from beer making.) Certainly, the creation of an integrated community life on a mine was difficult where the European employees were themselves invariably bachelor migrants. The inspectorate of native compounds was an indication of a genuine humanitarian response on the part of the administration, metropolitan and colonial, vitiated by being used simply as extra jobs for local native commissioners.

The same humanitarian response emerged in the dietary regulations, the ordinances governing employers' powers, and the ordinances providing for compensation on injury or death, and remittance of a man's possessions to his home village. However, the altruistic element is difficult to assess in a situation where poor conditions and high death rates reduced natural migration and created opposition at home, public and parliamentary. It is in this area that the Colonial Office's success in alleviating conditions can best be seen, but the provisions in many cases did not go far enough, did not add up to a coherent policy, and were subject to inadequate supervision in the colonial setting.

While the migrant's lot was improved piecemeal by the humanitarian demands of a distant opinion operating on the

Rhodesian administration, he remained the victim of two faulty economic assumptions. In the case of the "foreign" migrant, his home government retained its hold upon him through deferred pay and repatriation because the export and re-export of labour produced revenue, which was true, and because population was regarded as wealth, which was not. Secondly, Rhodesian employers preferred to employ labour as cheaply as possible rather than create conditions that would encourage industrial efficiency. They confused low wages with low labour costs and achieved neither an efficient nor an economical labour force. In their defence however, it must be said that the employers were themselves the victims of a vacillating official policy, and that there was too much awareness of the temporary nature of many of Rhodesia's gold bearing seams to permit of large capital expenditure. Another factor was that the European himself tended to be a migrant worker, a migrant capitalist or a migrant administrator. Both the Europeans and the Africans alternated "tours" of work or duty with periods at home. Neither party had a sufficiently developed sense of permanent stake. On the farms, where the Europeans did have this sense to a greater degree, the African was denied it because of the insecurity of the "private location" and the inconsistencies of land policy.

The migrant however did not understand these issues. Once he had acquired money for tax, some trade goods, and a

taste of "the world", he left for home. Some would be compulsorily repatriated; others would set out on the labour routes as independently as they had come. In either case, the migrant faced the same hazards he had faced on his way to work, in addition to a few new ones. For an important change had occurred in his condition. Unless he had been a total spendthrift, he was now comparatively speaking wealthy. He had a bundle of acquisitions. He might have saved as much as several pounds. Failing this, he was at least clothed. Many villages on his route home felt it their duty to see that he was fleeced of as much of this wealth as possible on the way. It must be remembered again that his journey on foot might take several weeks. The use of bicycles and of lorries was not widespread before 1914.

Along the length of his route, often beside streams or crossing places on rivers, the migrant would find villages whose inhabitants sought to earn their tax by the sale of food and beer (often at inflated prices), or by prostitution.[16] The migrant might also be robbed by the more lawless elements on the routes. The existence of these villages was yet another accommodation to the new economic conditions, a legitimate response to the service needs of many hundreds of travellers. But some migrants lost so much of their money in this way that it is recorded that some turned back to work before they reached home.[17]

For those who did reach home there would be a mixture of reactions. Before the growth of literacy and the spread of the post office service, the migrant might have had no contact with his village for several months or over a year. Melancholy songs' had been sung about his and the others' absence, so there would certainly be a welcome. But more than likely relatives would have died while he was away. And if married he might find that his wife had departed for another village. Part of his period at home might be spent in the re-establishment of his rights, an attempt to return so far as possible to the status quo ante.

If he were young, the comforting aspect of the village might swiftly pall in the face of its "dullness". If he were older he might value the village as the longed-for scene of his "retirement", at least from the European economy. It is clear that one migration led to another, provided the first had not been too harsh, and that successive migrations as an individual heightened the sense of social security represented by the village. To this day, most migrants keenly anticipate the time of their "retirement" (at whatever age) and take steps to insure their position within the social security of their village. This has been used as an argument that Africans prefer temporary migration. But it is equally evidence of the lack of security, social and financial, in the urban environment of bachelor accomm-

odation. While it is true that the African retains his identification with the soil of his ancestors, the figures of "permanent migrants" even in the period before 1914 reveal that a significant number were willing to make the break, and the Katangese experiment in stabilisation of labour in the 1920s indicates that more might have been willing to do so had the conditions for families been suitable and wages adequate.

