

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AGRICULTURE IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA WITH
PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE INTERWAR YEARS

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PREFACE

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+ pos such as who...

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Throughout this work Zimbabwe Rhodesia will be referred to as Southern Rhodesia in an attempt to place this work in its true historical perspective. The British South Africa Company will be referred to as the BSA Company, and finally, Native Commissioners will be referred to as NCs and the Chief Native Commissioner as the CNC.

In conformity with the regulations of the University of Natal, I hereby state that what follows is my own original work, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text. Furthermore, this thesis has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.

Durban, December 1979

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"We are often given to condemn the native method of agriculture.....if trying to produce crops with the least element of risk or failure can be called indolence then we are all equally guilty".

CNC Report, 1925

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine African agricultural development in Southern Rhodesia during the years 1890 to 1950. Special attention has been paid to the inter-war years because it was during those years that there evolved a definite policy for the administration of the African sector.

It must be stressed at the outset that African agricultural development cannot be studied in isolation from those influences exerted upon it by other sectors of the economy. Changing trends in the white agricultural sector played a major role in the formation of Native policy, and development in the former will be examined in so far as they affected government policy towards African agriculture and changes therein. Land policy also played a role in determining changes in African agriculture. Furthermore, government legislation and the Native Affairs Department assumed vital roles in determining the path along which African development was to be directed. All these contributing factors will be examined in relation to their influence on African agriculture.¹⁾

More specifically, the early pages of this work will outline the structure of the African agrarian economy in the years immediately preceding the arrival of the white pioneers in 1890. This will serve as a foundation upon which subsequent changes to this system, wrought by both indigenous and exogenous factors, may be compared and contrasted.²⁾ For example it is commonly believed that the Africans were poor agriculturalists, and that deterioration of the reserves during the years under review came as a result of an inherent inability to adjust their agricultural techniques as the need arose.³⁾ It is hoped that the inadequacy of this erroneous belief will be revealed in the following pages.

Changes invoked in the economic base of the African agricultural sector,

1) Details furnished in the main text.

2) *vide infra*, Ch.2.1.

3) *vide infra*, pp.12/13

arising from early contact with the nascent social, economic and political system of whites, will then be examined. In the early years of the British South Africa Company's rule, the settlers were uninterested in the agricultural potential of Southern Rhodesia. Instead they desired the lucrative and rapid returns which mineral prospecting promised. Consequently, they were content to allow Africans to supply their foodstuff requirements. African response to these demands will be examined in order to gauge their willingness to become involved in the nascent exchange economy.⁴⁾

In the second decade of the twentieth century, a change in Native policy became evident. The origins of this change will be sought as will the means employed in inaugurating this change. During those years, many whites no longer desired that Africans provide their foodstuff requirements. This was one of the major factors which led to the establishment of the Native Reserves Commission in 1914, the purposes and the results of which will be discussed in some detail.⁵⁾ It will be shown that little effort was made during this period to develop African areas: when pressure on the land was evident, and soil fertility declined, cultivation and settlement was merely extended into unused areas. Native policy, then, focused on augmenting rather than developing African areas.

Attention will also be given to the apparent paradox which emerged in African policy during the 1920s. On the one hand, it appeared that a definite move towards racial segregation was being made in order to curtail future possibility of African competition with white farmers, and this culminated in the passage of the Land Apportionment Act in 1931.⁶⁾ On the other hand, however, African administration changed from a policy of merely controlling and pacifying the indigenous population, and came to include the provision of extension services in order to facilitate agricultural development in African areas.⁷⁾

4) *vide infra*, Ch.2.1.

5) *vide infra*, Ch.2.2.

6) *vide infra*, Ch.3.1.

7) *vide infra*, Ch.3.2.

These extension services operated through the medium of African demonstrators whose function it was to encourage the adoption by Africans of improved methods of cultivation and preservation of the soil. This apparent paradox, and the functions and achievement of demonstrators, will be examined in Chapter Three.

The early 1930s witnessed a phase of acute depression in both white and African farming, and it was during that period that Native policy was again revised. For the first time, direct discrimination in the fields of agricultural marketing and production became evident. Events in the white farming sector will be shown to have been largely responsible for this change in attitude; and the reasons for these changes, and the effects of such changes on the African agricultural sector, will be analysed.⁸⁾ These trends of curtailing African agricultural production were maintained until the second half of the 1930s, whereupon further changes in policy began to manifest themselves.

The 1940s, in fact, represent a deviation from all previous policy: during the decade it became desirable that African production be increased in order to cater for the growing needs of the market.⁹⁾ During the 1940s, therefore, all efforts were devoted to the achievement of this aim by increasing the productivity of the African reserves. Extension programmes were modified and extended in these years, and the white farming sector also played a part in encouraging and facilitating these developments. Chapter Four discusses these changes, and examines the devices used in attempts to bring about these changes.

Chapter Five is devoted to an analysis of the same period as that reviewed in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, however, different aspects of African policy will be examined: the African cattle industry, cash cropping, the development of Native Purchase Areas and the establishment of rural credit facilities. The reason behind allotting an entire chapter to the above-mentioned development is that these movements represented deviations from all former extension facilities at the

8) *vide infra*, Ch.4.1.

9) *vide infra*, Ch.4.2.

disposal of Africans. It was thus decided to outline the history of the progression toward the adoption of these differing policies. In this way, it is hoped to re-emphasise the break with the past which resulted from the reformulation of policy in the 1940s.

Throughout this work, therefore, the development of African agriculture will be examined in the light of developments in other sectors of the Southern Rhodesian economy; which, in many ways, will be shown to have determined African responses to the extension services proffered. Conclusions will then be drawn as to the nature and course of African agricultural development during the period under review.

Up to the present time, very little has been written on the role and work of African agricultural demonstrators in Southern Rhodesia. Indeed, little has been written on African agricultural development in general; although much has been written on associated topics, and this has provided a useful source of information. There are several general texts on the history of Southern Rhodesia, but only a few of the more important works will be discussed here.¹⁰⁾ Two general works which ought to be mentioned are P.E.N. Tindall's *A History of Central Africa*¹¹⁾ and L.H. Gann's *A History of Southern Rhodesia*.¹²⁾ While both works touch upon some of the issues discussed in this thesis, their very general nature has precluded any detailed treatment of African agricultural development. Indeed, this is the inevitable difficulty with all such general works: while they often provide an excellent overview of Southern Rhodesia's development, they often lack sufficient analytical detail.

At a more specialised level, R.H. Palmer's *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia* examines the way in which white settlers used land policy, and consequent control over the land, in order to gain a position of dominance over the African population.¹³⁾ Palmer has examined both

10) See Bibliography, Secondary Sources, Books, for a list of the relevant works.

11) P.E.N. Tindall, *A History of Central Africa*, (London, 1967).

12) L.H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, (Humanities Press, New York, 1969).

13) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, (Heinemann, London, 1973).

the formation and implementation of land policy in the years 1890 to 1936; and, in this area was a constant source of reference. Nonetheless, he devoted little attention to the origin and role of African administration and African demonstrators, both of which comprise the central theme of this thesis. Furthermore, Palmer's work does not examine the period during and after the Second World War, a crucial period during which many changes in African policy became evident. Nevertheless, being one of the few works devoted entirely to African policy in Rhodesia, although devoted to land policy and not agriculture, this work posed many vital questions, some of which have been raised and answers attempted in this study.

D.J. Murray's work, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, also proved to be a valuable text.¹⁴⁾ It offers a clear analysis of the administrative system in Southern Rhodesia in both white and African sectors. This was a useful source of information, placing development of African agriculture within its administrative context, and explaining comprehensively how the latter functioned. M.C. Steele's *Foundations of a Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia: 1923-1933*, an unpublished thesis, devotes more attention to the evolution of Native policy rather than to the effects thereof.¹⁵⁾ He examines in detail the conflicts within the various sectors of the government and their effect on Native policy, but pays little attention to the growth and development of demonstrator effort in the African reserves. Furthermore, this work does not examine the period of the late 1930s and 1940s wherein demonstrators began to gain a foothold in the reserves, and during which government policy towards African development became evident, and which forms an important part of the present study.

The more specialised field of agricultural development is rather poorly served in the existing literature on Southern Rhodesia. Fortunately H. Weinmann's *Agricultural Research and Development in Southern*

14) D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, (Oxford, 1970).

15) M.C. Steele, *Foundations of a Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia, 1923-1933*, (unpublished PhD thesis, Simon Frazer University, 1972).

Rhodesia, is an exception to the trend.¹⁶⁾ Covering, in two volumes, the period 1890-1945, it examines the development of the white agricultural sector in great detail. This work was of great value: taking a narrative structure, Weinmann outlines trends in white agriculture, basing his work on statistical evidence; and by avoiding a thematical, analytical form, his work remains unclouded by models or theories. The statistics he offers, although relating to trends in white farming, help elucidate trends within the African farming sector.

A.K.H. Weinrich's work, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*, offers a rare, intensive study of African agriculture.¹⁷⁾ This work, however, is confined to a specific area within Southern Rhodesia and within a specific time period, primarily the 1960s, which lies beyond the scope of this thesis.

It can thus be seen that the majority of these secondary texts, with the exception of that by R.H. Palmer, cover themes which are peripheral to the central theme of this study; and even Palmer's work does not examine in depth the later period under examination in this work. All additional secondary sources were derived from journal articles.¹⁸⁾ For the most part, these works review selected periods in African agricultural development: Native policy, land policy and the various pieces of legislation passed. None examined these themes within a wider context, or discussed their ramifications on various sectors of the Southern Rhodesian economy. Furthermore, none of these articles examined the important part played by African demonstrators, their work and the results thereof.

16) H. Weinmann, *Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1923*, University of Rhodesia, Department of Agriculture, Occasional Paper 4 (Salisbury 1972); *Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1950*, University of Rhodesia, Series in Science 2 (Salisbury 1975).

17) A.K.H. Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*, (OUP 1975).

18) See Bibliography, Secondary Sources Articles and Pamphlets, for a list of the relevant works.

Virtually all the vitally important information required for this study - relating to African agricultural techniques and work undertaken by demonstrators and African responses to them - was gleaned from primary sources housed in the National Archives of Rhodesia (NAR)¹⁹⁾ The main records referred to in the period of BSA Company rule were the annual reports of the Chief Native Commissioner and Native Commissioners. After the grant of self-government in 1923, the yearly and half-yearly reports of the Chief Native Commissioner and Native Commissioners were examined. In addition, the correspondence of the Chief Native Commissioner was scrutinised. These valuable sources shed much light on the nature and course of African agricultural development; and, indeed, this study could not have been written without them.

Also of great value were the proceedings and report of the Native Production and Trade Commission of 1944, in which both white and African were interviewed.²⁰⁾ This work has the added value of being one of the few sources which provided some insight into African opinion. Reports of other commissions were also of great use: the Hadfield Commission report of 1924 examined the African educational system and advocated changes therein; while the Keigwin report of 1920 on 'The Industrial Training of Natives' contained the seeds of what was later to take the form of agricultural development programmes.²¹⁾

Apart from the official records housed in the National Archives of Rhodesia, perhaps the most important sources were the annual reports of E.D. Alvord, Agriculturalist for Instruction of Natives during the years 1926 to 1943, and Director of Native Agriculture from 1944 until he retired in 1950. These reports provide an in-depth account of all work undertaken in the African areas and the results thereof. Furthermore, Alvord wrote numerous published and unpublished articles on the nature and scope of his work, and it was from these that most of the chronological pattern of African development work was traced.²²⁾

19) See Bibliography, primary sources for list of relevant sources.

20) See Bibliography, primary sources for list of relevant sources.

21) See Bibliography, primary sources for list of relevant Reports.

22) See Bibliography, primary sources, for a list of E.D. Alvord's works.

These works were also important because they gave a greater depth of understanding and insight into the principal figure behind the origin and growth of these schemes. Indeed, much of the success of development programmes prior to 1940 may be attributed solely to E.D. Alvord.²³⁾

One major obstacle ought to be mentioned here: much difficulty was posed from the necessity of having to refer primarily to white opinion in the years under review. Being a work essentially involved in an examination of the African people, it would have been of great benefit to consult African opinion. Unfortunately, this was not possible. Owing to the war situation in Rhodesia at present, it was not possible to visit the Tribal Trust Lands to interview old chiefs and headmen, or retired demonstrators.

In an effort to overcome this obstacle, interviews were conducted with certain white officials. Mr. Beaumont, Chief Extension and Training Officer for Derag, offered much useful information on the history and development of African administrative policy and their response to the latter. In addition, R. Dinnis, retired Native Commissioner, and later founder of the Co-operative Movement for Africans in Southern Rhodesia, offered much information on African agricultural development during the years 1934 to 1950. Dinnis also presented firsthand experience of African attitudes to demonstrators, and substantiated the opinions gleaned from various official reports and commissions. Finally, D. Hampton, ex-principal of Domboshawa School, was of considerable assistance in explaining the training of demonstrators, the mechanics behind the running of the school, and success achieved therein. D. Hampton also offered invaluable information on the receptivity of the African population to demonstrator efforts, also having had firsthand experience in this area.

Within the limits outlined above, then, it is hoped that this study

23) E.D. Alvord wrote a lengthy paper on the development and consequences of his programmes: 'The Gospel of the Plow'. This work is on microfilm in the National Archives of Rhodesia. Unfortunately, page numbers were excluded in order to fit this paper onto film; and therefore, where this paper is referred to in the text of this work, page numbers have been excluded.

will help to provide an understanding of the nature and course of African agricultural development in Southern Rhodesia during the years 1890-1950. Not only will this help to shed light upon an important constituent part of Southern Rhodesia's overall development, but might also make a modest contribution to filling the gap which exists in the available literature on this subject.

"The inheritance of the past is important because the past has shaped the outlook of the people and their values, and any radical departure from traditional practises is likely to cause insecurity and arouse suspicion".

A.K.H., Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*, P.5

2.1 The Age of African Agricultural Prosperity: 1890 to 1908

To appreciate the full impact of colonisation on the African agricultural sector in Southern Rhodesia, it is necessary to understand the geography of the country. Southern Rhodesia is divided into three main regions: the fertile highveld, the middleveld, and the hot, arid lowveld.¹⁾

The highveld comprises land over 4,000 feet in altitude, and runs north-east to south-east across the centre of the country, with an offshoot north-west of Salisbury. The land in this region is predominantly flat, and forms the watershed between the Zambezi, Limpopo and Sabi rivers. This area is the most fertile of the three main regions, and receives the largest portion of the rainfall. The highveld forms 25 percent of the entire country, and it was in this area that the Ndebele, and later the white settlers, chose to live.²⁾

Bordering the highveld on the north-west and south-east lies the middleveld. This land ranges between 3,000 and 4,000 feet in altitude.³⁾ In some places the middleveld is flat, particularly from Bulawayo to the area near Wankie, where the railway runs in a straight line for nearly seventy-two miles. The major portion of the middleveld, however, is far more undulating than the highveld; it comprises 40 percent of the country and most of the African reserves were to be established in this area.

Finally, beyond the middleveld lies the hot, arid and often malarial lowveld. This area consists of the Zambezi and Sabi-Limpopo valleys; the latter, predominantly flat country, and the former, mountainous. The lowveld comprises 35 percent of Southern Rhodesia, and most of the land in this region is below 3,000 feet in altitude. It was not attractive to human settlement, lack of rain making it difficult to

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- 1) See Appendix I, Map 1, showing the three principal regions.
 - 2) The majority of the mineral wealth of the country is also to be found in this region, which is what attracted white settlers in the late nineteenth century.
 - 3) R.H. Palmer, 'The agricultural History of Rhodesia', in R.H. Palmer and Q.N. Parsons, (Eds.), *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*, (1971), pp.221/2.

cultivate crops and tsetse fly inhibiting the breeding of cattle.

There are two major soil types to be found in Southern Rhodesia. The predominant soils are the light sandveld variety, which are of low inherent fertility, and constitute 70 percent of the country's soil. These sandy soils are to be found mainly in the middle- and lowveld, the areas in which most of the African reserves were to be situated. The heavier red and brown loam and clay soils comprise 7 percent, and are found primarily on the highveld, the principal area of white settlement. These soils are of a much higher fertility than the sandy soils.⁴⁾

There are also two principal tribes in Southern Rhodesia: the Shona and the Ndebele. Although there were differences in their cultural communities in the nineteenth century, both tribes practised methods of shifting cultivation. This system was not as inefficient and primitive as the settlers, and later historians, believed. If one looks at the agricultural prospects prior to the arrival of the white settlers in 1890, taking into consideration climatic conditions - erratic rainfall and the nature of the soil, in conjunction with population-land ratios and the needs of the people⁵⁾ - it becomes increasingly apparent that the general consensus as to the nature of African agricultural methods is grossly inaccurate. As M. Yudelman has put it, "The methods of cultivation used at the time Europeans moved into the area were remote from those evolved by Jethro Tull, the father of the European agricultural revolution. Because there was no use for intensive land use, low yielding extensive methods of production were employed."⁶⁾ This does not, however, imply that methods were inefficient; rather, as Lord Hailey put it, "shifting cultivation is less a device of barbarism than a concession to the character of the soil."⁷⁾

4) NAR ZAD 1/1/1 Resident Commissioner Salisbury to High Commissioner, 8/9/1912.

5) The estimated total African population in 1890 was only 250,000 thus each man had sufficient land at his disposal. E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure in Southern Rhodesia', Unpublished Paper, p.1.

6) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, (1964), p.12.

7) W. Allan, 'Changing Patterns in African Land Use', in *Journal of Royal African Society of Arts*, 108, 1960, p.612.

Under this system of cultivation, land was tilled continuously for up to four years, whereupon it was abandoned and allowed to lie fallow for a period of approximately fifteen years before being brought into use once more. During the interim, the natural coverage was allowed sufficient time to recover.⁸⁾

When an area of land was selected for cultivation, all the trees were cut down, with the exception of those bearing edible fruit and those used for ritual purposes. The branches were then piled around the remaining boles. This task was undertaken by the men as only they were permitted to handle the axe. The land was then hoed by the women,⁹⁾ after which it was left for a time, during which the wood piles dried out. The piles of wood were then burnt and the land left untouched again. Once the first rains had fallen, usually in December or January, planting was undertaken. There was no seed selection and seeds were not planted at regular intervals, but broadcast in a haphazard fashion.¹⁰⁾ The ashes from the burnt trees were hoed into the ground as a fertilizer.

Fields were usually planted to a variety of crops: a small portion was planted to groundnuts, another to bambarra groundnuts - these being grown separately. On a large part of the field a mixture of kaffir corn (*mapfunde*), finger millet (*mapoko*), bullrush millet (*munga*), curcubits and cowpeas (*nyimo*), were broadcast and hoed into the soil. Although maize was grown on the same land and mixed with other crops, small holes were made with the hoe, and several maize seeds planted in each. This method of mixed planting, later condemned by the settlers, was actually well-suited to the extensive systems of agriculture employed by Africans, particularly to those practised on sandy soils. As different crops matured at different times, mixed planting ensured that there was an adequate ground coverage throughout the planting season, thus preventing the soil from becoming scorched and dry from the fierce rays of the sun. Furthermore, it ensured there

8) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow', Unpublished.

9) If virgin land was cultivated, the men assisted in this task because the ground was usually hard and unmanageable.

10) NAR.ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission.

would be little or no water loss through run-off during periods of excessive rainfall.¹¹⁾ In W. Roder's words,

...under conditions of thin soils and a tropical ecology, the Shona were in many ways, excellent agriculturalists. Their practises avoided the main problems that plague Southern Rhodesia: soil erosion and declining fertility of the soil. Soil erosion was reduced by thick, mixed plantings of low leafy crops which leave no bare ground between grain stems, while roots of tree stumps and pollarded trees held the soil together. By shifting fields and letting land return to bush, they avoided prolonged periods of baring soil to erosion.¹²⁾

Thus, contrary to attitudes prevailing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Africans did have well-thought out reasons for the type of tillage methods they practised.

New fields were up to four acres in size, and every year adjacent virgin land was brought under cultivation. After approximately four seasons, the whole area would be between 4 and 6 acres. At that stage, a portion of the first land would be abandoned and a new section added each year. In this way, each portion was cultivated for about four years and then allowed to revert to bush and grass. Alternatively, if over time fields came to be located too far from the village, the entire village was moved to a new site. This system of cultivation had a carrying capacity of 20 persons per square mile, of which 25 percent was cultivated, 5 percent wasteland, and the remainder was grazing land.

Before the penetration of whites, when human and cattle numbers were sufficiently low relative to the availability of land, this system could be carried out effectively. Yields were low, but sufficient to cater to the subsistence requirements of the indigenous population. Demands on the fertility of the soil were not great because the bush fallow system allowed recovery. With the hoe as the only implement for cultivation, and the practise of mixed planting, soil losses were

11) Nevertheless, it was claimed that as a result of this practice, the land was supporting more plants per square yard than would ensure optimum output, thus crop yields were lower than would have been the case had more efficient tillage methods been employed. NAR ZBS 1/1/1, Native Production and Trade Commission.

12) Wolf Roder, *The Sabi Valley Irrigation Projects*, (1965), p.57.

minimised.¹³⁾ In this regard W. Allen has written,

We may assume, therefore, that as communities of men changed their methods of land use from hunting and food gathering, or herding and shepherding, to an increasing dependence on hoe cultivation, they acquired a substantial knowledge of the soils they used as a means of recognising and distinguishing them ... The shifting cultivator knew and understood his environment. He could assess the fertility of a piece of land and its suitability for one or other of his crops by the vegetation which covered it and the physical characteristics of the soil, and he knew how long he could cultivate each variant and the period required for restoration of fertility.¹⁴⁾

The above passage would also refute the belief, held by many, that pre-colonial agricultural practises were static, and as such, inefficient and primitive.

Agriculture was communal: the extended family was the main unit of production, and kinsmen were often called in to aid in the tasks of weeding, reaping, threshing and the breaking of new land. The older men usually supervised the work which was carried out primarily by the women and younger men. Specific tasks were allocated to each group: the females carried out most of the work of cultivation; while the tasks of preparing the land, herding the cattle, making decisions relating to cropping times, the planting of new lands and abandoning of old, were the preserve of the males.¹⁵⁾

Prior to the arrival of the whites, the Shona lived on the high and middleveld in the north-east of the country. Crop production was central to the Shona economy and the principal crop cultivated was *rupoko*, which, due to its hardy, drought-resistant nature, was best suited to the sandy soils in this region.¹⁶⁾

13) This was because with mixed planting different crops matured at varying times, thus the earth was seldom exposed to the fierce rays of the sun.

14) W. Allan, 'Changing Patterns of African Land Use', p.613.

15) The traditional allocation of tasks was to have profound consequences later, with the beginnings of the migrant labour system, particularly after the introduction of the plough, when cultivation too, became the task of the male.

16) D.N. Beach, 'The Shona Economy: Branches of Production', in R.H. Palmer and Q.N. Parsons (Eds.), *The Roots of Rural Poverty*, pp.42/43.

The main difficulty experienced was that of storage: grain could not be stored for long periods, and with no markets, storage of grain was not a viable proposition. To store grain in expectation of a dry period would result in the seed going bad if the drought was not forthcoming. If additional crops were cultivated each year in a similar expectation, they would go to waste as extra grain supplies were not required in good years. In most cases, retention of grain from one season to another was not possible anyway, owing to the vagaries of climate and the prevalence of insect pests.¹⁷⁾

The inherent fragility of the Shona economy, made cattle play an important role. Cattle lived longer, and were not subject to the vagaries of nature to the degree that crops were. In addition, they served important ritual and social purposes. It was these social roles designated to cattle which compelled the Shona to increase their herds; they were only used as an insurance against drought in cases of absolute necessity.

In contrast to the Shona, the Ndebele are usually classified as pastoralists. Before white settlement in Southern Rhodesia, the Ndebele occupied the highveld in the south-west of the country. The Matabeleland highveld was free of tsetse fly and therefore ideal cattle country. It was usually claimed that the Ndebele relied for their agricultural requirements on raids into Mashonaland. Although raiding constituted an important part of the Ndebele way of life, they did cultivate their own crops, often using captured Shona (*Holi*) for this task.¹⁸⁾ The regular raids on the Shona by the Ndebele were partly responsible for the decentralised nature of Shona tribes in comparison to the highly centralised Ndebele state.

When the first white pioneers arrived in Mashonaland in 1890, it was

17) W.J. Barber, 'Economic Rationality and Behaviour Patterns in an Underdeveloped Area: A Case Study of African Economic Behaviour in the Rhodesias', in *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 8, 1960, p.239.

18) This factor, that is, the different nature of the Shona and Ndebele ways of life, was to have important bearings in the early part of the twentieth century when the compact Ndebele homeland was disrupted by white settlers, *Vide Infra*, p.17.

the mineral wealth of the country to which they were attracted, and not its land or agricultural potential. The development of a railway network, which followed the initial white settlement in Southern Rhodesia, did much to open up the country, and was built mainly with the view to serving the interests of the mining industry. The first railway line to be opened was that linking the main mining centres. Between Bulawayo and Gwelo, it followed the watershed along the highveld; but between Gwelo and Salisbury, it passed through the middleveld in order to serve the principal gold mines. This main line of rail was completed by 1894, and that connecting Salisbury and Umtali by 1899 (this latter was a continuation of the Beira-Umtali line which had been opened the previous year). By 1904 the rails had reached Wankie and Victoria Falls, thus connecting the Wankie coalfields with Bulawayo. During the following years branch lines were constructed, mainly with the purpose of serving some mine or group of mines. At the onset of the First World War, the railway network serving Southern Rhodesia was almost complete, and very little construction took place thereafter.¹⁹⁾ It was sheer coincidence that the main route traversed the highveld on which white farming came to predominate in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Although the early settlers were lured to Southern Rhodesia by its mineral prospects, each white settler in Mashonaland was promised a farm of 1,500 morgen (approximately 3,000 acres). These farms could be pegged out anywhere, except on the gold belt which, until 1903, was reserved for the mines. By the end of 1891, over half of the pioneer land rights were in the hands of speculative companies, and by March 1899, approximately 7,300,000 acres had been alienated in Mashonaland, mainly in the vicinity of the mining centres in Salisbury, Umtali and Fort Victoria (that is, on the fertile highveld); and in Matabeleland 8,500,000 acres had been alienated on the highveld.²⁰⁾

Land alienation in Matabeleland followed a different pattern from that in Mashonaland. In 1893 white settlers refused to assist the government in pacifying the Ndebele unless granted certain concessions. These

19) J.R. Day, *Railways of Southern Africa*, (1963), p.95.

20) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.36.

as stipulated in the Victoria Agreement of 1893 included fifteen reef and fifteen alluvial gold claims and a farm of 3,000 morgen (approximately 6,000 acres) anywhere in Matabeleland. In addition, Ndebele cattle were to be shared equally amongst the British South Africa Company (BSA Company), its officers and men.²¹⁾

After the conquest of the Ndebele in 1893 white settlers moved into this area. The land that the settlers selected on which to peg out their farms was the fertile highveld which had long been the Ndebele homeland. A Land Commission was set up in 1894 to seek a solution to the conflicting interests of the Ndebele and white settlers over land. In the same year a Matabeleland Order-in-Council instructed the Commission to set aside land for Africans in Matabeleland, sufficient for their occupation and to allow them to continue their agricultural and pastoral pursuits.²²⁾ These areas were to be endowed with sufficient water supplies to cater for the inhabitants' needs. The Land Commission then assigned two large reserves, the Gwaai and the Shangani, which were 3,000 and 3,500 square miles respectively.²³⁾

These measures were not deemed necessary in Mashonaland where the areas selected by the settlers did not usually encroach upon large areas of Shona settlement. The whites tended to choose the heavy soils of the highveld, whereas the Shona usually cultivated light sandy soils; in addition, the scattered nature of the Shona population²⁴⁾ indicated

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- 21) The BSA Company claimed that the reasons behind the 1893 invasion of Matabeleland, was to bring to an end the Ndebele raids on the Shona. In addition, the mines required a labour force, and after disappointments as to the extent of the mineral wealth in Mashonaland, became convinced that the real wealth must lie in Matabeleland.
- 22) *Official Year Book of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.1 1924*, p.203.
- 23) See Appendix II, Map 2, 'Native Reserves 1894'.
- 24) The decentralised nature of the Shona settlement may be attributed largely to the results of the Ndebele raids, and the necessity to seek shelter in hilly, naturally fortified areas. This also explains the so-called Shona preference for sandy soils. The predominantly flat highveld offered no natural protection against the frequent onslaughts from the Ndebele, hence many Shona sought refuge in the rocky outcrops of the middleveld.

that there were no densely populated areas such as existed in Matabeleland.

The pressures exerted on the Ndebele when the white settlers occupied Matabeleland in 1894 were largely responsible for the 1896 uprisings. Tribal activities had been disrupted: raiding was banned, land and cattle were expropriated, and 1895/6 was a drought year accompanied by a plague of locusts and rinderpest which decimated both crops and cattle.²⁵⁾ The combination of these factors led the Ndebele to rise up in open revolt in 1896, followed by the Shona in 1897.²⁶⁾ After these uprisings reserves were assigned throughout Southern Rhodesia. This was partly a consequence of pressure exerted from the British government; and partly owing to an awareness on the part of the BSA Company that the mineral wealth of the country was not as vast as was originally anticipated, and that land was a viable alternative source of wealth.

The British government viewed the creation of 'native reserves' as a temporary expedient which would disappear once Africans became wage labourers and were incorporated into the exchange economy. They did not envisage the eviction of Africans from white owned land once white agriculture had become firmly entrenched.²⁷⁾ The BSA Company entrusted the assigning of reserves to Native Commissioners, and the 1848 Order-in-Council passed to this end had the same stipulations as that of 1894 in Matabeleland, but it now applied to the whole country.

By 1899, 16 reserves comprising 7,700,000 acres were allocated in Matabeleland, and by 1902 80 reserves comprising 17,100,000 acres in Mashonaland. In 1902 the Executive Council approved the boundaries and these were ratified in 1908 by the Colonial Secretary with the reservation that they were to be regarded as provisional and subject to further consideration.²⁸⁾

25) E.A. Nobbs, 'The Native Cattle of Southern Rhodesia', in *South African Journal of Science*, vol.XXIV, 1927, p.331.

26) The reasons behind the Shona risings were of a different nature: they feared that if the Ndebele conquered the whites, then the raids would continue as they had done of old, only with more intensity than before because the Shona had not co-operated in the settlers' defeat.

27) For further information on this, *Vide Infra*, pp.32/34.

28) NAR ZAD 1/1/1 Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission.

The reserves were allocated in a haphazard fashion by Native Commissioners who had no criteria upon which to base their selection of land. The only stipulations presented to them were that they could not select land already alienated to whites, land on the gold belts, or land adjacent to existing or projected railways. By 1900, 15,800,000 acres had already been alienated to whites, and this constituted one-sixth of the entire country including the entire Ndebele homeland.²⁹⁾ In addition, it was maintained that the land selected for African occupation was, in most cases, of inferior quality. "Native reserves thus established," wrote Steele, "were often poor, sandy, low lying and arid, located in districts remote from main roads and railways. They were essentially an afterthought. The settlers had already taken the best land for mining and speculative purposes."³⁰⁾

During this period the only other sphere in which whites directly interfered in African affairs was that of labour. In 1894 a 10/- hut tax was imposed, the principal reason being the need for an abundant supply of cheap labour for the mines.³¹⁾ In 1904 this hut tax was superceded by a poll tax of £1 on each male, with an additional 10/- for every wife after the first.³²⁾ The African administrative sector, set up in 1894, came partly in response to this need for labour, and partly to control Africans and prevent a repetition of the 1893 Ndebele rebellions. In the Order-in-Council of 1891, provision had been made for the "appointment of Executive Officers under the direction of the High Commissioner."³³⁾ Although not actually termed Native Commissioners, these officers did have control over the Africans as part of their duties. In 1894, following the Ndebele rebellion, the Native Department appointed its first Native Commissioner (NC), and the following year Southern Rhodesia was divided into two provinces each under a chief Native Commissioner (CNC).³⁴⁾ These provinces were further subdivided into native districts (of which there were 32 by 1923), each under the care of a Native Commissioner. After the

29) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp.66/67.

30) M.C. Steele, 'Foundations of a Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia, 1923-1933', (unpublished thesis, 1972), p.7.

31) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp.43/44.

32) *Ibid*, pp.72/73.

33) *Official Year Book of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.1 1924*, p.203.

34) See Appendix 3, Map 3, showing 'The Two Provinces of Southern Rhodesia'.

1896/97 rebellions the Native Department was reformed and reorganised, and stricter discipline was enforced under the control of NC's in order to ensure that such incidents would not re-occur.³⁵⁾ In 1902, the Native Affairs Department was formally constituted by the High Commissioner.³⁶⁾

The role of the Native Affairs Department in these years was primarily one of maintaining law and order and administering justice, collecting taxes and inducing Africans to seek work in the mining areas. The imposition of the hut tax, and even its doubling in 1904, was not sufficient incentive to induce the indigenous population to seek employment.³⁷⁾ Demands for African labour were growing, and when a steady supply was not forthcoming, attempts were made to improve conditions on the mines to make work more attractive. In addition, organised recruiting was undertaken by the government-sponsored Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau, first established in 1904.³⁸⁾

In these early years, Africans had little incentive to seek work on the mines because they were usually able to meet their financial obligations through the sale of agricultural surplus. The land policy prior to 1908 and the embryonic Native Affairs Department were not intended to curtail African responses to the agricultural demands of the mining sector. All interventions in land rights and allocations in Southern Rhodesia occurred on a purely speculative level: land was viewed as an additional source of income should the gold mines not produce the expected volume of wealth. This was especially true of the BSA Company itself which had spent a large amount of capital on railway construction. In addition, it was not thought that this sale of agricultural surplus would interfere radically with the labour

35) By the early 1900's the post of one of the CNC's was withdrawn and H.J Taylor became CNC over the whole of Southern Rhodesia.

36) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.1 1924*, pp.202/3.

37) This was because in these years Africans were still able to supply the food requirements of the mines, hence there was no need to seek wage labour.

38) P. Scott, 'Migrant Labour in Southern Rhodesia', in *Geographical Review*, No.44, 1954, p.30.

supply. This was largely because most of the labour needs in these years were met by foreign Africans who were attracted by the relatively higher wages offered on Southern Rhodesian mines.

There were numerous obstacles militating against the expansion of white agriculture prior to 1908, and these explain the lack of interference with African agricultural practises in these years. It was gold which initially attracted the settlers, offering a quick and lucrative return. Some viewed the land they had been given as a speculative asset, but very few were aware of its agricultural potential. In addition to the preoccupation with gold, there were other factors preventing the advancement of the white agricultural sector: the 1896/7 rebellions were the focus of much attention in the 1890's; rinderpest decimated the cattle population in 1895, and cattle numbers decreased from some 500,000 at the beginning of white settlement to 25,000 in 1896-1898.³⁹⁾

Furthermore, the transport network was still inefficient in these years, and the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War in 1899 worsened the situation by bringing about the suspension of all traffic from the south.⁴⁰⁾

I. Phimister has argued that this increased the dependency on African agricultural production when the severing of the rail link with the south caused a cessation in the importation of food supplies by some of the larger companies. He quoted the CNC for Matabeleland as saying, "(Owing to) the interruption of railway communication with the south, and the high price of grain occasioned by the war, the natives have been able to trade their grain at a considerable profit."⁴¹⁾ Finally, the extent of settlement at this stage did not offer sufficient market opportunities for capital-intensive farming on a profitable scale, and the settlers lacked sufficient capital to inaugurate an efficient agricultural base for the economy.

39) E.A. Nobbs, 'The Native Cattle of Southern Rhodesia', in *South African Journal of Science*, vol.XXIV, 1927, p.331.

40) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.1 1924*, p.293.

41) I.R. Phimister, 'Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914', in *African Affairs*, 1974, 73, p.222, quoting CNC Matabeleland 1901.

A report of the Civil Commissioner for Bulawayo in March 1895 stated that only 150 of the 1,070 white farms in his area were occupied, and that white farmers were cultivating an overall total of approximately 900 acres or six acres per farm.⁴²⁾ A settler in the 1890s was quoted as saying, "In those days no farmer grew grain, it being cheaper to trade the country's requirements from the natives."⁴³⁾ Any farming that was undertaken was done so in the same manner as that practised by Africans: hoe cultivation, the broadcasting of seeds and only scanty cultivation was undertaken.⁴⁴⁾

The Africans responded readily to the demands placed upon them by the white mining sector. As yet, they were unaffected by land policy, and many of them remained on unoccupied white farms, no effort being made to evict them or push them into reserves. While there was still little pressure on the land, Africans were able to increase their acreages in order to produce a surplus for sale to whites. This is evident in the annual reports of several NCs of the time, "... (the) acreage under cultivation is increasing considerably every year and mealies are very much more plentifully grown, this is due to trade."⁴⁵⁾ Many Africans actually migrated to areas in the vicinity of the mines in order to be closer to centres of demand, "natives sell a good deal of meal to those working on the mines, and a general tendency is observable to migrate nearer to the mines so as to be nearer those markets for the more advantageous sale of produce."⁴⁶⁾

Prior to the arrival of the whites the principal crop cultivated by Africans had been *rupoko*. Soon after white settlement, however, the acreage of maize expanded at the expense of *rupoko* in order to meet the requirements of the mines.⁴⁷⁾ The NC for the Range wrote at the

42) R.H. Palmer, 'The Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.228.

43) *Ibid.*

44) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.1 1924*, p.129.

45) NAR N9/1/4 NC Annual Reports, NC Chilimanzi, 1898.

46) NAR N9/1/9-11 NC Annual Reports, NC Lomagundi, 1906.

47) Between 1902/3 and 1908, the estimated acreage under all crops increased from 556,974 to 736,265, and estimated probable yield of grain in 200lb bags, from 1,273,027 to 2,175,367, L.H. Gann, *The History of Southern Rhodesia*, p.149.

time, "Mealies formerly were not grown in any quantity, it is only since the occupation that they have gone in for it on a large scale with the purpose of trading it to the white man."⁴⁸⁾ Not only were acreages of maize increased, but Africans soon began to cultivate the variety introduced by the whites. In this connection, the NC for the Range commented,

Until 1907 the white population depended on African produced staples. The grain produced increased in response to this demand....Africans grew a variety of maize with small flinty cobs in 1890. For this plant they soon substituted a variety introduced by Europeans with larger cobs. By 1909 the local variety had almost given way in the Umtali district. With the new variety came the expansion of maize cultivation at the expense of finger millet.⁴⁹⁾

From the above it would appear that Africans were not as insensitive to market demands as was later maintained; and these points are worth bearing in mind when examining African responses to demand in later years, particularly in the 1940s.

The opening of trading-stores in the reserves was partly responsible for the migration of some Africans to areas in the vicinity of the mines. They were aware that in selling their grain to traders they did not achieve such high returns. Much of the profit from such sales accrued to middlemen and not to the producers themselves. Many did make use of these trading stores, however, requiring only sufficient capital to meet their limited needs - mainly the payment of taxes. Contact with whites had not, as yet, created larger wants amongst the African population. The very existence of trading-stores, however, had the effect of creating new wants and needs among Africans, bringing them into contact with goods which the exchange economy was able to provide. In order to acquire such goods, they required a larger amount of capital, and the NC for Mrewa was of the opinion that this would have the effect of forcing more Africans into the labour market,

The opening of trading stations of which there were three in this district last year, has had the effect of making the natives in proximity to these stations plant much bigger lands than usual, and most of

48) NAR N9/1/5-6 NC Annual Reports, NC The Range, 1899.

49) Wolf Roder, *op. cit.*, pp.84/85.

these stations do a big cash business. They have a good effect on the labour question, as whenever you create a want, the native must have money to satisfy it....most of the grain traded here finds its market in Salisbury as there are no mines in the district to supply.⁵⁰⁾

The following year the same NC stated, "The purchase of grain by the traders for cash (from the Africans) ought to be restricted, as if it is going to continue at all, it will have a very bad effect on the supply of labour."⁵¹⁾ In later years, many traders actually refused to pay Africans cash in exchange for their produce, but did so in goods. This acted as a device to force Africans onto the labour market: for once the desire for additional goods had been awakened in Africans. They required capital in order both to satisfy these and meet their tax obligations.

During the period 1890 to 1908 the Shona were more receptive to demands made on them from the mining sector than were the Ndebele. The labour once used by the Shona in maintaining defensive positions against the Ndebele could now be employed in agricultural production, and Shona manpower was no longer incorporated into the Ndebele state as a result of raids.⁵²⁾ The Shona, then, preferred to meet their tax commitments through the sale of crops and cattle rather than by becoming migrant labourers. This is verified by the fact that mine wages were raised - from between 5/- and 10/- a month in 1896 to between 30/- and 80/- in 1903⁵³⁾ - in order to make wage labour more attractive. In 1903, African sales of grain and livestock amounted to £350,000, and in the same year, wage earnings amounted to £100,000 - £150,000. In other words, agricultural sales totalled 70 percent of all cash earnings.⁵⁴⁾

In 1902 13 percent of the Shona worked for three months, compared to 48 percent of the Ndebele.⁵⁵⁾ In view of this large discrepancy between the percentages of the two tribes involved in wage labour there must be explanations other than the cessation of raiding. The shattering

50) NAR N9/1/5-6 NC Annual Reports, NC Mrewa, 1899.

51) NAR N9/1/6 NC Annual Reports, NC Mrewa, 1900.

52) L.H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, (1969), p.174.

53) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp.71/72.

54) *Ibid.*

55) *Ibid.*, p.72.

of the Ndebele economy after the 1893 revolt must be taken into consideration. Their land was expropriated, their cattle seized by the settlers, and their raiding brought to an end. Over and above this the Shona lived on the middle and highveld in Mashonaland, the majority of mines being located in this area. They therefore had easy access to the main white markets and the railway. Their population was small and scattered, hence there was no pressure on the land. Furthermore, they were aided by the opening-up of many small mines in Mashonaland, which resulted in an increased demand for both beer and foodstuffs for the mine workers.⁵⁶⁾ The Shona were able to take advantage of these opportunities, whilst the Ndebele were forced onto the labour market at a much earlier date than were the former.

In addition to supplying maize, which soon became the staple diet of the African mine employees, the Shona also responded by increasing the variety of foodstuffs offered for sale: market vegetables were grown as demand arose, especially after 1907 when the new dietary regulations for the mines were passed.⁵⁷⁾ An increasing number of cattle became available for sale, their numbers having increased after the 1895 rinderpest epidemic. According to L.H. Gann, the number of African owned cattle increased from 63,564 in 1902/3 to 204,000 in 1908.⁵⁸⁾ Cattle sales serve as an important indicator of the receptiveness of Africans to the new economy: in the past Africans were seldom willing to part with their cattle, their symbolic and ritual value holding more importance than their potential economic value; yet on demand from the mining centres they were willing to sell their animals.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, it came to be realised that the earlier hopes of finding a second Witwatersrand were merely an illusion; but such hopes lived on. R.H. Palmer has attributed its perpetration to the diversion of attention away from this matter to

56) Increased demand from the mines actually caused food prices to rise; much of this increased demand resulted from the employment of foreign migrants on Rhodesian mines owing to lack of employment opportunities in their home countries.

57) I.R. Phimister, 'Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia 1890-1914', p.222.

58) L.H. Gann, *op. cit.*, p.149.

other events: the 1896/7 risings and the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 which cut Rhodesia's rail links with the south.⁵⁹⁾ The end of the Anglo-Boer War was followed by a mining boom, but this collapsed during the financial crisis of 1903-4. As a direct consequence of this, thoughts turned to the potential wealth of land; and an awareness grew of the important role of the African agricultural sector had assumed in the economy and the threat it posed to the future labour supply of the Colony.⁶⁰⁾

The turning point in this period of African prosperity came in 1905 with the enquiries of the BSA Company into land settlement schemes, and the establishment of a Land Settlement Committee in the same year. By 1908, when the white agricultural system began to expand, African agricultural opportunities gradually began to be reduced.

2.2 The Road to Power: The Foundation of Future Policy 1908-1923

The growing awareness that the mineral wealth of the country was not as extensive as was originally anticipated, led administrators to examine alternative possibilities for an economic base for the Colony. The other great asset was the land, and it was to this that thoughts were turned in the first decade of the twentieth century. The formation of the Land Settlement Company represented the realisation of this aim, and for the next decade all energy was expended in promoting the development of white agriculture.

In 1891 the BSA Company had stated that "splendid as are the agricultural prospects of the country, it is to the mineral wealth that the directors look for the most profitable returns";⁶¹⁾ but by 1912 the directors were telling the shareholders that,

59) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia Vol.1 1924* p.293.

60) L.H. Gann, *op. cit.* pp.174/175.

61) V. Machengadzi, *Company Rule and Agricultural Development: The Case of the BSA Company in Southern Rhodesia, 1908-1923*, (Seminar No.43, 1978), p.2.

The recent and continuous rise in land values, both in Southern and Northern Rhodesia, is, in the view of the board, the most striking feature of the present situation. In the early years of the century, the mining industry was the Company's chief care. While the industry continues to receive such assistance as its circumstances require land is today claiming a much greater share of the Company's attention, and the industries connected with it are rapidly gaining ground now that capital is available for their support.⁶²⁾

Thus it was that land came to assume a position of new importance in the eyes of the BSA Company and encouragement of land settlement and interest in white farming were the outward manifestations of this awareness.

It was essential that white agriculture be promoted. It was hoped that a prosperous white agricultural sector would create greater economic self-sufficiency, cut the import bill, raise the value of land and provide more traffic for the railway. In order to achieve these aims, however, two thorny issues had to be resolved: firstly, land currently held by speculative companies had to be made available to potential farmers; and, secondly, African agricultural competition had to be eliminated. In the ensuing years the promotion of white agriculture was advanced on these two fronts.

The BSA Company began to charge rents to Africans living on unalienated land, and a rent of £1 per annum was levied on all Africans living on such land.⁶³⁾ This policy also served to fulfill the BSA Company's second aim: that of creating a larger labour force to serve the need of the mines and farmers. In this connection, the CNC for Mashonaland stated, "A commercial agent of the BSA Company informed me that it was intended to charge all adult natives living on unalienated land a rent of £1 per annum from the 1st of January 1909. NCs were told to warn natives under their control that they must either move into reserves after the crops had been reaped or be prepared to pay the rent."⁶⁴⁾

62) *Ibid.*

63) Unalienated land was that which had been appropriated but not yet sold or granted to individuals or companies by the BSA Company.

64) NAR N9/1/11 NC Annual Reports: CNC Mashonaland, 1908.

If Africans chose to move into the reserves, many would be forced to relinquish the ability to sell surplus agricultural products because of the general remoteness from markets of these areas. Those who chose to remain on white owned land came to play an important role in the development of nascent white agriculture. On occupied white farms, the landowners could exact rents or labour services from their tenants, and they could also charge grazing and dipping fees; thus they were not only contributing financially to white agricultural development, but forming an all-important labour force. Those living on unalienated land were also welcomed as a source of revenue to the BSA Company. The government at this stage made no effort to evict Africans from the land because the white sector was still heavily reliant on African agricultural production.⁶⁵⁾

The other method which the BSA Company used to create a labour force took the form of an attack on the absentee landlords: The Private Locations Ordinance of 1908 stipulated that all agreements with tenants should be written and no longer merely verbal. Mr. R. Dinnis, former Under Secretary for Native Co-operatives, stated that all labour agreements must be written and signed in the presence of a NC; these were no longer undertaken in a haphazard manner and conditions of the agreement were laid down, the contract having to be renewed each year. He stated further that these agreements were still in existence in 1952.⁶⁶⁾ Owners occupying land were obliged to take out a licence of 1/- per annum for each adult male residing on their farms. Absentee landlords, however, were obliged to pay 5/- per annum. A maximum of forty males were allowed on each farm of up to 3,175 acres. Africans in excess of this number were to move into the reserves.⁶⁷⁾ In this manner, it was hoped that African competition would be eliminated and an adequate labour force created. G. Arrighi saw these occurrences as laying the groundwork for the take off of white

65) The relevance of this may be seen when with the passing of the Land Apportionment Act in 1931, all labour agreements were to be terminated within seven years of its passage, thus bringing to an end, the last vestiges of supposed African competition. *Vide Infra*, pp.48/49.

66) Mr. R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

67) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp.89/90.

agriculture: because markets were small, "and prices, being mainly determined by African production of marketable surpluses, fluctuated widely from season to season, " take off of European agriculture "could only be brought about by other than market mechanisms."⁶⁸⁾ Labour services were a solution to the predominant problem of labour shortages, and rents and fees represented a source of capital accumulation.

The charging of rents to Africans residing on white land had the desired results, and from 1909 the rate of migration of Africans from white areas accelerated. The proportion living in reserves increased from 54 per cent in 1909 to 64 per cent in 1922;⁶⁹⁾ and at the same time the rate of African production began to decline as poorer and more densely populated land was brought under cultivation. Thus, of necessity, many Africans were forced to seek wage labour.

The consequences of this policy were to have a greater impact on the Shona than on the Ndebele. The latter were used to paying rents and preferred to remain on their traditional lands in order to do so, rather than move into reserves. In Mashonaland, however, there were fewer Africans in alienated areas - furthermore, many reserves were in close proximity to both mines and white farms and Africans were still able to market agricultural surplus. As white farming developed and the marketing of African produce was discouraged, the Shona increasingly realised the necessity of seeking wage employment which, after many years of acquiring cash through sale of agricultural surpluses, they were reluctant to accept.

The second platform of reform - that of promoting white agriculture - began in earnest when, in 1908, an Estates Department was set up to promote white settlement and deal with applications for land. In the same year, the Department of Agriculture was re-organised and the first Director of Agriculture, E.A. Nobbs, a scientifically trained man

68) G. Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A Study of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia', in *Journal of Development Studies*, 6, 1970, p.209.

69) M. Loney, *Rhodesia: White Racism and Imperial Response*, (1975), p.53.

was appointed.⁷⁰⁾ Experimental farms were opened and extension facilities offered to white farmers. In 1912, a Land Bank was set up making credit available to persons of European descent only. Availability of these credit facilities alleviated the position somewhat. The Bank gave loans of up to £2,000 for the purchase of farms, livestock and agricultural equipment.⁷¹⁾ It was obvious, even in the absence of restrictive land policy, that with such assistance the white farming sector would soon surpass that of the African sector.

The need for more land demanded by the Estate Department, however, necessitated readjustment of the original land distribution. In a letter to Gladstone in 1913, the Resident Commissioner stated that "...the increase of European land settlement and the construction of railways has led the BSA Company recently to press for constant re-adjustments of the Native Reserves."⁷²⁾

In the years immediately following 1908, debates ensued as to the desirability of undertaking re-adjustments to existing reserves. In May 1914, the British government set up the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission under the chairmanship of Robert Coryndon; and the High Commissioner was ordered to,

Visit and examine the existing Native Reserves and to have special regard to the sufficiency therein of land suitable for the agricultural requirements of the natives, including in all areas, a fair and equitable proportion of spring or permanent waterIn so doing you shall have regard not only to the present requirements of the natives, but also to their probable future necessities, consequent upon the spread of white settlement land now occupied by natives but not falling within the reserves, and to the probable extension of these requirements by reason of natural increase of population.⁷³⁾

Although the Commission was supposed to treat Africans fairly in allocating land for their occupation, it is doubtful whether this need was accorded the same treatment as that for additional land in areas suitable for white occupation.

70) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.2 1930*, p.304.

71) V. Machingaidze, *Company Rule and Agricultural Development*, p.7.

72) NAR ZAD 1/1/1 B. Burns Begg: Resident Commissioner to Gladstone, 1/4/1913.

73) NAR ZAD 1/1/1 Commission by His Excellency The High Commissioner.

The final report of this Commission, only published in 1920, suggested alterations to existing African land holdings,⁷⁴⁾ the final area reserved for Africans amounting to 21,594,957 acres.⁷⁵⁾ "Certain defined lands", the Commission's report stated, "known as Native Reserves are vested in the High Commissioner and set apart for the sole and exclusive use and occupation of the Native inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia."⁷⁶⁾ The demands of the Commission were met by the Estates Department which presided over the Commission, but much debate was to follow before the report was finally accepted by the Legislative Assembly.

As early as 1903, one NC was heard to have said,

I am strongly in favour of abolishing the large Native Reserves and in lieu thereof giving them individual title on the quit rent system. If this were done it would facilitate the labour question to a certain degree; whereas at present the natives living in these reserves cultivate as much ground as they please, the products of which are in excess of their consumption and the large remaining surplus they sell to traders in order to meet their hut tax, and by this mode of living the average Mashona does not require to look for work. If a native owned a limited piece of land which would only produce sufficient grain for his own consumption he would be bound to go out in search of employment in order to earn enough money to pay his tax."⁷⁷⁾

That such consideration was not given heed to prior to the second decade of the twentieth century is indicative of the important role African agriculture played prior to this period.

By 1914, however, this leniency regarding African landholdings had abated somewhat, and in that year Sir Percy Inskipp, the Commercial Representative of the BSA Company, brought attention to this subject. He wrote,

74) See Appendix 4, Map 4, showing the reserves prior to 1920.

75) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.2 1930*, p.286.

76) *Ibid.*

77) NAR N3/6/3 NC Makoni, 1903.

In some cases it has been made easy for natives to obtain the use of additional land. If the native finds himself getting overstocked he only has to apply for additional land to get it. The European farmers say these natives are competing with them, they breed cattle, sell stock, grow grain and sell grain. If the white man overstocks his farm he has to do one of two things: either to buy more land or sell cattle. Owing to the position in which the native is placed, he can go on increasing his herds, and when his lands are fully stocked he applies for more land and usually gets it and he need not sell his stock unless he wants to.⁷⁸⁾

Thus it was that the Africans' treatment in the allocation of land only came to be questioned and examined at a time when white agriculture was struggling to assert itself and attain a position of predominance over African farming.

A further important consideration taken into account when deciding how to readjust the reserves, was the importance of the tobacco industry in which the white farming sector was becoming increasingly interested. In 1912 the Resident Commissioner wrote as follows,

It has been customary in the past to regard certain soils as suitable for European settlement and others for native occupation. A change in this respect is, however, observable. It has been found that light sandy soils are usually inhabited by natives, owing to the facility with which they can be cultivated, are eminently suited to the cultivation of tobacco, and in some instances, wheat. Such land, therefore, is now being readily taken up by Europeans. There is also a tendency among natives who have learnt the use of the plough to cultivate richer and heavier soils which are able to take crops of grain for a greater number of successive years than from the light sandy soils which need scientific treatment after being cultivated successfully for two to three years.⁷⁹⁾

The BSA Company was keen to promote the cultivation of these sandy soils, because it would entail the extension of white farming areas into land further removed from the main mining centres and railways, both of which were situated predominantly on the highveld, that is, on the dark, heavy soils.

78) NAR ZAD 3/1/1 Bulawayo 2/7/1914, statement by Sir Percy Inskipp.

79) NAR ZAD 1/1/1 Resident Commissioner Salisbury to High Commissioner, 8/9/1912.

That the Native Reserves Commission report was not implemented until 1920, resulted partly from the interruption occasioned by the First World War, and partly from the continuously conflicting aims of the various parties interested in readjusting the reserves. When the report was finally published in 1920, 83 reserves of various sizes on a total acreage of 21,594,597 were assigned.⁸⁰⁾ In addition to the 675,499 Africans in the reserves, there were 375,000 living on unalienated and white-owned land. Of the entire country, 23 per cent was assigned to reserves, 32 per cent alienated to individuals and companies, and 45 per cent earmarked for future allocation.⁸¹⁾ In the reserves, terms of tenure were to follow those of the old tribal system: communal grazing rights, and individual arable holdings granted by the chiefs.⁸²⁾ In unassigned and undeveloped areas, Africans continued to live as they had done in the past, no attempt being made at that time to force them into their own areas.

Although whites were anxious to prevent the acquisition of land by Africans which under the terms of the 1898 Order-in-Council, they were able to buy, concern was expressed by the British Government and the missionaries. The latter feared that by the time Africans had accumulated sufficient capital to enable them to purchase land, all the best land would have been alienated to whites.⁸³⁾ Thus by 1918, whites began to demand segregation of land ownership and other protective devices to shield themselves against possible competition from African agriculturists. The fears of the missionaries and the Native Affairs Department, however, were of a different nature - that the African was not yet equipped to compete with whites in an open land market. These considerations, however, only gathered momentum in the years immediately after the grant of self-government in 1923. At this stage, they were merely latent desires expressed by various parties; and most attention in the years prior to self government was focused on the development of the European agricultural sector, the search for a staple crop to stabilise this sector, and the elimination of African competition in this sphere. The Native Reserves Commission's report in 1920 stood out as a landmark on the road to the achievement of

80) L. Carbutt, 'The Racial Problem in Southern Rhodesia', in *NADA*, 12, 1934, p.6.

81) P.E.N. Tindall, *A History of Central Africa*, (1967), p.209.

82) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia Vol.2 1930*, p.286.

83) G. Kay, *Rhodesia, A Human Geography*, (1970), p.50.

these goals.

The role played by the BSA Company in furthering the aims of the white farmers was limited relative to government interventions which were to occur in ensuing years, particularly in the 1930s. The BSA Company itself had established several large estates and was engaged in the large scale production of tobacco and fruit, and cattle ranching. In 1907, the Company's commercial and governmental operations were split, and marketing organisations and processing enterprises fell outside direct government control. Thereafter, the advancement of white farming was to occur through the operation of private enterprise and companies, of which the BSA Company was only one.⁸⁴⁾ Direct government intervention - in the fields of production and provision of price supports or assistance in marketing - was avoided. The only assistance offered by the government in those years was the taxation of Africans, which in some cases forced them onto the labour market, and a law making the dipping of cattle compulsory which helped curtail the rampant spread of contagious diseases. All the efforts of the Department of Agriculture were focused on the conduct of research and the offer of extension services.⁸⁵⁾

Despite lack of government intervention on behalf of white farmers, the white farming sector did expand. It was to the advantage of the white farming sector that it was confined largely to mining centres and along the line of rail. By 1913, approximately 12,500,000 acres had been alienated by the BSA Company to individuals and small companies, and of this over 80 per cent was within 25 miles of the railwayline.⁸⁶⁾ Further from the rail most of the land was held by companies or retained by the BSA Company, but most of it was not utilized. The number of white farmers occupying farms increased from 545 in 1904 to 1,324 in 1911.⁸⁷⁾ After 1912, the mines' requirements were met by

84) D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System of Southern Rhodesia*, (1970), p.60.

85) *Ibid.*, pp.60/61.

86) R. Anderson and Department of Native Agriculture, Southern Rhodesia, *An Agricultural Survey of Southern Rhodesia. Part Two: The Agro-Economic Survey*, p.15.

87) R.H. Palmer, 'The Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.232.

white farmers, who concentrated primarily on maize and cattle production to meet these demands.⁸⁸⁾ Tobacco production was gaining in importance and maize production was facilitated by the opening up of the gold-belt to farming - an area consisting largely of the heavy red soils which were ideal for the cultivation of maize. Production of this crop increased from 45,815 (2031b) bags in 1903/4 to 634,133 (2031b) bags in 1913/14. By 1924, 78 per cent of the land cultivated by whites was devoted to maize production.⁸⁹⁾

The cattle industry expanded from the base provided by African cattle. The Director of Agriculture, E.A. Nobbs, stated in this connection, that African cattle "...have been found to make an excellent foundation, being extremely hardy and immune, or nearly so to many diseases of the tropics, qualities which are transmitted to a considerable extent to their graded descendants... Matabele cattle have served as a valuable foundation on which the European farmers have, by the use of bulls of British breeds, built up their present excellent breeds."⁹⁰⁾ It was believed that Southern Rhodesia was ideal cattle country, and this view was reinforced when in 1911 Nobbs claimed that Southern Rhodesia was "essentially a stock country. The conditions of the country point strongly to meat as the principal ultimate product to be elaborated of (sic) our veld...Arable farming must rank below stock farming in importance, profitability and usefulness."⁹¹⁾

The BSA Company in 1919 claimed, "...from a ranching point of view Rhodesia is exceptionally well favoured in three important respects. Land is plentiful and cheap, grazing is abundant... and in the native

88) In 1909 the first shipment of Rhodesian maize was made into Europe, an amazing feat when it is considered that cultivation of the crop commenced from seed obtained from Africans; and that by 1909 9 new strains had been introduced: 6 white and 3 yellow. *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia Vol. 1 1924.*

89) R.H. Palmer, 'The Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.232.

90) E.A. Nobbs, 'From Breeder to Butcher, Cattle Feeding Experiment, No.8, Government Experiment Farm, Gwebi', in *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, Vol.18, 1921, pp.258/9.

91) V. Machingaidze, *Company Rule and Agricultural Development*, p.8, quoting Director of Agriculture, E.A. Nobbs.

herds there is a good foundation stock available at a low price."⁹²⁾ The white cattle industry continued to expand on the base of African cattle, which were purchased at very low prices, particularly in times of drought and famine when a source of income was necessary to purchase essential food requirements. In this connection, the Native Superintendent for Umtali stated that, "reserve natives are practically living on roots and wild yams. Some are dying of starvation. It is imperative that grain should be supplied for cash as well as grain in exchange for cattle and the price shouldn't exceed £2.00 per bag or 4 bags for a really good cow."⁹³⁾ The following statement indicates the importance of cattle to Africans; the alternatives to sale of cattle in poor years were starvation or the necessity to seek wage labour: "In the south-west...all cattle were sold or killed in the famine of 1912. The old men are paupers, while the younger men are away at work."⁹⁴⁾ Once the herds of white farmers had reached a moderate size, the prices offered for African stock decreased markedly and the last source of income available to the African, other than that of wage labour, dwindled.

After 1916, Southern Rhodesia, which had until then been a net importer of cattle, began to export stock, and for a while cattle ranching became a profitable undertaking. This was particularly true during the First World War when the meat market expanded as demand increased. This prosperity was short-lived, however, and when the post-war boom collapsed in 1921/22, cattle prices fell and the internal market was unable to absorb the surplus. As cattle numbers continued to increase, prices fell even further.

Other agricultural sectors felt the impact of war possibly more than those involved in the cattle industry which had managed to establish export markets by 1916. In all sectors of the economy there was a heavy drain on white farmers and agricultural officials as volunteers

92) I.R. Phimister, 'Meat and Monopolies: Beef Cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938', in *Journal of African History*, XIX, 3 (1978), p.395.

93) NAR N3/11/1-3 Native Superintendent Umtali to CNC Salisbury, 21 October, 1912.

94) NAR N3/11/1-3 Ndanga 21/8/1915, Grain Supply.

in the armed forces. This resulted in the abandonment of many farms and reduction of activity on others. The Director of Agriculture said of white farmers in 1916 that, "a number are away on active service, and their farms are occupied by substitutes or worked by neighbours, and in some cases have been temporarily abandoned."⁹⁵⁾ By this time the effects of the absence of manpower from the agricultural sector was already being felt and "...by 1916 the full impact of the war was felt as extremely limited stocks of all materials in Southern Rhodesia for agricultural production were exhausted."⁹⁶⁾

The infant tobacco industry was one of the hardest hit. Production had reached a peak in 1914, whereafter prices slumped as the limited South African market became overstocked. Unlike other crops, tobacco collapsed through overproduction, but little attempt was made during the war to rectify this, and it was not until six years later that tobacco began to recover. Unsuccessful experiments in other crops were undertaken, and with the failure of those crops, tobacco and the cattle industry, more and more land came to be reverted to the cultivation of maize for which there was a continual internal demand, particularly since maize came to be the staple diet for African mine employees.

Nevertheless, maize was also to experience an overproduction crisis in the 1920s. At the end of the First World War, the position of the white farming sector had improved when increased mining activity created new internal demands for agricultural produce, and external demand increased as "depleted national larders" required replenishment.⁹⁷⁾ This period of prosperity was shortlived, however, and in 1921 a general recession set in as production fell to prewar levels: "markets were glutted, prices dropped...reduced prices on the world market

95) E.A. Nobbs, Director of Agriculture and B. Haslewood, Statistician, 'Statistical Returns of Crops in Southern Rhodesia for the Season 1914-1915', in *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, Vol.13, 1916, p.29.

96) R. Anderson and Department of Native Agriculture, Southern Rhodesia, *An Agricultural Survey of Southern Rhodesia, Part Two: The Agro-Economic Survey*, p.16.

97) *Ibid.*

were reflected on internal prices which dropped correspondingly."⁹⁸⁾ ⁹⁹⁾

This general insecurity in the white agricultural sector was to lead to increased clamouring for government intervention in production and marketing in the period immediately after self-government was granted in 1923. Despite the teething problems, experienced in this sector, it was still able to surpass and triumph over African agriculture in this period.

When maize began to be grown in abundance in the gold belt area, it had the advantage of having both the best soil and easy access to markets in the mining centres. African markets in this area were thus taken over by white farmers. In addition, as the tobacco industry expanded with its preference for light sandy soils, many Africans in Mashonaland lost access to the land which they had traditionally cultivated. The expansion of the white cattle industry at the same time as that of the African, resulted in increased competition for grazing lands. The whites began to challenge Africans for markets, cattle and land, beginning what Palmer has termed "the squeezing-out process".¹⁰⁰⁾

Prior to 1914, white farmers had not forced Africans off their land. If they chose to leave through pressure created by the imposition of taxes and other devices, they were free to do so, but whites were reluctant to force their eviction because at this stage they supplied crops, labour services and also revenue through fees and rents. By 1914, however, competition for African labour between the mines and the farmers had increased. In 1905, Southern Rhodesia needed a labour force of 25,000, but by 1920 the mines alone required 39,000 and the farmers 23,000.¹⁰¹⁾ To complicate matters, white farmers required seasonal labour at precisely the same time that Africans planted their own crops, and they were reluctant to work for white farmers during this

98) *Ibid.*

99) The above survey claimed that this recession coincided with one of a similar nature in the mining industry which also reduced internal markets. This uncertainty was to continue for more than ten years.

100) R.H Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, pp.80/81.

101) R.H Palmer, *Ibid.* p.95.

period. Thereafter, farmers became reliant upon migratory labour from depressed African areas.

To achieve the twin goals of both reducing African competition which had become a larger threat during the war years, and discontinuing the general refusal of Africans to work, white farmers began imposing higher rents, and grazing and dipping fees on their African tenants. Such action, it was hoped, would force more Africans into the reserves which were further away from the main markets.¹⁰²⁾ In this manner, both goals were achieved: competition was of necessity reduced, and Africans were forced to seek wage labour because of their inability to realise a sufficient cash income through the sale of agricultural surplus.

The natural consequence of this movement of increasing numbers into the reserves during these years was the acceleration of congestion in these areas. Access to markets was denied them owing to the remoteness of many reserves from the main centres of economic activity. African crop production began to decline, partly as incentive waned with diminishing market potentials, and partly as the practise of extensive methods of agriculture became increasingly difficult to execute under congested conditions. Furthermore, cattle numbers increased rapidly during this period, placing more pressure on the land, and incentives to dispose of this surplus through sale deteriorated with the collapse of the cattle market in the 1920s.¹⁰³⁾

The post-war slump from 1921 to 1923 worsened the already deteriorating situation. During the war-years, the Africans had been able to sell cattle and crops at inflated prices owing to the absence of many white farmers in the armed forces. In 1921, however, prices for agricultural products declined and African earnings decreased correspondingly. In 1920, African sales of grain to white traders was estimated at 198,000 bags at 10/- a bag, but in 1921 this price had fallen to 5/- a bag.¹⁰⁴⁾

102) *Ibid.*, p.97.

103) For additional information on the African Cattle Industry, *Vide Infra*, Ch.4, Part 1.

104) G. Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', p.216.

At this low price trade actually became uneconomic in many districts despite a good harvest and in 1921 only 43,600 bags were purchased from Africans.¹⁰⁵⁾ In 1921, an estimated 20,000 head of cattle were sold by Africans at £7-£8 a head, but by 1922 this demand had practically ceased.¹⁰⁶⁾ At the same time, the prices of consumer goods widely purchased by Africans increased by 165 per cent but African wages rose by a mere 13 per cent.¹⁰⁷⁾ The increased numbers of Africans on the labour market owing to difficulties experienced in the agricultural sector explains this decline in wage levels: Arrighi maintained that in 1900 sale of produce contributed 70 per cent of total African cash earnings; by 1932, however, this contributed barely 20 per cent.¹⁰⁸⁾ This would indicate that an increased number of Africans were procuring capital through alternative sources - in this case, urban employment. An additional consequence of the slump in the early 1920s was that many Africans moved into the reserves, having no incentive to remain near markets in areas in which they were obliged to pay rent when sale of produce was becoming uneconomic. Having made this decision to migrate to reserve areas, future possibilities of gaining financial requirements through sale of crops was negligible. Thus, whilst for white farmers the slump was merely a temporary downward trend in the business cycle, for the African this situation was, in many ways, irreversible.

The migratory labour system itself led to deterioration of conditions in themselves: tasks assigned to males - such as herding, preparing new land, and making decisions relating to cropping times, harvesting, the opening of new land and abandoning of old - were impeded. This problem was accentuated when the use of the plough gained popularity, and cultivation of the land passed from being the task of the women, to that of the men.

During the period of BSA Company rule, the future of Southern Rhodesian African policy was formulated and all developments in ensuing years

105) *Ibid.*

106) *Ibid.*

107) R.H Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.148.

108) G. Arrighi, *op. cit.*, p.216.

were to revolve around the initial distribution of land and the motives behind it. The establishment of reserves with the reservation that they were to be a temporary expedient, led to lack of careful consideration in their selection, and the large-scale movement of Africans into these areas as a result of white pressure in order to curb competition and procure a labour supply, was to have important repercussions on the African agricultural economy in future years.

"Responsible Government is to be. The Trial is to be made. Some will go into it with confidence, some with forebodings, but it is up to all to try and make the best of it. To the confident I would say, take care there will be difficulties, there will be mistakes. Along the path you have to tread you need to be accompanied by all classes and conditions, do not needlessly alienate any of them.

To the foreboding I would say, have courage, and remember there is little satisfaction in prophesies of failure coming true where that failure be due to your own action or inaction.

Yes! The Trial has to be made, and, if some elixir can be found to soften the pride of victory, to sweeten the bitterness of defeat, if all according to their natures, will work their hardest in the venture to which all are committed, I am confident the people of Rhodesia are capable of building up a state worthy of their character and hopes, and worthy of their founders name".

R., Macquire, 'Rhodesia', P.95.

3.1 Land Apportionment: The Birth of Future Policy

With the transition from BSA Company rule to responsible government under Coghlan in 1923, African policy entered a new phase. The BSA Company's policy had been based on "...care and maintenance... conducted by a special department which had administered Native Affairs in an unruffled and thoroughly pragmatic manner."¹⁾ After 1923, however, attempts were made to develop Africans in their own areas. Although responsibility for African affairs was transferred from the BSA Company to the settler government, final authority in this sector remained in the hands of the Crown. As H.M.G. Jackson pointed out, however, this factor held more weight on paper than in practice,

There is a constitutional check upon legislation directly affecting natives. All such laws must receive the King's assent....In practise it is difficult to conceive of a case where the king would be advised to withhold his assent. In practise the will of the local Parliament may be said to be the dominant factor.²⁾

This provision in the new constitution, Gann maintained, "...protected Africans against possible abuses rather than promoting development."³⁾ In theory, this provision perpetuated the negative attitude of the BSA Company towards African administration. In practise, however, the Coghlan ministry did implement the move towards formal segregation, and initiated the policy of developing rather than augmenting the reserves, both of which were carried to their conclusion by the successive Moffat and Huggins administrations.

In examining the first of Coghlan's aims - the move towards segregation - light will be shed on the apparent paradox implicit in these two goals: the attempt to develop African agriculture while at the same time moving towards fuller segregation, one of the aims of which was to curtail the advancement of Africans in any area which might threaten white predominance. Coghlan's government continued to encourage land

1) M.C. Steele, 'Foundations of a Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia, 1923 - 1933', p.314.

2) H.M.G. Jackson, 'The Natives of Southern Rhodesia: Their Position After Ten Years Under Responsible Government', in *The African Observer*, 1, 1934, p.19.

3) L.H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, p.249.

settlement, and to this end the Land and Agricultural Bank of Southern Rhodesia was set up in 1924, through which loans and credit facilities were made available to white farmers. As a result, the number of immigrants to Southern Rhodesia rose.

During this period of increased immigration and expansion of white farming, attitudes towards the rule of the 'Native Reserves' underwent a fundamental change: they came to be seen as areas where Africans could develop along their own lines, and tribal customs maintained in an unadulterated form, as opposed to previous attitudes which viewed reserves as a temporary expedient ceasing to be necessary as Africans were absorbed into the exchange economy. W.J. Barber maintained that this decision was largely adapted as a means of preventing the flow of substantial amounts of capital into African areas. And, in reality, the retention of tribal institutions as the means of administration and rule were illusory, for these were merely channels through which instructions were communicated.⁴⁾ In this connection, Barber has stated that, "... (the) tribal structure was rehabilitated and recast in such a fashion as to ensure its responsiveness to European direction."⁵⁾

The Legislative Assembly encouraged the establishment of Native Councils in furtherance of this end; and at one of the parliamentary sessions it was stated that,

The tribal system had been evolved by time and circumstance and it was peculiarly suited to the needs of the natives....the best features of that system...could be retained by the initiation of those native councils which had been provided for in their constitution. The effect of these councils would be to study the point of view of the natives at close quarters....study the condition of the natives' daily life, to get a correct focus of the capacity for development of reserves and of the natives....the present system of control was based on an almost uniform law for black and white, irrespective of colour, traditions or capacity...the system was inefficient to meet the varying and divergent needs of black and white...

4) W.J. Barber, *The Economic Development of Central Africa*, (1961), p. 19.

5) *Ibid.*

a modified system of local control under the supervision of nominees of the government was the only practical way out of the difficulty. By these councils in his (Moffat's) opinion, the native would be assisted to build up a system of civilization of his own, a system built up with due regard to his peculiar and primitive needs and modified to meet the conditions, altered by his contact with the whites.⁶⁾

Thus it was that although local control was to be promoted in the tribal areas, those figures of local control were to be government-appointed and not in the customary tribal manner.

Nevertheless, the complete dislocation and breakdown of the tribal system was to be reversed after nearly twenty years of attempts to foster its disintegration. It was decided that reserves must be developed at all cost, particularly those in the more remote areas, and Africans persuaded to settle on this land. Decisions pertaining to the advancements which were to be projected in African areas were much influenced by developments occurring in the white farming sector. During the 1920s white agriculture was gaining a foothold and assuming an important position in the economy; the settlers economic position was enhanced and their political power entrenched. The result of this was an increasingly successful attack on the African peasantry in order to safeguard their own position. The form which this attack assumed was a demand for the segregation of land ownership.

A period of renewed expansion which followed in the wake of the 1921-23 slump was largely responsible for this change in outlook. This expansion was facilitated by the new settler government which encouraged the development of white agriculture. How these developments were to be realised were discussed by the Legislative Assembly, and in 1924 it was stated that,

The Government must adopt a more progressive development policy with a view to 1) bringing a greater mood of prosperity to the agricultural community and thereby the whole Colony 2) placing further settlers on the land under circumstances

6) NAR *Debates of the Legislative Assembly*, 1924, pp.1127/8.

in which they are likely to succeed 3) encouraging the production of exploitable crops by natives in Native Reserves...⁷⁾

It was further stated that,

...schemes proposed which aimed at shortening that anxious time when they had too much for the home markets and too little for the European market, was based on three principles: 1) cheapen the cost of production 2) increase the acreage under cultivation 3) enlist the assistance of that very big asset belonging to us: the native.⁸⁾

Nevertheless, the assistance of the Africans was not encouraged in any way except that of providing a continuous supply of cheap labour, until the 1940s.

In the 1920s, attempts made in the realisation of the above aims were to take the form of debates urging further segregation of land for Africans and whites, culminating in 1930 with the passage of the Land Apportionment Act.⁹⁾ On a more practical and immediate level, the government set out to develop white agriculture by improving facilities in the rural areas. This was to be accomplished "through an active programme of provision for communications, road, telephone, postal services....markets were sought and established in neighbouring territories, mainly for livestock produce, and on the British market for tobacco, citrus and cotton."¹⁰⁾ The average annual expenditure of the Department of Agriculture rose from £33,468 in 1918/19 - 1922/23 to £75,636 in 1923/24 - 1928/29. The number of white farmers increased from 1,324 in 1911 to 2,355 in 1921. During the years 1915 to 1925, 8,000,000 acres were alienated to whites, bringing the total white area to over 31,000,000 acres. (Over one-third of Southern Rhodesia.)¹¹⁾ Initially, only land within 25 miles of the railway had been considered economic from an agricultural point of view; with this expansion, however, land further removed from the line of rail came under cultivation.

7) *Ibid.*, p.1295.

8) *Ibid.*, p.1312.

9) These debates will be discussed later in this chapter.