In his restlessness, the young returned migrant disturbs the equilibrium of the village. If he had been to the mines, he had come to regard farm labour as much lower in prestige, "less manly" even, because of the much lower wages.[18] If he came from one of the martial tribes, this might fit his pre-migration attitudes, although, as with the British concept of "martial races" in India, this is a distinction that must not be pressed too far. His re-entry to the village economy would often therefore not be an easy one. Moreover, he had possessions, clothes, that his headman often did not have. This resulted in a disturbing shift in prestige. If there is one constant refrain reiterated by chiefs and headmen to native commissioners, it is that they could no longer control their young men.

These same possessions would also have a disturbing effect on the migrant's brothers or neighbours who had not been to work. It was often said by officials of the labour bureaux

that "the contented returned migrant is the best recruiter".[19] The evidence of the migrant's new found prestige would often conflict with the wishes of the womenfolk who naturally preferred their men to stay at home. The young migrant indeed invariably returned with the intention of finding a wife. Having done so, the pull of the mining compound and the pull of his wife would create a conflict on a personal level comparable with that more generally felt in the village.

The effect of his migration varied according to the tribe and its ecology. There were frequent complaints by officials of the break-up of tribal society, which from an administrative point of view was regarded by many as a bad thing (others sought to facilitate this break-up). That such a destruction took place was not however uniformly true. Amongst the Bemba, the lot of the women and children certainly declined. The poor economy which probably stimulated migration had itself depended to a great extent on male labour: it was the men who pollarded the trees and burned the bush for the citemene agriculture. The Ngoni also became an extremely depressed labour reserve because the men's relationship to the cattle was destroyed and because there were few opportunities for cash-cropping and trading. The Ndebeles' experience was not so disastrous because such opportunities did exist for the re-integration of men into a mixed tribal/cash economy. On the other hand, the social organisation of

the Lakeshore Tonga of Nyasaland might indeed have been strengthened by migration, and they have revealed one of the highest figures for migration in Central Africa.[20] Their cassava cultivation could be handled quite adequately by the women and the few men left; and the migrants sought constantly to ensure their position in the social life of the village by remittances and by frequent visits home. In all these cases, these trends were evident before 1914.

Thus tribal dislocation and depression depended first on the ability of those left behind to cope with their environment and mode of food production, and secondly on the capability of the migrants to re-integrate socially or economically into the tribal situation. There has been a considerable discussion as to whether the matrilineal/matrilocal or the patrilineal/patrilocal society suffered more under these conditions. There is some evidence that the migrant's grass widow fared better under the protection of her husband's people, more zealous of the son's or brother's rights.

There has been some attempt to find a continuity between the migration of shifting agriculture and the migration of incipient industrialism.[21] Such a sense of continuity is difficult to confirm while the one remained a communal experience and the other an individual one. In many societies, when a man had enough dependents, he could move out and found a

new village for himself to head. But when he left to occupy his temporary niche in the European economy, he performed a sort of industrial"national service" together with the many others who passed in waves through the mining or location barracks.[22] The quality of the experience was wholly different.

It is however important to note that while the migrant's situation changed under the aggressively individualistic conditions of mining employment, the situation of his village did not remain static. With the absence of raiding and the disappearance of the need for defence, many larger villages dispersed into smaller kin groups. This was however contrary to the needs of the local tax-gathering official who sought stabilisation and centralisation in order to facilitate his control and reduce his labour. Thus the village changed its relationship to the soil. Moreover, it changed its political relationships. The native commissioner (in Southern Rhodesia), the district commissioner (in Northern Rhodesia), and the district resident (in Nyasaland) was the new paramount. In criminal law at least, the powers of the village were removed and vested in the police (often from another tribe) and in the magistrate's court. But most important of all, while the migrant was entering the European economy through paid labour, the village, depending on its geographical situation, might well be entering the European

economy through cash cropping and the purchase and sale of stock.