10) R. Anderson and Department of Native Agriculture, Southern Rhodesia, *An Agricultural Survey of Southern Rhodesia, Part Two: The Agro-Economic Survey*, p.16.

11) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.145.

In the Agro-Economic Survey, it was stated that, "by 1927 most Crown land within fifty miles of the rail had been alienated and there was a spreading of some ranching activity into the lowveld."¹²⁾

White agriculture continued to be dominated by maize and cattle in this period. Although maize continued to be the major crop produced, production fluctuated in this period: in 1914/15 916,926 (2031b) bags were produced; by 1922/23 this had increased to 1,505,580 (2031b) bags. This number fell in 1925/26 to 1,068,904 (2031b) bags. Maize exports rose from 346,855 (2001b) in 1915, to a peak of 774,449 (2001b) bags in 1923, thereafter dropping to 383,338 (2001b) bags in 1925.¹³⁾ Referring to this instability in the maize industry, F.H.G. Mundy, Chief Agriculturalist and Botanist, stated in 1921 that, "...permanent agricultural stability will never be maintained in this country by grain growing alone. At best it can be regarded as a means to an end...."¹⁴⁾ Uncertainty in this sector led to the search for other more secure staples.

There was a cotton boom in 1924/5, which had aroused farmers interest owing to high prices and the removal of transport difficulties.¹⁵⁾ Furthermore, improved rural credit facilities stimulated the revival of the tobacco industry which had collapsed in 1914. The increase in rebate under the Imperial Preference Scheme, from one-sixth to one-quarter of the full import duty, a preference of 2/- per lb of tobacco, and an influx of new settlers, were further factors influencing this renewed interest in tobacco.¹⁶⁾ Output increased from 426,423 lbs in 1914/15 to 5,659,809 lbs in 1925/6.

12) *Agro-Economic Survey, op. cit.*, p.16.

13) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.146.

14) F.G.H. Mundy, 'The Interdependence of Crop Rotation and Mixed Farming', in *Rhodesian Agricultural Journal*, Vol.18, 1921, p.344.

15) Abridged Report of the Director of Agriculture for the year 1923, in *Rhodesian Agricultural Journal*, Vol.21, 1924, p.399.

16) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia Vol.2 1930*, p.343.

The cotton boom was shortlived, and collapsed in the late 1920s when demand on the cotton market lessened, and in conjunction with this, yields were low owing to poor seeds and insect pests.¹⁷⁾ It was said that the combination of these factors "gave farmers such a poor return for their efforts that cotton growing fell into disfavour."¹⁸⁾

Shortly thereafter tobacco production collapsed through overproduction as the overseas market became saturated. It was stated in 1927 that "a decrease of 75 per cent is anticipated for 1928/9: this is due mainly to the present unsatisfactory state of the market. Climate conditions were also unfavourable and reduced yields considerably."¹⁹⁾

In the 1920s, local markets became too small to absorb local produce, and overseas markets deteriorated: "The period of expansion was short-lived...(in) 1928 overseas markets deteriorated and internally there was a reduction in mining and industrial activity, and soon Southern Rhodesia was in the trough of depression."²⁰⁾ What was at first true of maize and cattle, came in the course of the 1920s to apply to other commodities as well: more was produced than could be consumed locally. Producers of each commodity in turn were faced with overproduction and began to seek means to control this situation. This took the form of demands for government intervention in the fields of marketing and price control. Maize growers were the main body behind these demands because much of the land utilized in tobacco and cotton production had been reverted to the cultivation of maize when the boom in the former crops collapsed. D.J. Murray said of this situation, "By 1928 the development of alternative crops in the previous five years, instead of alleviating the position of the main maize growers, had made it more difficult. There was threatened for maize what had happened to tobacco with the additional problem, that farmers had no other crops to turn to...."²¹⁾ An additional problem, facing the

17) *Ibid.*, p.345.

18) *Ibid.*

19) *Ibid.*, p.344.

20) R. Anderson and Department of Native Development, *The Agro-Economic Survey, Part Two*, pp.16/17.

21) D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System*, p.70.

maize growers was that maize could not be grown profitably even on good land, at over twenty miles from the railway, transport being costly owing to its bulk. All land over twenty-five miles from the railway was considered suitable only for ranching.²²⁾

Despite growing pressure for government intervention, Coghlan's ministry, as the BSA Company before it, avoided any direct commitment in the field of production and marketing. These objectives were to be achieved through the operation of private enterprise.²³⁾ The Rhodesian Agricultural Union, established in 1904, came to assume an important role in the white agricultural sector: it served as a means of communication between farmers and the Department of Agriculture. Although the white farming sector in the 1920s assumed an important role in the economy, its members occupying strategic positions in both government and parliament,²⁴⁾ it was not until the 1930s that they were able to achieve the government intervention for which they were pressing.²⁵⁾

The instability of white agriculture in the late 1920s and the simultaneous increase in their political power, gave rise to a great deal of aggression towards Africans living on white land.²⁶⁾ The white farmers, if they could not achieve satisfaction through the framework of government aid, were more determined to achieve security through other means. The form these desires assumed were pressures for segregation.

The 1920 Order-in-Council had defined the land already allocated to 'Native Reserves' and white settlement, but no attempt had been made to determine the future of the remaining 46,000,000 acres of unassigned

22) This may be attributed to the fact that maize was the principal crop cultivated in these years, and the heavy red soils, mostly found on the highveld i.e. along the line of rail, were considered the only soils suitable for maize cultivation.

23) D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System*, p.60.

24) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.146.

25) Achievements of the white farming sector in the 1930s will be discussed more fully in Ch.3.

26) Although white farmers gained considerable profit from rents and fees, there was a growing concern as to the sufficiency of the labour force, particularly as the post war slump passed and commodity prices revived.

land. The question of how this land should be dealt with led to the debates in the 1920s which finally culminated in the Land Apportionment Act of 1930.

The main pressure for segregation, then, came from white farmers who sought to consolidate their position, for although they were the main pillar of economy in the 1920s, their position was by no means secure. The main reason for this was the lack of a viable staple crop, hence they still had reason to fear competition from the Africans who were also cultivating maize, and who, if given an opportunity, could do so at far lower cost of production than could whites.

Article 83 of the Order-in-Council of 1898, which gave Africans the right "to acquire, hold, encumber and dispose of land on the same conditions as a person who is not a native",²⁷⁾ was the cornerstone of the segregation debate and the principal cause of white farmers' fears.²⁸⁾ With continuing fears of African competition in the production of maize, the white farmers saw the possibility of Africans becoming commercial farmers and buying land in their midst as an impending threat to the continuation of their economic security. They were violently opposed to the creation of a wealthy African landowning class.

Furthermore, they feared the encroachment of the poor tillage methods of the Africans on their land. At first, farmers had wanted Africans on or near their farms because they represented a ready supply of labour. As land became settled, however, African squatters or tenants became less attractive. The white farmers did not approve of what they called "the slash and burn" method of the Africans,²⁹⁾ and they resented the intrusion of African scrub stock on their pasture land. They

27) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia No.2 1930*, p.286.

28) W.M. Leggate, in 1929, commented on the reality of this fear. "In practise outside the Native Reserves, which comprise 21,549,000 acres held in communal ownership, a native is unable to purchase land because of the injury which any seller of land to a native would inflict on his white neighbours and the strong public opinion that exists in this respect."

W.M. Leggate, *Southern Rhodesia - Some Problems of Native Development and Trade*, (1929), p.6.

29) Furthermore they feared the encroachment of a class of African commercial farmers in their midst.

were also alive to the fact that should Africans purchase land in their midst, with easy access to markets and the availability of good quality soil, their potential as competitors would be vastly increased. White farmers were also aware that the possibility of Africans purchasing land in their midst was becoming a more feasible proposition as their earning capacity increased.

The resolution of this problem, in the eyes of white farmers, revolved around the labour question: they did not encourage total segregation, for Africans residing solely in African areas would minimise the labour supply. White farmers consequently adopted the CNC's initial suggestion that certain areas be set aside for the purchase of land solely by Africans, in which communal ownership was to be forbidden. There was some divergence of opinion in deciding where these lands should be located - whether in areas adjoining white farms, or areas adjoining the reserves.³⁰⁾ E.T. Jollie wrote at the time,

Native ownership in a district adjoining white men's farms would probably cause them to deteriorate in value. The natives themselves do not like a neighbourhood that brings them up against standards and regulations above their own level. This aspect of the case, however, was not the one that originally suggested a change, as the writer has special interest to know, having been one of the first who urged individual ownership of land as the only incentive to the native to stay on the land and keep him from drifting into a detribalised life.³¹⁾

This then would appear to be in line with the general policy adopted in the 1920s, aimed at preventing the dislocation and break-up of the tribal system.

The white farmers were the largest sector demanding segregation; nevertheless, they were supported in this field by both missionaries and the Native Affairs Department, who saw also in the creation of Native Purchase Areas, a means of preserving the tribal way of life. The missionaries were opposed to Africans coming under what they

30) The smaller white farmers feared competition from both Africans with their low overheads, and from bigger white producers who produced maize using more efficient methods.

31) Ethel Tawse Jollie, 'Native Land Tenure in Africa', in *Pioneer Settlement Co-operative Studies*, 14, 1932, pp.185/6.

considered, in many cases, to be the corrupt influence of the white sector of the economy. Initially, the missionaries were of the opinion that Africans were "uncivilised barbarians" who must be civilised at all costs. By the 1920s, however, they came to realise that there were many aspects of tribalism which were worth preserving. The missionaries were of the opinion that attempts to assimilate Africans into the white economy before they were ready, would result in their adoption of many of the less desirable aspects of the white sector.³²⁾

The Native Affairs Department was also a defender of retention of the tribal system. This Department had become increasingly paternalistic, and was the strongest advocate for the preservation of the "traditional" lifestyle of the Africans.³³⁾ Both the Native Affairs Department and the missionaries realised that the majority of Africans at that stage did not have sufficient capital to warrant the purchase of land a feasible proposition. It was believed that by the time Africans had been assimilated into the cash economy, and were in a position to compete on equal terms with whites for the acquisition of land, most of the best land would have been sold to whites:³⁴⁾ "...the right of natives to purchase land anywhere means that they purchase land nowhere."³⁵⁾ Thus they felt that it was to the advantage of Africans to have the creation of separate purchase areas where they alone had the right to acquire land. Over and above this, the Native Affairs Department considered the practice of individual ownership as being progressive,

32) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp.140/1.

33) *Ibid.*, p.144.

34) G. Kay stated in connection with sale of land to whites and Africans that by 1911 whites had acquired approximately 19,000,000 acres, and by 1925 the total area alienated to whites covered 31,000,000 acres (one and a half times the area of the reserves), which included all land over 3,00 feet in altitude, within 25 miles of the railway. In contrast, by 1925 only 45,000 acres of land outside the reserves had been purchased by Africans. These figures serve to emphasise the incapacity of Africans to compete with whites in this field.

G. Kay, *Rhodesia, A Human Geography*, p.50.

35) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.141.

and a means of advancing the more capable Africans from the primitive communal system perpetrated in the reserves. It was realised that individual tenure was not possible in the reserves, where congestion was already rampant and was likely to worsen as more Africans were evicted from white farms consequent upon the expansion of white agriculture.

Thus although motives behind the desire for the creation of separate purchase areas for Africans were many and varied, all sectors, including for the most part the Africans themselves, were in agreement that this was the best policy to adopt. The Imperial government maintained a neutral position, but was not opposed to segregation providing Africans were allocated land sufficient to their requirements, both present and future. Discussions in the legislative Assembly as to the best solution to adopt were ultimately resolved by placing it in the hands of a Commission.

This Commission, under the chairmanship of Morris Carter, "was appointed", in C.L. Carbutt's words, "to enquire into and report upon the expediency and practicability of setting aside defined areas outside the Native Reserves within which a) natives only would be permitted to acquire ownership or an interest in land, and b) Europeans only should be permitted to acquire similar rights."³⁶⁾ Upon the appointment of the Commission in January 1925, all Native Commissioners were requested to suggest suitable areas for purchase by whites and Africans. Soil surveys were to be drawn up of areas selected as Purchase Areas, and consultations with chiefs arranged. Despite this, the NCs did not have much choice in the selection of appropriate land: they were forbidden to consider the 31,000,000 acres already alienated to whites; furthermore, the time allocated in which they were to undertake their survey was not sufficient to conduct a thorough investigation of land categories.

36) C.L. Carbutt, 'The Racial Problem in Southern Rhodesia', in *NADA*, 12, 1934, p.7.

It was decided against dividing the country equally in two as this would be detrimental to the labour situation: African areas would be too far removed from white centres; furthermore, this would militate against the flow of beneficial examples from white to African rural areas. Over and above this, the cost in both monetary and personal terms of wholesale movement of Africans made this solution unfeasible.³⁷⁾ It was also concluded that the assignment of one or two large Native Purchase Areas would be impossible for similar reasons. Ultimately it was recommended that white areas be left as they were, and Native Purchase Areas be created in areas adjacent to existing reserves wherever possible, or near districts where Africans were residing at the time.³⁸⁾

When the Commission's report was submitted in December 1925, it reported in favour of the creation of separate Purchase Areas, recommending that 17,793 acres in remote tsetse fly ridden areas remained unassigned and for future consideration should this be deemed necessary. The report also recommended that 6,851,876 acres of unalienated land were to be assigned to Africans as Purchase Areas, and 17,423,815 acres reserved for future purchase by whites. This assignment would bring the total African area up to 28,933,362 acres, and that of whites to 48,605,898 acres.³⁹⁾

The report was then subject to the scrutiny of the British and Southern Rhodesian governments and only after a protracted period of negotiations was the Land Apportionment Act, embodying the greater part of the Land Commission's findings, passed in 1930 and came into effect in 1931.⁴⁰⁾ The main reason behind this delay was Coghlan's belief that whites and Africans should be treated equally; hence he resisted segregation. It was only when Moffat, a firm believer in segregation, assumed the reins of power in 1927 that the recommendations of the Land Commission could be finalised. Under the Land Apportionment Act, Africans relinquished their former right to purchase land anywhere, but were

37) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.165.

38) *Ibid.*

39) *Ibid.*, p.166.

40) W.M. Leggate, *Southern Rhodesia: Some Problems of Native Development and Trade*, p.6.

allowed to purchase farms anywhere within the 81 Native Purchase Areas that were allocated. These were scattered all over the colony, in most cases adjoining existing reserves.

TABLE 1 (41)

Land Categories Under the Land Apportionment Act

European Area	49,149,174
Native Reserves	21,600,000
Native Purchase Areas	7,464,566
Unassigned Area ⁴²⁾	17,793,300
Forest Area	590,500
Undetermined Area ⁴³⁾	88,540
Total	96,686,000

In the Native Purchase Areas, Africans could acquire land at lower prices than if they were competing with whites on an open land market. The maximum size of a landholding was set at 1,000 acres - thus ensuring that Africans could not compete on a large scale with whites - while the minimum was set at 8-10 acres. No communal holdings were permitted in the Purchase Areas, and a Land Board was established to supervise the purchase of land and general development in these areas.⁴⁴⁾ The reserves were vested in the High Commissioner, and he had final authority to make decisions in these areas. On unalienated Crown land, where many Africans were residing, the rent of £1 per annum for each adult male continued. A system of private locations existed on alienated land: Africans became tenants, and either paid rent or gave labour services. Moffat decided to act on the Native Affairs Department's advice and terminate the system of rent or labour agreements on alienated white land. The phasing-out period was to last six years; hence, by 1937 all Africans previously living on this land would be

41) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.75. See map, Appendix 5.

42) The unassigned area was that land reserved for future allocation.

43) In the undetermined area blacks and whites could purchase land. This was also available for future allocation.

44) NAR CNC report for the year 1931.

moved to reserves or Purchase Areas.⁴⁵⁾ E.T. Jollie commented on the reasons behind this decision,

It has been the practise on many European owned estates to demand rent, or labour in lieu of rent, from native tenants, but the system has not proved satisfactory either for the European or the native, as no contract entered into is readily enforcable and many natives go to mines for years at a time, leaving their wives and families behind, whilst, on the other hand, they have no security of tenure. Nevertheless, the native living on European owned farms, many of which belong to absentees, has had a very easy time in the past. In the future he will be rounded up, probably to his own great advantage and certainly to that of the land, of which he has been wasteful because it cost him nothing."⁴⁶⁾

Thus the Private Locations Ordinance of 1909 was to be gradually phased out and all Africans moved into their own areas.⁴⁷⁾

In 1930, there were 919,000 Africans in Southern Rhodesia: 587,000 lived in reserves, 300,000 on farms and Crown land, and 22,000 in urban areas.⁴⁸⁾ This meant that a substantial portion of the African population would have to be moved into the reserves, many of which were already congested.⁴⁹⁾ Furthermore, the ineffectiveness of many of the Purchase Areas was soon apparent. A missionary, who represented African interests on the Land Board commented,

This land tended to be located in remote sections of the country, where frequently soil was inferior, and cost of purchasing the farm precluded capital investment in such improvements as fertilizers. These areas exhibited varying degrees of difficulty in obtaining ready markets, labour, transport and water. Moreover, large portions of the almost eight million acres were still being occupied communally. The conditions of both purchase and ownership were stringent.⁵⁰⁾

45) NAR 51542 A4 1933-1934, Address given by CNC to Native Demonstrators.

46) E. Tawse Jollie, 'Native Land Tenure in Africa', pp.186/7.

47) Vide Supra, p.21.

48) E. Tawse Jollie, *op. cit.*, p.188.

49) The CNC Carbutt estimated this figure to be 100,000 R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.205.

50) O.B. Pollack, 'Black Farmers and White Politics in Rhodesia', in *African Affairs*, 74, 1975, p.265.

Therefore, although land had been made available for purchase by Africans, most required development before it could be considered fit for occupation.⁵¹⁾

In part, Purchase Areas had been created to relieve the growing pressure in the reserves. This objective was not realised, however, because many Africans were already living on land selected for Purchase Areas, and sale of the land in question could only take place at the expense of evicting those already residing there, hence increasing pressure in the reserves.

With the passage of the Land Apportionment Act, white farmers had achieved their objectives. Africans were prevented from purchasing land in potentially good farming areas, and they were pushed into areas remote from markets. Furthermore, the clause giving Africans a six year period in which to move into their own areas ensured the acceleration of congestion therein, the consequent cessation of agricultural competition and the concurrent necessity for Africans to seek an alternative source of income through wage labour.

In the final analysis, the Land Apportionment Act achieved the divergent aims of the farmers, missionaries and the Native Affairs Department. It prevented wealthy Africans from purchasing land in areas in close proximity to white farms, and the Purchase Areas ensured that there would be no conflicting interests with whites: their access to both railways and markets was restricted. In addition, the progressive Africans were aided in that they were now able to establish more viable economic units and could develop in isolation from the primitive practises of reserve Africans. And finally, the fear of the missionaries and the Native Affairs Department that all land would be alienated to whites, was abated.

51) R.H. Palmer, maintained that over half of the purchase areas assigned, lay on the borders of the country, and approximately 4,000,000 acres of the total assigned comprised five large, remote, low-lying and in some cases tsetse ridden areas in Darwin, Melssetter, Bubi, Bulalima-Mangwe and Gwanda.
R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination* pp.182/3.

D.J. Duignan has commented on the segregatory aims which played so large a part in the passage of the Land Apportionment Act,

Segregation retarded the African's development but in some ways that was its purpose. Native Reserves were neither served by roads nor given sufficient agricultural extension advice or access to technical services provided to Europeans. Through segregation Africans were entrenched in their primitiveness.⁵²⁾

The government remained deaf to repeated pleas for the allocation of additional land, and maintained that existing holdings must be more economically utilized. The problems involved were pointed out by Carbutt,

The native population is now confined in its use of land within defined boundaries that a far reaching and radical change in their social organisation has taken place with the advent of the white man, and that an adjustment in the agricultural and pastoral systems hitherto practised by the natives is essential if the land assigned for their use is to prove adequate to their needs....Already there are signs of congestion and overstocking in certain areas where the Natives have been left to follow their own time-honoured agricultural and pastoral methods.⁵³⁾

It was the growing awareness of the inefficiency of African methods, given the new role that reserves were to play, which led to the implementation of programmes aimed at rectifying this state of affairs.

3.2 The Paradox Resolved: African Agricultural Development Schemes, 1925-1930

Disruption of the Africans' traditional agricultural system began with the arrival of whites, although the manifestations of this were not apparant for at least two decades. Population increased with the introduction of medical facilities and cessation of intertribal warfare. In 1902 the population was estimated at 530,000, which tilled approximately 500,000 acres and owned 55,000 head of cattle.⁵⁴⁾

52) D.J. Duignan, *Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia*, (unpublished thesis, 1961), p.307.

53) C.L. Carbutt, 'The Racial Problem in Southern Rhodesia', p.7.

54) Cattle numbers were estimated at this low figure owing to decimation by rinderpest in 1895.

By 1926, the population was 936,000 and the estimated carrying capacity of the reserves was only 940,000 under pre-colonial systems of agriculture.⁵⁵⁾ Cattle numbers increased as compulsory dipping lessened the occurrences of rinderpest and East Coast fever which, in earlier years, had decimated African cattle. Alvord estimated that while population doubled from 1902-1920, cattle numbers had increased during this period from 55,000 to 850,000 head.⁵⁶⁾ "In several of the newly created reserves," he commented, "it was found that it was no longer possible to practise shifting tillage and each native farmer had to stay put on a piece of land allotted to him by his chief or headman."⁵⁷⁾ The creation of reserves was itself responsible for this cessation of the nomadic form of life, and the growing numbers on small areas of land. Under such conditions, the practise of shifting cultivation could no longer be efficiently executed, resulting in continuous cultivation of the soil. By 1924, the evils of soil erosion were making themselves felt and no longer passed unnoticed.

Increased use of the plough by African cultivators added to existing problems. African farmers saw the plough as a labour-saving device, and it was for this reason that many adopted it so readily. Use of the plough in the absence of improved methods of cultivation accelerated the already decreasing fertility of the soil. Africans were correct in assuming that a light scratching of the ground with a hoe was the most efficient method under Southern Rhodesian climatic conditions. Indeed, by 1905, white farmers were already questioning the wisdom of deep-ploughing. In that year G.M. Odlum wrote that,

The best depth for ploughing is still a matter of considerable dispute. The difference of opinion may be due to the difference of conditions. Deep ploughing gives a finer seed bed and creates better moisture retaining conditions, but the rawness of the soil should again enter into our calculations, for the deeper we plough, the less fitted the soil is to sustain plant life, for this reason, shallow ploughing of virgin lands often produces the best results...deep ploughing does not give equally

55) D.A. Robinson, 'Soil Conservation and Implications of the Land Husbandry Act', in *NADA*, 37, 1960, p.27.

56) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', pp.3/4.

57) *Ibid.*

good results on sandy soils, for the texture is sufficiently open to permit easy root growth without artificial soil loosening.⁵⁸⁾

As early as 1905, then, many white settlers had seen the value of the reasoning behind African methods of hoe cultivation. Deep ploughing without accompanying cultivation of the land, manuring and irrigation, would only result in soil erosion and decreasing yields. The most fertile soil was the top soil, and Africans therefore saw no reason to plant crops deep in the ground. They were shifting cultivators, and it was usually virgin soils which they cultivated, thus the necessity for deep ploughing was never experienced by them. Yudelman commented on the virtues of the methods of shifting cultivation,

...(It) now appears that under a system of shifting cultivation, a relatively sparse population was in ecological balance with the environment. The problem today is that the environment was changed. Population has increased. European occupation has limited the land supply available for shifting cultivation by African producers. Nevertheless, many traditional methods have persisted, taking a heavy toll on the soil.⁵⁹⁾

Thus, although shifting cultivation might have sufficed in the late nineteenth century, the conditions which brought it into existence no longer applied, and a new type of agriculture was required.

As mentioned, the introduction of the plough increased the deterioration of the land. African farmers had realised that much time and effort could be saved by utilizing this implement: fields were not properly cleared before the plough was applied, trees were left standing and the ground was ploughed around them; the ground was not stumped or levelled, nor was manure applied or land irrigated. Several NCs comment on this misguided use of the plough and its effects,

There is reckless ploughing....I know cases where single natives plough sufficient land to reap 500 bags of grain (this is what a good white farmer would reap) while he actually reaps 50 bags only. The cause of bad ploughing is the want of proper clearing of the land...(they plough) at the beginning of the rains and again towards the end of the season. The consequences are shortage

58) G.M. Odium, 'Maize Culture', in *Rhodesian Agricultural Journal*, Vol.6, 1905-6, p.136.

59) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.13.

of grazing grounds, and the destruction of roots and grass which would retain the rainwater and moisture. There is much ploughing done along the rivers with the result that at every heavy shower the best soil is washed away.⁶⁰⁾

I cannot report any improvement in methods of agriculture amongst the natives. A certain number of ploughs are in use...but with few exceptions the ploughing is done very carelessly. The land is not properly harrowed or drained with the result that a large part of it gets waterlogged and useless.⁶¹⁾

In 1929, the CNC compared the efficiency of African tillage methods, and the way cultivation was conducted using the plough,

It will be several years before the use of the plough by the natives can be considered an improvement on their own method of preparation of the soil for crops; the ploughing is in most cases badly done especially in the lands where stumps have been left and they very often select land to be turned over by the plough, just because there are no trees in it, that would have been a waste of time to turn over with the hoe. To see two lands alongside each other, on the same granite soil, dotted with tree stumps, land being put into cultivation for the first time, the one turned up with the plough, and the other with the hoe, is an object lesson. In the one done with the hoe the contour of the ground has been studied, and ridges made with a view to draining the lands from the heavy floods, but still more to prevent erosion, the crops stand high and dry in the heaviest rains, and gets all the benefit of the humus turned under between the sods which form the ridge. The other is a sacrificed piece of ground, the half turned drills running in circles or straight lines, depending on the stumps, no thought being given to flooding, wash or anything else, patches of grass left where they could not get the plough to work, the crop existing where it can.⁶²⁾

The above passage serves to explain how Africans were able to meet the demands of the mines and the settlers in the first decades of white occupation and also explains the growing concern as to the ability of Africans to support themselves on reduced areas of land when the plough replaced the hoe as the main implement of cultivation.