It was not then a static village community, but a radically changed one that the labour migrant returned to and departed from. These changes had occurred as rapidly as his new experience had been accumulated. His return not only affected the village; the changes in the village affected him. He became more aware of the new relationships. He might indeed discover that he could remain within the cash economy and abandon labour migration by responding to the new market possibilities. He might adopt the even more temporary migration of the vendor and the buyer of produce and stock. This is not to suggest that a village rich in cash cropping reduced its contribution to labour migration. As observed in chapter 5, a rich village could create as much migration as a poor one, if not more. The two new economic activities complemented each other in creating an increased awareness of the possibilities of the cash economy.

In following the "composite migrant" an attempt has been made to examine the variety of experience inherent in labour migration, the variety of accommodation required of tribal societies and produced by them according to their particular situation and characteristics, and the various issues to which it gave rise within a few years of its development. Labour migration was physically brutalising, but even more so it was

mentally brutalising. It replaced the slave trade of the Arabs, and had some similarities with it: the element of compulsion, the violence, the separation from family. But there were of course two enormous differences: it was regulated by ordinance, inspectorate, and a watchful but not always effective Colonial Office; and secondly, after the experience the migrant usually returned. Moreover, unlike slavery, it was not a once and for all experience, but one that might be repeated several times during a migrant's life time. In this the migrant was a victim partly of inadequate European labour theory and policy, partly of European demands for social and ultimately political segregation, and partly of his own predilections.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1 The principal sources for this chapter are the various labour bureaux documents, the reports of the inspectors of native compounds, and reports of native commissioners. It would be foolish to cite each individual point.

2 Hughes & van Velsen, The Ndebele (London, 1955).

3 Margery Perham, Ten Africans (London, 1936). The story of Ndausi Kumalo provides an interesting insight into the development of an Ndebele chief.

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5 A.J. Barnes, Politics in a Changing Society, a Political History of the Fort Jameson Ngoni (Cape Town, 1954).

6 Report of Administrator, North Eastern Rhodesia (Robert Codrington), March 31, 1902. Board minutes, October 8, 1902. C.O. 417/365.

7 Report of Administrator, North Western Rhodesia, (Robert Coryndon). B.S.A.Co. Report, 1898-1900, p.93.

8 Report of the Nyasaland Secretary for Native Affairs (Dr. Casson), July, 1910. NA A3/18/30/15.

9 Accidents were frequent, and sometimes reached the scale of a disaster. In 1906, 2 Europeans and 73 Africans were killed at the Valley Mine when it flooded. Report of the inspector of native compounds, Gwanda district, March 31, 1907. NA NB 6/1/13-21.

10 Gladstone to Harcourt, September 4, 1913. C.O. 417/525.

11 The inspector of native compounds, Gwanda-Belingwe district, C.L. Carbutt, considered a beating essential to the training and well-being of the mine labourers: "In his barbarous state he is merely idle and useless, and almost harmless after his initial beating in fair fight by the white man." Report, December 31, 1908. NA NB 6/1/13-21.

12 Correspondence on this blindness took place in late 1909. NA A3/18/30/18.

13 A.L. Epstein, Politics in an Urban African Community (Manchester, 1958).

14 Reports of inspectors of native compounds. NA NB 6/1/13-21.

15 Reports of inspectors of native compounds, passim.

16 R. Philpott, "The Mulobezi-Mongu Labour Route", Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, III, July, 1945.

17 ibid.

18 One of the bureau officials wrote of a conversation he had overheard between a mine labourer and a man who was being sent to a farm. The reject was told "not to speak to him, as he was a man, and worked in the mines, not digging mealies at 5/- per month." Loosely to Hole, December 9, 1909. NA A3/18/30/18.