60) NAR ZAD 3/1/1 Memorandum by the Reverend Father Beihlers of the Jesuit Mission Matabeleland 1/7/1914.

61) NAR N9/2/1-3 NC Half yearly reports. NC Mrewa 1923.

62) NAR CNC Annual Report 1929.

Because land was not properly prepared before the plough was applied, the crop yields tended to be low and land was abandoned more rapidly than in earlier years. Furthermore, in order to offset the disadvantages of low yields, larger areas were tilled. That the plough was regarded as a labour-saving device also served to encourage the tillage of larger acreages. Several NCs in their annual reports commented on these problems: "In the northern part (of the reserve) hoes have almost fallen into disuse, with the increased use of ploughs, old lands seem to be abandoned more rapidly than before, with a consequent more rapid destruction of timber."⁶³⁾ In the same year, the NC for Umtali stated that, "at present the use of the plough in the reserves is of doubtful economic advantage. The owner is inclined to plough up more land than he can properly cultivate."⁶⁴⁾ It was pointed out that even Africans admitted to better yields under hoe cultivated lands: "Although the plough connotes an advance in the economy of human labour...if left unguarded it is so unintelligently applied that its result is of doubtful economic benefit...we have the admission of natives that higher yields were obtained from hand hoed lands."⁶⁵⁾

With the increased use of the plough, the total area under cultivation rose faster than the number of cultivators. The task of cultivation was traditionally allocated to women, and although the widespread use of the plough relieved them of much of the drudgery of hoe cultivation, the area ploughed was too large to properly care for, and yields dropped further. Gradually men came to assume the role of cultivators.

Although problems accruing from the increased use of the plough were noticed in the first decade of the twentieth century, African, and indeed white, agricultural methods were left to continue unhindered during the period of BSA Company rule. It was only when pressures for segregation increased after the grant of self-government in 1923, that this was brought to attention. At one of the Legislative Assembly

63) E.D. Alvord, 'The Agricultural Life of Rhodesian Natives', in *NADA*, 7, 1929, p.10, quoting NC for Buhera.

64) *Ibid.*, p.9, quoting NC Umtali Annual Report 1929.

65) *Ibid.*, pp.8/9.

debates it was said that,

For the last twenty years the native policy of this country has remained unchanged. It had been quiet and uneventful, it was met with the blessing of the Colonial Office to whom it gave no trouble, it was one of stagnation, but it was not prejudiced by any vital errors...it was certain that present conditions could not remain as they were. Now, that time has come in this country, the question of segregation was primarily a land one.⁶⁶⁾

This attitude would appear to be in sympathy with the BSA Company's intention, in the earlier part of their rule, of allowing Africans to supply its needs. With vast areas at their disposal, Africans were able to meet these needs. When, in the final decade of BSA Company rule, attention came to be focused on the promotion of white farming, Africans were forced into the reserves and no further consideration accorded them. It was only when Coghlan's ministry assumed control in 1923 that a more concerned, if not paternalistic, attitude towards Africans came to prevail.

There were indications, however, of an awareness of the needs for improvement prior to 1923, although in many cases these acknowledgements were advanced only in so far as they would benefit whites. For example, by inducing an increased supply of labour. In 1903 the NC for Charter commented,

This season, however, owing to the drought, will produce sufficient only for the maintenance of natives. Natives must be brought fully to realise the advantages of ploughing and irrigation. Then they would readily adopt more modern methods. It is the old and primitive and antiquated method which keeps a native so much at home and his constant excuse for not going out to work.⁶⁷⁾

A few years later, in 1907, the CNC wrote,

If the native could be taught more practical things such as proper cultivation of the soil, adequate housing of themselves and their families, wants would gradually arise which would necessitate working to earn the necessary purchasing power, and so throw into the labour market a far greater number of keen and intelligent workers than any taxation or amplified legislation could produce.⁶⁸⁾

66) *Debates of the Legislative Assembly*, March-October 1924, p.1123.

67) NAR N9/1/8 NC Annual Reports, NC Charter, 1903.

68) NAR N9/1/10 Report of the CNC for the year ending 31/12/1907.

Finally, it was claimed by the NC for Charter that, "By abolishing the old system of spreading the tilling, sowing and reaping over the whole year and conveniently accomplishing all that in half the time, would also abolish the attraction of beer drinks."⁶⁹⁾ Another important consequence of the achievement of this last aim would be the release of a large quantity of potential labour for part of each year.

It was not until 1910, however, that steps were taken towards the realisation of these goals. In these years a Committee of Enquiry into African Affairs was appointed under J.H. Graham. Sections 105-6 of the report stated,

In the matter of agriculture, however, proper knowledge of which is regarded as all important, the commission feels it may be necessary to provide for instruction other than that obtainable in mission schools. For this we recommend the establishment by government of central institutions in reserves, where teaching may be given by expert instructors, not only in regard to proper methods of tillage, but also to the treatment and rotation of crops and to all other branches of agriculture.⁷⁰⁾

The Committee's report had also recommended that ocular demonstration be undertaken, "which should be furnished at the central stations... also should be laid down as part of the educational policy, that members of staff should be able to travel around the districts and endeavour to get in touch with the more progressive natives and give them advice at their kraals."⁷¹⁾

The proposals of the committee had been reaffirmed by a conference of senior officials of the Native Affairs Department in 1911, but these recommendations met with much opposition at this stage. It was this which, in part, prevented the implementation of development programmes until the mid-1920s. The negative attitude which the BSA Company exhibited towards African affairs was an important contributive factor. The demands for labour in these years were met largely by foreign Africans, and it was not until the white farming sector became firmly entrenched that the labour needs of this sector increased markedly. Finally, the recommendations of the Committee could not be realised

69) NAR N9/1/8 NC Annual Reports NC Charter 1903.

70) *Debates of the Legislative Assembly*, 1923, p.583.

71) *Ibid.*

until the reserves had been more clearly demarcated and approved of and, this was not completed until 1920. The onset of the First World War was partly responsible for this delay, owing to lack of both manpower and capital.

The Native Affairs Department was also largely responsible for the long delay in inaugurating developmental programmes. The Department was responsible for the administration of Africans; but until 1920 the missionaries monopolised African education and the government gave them grants for this purpose. Owing to lack of both capital and trained personnel, however, technical education was not a feasible possibility, and all education was of a literary nature. The missions were under the control of the Department of Education, whose primary concern was that of white education. The missions and the Native Affairs Department were, at the time of self-government, the principal administrative bodies representing African interests, and conflict arose between these two bodies centred on the issue of education.

Prior to 1920, then, when the Native Affairs Department's attentions were devoted to areas other than that of education, the missionaries came to dominate in this field. During the 1920s, however, this situation was changing. With segregation becoming a more realistic possibility, an awareness grew of the necessity of developing African areas.⁷²⁾ Furthermore, pressure from white farmers had lessened in certain areas: in 1919 a resolution was passed by the Congress of the Rhodesia Agricultural Union, suggesting that Africans be taught handicrafts with the object of making them into better citizens, but not so that they would compete with whites.⁷³⁾ Changes in policy for African education were discussed in the Legislative Assembly debates, and they compared the virtues of the old and new systems,

The old was trying to graft upon the native European civilization. In as far as its influence on the masses was concerned this had failed. Missionaries had produced fine individuals but the effect on the masses was small. The new system was that of taking the native as they found him in his

72) See *Legislative Assembly Debates* 1922/3, May-October 1923, p.570.

73) D.J. Duignan, *Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia 1890-1923*, pp.249/50.

kraal, with his simple methods of agriculture and stock raising, his simple industries and handicrafts, and building him up. This was the underlying principle and aspect of this scheme.⁷⁴⁾

Thus it was that Africans were now to be developed in their own areas and not along white lines. This decision was embodied in the recommendations of the Southern Rhodesian Native Affairs Commission of 1910,⁷⁵⁾ which were implemented in 1920.

In 1920 pressures for initiating development policies in African areas led the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Council to authorise the establishment of two central institutes and a Native Development Department subordinate to the Native Affairs Department. The aim of these moves was to promote the growth of African industries, which the Native Affairs Department maintained the missionaries had neglected in their devotion to literary education. Many of the recommendations proposed by the Legislative Council were those which H.S. Keigwin had formulated in his report on the 'Industrial Training of Natives.'⁷⁶⁾

Keigwin proposed that the purpose of the industrial schools should be the development of Africans in their own areas. In this regard, he stated that the schools should deal,

First with the simplest and humblest vocation of the people, building up in them among the people in their own villages instead of taking individuals away from their home surroundings and collecting them in central institutes⁷⁷⁾ where they are probably trained on European lines and in European directions....we are concerned primarily with the natives who live in a more or less communal way in the reserves...they cannot be allowed to drift on as they are without any organised system of guidance and instruction. Use of ploughs is a sign of progress...it is evident that on the one hand native conservatism has to be broken down, and on the other it is desirable that some means

74) *Debates of the Legislative Assembly, op. cit.*, p.588.

75) *Vide Supra*, p.57.

76) Keigwin became the first Director of the new Native Development Department in 1920.

77) Keigwin's proposals for developing Africans in their own areas, was backed by the legislative assembly which stated that there was a "big distinction between the development of the natives in European and their development in Native Industries. Certain industries must be marked out: cattle raising, agriculture, peasant life, basket making, curing of hides etc. which natives have so long followed. *Debates of the Legislative Assembly 1922/3* p.385.

should be devised whereby the progressive native may be instructed in the proper use of his new implements.⁷⁸⁾

Keigwin also advocated the means by which these agricultural improvements could be realised,

Better methods of tillage, improvement in seed selection, more constant cultivation, proper rotation of crops, and less wastage of corn in beermaking. One of the first needs is for an instructor, who shall go around the reserves and demonstrate with a plough. In America wonderful results have been achieved among negroes by instruction.⁷⁹⁾

It was this last suggestion which was to form the basis of all African development policies in ensuing years.

Keigwin's primary concern at this stage, however, was with the inadequacy of the missionary system of education, which concerned itself with reading, writing and arithmetic, but included no wider training. The financial assistance given by the government for the furtherance of the Keigwin scheme was for more practical training. It was stated thus, "The money voted to Keigwin's scheme was for a different purpose. They started on the hypothesis that the native wanted industrial rather than religious and literary education...the missionaries trained a smaller number of pupils to a higher level."⁸⁰⁾

At Keigwin's suggestion, two Industrial Schools were opened: Dombashawa in the Chindamora reserve in Mashonaland in 1920⁸¹⁾, and Tjolotjo in Matabeleland in 1924. At these schools, demonstrators were to be trained "with the view of their going out into the reserves to give demonstrations and instruction to their fellow natives."⁸²⁾

78) H.S. Keigwin, *Report on the Suggested Industrial Development of Natives*, 1920, pp.3/4.

79) *Ibid.*, p.7.

80) *Legislative Assembly Debates* 1922-3 Vol.1, 1-25 May 1922, p.375.

81) Mr. D. Hampton, ex-principal of Dombashawa School, stated that the reason Chindamora Reserve was selected as a site for the school was because Africans had said the soil was no good and had all been worked out. Nevertheless, demonstrators got 20 bags an acre from this land in ensuing years.
D. Hampton, Interview, November, 1979.

82) H.S. Keigwin, *Report on the Suggested Industrial Development of Natives*, p.7.

Although agricultural instruction was part of the schools curriculum, industrial training received the most attention until the appointment of an agricultural expert in 1926.

Part of the reason for the delay in the effective launching of the Keigwin scheme was the continuing opposition between the Native Affairs Department and the missions. Keigwin was allotted £7,500⁸³⁾ for the execution of his scheme, which the missionaries criticized as being extravagant. The isolation of Domboshawa from the remainder of the education system administered by the missions, enraged them further. When, in 1922, a more practical emphasis was given to training but involving literary education, which Keigwin had realised was necessary, the Missionary Conference of that year attacked the government schools, maintaining that these schools were encroaching on an area which they considered their responsibility.⁸⁴⁾ In response to these conflicts, a Commission was set up under Hadfield in 1924, to enquire into the matter of African Education.⁸⁵⁾ The extensive drought experienced in the 1921/2 season was also a contributive factor in the establishment of this commission: £50,000 was spent on famine relief following crop failures,⁸⁶⁾ and this made the necessity of developing African areas even more imperative.

The missionaries pressed for the creation of a separate sub-department to take over the supervisory functions which were in the hands of inspectors of the Education Department, who were more concerned with white education. The Commission was divided as to which department this should fall under.

83) *Debates of the Legislative Assembly op. cit.*, p.370.

84) The missionary conference was established in 1906 and co-ordinated the activities of all the missions. Its declared objective was to promote the work of the missions and encourage co-operation between them.

85) *Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the matter of Native Education in all its bearing in the Colony of Southern Rhodesia*, 1925.

86) Gloria Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development in Rhodesia*, (1972), p.18.

The CNC, H. Jackson, recommended that the sub-department be placed under the wing of the Native Affairs Department, and not the Education Department.⁸⁷⁾ It was not until H.U. Moffat became Premier in 1927, however, that these recommendations were put into effect, and the Native Education Department was created, with H. Jowitt as its head and Domboshawa and Tjolutjo under his control.⁸⁸⁾ The 1924 Hadfield Commission brought about Keigwin's downfall: not believing him suitable for the implementation and execution of the scheme, he resigned in 1926; and the Native Development Department, established only in 1920, did not long survive its founder.

Like the Native Development Department, the new Native Education Department stressed the need for development within the bounds of the 'traditional' tribal framework. In 1927 the CNC stated,

The removal of the two native schools from direct connection with the Native Affairs Department serves to widen the already considerable gap between Native Administration and Native Education. But a closer connection between mission schools and government schools has been effected through the important establishment by the government of a Native Department of Education with a director and staff of Inspectors.⁸⁹⁾

The Native Education Department, too, was not to survive very long. In 1929, as a result of the Hadfield Commission, the passage of the Native Development Act substituted the Native Education Department with a new Native Development Department of which Jowitt was made Director.⁹⁰⁾

88) NAR CNC Annual Report, 1927.

89) NAR CNC Annual Report, 1927.

90) From 1928-1930 the rivalry between the Native Affairs Department and chiefs on the one hand, and the missionaries on the other, was concealed. With the establishment of a new Native Development Department in 1929, an attempt was made to unify the varying aspects of educational policy. But this division remained, lying dormant while Jackson was CNC: although in the Native Affairs Department, he shared many ideals of the Native Development Department and the missionaries. It was only when a new CNC - Carbutt - was appointed in 1930 that the Native Affairs Department came to dominate in African development again, Carbutt being a representative of the more conservative traditions of the Native Affairs Department.

When the first Agriculturalist for Instruction of Natives, E.D. Alvord, was appointed in 1926, he was to work with the Department of Agriculture. In April 1927, however, he was transferred to the Native Education Department within the Native Affairs Department. The 1925 Land Commission was partly responsible for his appointment, as it envisaged the migration of Africans into reserves on a more permanent basis. These areas had to be made to facilitate a much larger population, and their deterioration brought to a halt. Commenting on the possible repercussions of the Land Apportionment Act, the CNC in 1933 stated,

The Land Apportionment Act....also requires that by 1937 all natives who have not required farms of their own, or who are not living on European farms as workers, not as at present in some cases as rent payers, must reside in Native Reserves. That means there will be far more people in the reserves than there are now. You who have been in the reserves, know that, owing to the large areas which natives plant, since the white man brought them the plough, and owing to the large increase in cattle, since dipping was introduced, that many of the reserves appear to be overcrowded with human beings and cattle even now. Therefore it is necessary to organise the occupation of the natives in such a way that they will accommodate more people who will move into them in 1937.⁹¹⁾

An American missionary, Alvord, having already achieved successes on his mission station at Mount Silinda was selected to instruct Africans. His primary aim was to introduce agricultural instruction to the school on his mission, and develop agricultural instruction and improved tillage methods amongst Africans residing on mission farms. Alvord was appalled by African cultivation techniques. Although he was hasty in condemning these methods without pausing to examine their possible value under existing conditions, he had inadvertently struck at the core of the problem, one which no other white was to consider in ensuing years: that in attempting to induce Africans to adopt new methods the first platform of reform must be conducted at a social level, and it was at this level that Alvord initiated his schemes.

91) NAR S1542 A4, 1933-1944. Address given by the CNC to Native Demonstrators, 28/6/1933.

Writing of African methods of cultivation, Alvord maintained that, "once the seeds were planted...they left it to nature, ancestral spirits and witchcraft charms to bring them a good crop."⁹²⁾ He was alive to the fact that before the introduction of new technology could achieve any noticable results, these attitudes would have to be overcome; and the only way Alvord believed this would be successful was by the demonstration of improved methods in the tribal areas. In this manner, Africans would see for themselves that these improvements could be achieved without resorting to supernatural means.

Alvord then implemented the programme he had devised at Mount Silinda. He inaugurated a five year course in agricultural instruction at the mission school, and demonstrated the use of advanced methods on one-acre plots of land. Prior to the harvest, Africans were assembled at the plots to witness the results achieved. At the before-harvest meeting at Mount Silinda in 1921, the general response was "*mtakati ya rayungu*"⁹³⁾ (magic of the white man). He grew even more despondent when the very pupils who had prepared the land and cultivated the crops, firmly asserted that the "*mfrandsi*" must have gone out at night to sprinkle magic medicine on the crops.⁹⁴⁾ It was at this time that Alvord made his discovery, which he wrote,

...was to influence millions and affect the economic development of a whole nation. I discovered that in spite of high qualifications and experience, a white man could not teach agriculture to the superstition steeped native who attributed high crop yields to 'muti', witchcraft and favour of the ancestral spirits. I concluded that it was impossible to Christianise the natives without first of all intellectualising their agricultural practises, so filled with superstition, ignorance, witchcraft and worship of the

92) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

93) E.D. Alvord, 'The Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.6.

94) *Ibid.*

unknown.⁹⁵⁾ I must create in them wants and desires which would automatically lift them out of the sea of fear and superstition which engulfed them. I made the discovery⁹⁶⁾ that the African must see things demonstrated on his own land, within his reach, by demonstrators of his own black colour.⁹⁷⁾

This principle was to form the basis of development schemes in Southern Rhodesia.

Neither the settlers nor the government considered the necessity of inducing receptive social responses from Africans towards agricultural change. This is indicative that the prime considerations behind the inauguration of development policies were not that these would benefit the African himself; but rather that they would prevent deterioration of the soil and allow an increased number of Africans to subsist in the reserves without the support of government famine relief in times of drought and crop failure. In 1930 the following was written on the purpose of the demonstrators,

The aim of farming demonstrators on Native Reserves is not to stimulate production of staple cash crops, but to teach the native farmer how to get good returns from his labour, and at the same time build up and maintain the soil fertility for himself and his children. It must be remembered that land on native reserves is communal and it is limited. No individual can be permitted to go extensively into the production of money crops, wear out the land and crowd out other individuals who

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- 95) As most missionaries at this time, Alvord sought to release Africans from the vices of polygamy and collectivism. Most missionaries, however, neglected industry and agriculture, believing that conversion and literary training would resolve this situation. Alvord believed that hard work in agricultural and industrial fields would gradually draw the Africans from their 'heathen' states. They would realise that effort and industriousness had its own reward, entirely unconnected with any form of supernatural rites.
- 96) Although Alvord attributed this idea to his own ingenuity, the use of African demonstrators as a means of improving African agricultural methods, had been used on previous occasions. The CNC Taylor commented, "It is certain that it is only by native agents that the masses can be reached." He drew his conclusions from the precedent set in the Transkei, and recommended the training of demonstrators at Domboshawa and Tjolotjo, after which they were to be sent out into reserves to assist any interested Africans. These extension services had also been practised among negroes in the Southern States of America. NAR CNC Annual Report for the year 1924.
- 97) E.D. Alvord, *The Gospel of the Plow*.

98)

have an equal right to a share of the land.

The white population and the government were adamant that Africans should not compete with whites for limited markets. In considering the Africans' position in the economy it was also said that "Africans should grow subsistence crops before cash crops. The native should always be in a position to obtain his own requirements by his own efforts from the land. There will be saleable surpluses in some areas, but the basis of native agriculture should be to get at least a subsistence from the land."⁹⁹⁾

When Alvord accepted the new post in 1926, his duties were to include the organisation of better agricultural training of Africans at both mission and government schools; and to organise agricultural instruction and development in reserves by means of African demonstrators and demonstration plots.¹⁰⁰⁾ Alvord faced governmental antagonism from the outset and he was offered little assistance in furtherance of his schemes. Mr R. Dinnis, retired NC, and later undersecretary for Native Co-operatives, commented on this antagonism displayed towards Alvord. He maintained that firstly, Alvord was a missionary, and, as already explained, the Native Department and missionaries were generally of divided opinion where African policy was concerned. Secondly, Alvord was an American, and was not too well received by a civil service largely comprised of men of British origin. Finally it was feared that should African produced crops enter the market, the country would be flooded with an inferior quality product which would lower the standard which white farmers had struggled so hard to attain.¹⁰¹⁾ D. Hampton, retired principal of Domboshawa school, suggested that Alvord infringed upon what the NCs had considered their domain. These men were, until this time, what Hampton termed the "Lord Gods of the districts", and Alvord, who on many occasions, was tactless, was not popular with NCs for many years.¹⁰²⁾

98) *Official Yearbook of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia Vol.2 1930*, p.745.

99) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission.

100) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

101) R. Dinnis, Interview, October 1979.

102) D. Hampton, Interview, November 1979.

In addition to the difficulties outlined above, when Alvord first assumed duty he discovered the agricultural instruction was not included in the school curriculum at Domboshawa. The demonstrators were badly trained, and the course offered was vague and elementary. Industrial training was considered more important and accorded the greatest emphasis. Skills were encouraged which offered no possibility of competition with whites. It was feared that improvements in agricultural techniques would give rise to a class of independent black commercial farmers, and threaten the perpetuation of white supremacy. While white farmers were still struggling to find their feet, they were loathe to co-operate with Alvord's far-reaching schemes. At Tjolotjo, too, Alvord encountered similar setbacks: the role of agricultural instruction was underplayed and taught to the lowest classes only, carpentry and building being taught at higher levels.

The scheme Alvord drew up was finally enforced when the CNC ordered the principal of Domboshawa to adhere to all Alvord's recommendations pertaining to agricultural instruction.¹⁰³⁾ Thereafter, this field came under Alvord's control and in July 1927 a five year course in practical agriculture and allied subjects was inserted into the school curriculum,¹⁰⁴⁾ and organised courses in agriculture embarked upon in several important mission schools. Agricultural trainers were instructed in soil conservation methods, gardening, animal husbandry, fish farming, water conservation, crop cultivation, general farming practises and farm mechanics.¹⁰⁵⁾

Efforts in agricultural instruction were focused on raising the standards of land use sufficiently to ensure that a subsistence livelihood could be eked from the land, and the demonstration schemes devised in the 1920s did not attempt to alter the existing structure of the 'traditional' system. Communal holdings were to be maintained, and capital intensive, large-scale holdings were not encouraged. "Our purpose is to teach these reserve natives to make the most of their

103) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

104) *Ibid.*

105) D. Hampton, *op. cit.* "Once these schools got under way," Hampton maintained, "they were swamped with applicants". Although some enrolled in building and carpentry, there were twice as many in agriculture. Thus the emphasis in teaching came to be on agricultural training.

arable and grazing lands. It is our aim to teach them how to grow on one acre the quantity of crops they now grow on ten acres. Thus we shall be able to set free more lands for grazing purposes and greatly add to the resources of the Native Reserves."¹⁰⁶⁾ Alvord was aware that vast improvements could be made within the existing system; and his schemes aimed at increasing the productive and carrying capacity of the reserves without changing either the traditional system or capital expenditure in this sphere.

In August 1927, after preliminary meetings on eleven different reserves, the first demonstrators assumed duty.¹⁰⁷⁾ The first task of the demonstrator was outlined as follows: the demonstrator was,

to question a likely man in his area as to the acreage he has under cultivation, what his returns have been...then he will tell him that he should be able to get better results with better methods. He will then offer to take over one or two acres of this man's land, attend to the cultivation, and generally handle the crop until it is reaped. When it is done the results will speak for themselves.¹⁰⁸⁾

The demonstrator was not to take over complete control of the owner's plots, but encourage the plowholder to work under his direction. Demonstrations were to be attended on a voluntary basis and not forced upon those not wishing to receive instruction. Those who followed the demonstrator's advice on their own were to be classed as co-operators.¹⁰⁹⁾ 'Before Harvest' meetings were to be held before each harvest alongside demonstration plots, under the supervision of the NC and the demonstrator, in order to indicate the results of improved methods.

During the first year of demonstration, single unit demonstrations were conducted, the purpose of which was to indicate the value of proper tillage methods and the use of kraal manure. Plowholders were taught proper use of the plough, preparation of land and planting.¹¹⁰⁾

106) Annual Report of Agriculturalist for Instruction of Natives 1929.

107) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

108) NAR S138/10 24/2/1927.

109) E.D. Alvord, 'Agricultural Demonstration Work on Native Reserves', in *Department of Native Development, Occasional Paper* 3, 1930, p.19.

110) NAR S1044/7 Native Agriculture 1934-6, ANC Umvuma to SN Fort Victoria 11/1/1934.

During the second and successive years, if the plotholder wished to continue, crop rotation demonstrations were to be undertaken to show the building and maintenance of soil fertility.