19 Statement of chairman of the R.N.L.B., June 24, 1912. NA A3/18/30/28.

20 Mary Tew, Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region (London, 1950). J. Van Velsen, "Labour Migration as a Positive Factor in the Continuity of Tonga Tribal Society" in A. Southall, Social Change in Modern Africa (London, 1961).

21 Margaret Read, "Migrant Labour in Africa and its Effect on Tribal Life", International Labour Review, June, 1942.

22 This idea of a kind of industrial national service is in Walter Elkan, Migrants and Proletarians (London, 1960).

CONCLUSION

Many different strands were woven together into nineteenth century attitudes towards indigenous peoples and their place in the imperial economy, which taken together amounts to colonial labour theory. If the compulsion of slavery were removed, how could ex-slaves in the old colonies and native peoples in the new be persuaded to work, and how could labour be transported around the empire to replace the slave trade. Indentured labour was the solution to the second problem, and from Earl Grey's period as Colonial Secretary onwards, taxation and a modicum of land hunger were seen as the solutions to the first.

In this way land policy became inextricably bound up with labour theory, and land policy became the foundation of all native policy, particularly in Southern Africa. The parcelling out of land to native peoples turned into a conflict between metropolitan theory and colonial practice, between notions of civilising stimulants and concerns for administrative expediency and security. It was at this point that the demands of settler communities for defensive arrangements against the black majority around them, even if those arrangements conflicted with economic needs, began to play a crucial part in the debate.

At the time of the settling of Rhodesia, the reserves-amalgamation debate was still a live one, and policy continued

to falter between liberality of outlook and demands for secure provisions to ensure social and political exclusiveness for white immigrants. At the same time colonial labour policy came under the influence of the school of imperial idealists, so convinced of the greatness of the empire, and of the need for native peoples to serve, to be civilised by force if necessary.

At first Europeans in Rhodesia appeared to pursue an amalgamation policy: they simply super-imposed their centres of economic activity, towns, mines and farms, on to the pre-existing pattern of tribal village communities. But because of Colonial Office withdrawal from responsibility in the early years, this system appeared to lead to massive abuse. Although it had not originated in the Colonial Office, a reserves policy had become one of the accepted colonial doctrines by the end of the century. Moreover, rudimentary ideas of indirect rule were becoming the darling philosophy of radical opinion, and this found an echo in the Colonial Office where reserves came to be regarded as vital protection for African social and political interests. This is not to say that the two are coterminous, for clearly they are not. But on the other hand, the notion of amalgamation or of scattered locations is quite inimical to indirect rule. And although indirect rule never genuinely existed in South Central Africa in this period (with the possible exception of Barotseland), the reserves created

the opportunity for its anachronistic resuscitation in perverted form in more recent times.

How did the reserves policy operate in Rhodesia? Moves against inconvenient squatting, moves to obtain revenue, moves directed against large absentee landlordism, all these caused increased African migration to the reserves. As a result of these policies, labour became an extractable and returnable commodity; the fact that women and children were conveniently beyond the pale aided the creation of an exceptionally cheap labour policy. These notions were accentuated and fostered by the movement of labour from Northern Zambezia, Nyasaland, Mozambique, and from beyond the Indian Ocean. Policy makers thought of compulsion to labour rather than repulsion from it at the places of work, of distraction from it on the reserves rather than attraction to it. They operated on largely the same myths as had obtained in the early nineteenth century.

In fact there was a much more rational economic response in the districts than they ever recognised, although this varied widely of course. Policies of driving to reserves, of holding down wages to an irreducible minimum, of maintaining the migrant system for its cheapness, only helped to destroy such rational response as there was. Some recognised this and argued for a permanent labour system, but this was irreconcilable with a reserves policy. Taylor, the Chief Native Commissioner, tried to espouse both arguments and only

revealed their incompatibility. A permanent labour force and the existence of reserves could only be reconciled by a thorough-going African agricultural development programme, and the existence of the settler farming community saw to it that that could never come about in this period.

There are two possible objections to the arguments for a permanent labour system, and both have appeared in this thesis at some point. One is that the system of migrant labour fitted African predilections in the period. The second is that the system also fitted the realities of Rhodesian mining, that small mines could be easily worked out or crash financially. Both can be, and were, answered. Firstly, the migrant's love of his own territory, and his anxiety to return were of course emphasised by the fact that the extended family, the genuinely communal life, were there. Migration as a family was a familiar experience in tribal life, and one which could have been made attractive. Secondly, the small tributors' mines were but a small sector of the Rhodesian economy even by the first years of the century. Many turned into large mines, particularly coal, a few gold, and various other metals as discovered. Both farming and secondary industry required a stable labour force.

The reserves policy was foisted upon the Company by the Colonial Office. This ironically was the Colonial Office's greatest success in controlling the Company. For the rest,

Colonial Office control over native policy was tenuous, particularly after the departure of Sir Marshal Clarke as Resident Commissioner. It is misleading to argue, as Claire Palley does in her Constitutional History and Law of Southern Rhodesia, 1888-1965, that the Colonial Office successfully controlled the Company after the 1898 Order-in-Council. This may be the conclusion reached by an examination of hundreds of ordinances and the effectiveness of the Colonial Office in modifying them. But an examination of the grass roots operation of native policy reveals quite the opposite. Sir Marshal Clarke, as has been indicated, kept a fairly watchful eye on local native policy, but his efforts were vitiated by the war in South Africa, his own vacillations, and by the antagonism of Milner. His successors were without exception completely ineffective, as is evidenced by the fashion in which the Administrator and High Commissioner invariably operated over their heads, and by the High Commissioner's complaints of their incompetence. In addition, the High Commissioner was remote and far too intimately connected with South African affairs.

The control which the Colonial Office and its representatives did effect was invariably destructive rather than constructive. In relations with Nyasaland, the Indian Government, the Portuguese, the Transvaal, and the Union of

South Africa later, the Company was almost always driven into a corner. There was no opportunity to work out a harmonious, mutually advantageous labour policy, which ironically the Company of all imperial agencies was in a position to implement. The Company operated ultimately for commercial gain. Commercial gain ought to have involved the most efficient labour system, a permanent one. The Company might have pursued this, as the humanitarians feared, in a brutal way, but this was an impression derived from a period when the Colonial Office consciously shuffled off all responsibility. Such a system was inimical to settler social and ultimately political desires, and moreover conflicted with "enlightened"opinion of the day, of all colours.

Not only did the Colonial Office drive the Company into a corner over its foreign relations, and eventually convince it of the need for Southern African solidarity, it also drove the Company into a corner vis-à-vis the settlers. At Colonial Office insistence the pioneers were provided with a legislative council in 1898, and it was the settlers who ultimately proved the Company's downfull, and eventually benefited from Colonial Office policies. So it was that Africans faced a perpetual cycle of hazardous migrant labour, based upon a massive system of outdoor relief which consisted of over-crowded reserves, declining soil fertility, and declining stock holding. In pursuing "wants", in exploring the various avenues into the

cash economy, they had revealed in large part an essentially rational economic response. It was stifled by constant movement further from the centres of employment, further from marketing opportunity, further from the lines of communication. They experienced in practice Merivale's prophetic theory of over half a century before, that reserves invited contraction and led inevitably to perpetual movement outwards before the tide of advancing European interests.

A NOTE ON TRIBES AND THEIR NOMENCLATURE

Throughout this thesis an attempt has been made to use the forms of tribal names currently accepted by anthropologists. However, from time to time the name used by early administrators and pioneers has appeared because of its presence in a source, or in the name of a historical event. Thus Matabele appears in the sources and in the event, the Matabele War, but Ndebele has been used throughout to refer to the same tribe.