The rotation system Alvord devised was designed to build up the soil to a high degree of fertility as rapidly as possible, and to allow continuous cropping of the soil. One acre was split into four plots, and these were rotated for a period of four years. In the first year, maize was planted and manure applied; this was followed by maize or kaffir corn, or any other intertilled farniceous crop. In the third year, a legume was planted and this formed an important part of the rotation because these could be ploughed in at the end of the season, helping to correct the nitrogen deficiency in the soil. Only legumes known to Africans were cultivated: kaffir beans or groundnuts. In the final year, *rupoko* or any other close-growing millet crop was planted.¹¹¹⁾ In addition to crop rotation, proper stumping and clearing of the land was essential, and winter ploughing was encouraged in order to retain moisture during the dry season. Ploughing before planting was necessary to aerate the soil, and finally seed selection and row planting were demonstrated.¹¹²⁾

These methods were to prove successful: the average yields on demonstration plots were thirteen-and-a-half bags per acre, compared with one-and-a-half bags on ordinary African lands. The number of crop rotation demonstrations increased each year, which indicated an increasing interest in better methods of agriculture. At one of the 'before planting' inspections, it was stated that "...The introductory stage of the demonstration scheme where we emphasise the use of kraal manure and better tillage methods is already past in several reserves, and the second stage during which we teach the practise of crop rotation to build up and maintain soil fertility is well under way."¹¹³⁾

It was stressed that all improvements in crop yields were attained only with those implements already at the disposal of Africans and no commercial fertilisers were used.¹¹⁴⁾

111) D. Hampton, Interview, November, 1979.

112) NAR S1044/7 *op. cit.*

113) NAR S138/72 Report on Before Planting Inspection of Demonstration Plots on Native Reserves 1932/3.

114) NAR L6/3/1 Natal Witness, February 9, 1939.

Nevertheless, white farmer antagonism continued unabated, many still feared African competition, especially in the field of maize cultivation. Alvord commented on the origin and nature of these fears,

These feelings were even fostered in some districts by the NCs, many of whom were also district magistrates for European settlers. Under improved tillage methods, natives were producing more and more maize. There was a growing apprehension regarding native development and its seeming conflict with European development. The logical conclusion was that the African should learn no skills which the European offers in the labour market, and his soil should yield no food which the European could sell him.¹¹⁵⁾

These complaints formed the basis of what Alvord termed the 'maize complex', and he came under greater pressure to terminate what most whites considered to be development focused on one crop alone, that is, maize.¹¹⁶⁾

In 1931, Alvord received a letter from the Superintendent of Natives criticising him for teaching Africans to grow maize, and recommending that its growing by Africans be prohibited as it was a white man's crop.¹¹⁷⁾ The increased attention being focused on maize after the collapse of tobacco and cotton in the late 1920s, was partly responsible for this antagonism, and Alvord was accused of creating a maize monoculture in the reserves.

E.G. Howman, chief spokesman of the Native Affairs Department's conservative faction on African development matters, also attacked Alvord's supposed 'maize complex'. He declared that Africans should be taught to grow food crops like millet for which only a limited market existed outside the reserves.¹¹⁸⁾ Alvord, however, retaliated to these accusations,

It has been thought by some that our agricultural demonstration is limited largely to one crop,

115) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

116) NAR S138/72 Alvord to Director of Native Development 8/6/1931: The Maize Complex.

117) Herein lay the seeds of what was later to take the form of the Maize Control Act and the culmination of white fears of African competition.

118) These criticisms culminated in the passage of the Maize Control Act in 1931, for further details *vide infra*, Ch.3.1.

namely maize...this is not the case. A single unit plot planted to maize is only done for two years for the purpose of teaching manuring, winter ploughing, cross ploughing, proper seed bed preparation and cultivation. At the end of two years demonstration the owner is either dropped or undertakes to have the demonstrator teach him proper rotation. The following chart gives an idea of the crops grown by demonstrators on Selukwe Reserve during the past season:

TABLE TWO 119)

crops grown	acreage	yield	average yield per acre
maize	8	90 bags	11½ bags
peanuts	1¾	46 bags	26,7 bags
kaffir-corn	1½	4,4 bags	3 bags
kaffir-beans	1¾	4,6 bags	2,6 bags
pumpkins	½	1008 pumpkins	2016 pumpkins

In this manner, Alvord attempted to indicate that maize was by no means the only crop cultivated under demonstration schemes.

In a letter to the Director of Native Development, Alvord pointed out why most Africans preferred cultivating maize to other crops,

An important cause of the maize complex among the natives is the fact that the mines, missions, government departments and employers generally throughout the country ration the natives employed by them with mealie meal...maize can be produced and purchased at a quarter to a half the cost of rupoko...(the) natives themselves know that maize is much easier and cheaper to grow than rupoko and larger returns are to be had for their labour.120)

In his annual report, Alvord stated that with regard to the 'maize complex', "It is in my opinion that such farmers who cannot stand possible competition, would do the most good for Rhodesia by moving out."121)

In addition to the pre-occupation with maize cultivation on the part

119) E.D. Alvord, 'Agricultural Demonstration Work', pp.26/7.

120) NAR S138/72 Alvord to Director of Native Development, 8/6/1931.

121) NAR S138/72 Native Agriculturalist: Draft Report 1928.

of white farmers, there were further explanations for the accusations levelled against Alvord: Africans generally were pre-occupied with the cultivation of maize, and were reluctant to try other crops. Indeed, Alvord himself occasionally found difficulty in persuading ploholders to adopt crop rotations in which maize did not feature prominently. Africans had every reason to prefer the cultivation of maize to that of other crops: being the staple diet of Africans in urban employment, markets were more readily available than for other crops. Furthermore, the lower and less reliable returns for maize led to the planting of larger acreages per head;¹²²⁾ thus it might appear that more maize was cultivated than was in fact the case. This was sufficient, however, to convince white farmers of the African pre-occupation with maize cultivation.

Shortage of staff and government reluctance to finance development programmes were to prove two of the primary obstacles to the success of Alvord's scheme. Furthermore, conditions in some reserves had deteriorated to such an extent that restoration of the natural resources was deemed necessary prior to any attempts at development itself. Thus limited staff had not only to restore the land, but communicate what were revolutionary concepts to a vast number of rural Africans, comprising 98 per cent of the entire African population and existing on 89 reserves scattered throughout the country. In 1933, Alvord was granted an Assistant Agriculturalist, his first request in 1931 having been refused. In 1932, a Community demonstrator was appointed, and in the following year, two Land Inspectors.¹²³⁾ In that year, 1937, the CNC commented,

"...(there is) doubt as to whether it is possible to accommodate the whole of the above population (1,050,512) in reserves and native areas as they exist today. With a view to determining the matter two surveyors were added to the staff and are now engaged in production of large scale maps of Native Reserves showing the distribution of existing population, the amount of land suitable for cultivation and pasture, and the extent of

122) This is a possible explanation as to why Alvord experienced such difficulty in persuading Africans to cultivate smaller areas.

123) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

water supplies. Therefore we can form some idea of what additional population the Native Reserves are capable of carrying....It is not possible that this (development) will be complete by the time the Land Apportionment Act stipulates.¹²⁴⁾

Despite increased pressure for the development of reserves, the government at this stage was still reluctant to comply with this demand.

That Alvord was initially refused an Assistant Agriculturalist validates the assertion that there was still fear of African competition, and the existence of too many qualified men in the training of Africans might translate this fear into reality. In 1932, however, agricultural training at the two industrial schools was made compulsory. That there was no objection to this measure reflected the opinion that self-sufficiency in the reserves was favoured, but that a class of commercial farmers providing competition to whites should not be allowed to develop.

Alvord experienced great difficulty in introducing improved methods on scattered plots, and under communal systems of tenure. Of this practise Alvord stated that, "It was the custom of Africans everywhere to have small lands and gardens scattered throughout the reserves like small islands in a sea of grass. They also had their huts scattered and hidden away in the bush and rocks."¹²⁵⁾ In 1929, therefore, Alvord introduced the system of centralisation on the Selukwe Reserve. This entailed the consolidation of all arable holdings and grazing lands in block systems, separated by the village which was laid out in straight lines on the boundary lines between the two areas. Once the arable land had been protected, it was re-allocated into family holdings.¹²⁶⁾ In this manner, a permanent system of agriculture was inaugurated, grazing lands enlarged and crops protected from damage by roaming cattle. This terminated the system whereby "...the extensive patches of grassland which the owners of contiguous cultivated land

124) NAR Report of the CNC for the year 1933.

125) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

126) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 1944 Native Production and Trade Commission.

leave between their gardens, which are entirely wasteland during half the year, for they are not of sufficient size to be grazed without damage to crops in the adjoining fields."¹²⁷⁾

Africans generally were not opposed to the policy of centralisation, and in many cases actually requested assistance in this field.¹²⁸⁾ In pre-colonial communities, arable and pastoral land had been clearly demarcated. These divisions broke down in the 1890s, however, when grazing and arable lands became intermingled as the use of the plough became more widespread, and both cattle and the human population increased in number.

After the Selukwe Reserve had been centralised, there was a two year interlude while the success of this pilot scheme was examined. This work proved to be a success, and many Africans, originally sceptical about the idea, became enthusiastic about the project.¹²⁹⁾ Thereafter, work in this field accelerated: soil surveys were drawn up to determine suitable arable and grazing lands. This work was originally allocated to NCs, but the CNC, Carbutt, maintained that the NCs had neither the time nor the technical proficiency for such undertakings.¹³⁰⁾ When the land surveyors joined the department, they took over the execution of this work in conjunction with Alvord and Palmer, the Assistant Agriculturalist.

Enthusiasm for centralisation grew over the years as its benefits became more apparent: "Several old men, who on most reserves are opposed to progress, got up and spoke enthusiastically in favour of the work and urged all younger men to adopt our methods."¹³¹⁾ In 1937 Alvord quoted the agricultural demonstrator on Mondoro Reserve as saying, "(the) reserve people are thanking very much for the centralisation done in this reserve for they have now seen the good results of

127) C.L. Carbutt, 'Communal Land Tenure', in *NADA*, 5, 1927, p.43.

128) NAR S138/72 Alvord to CNC 26/5/1927 Centralisation: Mondoro Reserve.

129) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

130) C.L. Carbutt, 'Communal Land Tenure', p.44.

131) NAR S1534 Vol.1 1934 Alvord to CNC Report on Before Harvest Meetings in Demonstration Centres, Mtoko Reserve.

centralisation. Its good result is plenty of grass. Cattle are also fat and strong...A few years ago before centralisation cattle were poor and thin..."¹³²⁾ Thus, on experiencing the results of centralisation, much of the initial hostility exhibited against this policy abated. For example, the abovementioned reserve, so vocal in its appreciation of centralisation, had, only a few months before, been suspicious and hostile to the movement. "It appeared that there was a considerable amount of opposition by these natives to the movement of their villages into lines because they were firmly convinced that they were being moved into lines for purposes of taxation."¹³³⁾ Alvord was later to say of centralisation, "(it) is the keystone on which community development, permanency of agriculture and soil conservation are centred."¹³⁴⁾

On reserves which had been centralised, community demonstrators conducted development policies and aided in the resettlement of villages. Alvord outlined the tasks of community demonstrators in the following manner,

Their job is to propagandise, guide, advise, assist and supervise reserve natives in community improving enterprises such as the establishment of community tree plantations, the planning and layout of rural villages, kraal and village sanitation, improvement of spring and village water supplies, construction of dams for watering livestock, construction and improvement of reserve roads, layout of buildings, locations and erection of cattle kraals...¹³⁵⁾

The first community demonstrator was located on Selukwe Reserve in 1932, by 1937 these demonstrators were at work on twelve reserves.¹³⁶⁾

Alvord also initiated the movement towards irrigation schemes. These came to play an important role in the development of Southern Rhodesia, opening up previously uninhabitable regions in arid areas to human settlement. Prior to 1928, irrigation was not encouraged by

132) NAR S138/72 Alvord to CNC 26/5/37 Centralisation: Mondoro Reserve.

133) NAR 51542 A4 Vol.3 1937-39. Inspector Salisbury Circuit to Director of Native Education 5/6/37 Mondoro Reserve.

134) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

135) NAR S1542 A4 1933-34 Annual Report of the Agriculturalist Native Department 1933.

136) See Appendix 8: Community Development work on Native Reserves.

the government, and Africans built their own furrows, aided by missionaries whose example they followed. In 1928, the government took a hand in the development of irrigation, and during the following decades all the Sabi Valley projects came under government control with Alvord's supervision and direction.

The Mutema furrow was the first to be surveyed by Alvord in 1928 and this work was financed by the Native Reserves Trust Fund Committee. This allowed the furrow to be constructed in 1930.¹³⁷⁾ Between 1930 and 1937, four more furrows were surveyed and constructed by Alvord, and all were financed by the Reserves Trust Fund.¹³⁸⁾ At this point it was decided that all future irrigation projects were to be supervised by the Irrigation Department and financed from the Loan Vote Fund - "development of water supplies"; the actual construction of the canal, however, was to be left to Alvord's department.¹³⁹⁾

Alvord promoted his schemes by emphasising their importance as a supplier of grain for the lowveld in years of crop failure and food shortage.¹⁴⁰⁾ Alvord did not initiate many changes in this area. In most cases he built where local Africans had already begun programmes, thus ensuring their co-operation. Most of these Africans actually assisted in the building of their furrows.

By 1930, Alvord had achieved remarkable success in the implementation of his programmes. If one considers the various factors against him, then his accomplishments in these first few years were all the more notable. Dinnis, commenting on Alvord, stated that, "Alvord woke the African agricultural side up," and further that there was probably African resistance to these programmes¹⁴¹⁾ in the early years. In addition to the above, Alvord also had limited finances and staff at his disposal which also made the execution of his schemes

137) Annual Report of the Director of Native Agriculture for the year 1946.

138) *Ibid.*

139) Annual Report of Agriculturalist Native Department for the year 1937.

140) See Appendix 9, Table showing Comparative Production from Irrigation projects.

141) R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

more difficult.

It was knowledge of this earlier success which probably made the government reluctant to provide assistance in furthering and expanding the initial programmes. The government was fully aware of, and utilized, its ability to promote African advancement in one area whilst curtailing it in another. In the field of agriculture, barely enough assistance was given to allow Africans to attain self-sufficiency in their own areas. By keeping finance and staff members at a minimum, any advancement that might produce competition to whites was prevented. Population pressure and expectation of future mass movements into the reserves brought the realisation that although the carrying capacity of the reserves might be increased, pressure on the land ensured there would be no improvement in productive capacity. Poor communication and transport systems and lack of accessible markets also acted as a disincentive to adopt improved methods. Alvord wrote with regard to the above that,

(the) greatest handicap to our efforts to introduce better methods of tillage among reserve natives is the lack of marketing facilities. In many areas it is impossible for natives to sell for cash and they're forced to take salt or cloth for their grain or they cannot sell at all....The fact that most "kaffir-truck" stores cannot sell for cash imposes a hand to mouth existence upon him under which he cannot progress. With no income the natives are low consumers to the detriment of the whole country.142)

It is possible that these trading-stores were encouraged for this very reason - not being able to procure an income to meet financial obligations, many Africans were, therefore, forced on to the labour markets.

Alvord attempted to convey to the Africans that adoption of improved methods was not primarily for the production of a marketable surplus. In connection with this, he stated,

I have heard natives at kraal meetings say, "What is the use of teaching us how to produce better

142) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.1 1934 Annual Report of Agriculturalist. Native Department 1934.

and larger crops, if we cannot sell the grain?" I want you (the demonstrators) to tell them that the object of teaching them better and more certain methods of producing grain, is firstly to ensure that they and their children have enough to eat, and it is only after a man has grown sufficient to support his family that he should begin to think of selling any grain...(they) cannot expect the government to feed them, when the failure of crops is due to their neglect to follow the advice which is given to them.¹⁴³⁾

In the early years of development programmes, however, some reserves were not excessively overcrowded, and grain sufficient to meet subsistence requirements could still be obtained through "traditional" practises.¹⁴⁴⁾ Hence, with no access to markets, Africans were justified in expressing reluctance to adopt new methods.

It was a common belief that Africans were reluctant to adopt new methods owing to high leisure preference. In this regard, the NC for Belingwe commented,

(It is) difficult to explain why meetings are not better attended, and I can only think that it is due solely to lack of interest. While the native can grow sufficient food by his own crude agricultural methods he seems disinclined to adopt methods which to him involve more labour and care. He does not realise that there is no more trouble in looking after three acres properly than there is in caring for ten acres by his traditional methods, and that he would reap more from the three acres.¹⁴⁵⁾

Alvord himself did not realise that reluctance to adopt new methods could be explained in part at least, by the precarious nature of the African's existence; that in living so close to the poverty line, he was loathe to cast aside "centuries old methods to experiment with the new and foreign when he is experimenting, literally with the food his family must have to survive."¹⁴⁶⁾ E.M. Rogers commented further on this point, "The peasant way of life has conditioned them to avoid the risky, the novel, the uncertain. If he does not gamble, he can

143) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Tenure in Southern Rhodesia', p.18.

144) NAR S138/72 NC Sinoia to CNC 31/5/1933.

145) NAR S138/72 NC Belingwe to Superintendent of Natives Bulawayo 13/7/1933.

146) J.D. Rockerferr, 'The Challenge of Population and Food', in R.Clifton and J.R. Wharton, (Eds.), *Subsistence Agriculture and Economic Development*, (1970), p.5.

never win, but he can never lose either. This unfavourable orientation to change is partly a result of generations of cultural conditioning."¹⁴⁷⁾

In addition to casting aside well-tried methods, Africans were in fact working with government employees, sometimes total strangers, which added to difficulties experienced in this sphere. The Africans had justifiable reasons for the hostility and suspicion they expressed towards these government agents: memories of previous government intervention still ranked high in their minds and they did not readily forget the expropriation of their land and cattle in 1893, nor the various Land Commissions and establishment of reserves. In this respect, Alvord commented,

They feel they have been badly treated in apportionment of land and say that if they have demonstration plots and get good yields off small lands the government will do nothing for them with regard to further lands. They are justified in feeling that they have not been given a proper proportion of land on which to live. Almost the whole of Umtasa Reserve is one large granite mountain...the soil...is very shallow and low in fertility.¹⁴⁸⁾

These feelings of unjust treatment were heightened when Africans saw on land adjacent to crowded reserves, large white-owned ranches with masses of cattle, one head to twenty acres. That this land might have required development of water supplies and various other capital inputs to render it inhabitable was not understood. Many Africans merely saw large areas of uncrowded land, and this was sufficient to convince them of their own unfair treatment.¹⁴⁹⁾

Not only was it thought that if smaller lands were cultivated, the allocation of more land would not be considered, but it was feared that more land would be withdrawn from their use should it be realised that they could exist on smaller acreages. In this respect one African

¹⁴⁷⁾ E.M. Rogers, 'Motivations, Values, and Attitudes of Subsistence Farmers: Toward a Subculture of Peasantry', *Ibid.*, p.17.

¹⁴⁸⁾ NAR S138/72 Before Planting Inspection 16th December 1937 Umtasa Reserve.

¹⁴⁹⁾ R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

stated, "My fear is that if I were to go to a demonstrator and be taught, my land would be cut up and I would be given a very small area to plough...we feel that if we follow these people there is a danger that some of our land will be taken away from us."¹⁵⁰⁾ Alvord commented on African attitudes in this sphere, "They all know that this so called teacher of farming had not been sent to teach them about farming. The government would not spend money so foolishly... he was sent to test their land and if it was found to be good, it would be given to the white man...they all know that men's crops would be taken by the demonstrator."¹⁵¹⁾

Customary agricultural practises and peasant avoidance of the risky and novel were further endorsed by the role played in "traditional" agriculture by superstition and witchcraft. Alvord maintained that in these early years they failed to see the relationship between work and the visible benefits accruing therefrom. With regard to this, Alvord gave an example of the detrimental effects resulting from these beliefs,

Twenty-six days and not a drop of rain. Marudzi, after trying every charm he knew without results, began to make excuses. Certain spirits were angry because no beer-drink had been made in their honour...graves of...ancestors had not been properly cared for,,,Then at last Marudzi's fertile brain hit upon what was accepted by all as the real reason for the great drought. It was because of the coming of the native farming demonstrators who had been sent by the government to teach them better farming.¹⁵²⁾

This type of response might have been prevalent in the early years of Alvord's scheme when the needs for adoption of improved methods were not as great as they were later to become.

As the years passed, however, and reserves became more congested, the need for demonstrators increased. Never having witnessed the effects of soil erosion wrought through continuous cropping of the soil, the

150) *Southern Rhodesia Report of the Native Production and Trade Commission*, p.25.

151) E.D. Alvord, 'The Great Hunger', in *NADA*, Vol.6, 1928, p.37.

152) *Ibid.*, p.36.

Africans saw no logic or reason in adopting soil conservation methods, nor the need for manure to retain fertility. As the effects of soil erosion became evident, however, Africans began to see the wisdom behind these practices. Having once adopted them, they experienced the benefit of tilled smaller acreages under improved methods, and attaining higher yields through implementation of these.

Consequently, more Africans who were initially opposed to the scheme and had objected when demonstrators brought to a halt their migratory system of agriculture, settled down and adopted the proper rotation methods advocated by demonstrators.¹⁵³⁾ Be this as it may, Hampton maintained that there were still some dissenters, those whom he stated, "looked over the wall". These men watched the ploholders progress, ploughing when they ploughed, planting when they did and harvesting when they did. These men then stated that demonstrators were of no use because they too could get high yields without their assistance. Hampton pointed out, however, that even here the demonstrators were achieving indirect benefits for these dissenters were indirectly influenced by the new methods.¹⁵⁴⁾

Despite all these setbacks, by 1930 the demonstrators had achieved some visible results. The CNC stated in 1930, "Native demonstrators have without exception won laudatory comment upon their work and it is significant that areas in which marked improvement has been observed are usually those in which the activities of these demonstrators have been centred."¹⁵⁵⁾ Chief Umtasa of Umtali district offered his thanks to the Government in the following words,

I have to thank the government today for the success of this work. When the agricultural demonstrator came it surprised me very much that a native should be taught agriculture. I thought very sincerely that my people would be troubled by this agricultural demonstrator. My people for the most part used to have to buy food year by year but now their position is beginning to improve. They are getting enough food to eat and even a little to sell. What pleased

153) R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

154) D. Hampton, Interview, November, 1979.

155) NAR Report of the CNC for the year 1930.

me especially about this work is that many people are improving in all their affairs, in all their doings and in all their habits.156)

By 1930, then, Alvord's efforts were beginning to bear fruit and many Africans were actually asking for demonstrators.

In the final analysis of the success of demonstration schemes in the 1920s, all factors must be taken into consideration: lack of staff relative to the vast rural population, 'traditional' ties, and suspicion of government motives. Above all, it must be remembered, that these changes were revolutionary to the African, and not changes evolving from natural causes. Not only did Africans have to understand the changes advocated, but had to overcome their inherent hostility towards the government before implementing them.

Furthermore, the reserves themselves were in a position of upheaval and dislocation as a result of the Land Commission and Land Apportionment Act. That Alvord was able to induce change in the face of such obstacles is a tribute to his determination, and an expression of his belief in the validity of the work he was conducting. In 1930, Jowitt, the Director of Native Agriculture, commented thus,

It should be remembered, however, that experience is not static, and hence that with changing conditions, ancestral methods may be inexorably doomed. With an increased density of population and of stock in Native Reserves, acutely intensified by the powerful stimulus of rising needs, there would now appear to be ample justification by the giving of direction to native agriculture. Such direction is being increasingly provided by the work of agricultural demonstrators. The extraordinary response that they have already secured would seem to be illustrative of the fact that the new agricultural experience of the natives who have co-operated bears witness to the correctness of the practise which the demonstrations now advocate. Certain it is that in reserve after reserve the contrast between the old and the new is dramatic.157)

This, too, serves to illustrate the general success of Alvord's work by 1930.

156) NAR S138/72, Thanks to Government Chief Umtasa, Umtali District.

157) H. Jowitt, Director of Native Development Department, Forward to E.D. Alvord, *Agricultural Work on Native Reserves*, p.1.

The apparent paradox in government policy in the 1920s may be reconciled when it becomes clear that simultaneous pressure for segregation, and development of the reserves, were contributory factors to the same final goal. If segregation were to be rendered a feasible proposition, it was necessary to develop the reserves to the extent that they were capable of accommodating the vast numbers whose migration to these areas was envisaged. Simultaneously, while the white farming sector was still unstable, it ensured that Africans were not given assistance which might render them a threat to continued white hegemony.

"We cannot expect, however, to persuade a conservative and stubborn people to change over en masse to systematic crop rotation, we have been trying that for the past twenty years and under our programme of propoganda and gentle persuasion, less than 10 percent have been persuaded to adopt better methods. It is time to change our policy. We need a land utilization Act and a good husbandry bill which must be enforced".

E.D.Alvord, The Progress of Native Agriculture in Rhodesia.

4.1 Maize Control: Government Intervention in Agriculture, 1930-1935

The white farming sector entered the 1930s in a position which was already vulnerable. Their power in the political arena was firmly entrenched, and they had succeeded in limiting the possibility of African competition via the Land Apportionment Act which came into effect in 1931. Nonetheless, this did not detract from the fact that the white agricultural base was itself extremely fragile in these years. Consequent upon the general reversion to maize cultivation after the collapse of cotton and tobacco cultivation during the depression in the 1920s, demand for government intervention grew steadily more vocal, and determination to achieve government aid intensified as the early 1930s ushered in a more widespread depression.