The Ndebele are an Nguni people, that is part of the Zulu "backlash" in the nineteenth century from Natal. Other Nguni peoples in the area are the Shangaans in Mozambique and South Eastern Rhodesia and the Ngoni of Malawi and North Eastern Zambia. The latter should not be confused with the wider group.

Plural prefixes commonly used in the period, like Ma-Shona, Ba-Tonga, Wa-Bisa, have all been dropped. The Tonga of Lake Nyasa should not be confused with the Tonga of the Zambezi Valley.

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The main Colonial Office sources consisted of many volumes in the series

C.O. 417	Correspondence with the High Commissioner in South Africa, with the B.S.A.Co., and after 1898 the minutes and their annexures of the Board of the B.S.A.Co.

In addition, the following were used:

C.O. 468	B.S.A.Co. Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1889-1902 (also available in the British Museum)
C.O. 3	Ordinances, 1891-1899
C.O. 455	Gazettes, 1894-1914
C.O. 603	Sessional Papers, 1896-1914
C.O. 671	Acts, 1901-1914

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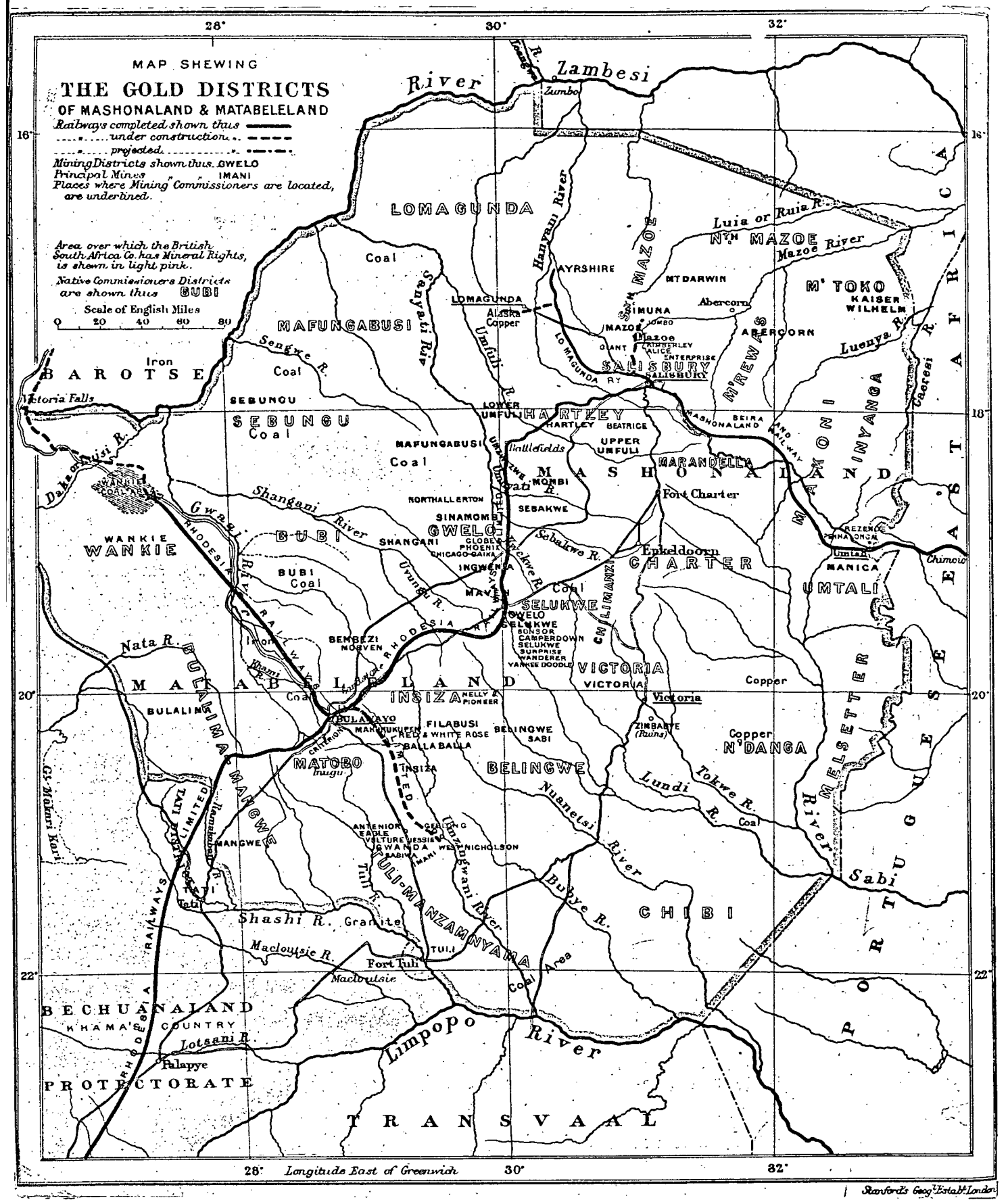
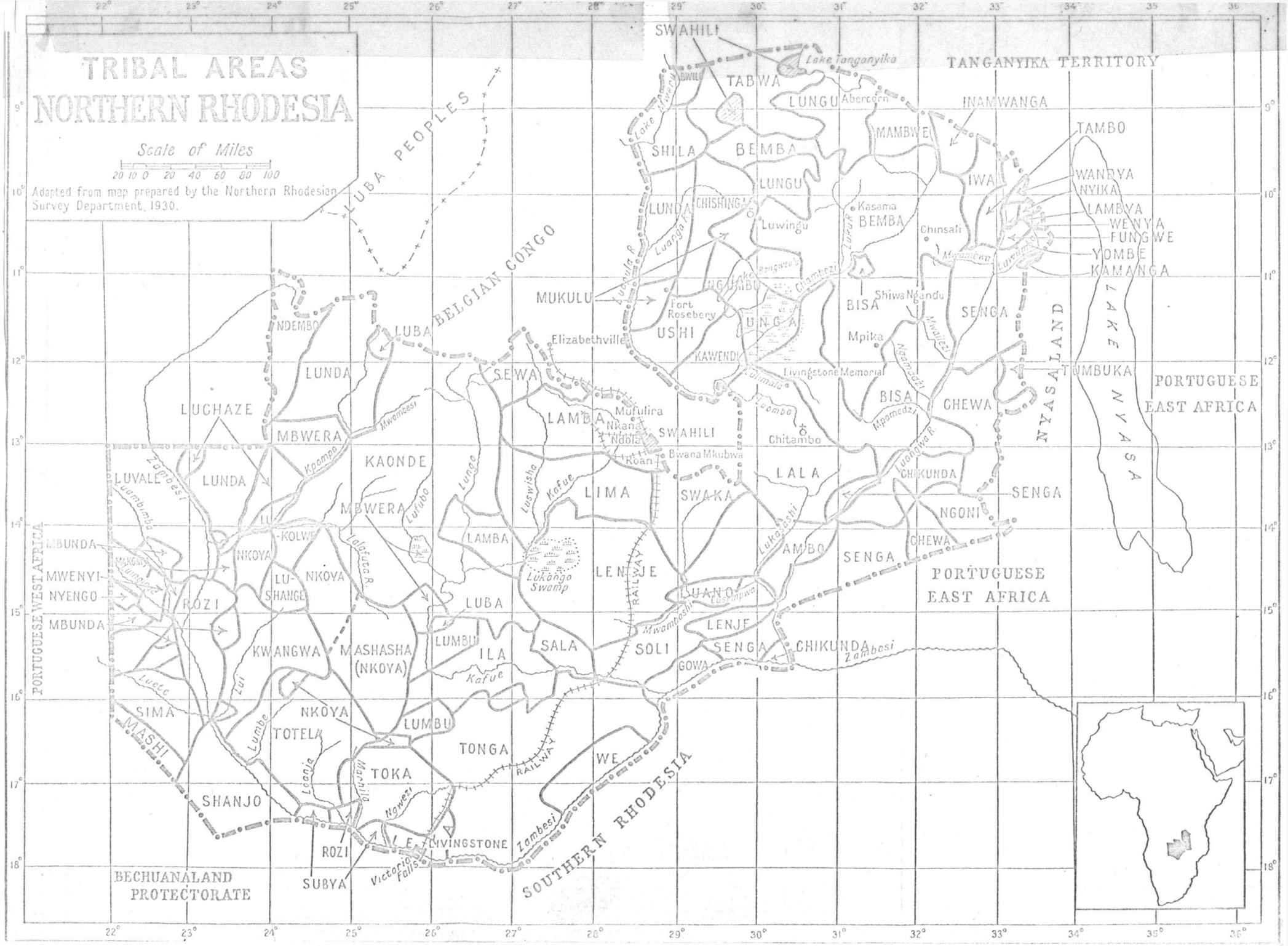