In 1929 government policy towards white agriculture began to change from that of promoting research and providing advice, and came to incorporate acceptance of responsibility in the fields of marketing and production. The reasons for this change of policy may be attributed largely to the declining importance of African agricultural contribution at a time when white agriculture began to expand. In this event, the government was no longer so reluctant to discriminate against African marketed produce.¹⁾

The position of hegemony which white farmers assumed in the 1920s stemmed from domination of the maize market; maize becoming Southern Rhodesia's chief export in those years. When the world maize market collapsed in the early 1930s, however, the relatively superior position of these farmers became threatened.²⁾ C.F. Keyter wrote of this situation that, "Concentration on maize growing merely served to exacerbate the already parlous position of white farmers when the export price of maize dropped from a plateau of 11/- a bag to 5/10 in 1930 and to a low of 3/4 in April 1931, at the very time that the

1) G. Arrighe, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', p.220.

2) Yudelman claimed that the value of gross output of agriculture reached a peak in 1927. When commodity prices fell in the 1930s, however, it was not for another decade that the value of agricultural exports again exceeded that of 1927.
M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.43.

amount of surplus maize available for export began to rise significantly."³⁾ As a result of this, many maize growers faced bankruptcy. In order to offset falling prices, acreages under cultivation were increased; but this led to soil erosion owing to continuous cropping, and less care of the soil. At the same time, their economic plight was heightened as competition from African growers intensified. The CNC said in 1929 that this "threatens to become a serious problem."⁴⁾

In 1931 the world price of maize fell sharply and it was the white farmers alone who bore this burden. All African-produced maize found its market in the home economy and competition to secure access to the now relatively higher-priced internal markets reached unprecedented heights.⁵⁾ This problem was brought to light by the CNC as early as 1929, when he said, "The argument is that as the local price is stabilised by export, and that is, up to the present, local prices have been prevented, as a direct result of export, from becoming unremuneratively low, means should be devised to save those who export from bearing the entire burden."⁶⁾ In response to falling prices on the international maize markets, a Maize Control Bill was drafted. This did not materialise, however, and instead a Commission of Enquiry was appointed to investigate the production and marketing of maize. The Commission's report, published in 1931, favoured compulsory control of the sale of maize and a bill was drafted in furtherance of this aim.

Nevertheless, there was conflict amongst white farmers in Southern Rhodesia over the Maize Control bill: the main maize-growers in Mashonaland were in favour of control, but in this regard they stood alone.⁷⁾ Farmers in the Midlands, Eastern Districts and Matabeleland,

3) C.F. Keyter, *Maize Control in Southern Rhodesia 1931-1941*, (1978), pp.3/4.

4) NAR CNC Annual Report for the year 1929.

5) In 1928/9 total white grown maize crop amounted to 1,826,000 bags, and that of Africans, only 140,000. It was, therefore, purely over access to the best markets that friction arose. L.H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, p.287.

6) NAR CNC Annual Report *op. cit.*

7) D.J Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, p.73.

(particularly ranchers and tobacco farmers) did not approve of this move. They believed it would operate to their disadvantage because they would then have to pay more for their maize requirements. Only when the bill was amended, and made to apply to Mashonaland and the Midlands alone, did it receive general support. Thus the Maize Control Act, which came into effect in 1931, was designed to safeguard the Mashonaland maize-growers. This Act authorised the establishment of a Maize Control Board to operate a system of compulsory co-operation in marketing.⁸⁾ It controlled both domestic and export markets in those areas, and set a minimum price on all maize sold in the domestic market.

The 1931 Maize Control Act did not meet with much success. It was intended as a temporary measure only, to last three years during which time white growers could find alternative crops.⁹⁾ Although it applied only to Mashonaland and the Midlands, growers in other areas could sell to the Control Board in order to benefit from guaranteed prices. Furthermore, consumers in controlled areas sought means of avoiding the higher controlled prices, and purchased maize more cheaply from local Africans.

Consequently, the Rhodesia Agricultural Union demanded an amendment to the original Act, making it applicable to the whole of Southern Rhodesia. Nevertheless, this did not come into effect until 1934, when Moffat's government was succeeded by a more conservative government under the leadership of G. Huggins. The fall from power of Moffat's government was brought about primarily by farmer opposition:¹⁰⁾ when the Rhodesian Agricultural Union, on behalf of the Mashonaland maize farmers, succeeded in persuading the Rhodesian Party to pass the 1931 Act, the opposition of other maize-growers to the Union (which, they believed, favoured Mashonaland farmers), was extended to include the government. As a result, the Reform Party was established, comprising Matabeleland, Midlands and Eastern District farmers, remnants of the old Progressive Party, and members of the Labour Party

8) *Ibid.*, p.78.

9) M.C. Steele, *Foundations of a Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia*, 1923-1933, p.383.

10) D.J. Murray, *op. cit.*, p.78.

which had been established in 1920. The Moffat government, unable to withstand such opposition, gave way to the Reform Party in 1933 under the leadership of George Mitchell. This government lacked the support of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union and the Mashonaland farmers; and in an attempt to overcome this schism, Huggins reconstituted the Reform Party in an alliance with the old Rhodesia Party¹¹⁾ in a new party called the United Party.

The United Party,¹²⁾ when it came to power in 1934, succeeded in passing the Maize Control Amendment Act in that same year. This new Act sought to satisfy the diverse aims of all the farmers, and it was to continue in operation until mid-1936. To placate the farmers of Matabeleland, Midlands and the Eastern Districts, who were predominantly small producers, the Act gave them preference over the large-scale Mashonaland growers. Unlike the Act of 1931, the Amendment Act was extended to include African maize-growers who were also suffering the effects of the world slump in prices. With regard to this, the CNC commented that, "Owing to the drop in world prices, the price of maize fell to such an extent that, in remote areas, maize was practically unsaleable and in some areas traders declined to buy for anything but goods."¹³⁾

The Maize Enquiry Committee believed the aims of the Act would be defeated were African maize-growers not incorporated into its context. They stressed the point thus,

If...as the Committee recommends, any control measures are applied to European produced maize, and native maize is left free, then undoubtedly it will at once become the most prominent factor in the matter, and in the hands of anyone desirous of defeating the aims of the co-operation, would be a powerful and most effective weapon, lending itself on the one

11) The old Rhodesian Party was Moffat's party which fell from power in 1933.

12) These movements indicate the growing strength of farmers in the Southern Rhodesian political arena. In fact, 13 of the 30 members of the assembly were, or had been, farmers, and it was on the basis of such strength that Africans came to be discriminated against for the duration of the 1930s.

13) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1934.

hand to the exploitation of the native, and on the other to prejudicing the interests of the European producer.¹⁴⁾

The Committee stated further that,

In addition to European production, there is a surplus produced by the natives estimated at from 75,000 to 300,000 bags which comes into the market and thereby becomes an important factor in determining prices for local sales. Native grown maize while in some cases excellent is on the whole of very varying quality, and is, therefore, generally speaking, unfit for export as grain. As a result, while some may undoubtedly be included in the meal exported north, it must be accepted that to all intents and purposes it is locally consumed.

...Item 5. Native Production....Native produced maize and its entry into the market.... a considerable quantity does come into trade channels - it is not possible to gauge the measure of its effect on local prices, although it is without a doubt an important factor.¹⁵⁾

It was obvious then, that much African-produced maize was entering the market, and being of inferior quality, was consumed locally. In order to prevent an African monopoly of the local maize market, the Act of 1934 operated against these maize-growers.

Under the 1934 Act, a two-pool system was established by the government. All maize had to be delivered to the Board from where it was assigned to either the export pool or the local pool. The amount of maize allocated to the local pool was determined by local consumption requirements, and the prices paid for this maize were 30 to 50 per cent above world prices.¹⁶⁾ Thus it was on the consumer that the burden of these increased prices fell. The remaining maize received by the Board was allocated to the export pool, and sold at whatever price could be reached on the world market.

In order to break up the African maize-producers grip on local markets, the Board established a quota system by which maize was allocated to the two pools. The smaller white farmers received large quotas of up to 80 per cent of their deliveries in the high priced internal market.

14) NAR S138/72 Maize Enquiry Committee.

15) *Ibid.*

16) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.179.

The large producers received a quota in the internal market of up to 20 per cent of their delivery.¹⁷⁾

The policy imposed upon African growers differed slightly from that of white producers: under the original Maize Control Act of 1931, Africans were accorded privileges not received by whites, and were permitted to sell maize to bodies other than the Maize Control Board. The new Act perpetuated this stipulation, but maintained that should African producers wish to share in the Board's local sales, they were to surrender their maize on the same terms as did whites.¹⁸⁾ African growers were allotted the same quotas as large white producers; and if their maize was surrendered to the Board by traders, it was to be submitted to the export pool only.¹⁹⁾ Africans, however, suffered a further disadvantage in that whereas white farmers' maize was treated individually, that of African growers was treated collectively. Furthermore, African-produced maize contributed only 25 per cent of all maize delivered,²⁰⁾ and this made their treatment in the quota system even more unjust.²¹⁾

17) Murray extends on these percentages: whites who delivered less than 100 bags per annum, sold 75 per cent on the domestic market, and the remainder went to export. Those with 200-300 bags had a quota of 70 per cent to 30 per cent and so on, up to 600 bags where the quota was 25 per cent to 75 per cent. D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, p94.

18) E.R. Jacklin, 'The Maize Control Amendment Act', in *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 31, 1934, pp.487-490.

19) This policy in effect excluded the African producer almost totally from the local pool, because in most cases the trader was the only means Africans had of handling and transporting their crops. The NC Mrewa commented on this fact: "The trader is the only channel through which crops can be laboriously collected in small quantities...then bagged and disposed of, and at this stage of development the trader is indispensable to natives in outlying districts." NAR S1542 A4 NC Mrewa.

20) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.179.

21) Jacklin, *op. cit.*, maintained that the belief that the lower the sales, the larger the quantity of the quota, was an illusion: the small grower was given a quota representing a higher percentage of his crop than was the large grower, but this was a percentage of a smaller quantity. An average of sales of 500 bags would earn a quota of 70 per cent, while that of 750 bags, 65 per cent. But 65 per cent of 750, was more than 70 per cent of 500. Therefore, those with larger average sales got a higher proportion into the local sales pool.

In the 1920s, then, white farmers achieved a preferential position in Southern Rhodesia, especially the small farmers. This situation, however, contained an inherent contradiction: the system of control, aimed at promoting an efficient agricultural system, actually militated against the achievement of this goal by favouring the element amongst the white farming community which least displayed an interest in improvement - the small farmers.²²⁾ The system of maize control produced an imbalance in the development of white agriculture since it invoked a strong incentive to maize production and militated against the expansion of other crops.

The 1934 Maize Control Act was the first Act directly seeking to control African marketing and production: "When did they first begin to organise native production of crops? The first Act by parliament in these directions was the Maize Control Act."²³⁾ As the following quotations reveal, African producers suffered a severe blow when the Act was implemented: "Chief Ngungubana stated that prior to the passing of the Maize Control Act, the natives of this district had disposed of some 10,000 bags of grain, whereas now the traders did not want their grain. He also complained that there was no local market for rupoko or munga";²⁴⁾ and, "further to my minute of January 25, on the... matter...add the following comments of NC Bulalima Mangwe: "the cultivation of maize has become negligible, the Maize Control Act may be regarded as the main factor for this, for under its operation the production of maize is not longer a remunerative one from the native point of view."²⁵⁾ Be this as it may, in the absence of maize control, Africans might have realised prices even lower than those guaranteed by the Board.

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- 22) The efficient producers were the large scale farmers: 70 per cent of maize growers planted under 100 acres, accounting for 25 per cent of the area planted, but only 15 per cent of the crop, while 8 per cent of the growers were responsible for 40 per cent of the area planted and 50 per cent of the crop. D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia*, p.94.
- 23) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission 1944.
- 24) NAR S1542/N2 B 1931-9 Meetings of Chiefs and Headmen Belingwe 13/5/1937.
- 25) NAR S1542/M2 Secretary Native Affairs to Secretary Maize Control Board 27/1/36 Resolution by Maize Control Board.

With the construction of markets, attitudes towards the adoption of improved methods of cultivation, and to the demonstrators generally, experienced a heavy setback. This is evidenced in the various official reports,

I have spoken to the natives to try and encourage them to continue with better methods of farming that they have been taught, but they simply refuse and say, "Why should we grow crops and sell them at less than we used to?" and another favourite remark is: "Yes, we told you when you first brought demonstrators onto other reserves that they had come to try out our land and that the government would take either it or our crops."26)

Demonstration work has taken a setback because plot holders have not been able to sell the improved maize grown on plots, and are wondering if it is worth while giving up the old easy methods and do the hard work required on plots.27)

'The precepts of the demonstrators are not being taken to heart. Once the first flush of enthusiasm is over, the painful fact that better farming methods mean more work is brought home, and interest quickly wanes.' No doubt the economic slump would encourage the tendencies described above.28)

...fall in number of African demonstration plots through the Maize Control Act is rather disappointing, as in this area and Zimutu North there were 141 plots and this year the total is only 67. I have done my best to talk the natives round to carry on with crop rotation but they say it means too much hard work and they would rather carry on with their native methods of farming, and further that the government will do the same with the price whatever they grow in excess of requirements for actual consumption as they did with maize prices.29)

During the years of maize control, then, much of the success achieved by demonstrators in the 1920s was undone.

The slump in agricultural prices during the depression retarded the marketing of surplus grain and altered attitudes towards demonstrators. Furthermore, the system of maize control made Africans believe that

26) NAR S1542/M2 Ass.Ag. SB7 to CNC 19/1/35 MCA.

27) NAR S138/72 Report on Before Planting Inspection of Demonstration Plots on Reserves, Mondoro Reserve, 1932/3.

28) NAR CNC Annual Report 1931, quoting NC Goromonzi.

29) NAR AL 6/1/1 Before Planting Inspection 1934 Zimutu South.

they were being discriminated against by the government and white farmers in whose favour the Act operated. Those Africans living in areas remote from the railway-line were more harmfully affected as transport costs alone rendered the marketing of maize an unviable proposition, the following excerpt from the CNC's annual report shows that the problem had not escaped official attention,

(The) present Maize Control System has had the effect of increasing native cultivation in central districts. NC Mazoe reports almost 100 per cent increase in the area under maize. ANC Victoria, the same. Reports of remote areas indicate the opposite effects i.e. it handicaps marketing. NC Nuanetsi: Transport renders the sale of maize to the Maize Control Board uneconomical and maize control makes it uneconomical for the trader to buy.³⁰⁾

In controlled areas, this position was alleviated somewhat when the Board permitted white farmers to purchase maize from Africans for their own requirements.³¹⁾ Thus these Africans were able to bypass the control system, and hence able to command higher prices for their grain.³²⁾

Africans in areas exempt from control, when they were able to sell at all, received better prices for their grain. In some districts, up to 10/- a bag was received; the general average price in uncontrolled areas being 1/6 and that in controlled areas under 4/- a bag. The CNC maintained that the main factor contributing to African responses to Maize Control and possible decreases in maize production in some areas, was not a result of the existence of the Control Board, which at least offered them some access to a cash income, even if prices

30) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1937.

31) This factor operated to the benefit of white farmers who could purchase maize cheaply from Africans and then sell at enhanced prices to the Board. Profits they received in this manner were further increased because most white farmers in these areas were small farmers who were favoured under the 1934 Amendment Act.

32) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1932.

were low. The main hindrance to African maize production was the existence of traders in many areas who refused to deal otherwise than by barter.³³⁾ At one of the Native Board meetings it was said in regard to the above that,

They could not get cash for their grain and were only paid trade goods...asked whether something could be done to make storekeepers pay cash for grain. The NC said,,,the only place where they could get cash for their mealies was in Fort Victoria from the Maize Control Board and that the heavy cost of transport made such a scheme a worthless proposition.³⁴⁾

In view of high transport costs, then, many Africans had no choice but to deal with traders, thus giving the latter the upperhand.

There were numerous 'kaffir truck stores' scattered on reserves throughout Southern Rhodesia, and over and above refusing to deal in money with African farmers, "even in the price offered for the goods and the goods received there was a big discrepancy."³⁵⁾ Alvord maintained that the value of the goods Africans received in exchange for their grain was usually 50 per cent above the cost of the same article purchased in white centres. Furthermore, the 'price' offered for African maize was 50 per cent below the price of grain in white areas.³⁶⁾ In this way, Africans were not only unable to secure a cash income for their maize, but the discrepancies between goods traded was so great as to make maize production for sale uneconomic. The following statement was made by an African when questioned as to his attitude towards traders,

(Traders) - what do you think wrong with the system? They go to the store and although the law says the storekeepers must pay cash the storekeepers are not keen on it. If a man brings mealies, they say 'Your bag is worth 6/6 but I have got this shirt here.' And the Africans have the feeling...that they are being done down...maize...price may be 1/- in that particular

33) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1932. It must be remembered, however, that in many areas, particularly the more remote ones, it was also uneconomical for traders to pay cash for grain. Price differences and trade in goods allowed traders to make a profit. It is possible that the existence of traders, and trade by barter, was actually intended as a disincentive to the continuity of maize production by Africans.

34) NAR S1542/N2 B-D 1931-1939 Bikita 7th Native Board Meeting 13/5/39.

35) *Ibid.* Minutes, Native Board Meeting 26/10/38.

36) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.36.

area and the man says 'Take this article' and the article is not worth 1/- but 6d.37)

The above view, and many more in a similar vein, verify the contention that Africans were accorded unjust treatment by traders.

There were, however, some benefits to be had from dealing with traders which, to an extent, justified the treatment meted out to their customers:

If, however, the prices quoted relate to maize purchased by traders remote from the market in which it will be consumed, the native producer will naturally be at a disadvantage in exactly the same way as a European producer remote from markets or railway communication. The transportation and intermediate charges must be met by someone. In the European producer's case, by himself, in the African's, by the trader.38)

It was all very well to attempt to justify the existence of trader producers as stipulated above, but it would appear that traders' profits were well above the cost of transporting the grain to markets, which is understandable and necessary for their continued existence.

Further benefits which accrued from the existence of trader producers were that they produced incentive in some Africans to produce better grades of maize. Prior to the Maize Control Act, Africans were not taught how to grade their maize - all maize was put in one bag before it was taken to traders. The traders then paid out farmers the price of lowest grade maize; and after grading it themselves, usually sold to the Board at a higher grade. Ultimately, then, the Maize Control Act provided the incentive for better grades of maize.³⁹⁾

Nevertheless, the Maize Control Act succeeded in restricting the African's ability to market grain at a profit, the majority of which accrued to these traders acting in the capacity of middlemen. Alvord commented on the effects of this,

37) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission 1944. Native Muyanda.

38) NAR S1542/M2 Maize Control: Secretary Maize Control Board and CNC 5/8/1935.

39) R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

This imposed upon the natives a hand to mouth existence, under which they could scarcely progress. All over the country natives were asking with wisdom, 'What is the use of adopting better methods and producing more crops when there is not market?' Alvord emphasised... the need for a cash market for a cash market for surplus crops grown by Africans as an essential to their economic development. With no income they were low consumers to the detriment of the whole country. They would not prosper and become self-supporting rural communities unless a market for their surplus crops could be developed.⁴⁰⁾

Unfortunately, the wisdom of this was not appreciated until the years immediately subsequent to the Second World War.⁴¹⁾

When Maize Control was first implemented, the majority of African maize marketed fell into the lower grading classifications, but there was a marked improvement in quality in ensuing years. Thus although the quantity of maize marketed in the 1930s did not increase greatly, the quality did. The CNC claimed that the influence of demonstrators was largely responsible for this improvement.⁴²⁾ The NC for Wedza reported that Africans under the influence of demonstrators were able to sell maize direct to the Board, and that this was classified as Grade A maize for which they received 5/- a bag. The NC stated that as a direct result of this, the demand for demonstration plots increased markedly. In the same year, the Superintendent for Natives, Victoria maintained that of 1,282 bags sold in Zimutu Reserve, only 24 were not classified as Grade A.⁴³⁾

The Board encouraged the cultivation of Grade A maize by all Africans who had access to railway transportation, and this indicates the importance of African contribution to the export pool. From 1937 to 1938, there was an increase of 203,158 bags of maize delivered to the Board, and the percentage of Grade B maize increased from nil to 18 per cent (46,695 bags).⁴⁴⁾

40) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p. 36.

41) For further information on this point *vide infra*, Ch.3.2.

42) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1932.

43) *Ibid.*

44) *Yearbook and Guide to the Rhodesias and Nyasaland 1938-9*, p.119.

The depression and accompanying concern with marketing possibilities led white farmers to go beyond merely pushing for marketing and price control: they demanded statutory discrimination against the marketing of African crops. Moffat's government, however, considered total segregation both impractical and unjust. It was not until the depression caused urban white unemployment and many hardships for white farmers, that these movements gathered momentum and direction, facilitating changes in the administrative sectors of Southern Rhodesia which led to the realisation of these aims.

By 1930 the missions and the Native Development Department had gained control of African social and economic development. Open conflict between these bodies and the Native Affairs Department had remained dormant during the latter part of the 1920s,⁴⁵⁾ primarily through the influence of Moffat and the CNC, Jackson, who were sympathetic to missionary interests. Two factors combined to bring about a change in the 1930s: firstly, the resignation of Jackson as CNC and the succession of C.L. Carbutt, who was a representative of the conservative faction of the Native Affairs Department and secondly, increased hostility from the white community towards the type of education offered to Africans by the missions and the Native Development Departments. The white farming sector was of the opinion that the Native Affairs Department would not attempt to develop Africans along white lines and in competition with whites as they believed the missionaries and the Native Development Department were doing.⁴⁶⁾ With the resignation of Moffat as Premier in July 1933, the Native Affairs Department regained its former predominant position when Carbutt forced Jowitt, the Director of Native Development, to resign. When Huggins came to power in 1934, the title of Director of Native Development was combined with that of Secretary of Native Affairs and CNC. Alvord and his staff were removed from the Native Development Department and re-organised as a sub-department of Native Education within the Native Affairs Department. The missions too, were subjected to the control of this branch of the Native Affairs Department.

45) *Vide supra*, pp

46) For example: the maize complex which developed when white farmers criticised Alvord for teaching Africans to cultivate maize, which they had regarded as a white man's crop.

Alvord, at this stage, believed this transition to be a beneficial move, bringing to an end the previous conflict between the various bodies involved in African administration. He saw this conflict as the causal factor behind the constant antagonism displayed towards his efforts at promoting African development. In his words,

(In) April 1933, Alvord and his staff were transferred back to the Native Affairs Department, good relations with administrative officers were restored and a sub-department was formed, designated as vote 4/111 - development of native areas and reserves. At the same time the title of Director of Native Development was transferred to the CNC who was also secretary for Native Affairs....the former director of Native Development was offered a new appointment as Director of Native Education, but declined....Thus Native Administration, Native Education and Native Development were placed under one Cabinet.47)

Carbutt himself was probably responsible for instilling this belief in Alvord when he stated, "This will reduce to a considerable extent the impractical policy whereby a system of dual control was gradually being built up in the Native reserves.⁴⁸⁾ What Alvord did not foresee, however, was that the conservative nature of the new Prime Minister, Huggins, combined with white pressure during the depression, might convert that which he had considered a beneficial move to one suited to their own ends.

Thus, by 1934, the progressive Native Development Department had been virtually annihilated, and had come under the control of the conservative Native Affairs Department. This move was backed by white farmers who wished to restore the power of the chiefs and a more 'traditional' form of education, as opposed to its predecessor which appointed its own African officials from amongst the ranks of the educated and encouraged progressive development. Huggins' beliefs allowed the Native Affairs Department to further their objectives for he encouraged a policy of total segregation, a policy that had not taken many steps during the previous Premier's leadership. Africans

47) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.32.

48) NAR Annual Report of the CNC 1933.

were to develop within their own areas. In Huggins' words, "In the native areas the black man must be allowed to rise to any position to which he is capable of climbing. Every step in the individual and social pyramid must be open to him, excepting always, and only, the very top."⁴⁹⁾ The African presence, however, was still required in the white sector as a labour force, and of this Huggins commented; "In the European area the African will be welcomed, when, tempted by wages, he offers his services as a labourer, but it will be on the understanding that he shall merely assist, and not compete with, the white man...the interest of each race shall be paramount in its own sphere."⁵⁰⁾

During the 1930s, fear of African competition continued unabated, and the combined forces of white opposition and the depression itself caused development programmes to lose momentum. In this regard Alvord has stated,

In 1934, the CNC influenced by these feelings took a very retrogressive step, and ruled that the saturation point had been reached with regard to the number of agricultural demonstrators and ordered that demonstrator training at Domboshawa should be discontinued. At that stage, with the exception of the demonstrators in training, there were only 60 demonstrators. The CNC ruled that only six men could be enrolled each year for training - 60 demonstrators for 750,000 living on 21,000,000 acres. The effect of this...total staff of demonstrators was increased by only six over a period of five years.⁵¹⁾

The CNC himself, when speaking of the necessity for demonstrators, justified his decision that saturation point had been reached, and that additional demonstrators would only encourage African competition, "...in my opinion, demonstrators should only be stationed at places where their services are really required...the appointment of demonstrators should be confined solely to those areas which are a) exhausted and b) where lack of rain causes constant shortages of food."⁵²⁾

49) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.50.

50) *Ibid.*

51) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', pp.38/39.

52) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.1 1934 Superintendent of Natives to CNC 7/6/34.