SOUTHERN RHODESIA: DISTRICTS AND MINES
from the British South Africa Company's Directors' Report, 1902


TRIBAL AREAS
NORTHERN RHODESIA
Scale of Miles
20 10 0 20 40 60 80 100
Adapted from map prepared by the Northern Rhodesian Survey Department, 1930.
LUBA PEOPLES
LUBA BELGIAN CONGO
TANGANYIKA TERRITORY
Lake Tanganyika
SWAHILI
TABWA
LUNGU
Abercorn
INAMWANGA
MAMBWE
TAMBO
WANDYA
NYIKA
LAMBYA
WENYA
FUNGWE
YOMBE
KAMANGA
SHILA
BEMBA
LUNGU
IWA
LUNDA
CHISHINGA
Luwingu
Kasama
BEMBA
Chinsali
Luvua R.
Luanga R.
Luvula R.
Lake Bangweulu
Chambezi
Mpanda
Luwumba
MUKULU
NGUMBU
Fort Rosebery
USHI
UNGA
BISA
Shiwa Ngandu
SENGA
Mpika
Mwaliezi
Mpamadzi
Elizabethville
KAWENDI
Ulimala
Livingstone Memorial
TUMBUKA
PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA
NYASALAND
LAKE NYASA
NDEMBO
LUBA
LUNDA
SEWA
LUGHAZE
MBWERA
Mwombezi
Mufulira
Nkana
Ndola
LAMBA
SWAHILI
Roan
Bwana Mkubwa
Luwombo
Chitambo
BISA
Mpomedzi
CHEWA
Luangwa R.
CHIKUNDA
LALA
SWAKA
LIMA
KAONDE
Kafue
Luswishi
Lungo
Luvubo
LUVALE
LUNDA
Zambezi
Luambimba
MBWERA
LU-KOLWE
NKOYA
LU-SHANGE
Lofuta R.
Lukangashi
NGONI
SENGA
CHEWA
MBUNDA
MWENYI-NYENGO
MBUNDA
MAKONDE
Luangwa
ROZI
LAMBA
Lukongo Swamp
LENJE
RAILWAY
AMBO
SENGA
PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA
LUBA
LUANO
Luangwa
LENJE
Mwamboshi
KWANGWA
MASHASHA (NKOYA)
LUMBU
ILA
SALA
SOLI
SENGA
CHIKUNDA
Zambezi
GOWA
Kafue
Luete
Zui
PORTUGUESE WEST AFRICA
SIMA
MASHI
NKOYA
TOTELA
Lumbe
LUMBU
TONGA
RAILWAY
WE
Loanja
Mafinga
TOKA
Ngwezi
SHANJO
ROZI
SUBYA
LIVINGSTONE
Victoria Falls
Zambezi
SOUTHERN RHODESIA
BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

LABOUR ROUTES IN SOUTH CENTRAL AFRICA

Towns..... Blantyre •
Recruiting Centres..... Senanga
Forwarding Depots.....Livingstone ▭
Medical Centres..... Ndola ✗
Labour Routes (on foot) →
(by rail)