Furthermore, when the Native Affairs Department regained control over the Native Development Department, the money allotted to the latter for purchase of equipment was decreased from £200 to £215 per annum. This occurred despite the fact that the number of demonstrators had increased from 26 to 46 between 1931 and 1933.⁵³⁾ With reference to this, Alvord stated, "...our estimates for 1933/34 for this item (equipment, spare parts and repairs) were drawn up to meet the needs of a 28 per cent increase in the number of demonstrators. The lowest estimate was £146. Mr. Leggate (Minister of the Interior) refused to accept this estimate and allowed for £125."⁵⁴⁾

Not only were the number of African staff in Alvord's Department insufficient to cope with expanding needs in African areas, but so was the white staff. At the end of 1937, Alvord, believing his staff of five whites to be incapable of coping with the expanding work, requested of the Minister of Native Affairs that he appoint an additional agriculturalist.⁵⁵⁾ This request was vehemently refused, however, and Alvord quoted the Minister as saying that, "he would have no hope of getting parliament to agree, because it was a European parliament with members from the European constituencies and no member would be allowed to hold his seat if he allowed the appointment of an additional agriculturalist to serve the natives."⁵⁶⁾ Alvord was, however, permitted to appoint a Land Development Officer and two more Land Inspectors.⁵⁷⁾ That these requests were approved by parliament, while that for an agriculturalist refused, would indicate that hostility towards the potential threat of advanced African farmers continued. The appointment of men capable of conserving the natural resources of the reserves, yet not concerned with improving African productivity, suggests that awareness of deteriorating conditions had not passed unnoticed.⁵⁸⁾

53) NAR S1542 A4 1933/4 10th October 1933 CNC to Secretary of the Treasury.

54) *Ibid.*, Alvord to CNC 9/10/1933.

55) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.43.

56) *Ibid.*

57) The Land Development Officer actually had the same duties as an agriculturalist, but Alvord actually said that if this officer was appointed on the grounds of aiding in the regeneration of reserves, and not developing them, whites would be less reluctant to comply.

58) (For further details), *vide infra*, p. 115/6.

There was also a growing need for additional demonstrators, whose numbers had increased by only three during the years 1934 to 1937 to a total of 63, and an additional 153 had been requested by NCs. After Carbutt's retirement, the new CNC, Bullock, less conservative than Carbutt, cancelled his predecessor's decision to limit the number of demonstrators in training. And as a result, by 1938 the staff consisted of 8 whites and 93 Africans: 9 supervisors, 64 demonstrators and 12 community demonstrators.⁵⁹⁾

This slight lessening of hostility towards Alvord's department in the mid-1930s may be explained partly by corresponding developments in the white agricultural sector. In these years this sector began to expand and diversify, particularly as the depression began to recede.⁶⁰⁾ The growing importance of tobacco as an export crop, and a staple more secure than was maize, played a paramount role in invoking this change of attitude.

After the collapse of the tobacco market in 1928, South Africa had imposed a quota on imports of duty-free Southern Rhodesian tobacco in order to prevent further detrimental effects on South African markets.⁶¹⁾ This, in addition to the depression, had resulted in tobacco production in Southern Rhodesia dropping to 8,644,390lbs in 1930/1 before picking up to 22,401,707lbs in 1935/6.⁶²⁾

Control boards were also set up for the tobacco and cattle industries during the depression years. In the case of tobacco, this board was

59) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.44.

60) 1926-1936 white agriculture was static. The numbers of whites employed in agriculture was 3,995 in 1926, this rose to 4,172 in 1932, then dropped to 4,009 in 1936. This was in spite of an increase in the annual expenditure of the department of agriculture from £91,874 in 1928/9, to £262,957 in 1936/7. R.H. Palmer, 'Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.239.

61) By 1946, tobacco had overtaken gold as the most valuable single item of export and by 1948 the value of tobacco production exceeded that of all minerals.

D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System*, p.105.

62) R.H. Palmer, *op. cit.*, p.239.

set up in order that the benefits of the quota system imposed by South Africa might be distributed evenly amongst all producers. In the cattle industry, the linking of marketing with South Africa and problems of over-production led to the control of dairying in Southern Rhodesia.

4.2 The Government Changes Roads: African Development Policy, 1935 - 1945

Having built up a cumbersome system of protection and assistance to protect farmers who, in the 1930s, were over-producing for the domestic market and exporting to a depressed international market, the government came to face new difficulties during the war years when farmers were unable to supply the needs of the domestic market. As a result, they were unable to take advantage of high world prices, or contribute to the war requirements of the Allied forces. In these circumstances, the role of the Control Boards changed to one operating an efficient marketing service ensuring that consumers received adequate grain supplies. Accordingly, these Boards were renamed Marketing Boards.

Under conditions of shortage, the fear and opposition displayed by white farmers to African competition for limited markets subsided, and as tobacco gained more importance in the late 1930s, offering an alternative staple to maize, this, too, played a role in alleviating the fears of white farmers.

The average export price of tobacco had been increasing since 1934. This may be attributed partly to improvements in quality, and partly to increased acreages and yields. Barber has attributed expansion in tobacco output to two factors: the substitution of tobacco for maize on established farms, and the expansion of acreage under cultivation owing to an increasing number of farmers. Tobacco acreage under summer crops in 1934 was nearly double that of 1929, and nearly 55 per cent greater than 1945. The number of producers was 1,000 in 1945 and 2,669 in 1954. The aggregate value of white production

increased sixteen-fold from 1939 to 1957 and tobacco was responsible for the bulk of this expansion. Prior to 1938, however, output changed very little.⁶³⁾

The shift from maize production was encouraged by the collapse of maize prices before the Second World War and shrinkage of the export market. Simultaneously Southern Rhodesian tobacco came to the fore again when, in 1933, the United Kingdom decided to guarantee the existing 25 per cent Imperial Preference for ten years.⁶⁴⁾ The promulgation of the Tobacco Act in 1936 witnessed the beginning of expanding production in a more stable environment. This Act, and amendments passed in subsequent years, provided a legal framework controlling the marketing of tobacco. With the shift to tobacco, emphasis shifted from the external to the internal market.

Agricultural exports assumed added importance in the 1940s.⁶⁵⁾ Tobacco comprised the bulk of this expansion, hence the problem remained of the inability of production to meet local food requirements.⁶⁶⁾ Food imports rose in relation to local sales of white agriculture, particularly in post-war years. In the 1930s, the value of retained imports was, on average, just over one-third of the value of retained output of white agriculture. From 1947 to 1953, this rate was three-quarters or more, and from 1940 Southern Rhodesia became a net importer of maize.⁶⁷⁾ In these circumstances, African agricultural contribution to the national economy became essential.

63) W.J. Barker, *Economic Development in British Central Africa*, p.131.

64) From 1938 to 1950 the total volume of agricultural production kept pace with white population growth, that of mineral production failed to keep pace, and that of manufacturing outstripped population growth. H. Weinmann, *Agricultural Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1924-1950*, Occasional Paper 4, 1972, pp.196/7.

The contribution of mining declined from 25 per cent in 1958 to 5 per cent in the early 1960s. Opposite trends occurred in agriculture (white) where the volume of output in 1958 was ten times that of 1937.

G. Arrighi, *The Political Economy of Rhodesia*, (1967), pp.46/47.

65) The major expansion came after the war; prior to the war it had never exceed 50,000,000lbs (in the mid-1930s it was only 25,000lbs) acreages increased in 1957/8 to over 190,000 acres, whereas in the 1930s they had never exceeded 70,000 acres.

W.J. Barber, *The Economy of British Central Africa*, (1961), p.130.

66) See Appendix 10, Table showing white agricultural output.

67) *Ibid.*, p.133.

Thus, in the war-years, African agricultural production, particularly that of maize, was called upon to increase its output in order to supply both local and export markets. Domboshawa school was requested to increase food production. The principal stated, "... (the school) was called upon to produce more crops, especially maize and soya beans, the acreage in 1941 has been doubled. At least 40 acres of this is new land...the school timetable has been reshuffled so that every school boy could do some 'war-crops' work."⁶⁸⁾

These demands for expansion account for changes in government policy towards African farmers in the 1940s, and in the late 1930s measures were taken to alter the existing maize Control Act in order to encourage African production,

We are carrying control too far. When the control of maize was first introduced it was said that this would be a temporary measure to give the growers other means of disposing of their grain. These means are now becoming available in the shape of feeding animals, not only for the export market, but for our own consumption as well.⁶⁹⁾

It was hoped that sales of African maize would increase when the restrictions characterising marketing policies of the depression years were removed. In 1940 a new Maize Control Act was passed regulating the marketing of African maize. In terms of this act a cash price was fixed for African growers on all maize delivered to the Board; and the trader-producer was paid directly instead of having to participate in the distribution account, which only paid producers when all maize had been disposed of. It was stated in 1940 that,

The provisions of the 1940 Maize Control Act governing the purchase of native maize only came into force on 1/6/1940. In previous years the sale of European maize was governed by the market for the sale of African maize. Prices for both European and African maize fluctuated between 6/- and 8/- per bag when native maize sold freely. This year the position was reversed under provision of this Act. The selling of native maize was fixed at 6/6 per bag to trader producers. In consequence European growers were

68) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1942, quoting principal for Domboshawa School.

69) NAR ZAY 2/2/2, Suggestions to the Southern Rhodesian Economic Committee, R.A. Ballantyne 12/10/38.

selling their maize freely between 10/1 and 11/- per bag and closed the market for African grown maize to all but farmer consumers until all European maize had been disposed of.⁷⁰⁾

Thus, although Africans were now paid a fixed price for their maize, they were still in a less favourable position relative to white growers.

Alvord, however, believed that Africans were now being treated more fairly, and were getting a more favourable share of available markets. Alvord stated, "For the first time, maize grown by natives was admitted into European farmers (markets) and became saleable through the Maize Control Board at prices comparable to prices paid to European farmers."⁷¹⁾ The fixed price Africans were to receive under the new Act may have been more favourable than the prices they had received previously when they were only allotted 20 per cent in the export pool; nevertheless, many NCs believed the new Act would operate to the detriment of African growers. The NC for Bulawayo stated, "Before the new Act came into force, a large number surrendered their maize to the Board and obtained prices far in excess of those paid now. It is believed that the new regulations will discourage maize growing."⁷²⁾

Under this a price equalisation fund was established for the benefit of African growers, prices being guaranteed by the government at a certain level for a number of years. This, in addition to the safeguard of the accumulated surplus held in the equalisation fund, enabled the government to fix one flat rate for maize throughout the country. This scheme actually discouraged the growing of maize by Africans in the more remote areas because it did not take the cost of transport into consideration, which in these areas often made disposal of maize to the Board uneconomic.⁷³⁾ In this regard, the NC for Bubi stated, "The effect of the Maize Control Act has upset traders considerably and they refuse to buy any maize whatsoever. Price to producer was fixed at 4/- per bag and the natives refuse to sell at this

70) NAR S1563 NC Annual Reports 1940 Mutumbara.

71) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.47

72) NAR S1563 NC Annual Reports 1940 Bulawayo.

73) NAR Annual Report of the CNC 1940.

price and deal amongst themselves at 8/- to 10/- a bag."⁷⁴⁾ The CNC, when speaking of the case of the Shangani Reserve, commented thus, "(This reserve is) 120 miles from Bulawayo and an uneconomical centre for the production of maize (for sale), and it follows that even if the price were fixed at 8/- a bag, transport charges to various centres are prohibitive."⁷⁵⁾

Indeed, it was the exorbitant cost of transport which prevented both growers and traders from taking advantage of the price equalisation scheme. In the words of the NC for Bulalima Mangwe, "Traders are unable to buy from natives at the prices fixed, on the other hand, the return to the trader (the only present available channel through which such trade can be carried on) is so unremunerative that he declines to purchase maize."⁷⁶⁾ Many Africans, especially those in Purchase Areas, experienced the difficulties involved of being treated as whites were under the new Act. The NC for Mrewa commented on this problem,

The natives on the Native Purchase Areas, who are by the Maize Act, in exactly the same position as Europeans, soon discovered that their privilege included finding transport and good bags and also getting an unascertained amount of their maize by instalments, and were only too glad to sell their maize to the missions (who supplied bags and transport) at the uncontrolled price permitted to these institutions.⁷⁷⁾

From the implementation of the new Act until the mid 1940s, then, many Africans, particularly those in the Purchase Areas and remoter districts, experienced extreme difficulty in marketing their maize under the price equalisation scheme.

Under the zoning system which was dominant for maize marketing prior to 1946, the prices received were reduced by 3d. for every 5 miles from rail head.⁷⁸⁾ In 1946, however, a flat price was introduced

74) *Ibid.*

75) *Ibid*

76) NAR S1563 NC Annual Reports 1940 Bulalima Mangwe.

77) *Ibid.*, NC Mrewa 1941.

78) NAR, Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch, 1948.

throughout Southern Rhodesia, and under this transport equalisation scheme African producers in remote areas paid the same transport costs as those nearer railheads. All African producers were formed into what amounted to 'compulsory co-operatives',⁷⁹⁾ as far as transport charges were concerned. Under this scheme, all producers had 3/- deducted from the basic price received for their maize; this contributed to transport costs. In other words, producers near railheads contributed to the transport costs of those in the more remote areas.

This system was not without its advantages, for it allowed those living in remote areas to contribute agricultural production to a cash market. It had the added advantage of spreading production more evenly, thus minimising the risks of soil erosion. The latter had resulted from overcrowding in those areas nearest to markets to which farmers migrated in order to receive higher prices. This had been prohibited to them under the old system since high transport costs prevented their taking advantage of market opportunities.

With transport equalisation, there was less necessity to live in areas closer in proximity to markets, hence production would be distributed evenly throughout Southern Rhodesia. Because much of the maize marketed was done through the agency of the trader producers, they too were permitted certain advantages under the transport equalisation scheme. It allowed them to market maize under more favourable conditions than those existing during the first half of the 1940s under price equalisation alone: "From the pool of 3/- deduction, each trader was paid $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per bag mile on this distance from his place of registration. The transport allowance was raised from $\frac{3}{5}$ d. to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. on June 1 because of greatly increased costs of transport....The number of trader producers rose from 606 on May 31 1947 to 1,024 at the end of 1947...(we) can relate the 66 per cent increase in registration to this improved margin and transport allowance."⁸⁰⁾

79) *Ibid.* This explains why those in areas remote from urban centres suffered under the Maize Control Act.

80) NAR Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch for the year 1948: Marketing Officer - Pendered.

In 1946 the CNC stated: "The new scheme and increased price was advised to the Africans in good time before the 1946 planting season commenced."⁸¹⁾ Thus it was hoped that the scheme would give Africans the incentive to produce a larger maize crop, for which there was an ever increasing demand in Southern Rhodesia. The price and transport equalisation schemes together had the desired effect, and by 1948 Africans were contributing 625,331 (2031b) bags of maize to the country's food supplies. This represented 35 per cent of all maize marketed in the country.⁸²⁾ The Board paid 30/- per bag for Grade A maize surrendered at the railhead for the pool year 1948 to 31 May 1949.⁸³⁾ The Minister of Native Affairs, however, had fixed the price of maize at 22/- per bag under Section 23 of the Maize Control Act, and this price was to be paid to buyers of African maize anywhere in Southern Rhodesia during this same period. The reason for this difference was that well over 50 per cent of African maize was surrendered to the Board through the agency of trader-producers who operated on fixed margins declared by the Minister. The difference was made up as follows:

Trader handling margin	2/- per bag
Flat transport deduction	3/- per bag
Levy	3/- per bag ⁸⁴⁾

In the wake of the price and transport equalisation schemes, there followed a tendency to switch to the cultivation of maize. This was because small grains were not included under marketing control and their prices were not guaranteed. In this regard the CNC commented,

Natives are dissatisfied with fluctuations in prices of small grains and of encouragement given to maize produced by a fair guaranteed price. This has led to the growing of maize as a gamble in areas climatically unsuited for it, where the hardier millets would have given better returns in normal seasons.⁸⁵⁾

81) NAR Annual Report of the CNC 1946.

82) NAR Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch, *op. cit.*

83) Grade A maize was first quality maize in a new Bag.

84) NAR Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch, *op. cit.*

85) CNC Report 1948. We may compare the encouragement of African maize cultivation in the 40s with the maize complex evident in the 20s and 30s. This is an indication of the growing stability of the white farming sector.

In many ways, then, the new Act encouraged the overproduction of maize which the government had tried so hard to avoid in the 1920s.

TABLE 3 ⁸⁶⁾

Small Grains 1948

Grain	Total Estimated Production in Bags	Total Estimated Sales in Bags	Percentage Sales of Total Production
Kaffir corn	888,960	32,555	3,7
Munga	682,065	52,133	7,6
Rupoko	679,846	59,005	8,7

CF % of sales of total production in these grains to maize, which was 32%.

It can thus be seen that within the African sector itself there were some advantages to be had from maize control. As maize control policies changed in the 1940s, from imposing restrictions in the fields of production and marketing to that of relative freedom and actual encouragement of production and sales, the amount of maize marketed increased. This would appear to be in line with the general attempts in these years on the part of the white sector to increase African agricultural contribution to the National Economy, particularly to the internal market as white farming became increasingly export oriented on the base of tobacco.

The lessening of white hostility to rural Africans was evident in fields other than maize control: The scope of government intervention in African affairs was widened during the war-years. Prior to the 1940s, the role of the reserves was that they provide a reservoir of labour, an outlet for products from the urban areas, a source of taxes and a means of maintaining control over Africans and preserving their 'traditional' way of life. In the 1940s, however, particularly during the war-years when agricultural output could no longer meet growing demands, the role of Africans in the economic system of Southern Rhodesia was extended. ⁸⁷⁾

86) *Ibid.*

87) D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System*, p.300.

The open hostility - a policy of minimal concessions to Alvord's department, predominant in the 1920s and 1930s - gave way to an attitude encouraging African agricultural development through the medium of demonstrators. In furtherance of this aim, in 1944 the Department of Native Agriculture was formed of which Alvord was appointed Director. Furthermore, the scope of the work was extended and more white staff were appointed. The post of Land Development Officer was expanded and many more of these men were appointed to supervise soil conservation work in reserves. In addition, two more agricultural instructors were appointed to assist in agricultural extension work among the increasing number of farm owners in Purchase Areas. In the final analysis, this new organisation allowed all demonstration work to be accelerated and improved.⁸⁸⁾

The lessening of white hostility towards African cultivators and demonstration schemes in the 1940s may be attributed to more than the importance of tobacco as a staple crop. In addition the Industrial Conciliation Act was passed in 1934 which reserved preferential pay and seniority for white union labour, and denying bargaining power to Africans.⁸⁹⁾

This legislation proved vital in war and post-war years when Africans were required as both producers and consumers. It kept progressive Africans in rural areas where they were encouraged to become commercial farmers, and prevented them from becoming potential competitors in the industrial sphere where they were only required as cheap unskilled labour. This became more important as Southern Rhodesia began to industrialise and particularly so in the years after the Second World War. In those years, an increase in agricultural production was required, and the African contribution to the national economy became

88) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

89) G. Arrighi, *The Political Economy of Rhodesia*, p.34.

This is in line with other similar movements in these years. For example, the transference of the progressive Development Department to the control of the conservative Native Affairs Department; but Africans were already becoming educated and therefore a possible threat in urban areas. The Industrial Conciliation Act prevented further possible competition to whites from more educated Africans.

all-important.⁹⁰⁾

In the 1940s, more attention came to be devoted to developing the country's industrial base, and for this a large consumer power was required. It was suggested that,

One of Rhodesia's most vital needs is a larger consuming power. This can mainly be brought about in two ways: firstly, by increasing the spending power of the indigenous natives and secondly, by providing openings for a larger number of Europeans than we have at present. Most of the food we eat is imported. The country is capable of providing most of these supplies.⁹¹⁾

More important, as the pillar of the economy came to be based on secondary industry, the dominant position of the farmers gave way to that of the industrial element. Thus farmers lost their position of hegemony in the government, those who usurped their position desired the expansion of industry at all costs. And although industrialists urged the expansion of agriculture in support of this growing secondary sector, they insisted that both African and white agriculture were to be encouraged.

As a result, from the onset of war in 1939, efforts were made to increase and improve Alvord's staff so that African farmers might more readily meet the increasing demands for their products. And, indeed, responses to these demands were favourable. Alvord commented on these satisfactory trends as follows,

More and more native farmers were becoming plot-holders and followers of the demonstrators. The only deterrent was the lack of a proper ready cash market for their surplus maize and other crops. Then without much warning an event occurred which changed the status of these native farmers almost overnight. In September 1939 war was declared...able-bodied men all over the

90) Towards the end of the 1940s the requirements of the industrial sector were for a more skilled stable labour force, and not cheap migratory labour. The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951, was passed partly in furtherance of this aim. This period, however, is beyond the scope of this work.

91) NAR ZAY 2/2/2 Suggestions to Southern Rhodesian Economic Committee by R.A. Ballantyne 12/10/38.

country were joining the service, including all the younger men on Alvord's staff. Early in 1939 his staff had been increased to ten by the appointment of two land inspectors. Nine months later the assistant agriculturalist and three land inspectors entered war service. To the end of the war work was done by a skeleton European staff....Meanwhile the African staff of agricultural demonstrators increased from 65 to 99 and community demonstrators from 19 to 63. Meanwhile native farmers were being urged to increase production of crops and cattle. The attitude of the members of parliament and their European constituencies changed almost overnight.⁹²⁾

The onset of war and expanding demand were to have advantageous effects on demonstration schemes.⁹³⁾

Alvord attributed these more favourable trends to the onset of war alone,

As Southern Rhodesia became one of the most important Royal Air Force training centres, it became impossible for the European farmers to meet the increasing need for food. The Department of Native Agriculture was instructed to intensify its propaganda to encourage native farmers everywhere to produce not only more food crops and beef, but also peanuts for oil and cotton for textiles.⁹⁴⁾

During the war-years, agricultural demonstrators made a concerted effort to induce African farmers to increase crop production. The positive responses in this direction came more as a result of increasing prices than the increasing number of demonstrators: "The price paid for native crops was almost doubled over the previous year and native farmers everywhere were begging to be taken as plottolders."⁹⁵⁾

Many unforeseen difficulties came in the wake of these rising prices: demonstrators were soon unable to cope with increasing demands from African farmers to become plottolders, and the number of plots increased from 5,619 in 1940 (average of 85 per demonstrator) to 6,929 in 1941

92) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', pp.46/47.

93) By 1944 white staff numbers had increased from 10 to 30; and African, from 151 to 219. *Ibid.* p.52.

94) *Ibid.*, pp.46/7. After the war when conditions returned to normal, continued encouragement of African agriculture may be attributed to the development of secondary industry.

95) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.47. This would indicate that contrary to current beliefs, Africans did respond to market incentives.

with some demonstrators having as many as 300 plots.⁹⁶⁾ These numbers proved to be more than demonstrators could adequately supervise, and as a result yields from these plots fell to about half of those on properly supervised plots. Consequently, Alvord limited the number of plotholders per demonstrator to sixteen. This, in effect, meant that each demonstrator had a total of 64 to 80 plots, because each plotholder had 4 to 5 plots in systematic crop rotation. All other interested farmers were classed as co-operators. In 1941/2, the number of official demonstration plots decreased from 6,929 to 1,898.⁹⁷⁾ This move also gave demonstrators more time to pay attention to advisory work, and to the direction of cropping systems in the increasing acreage protected by soil conservation work.

Rapid soil erosion was occurring in the reserves, particularly as the use of the plough became more widespread and ploughing up and down hills was popularised. Alvord considered this method of ploughing to be the root of the problem, and urged contour ridging to be undertaken on all centralised lands. With reference to this problem Alvord commented, "Soil erosion is showing a decided effect on our demonstration plots and a change in demonstration methods must be made. The usual square or rectangular plot must be changed to plots laid out on contours with terracing, strip cropping and vegetative control."⁹⁸⁾ Instructional contour ridging thereafter became part of the demonstrator's task. To this end, all demonstrators were given intensive courses in soil erosion control methods.⁹⁹⁾ Erosion control was not left to individual enterprise. In addition to all demonstrators being given general courses in soil conservation, a Soil Conservation Officer and three Erosion Control Demonstrators were appointed in 1936, and three more were appointed the following year.¹⁰⁰⁾

Labour gangs were appointed in order to accelerate the work of soil

96) E.D. Alvord, *op. cit.*, p.49.

97) *Ibid.*

98) NAR Report of Agriculturalist for Instruction of Natives, 1935.

99) NAR Annual Report of the CNC 1932, Acting CNC, C. Bullock.

100) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.II 1935/6 Alvord to CNC 8/12/1936.

conservation; these gangs were allocated to reserves on which centralisation surveys had been conducted. By the end of 1938, these gangs were at work on ten different reserves: a total of 1,140,729 yards of contour ridges had been constructed, 34,004 yards of storm drains dug and 16,087 acres of arable lands protected.¹⁰¹⁾ By 1941/2, 23 gangs were at work on 22 reserves under the direction of a soil conservation officer.¹⁰²⁾ "Agricultural demonstrators," wrote Alvord in 1941, "have now been limited for demonstration plot work so as to give them more time for supervision of maintenance and erosion control works, and direct tillage methods and crop rotation in protected areas."¹⁰³⁾

More and more Africans were encouraged to adopt improved methods of tillage in order to prevent the rampant spread of soil erosion. Indeed, prior to the mid-1930s this was the sole reason for advocating these techniques, as verified by a statement made by the CNC in 1933, "...adoption by natives of better agricultural methods can have far reaching effects in conservation of soil productivity, a matter ultimately more important than present increased production."¹⁰⁴⁾ Concerted efforts in promoting these methods ultimately bore fruit, and the NC for Chilimanji commented, "Bad methods of ploughing up and down the slope is gradually being corrected by means of soil conservation and contour ridging has or is taking place. Propaganda in the form of lectures is gradually having effect towards improved agriculture."¹⁰⁵⁾

Growing concern with soil conservation explains in part Alvord's introduction of the Master Farmer Training Scheme in 1934. This scheme was conceived on the Selukwe Reserve in 1928 where one of the cultivators, Vambe, tilled 32 acres of worn-out, sandy soil using pre-colonial agricultural techniques, but "...his cattle kraal was belly-deep in years of accumulated, well rotted manure."¹⁰⁶⁾ When

101) NAR AL6/2/1 E.D. Alvord, *Rural Development Work for Natives*, 1938.

102) NAR Annual Report of Agriculturalist for Natives, 1941, See Appendix 11, Table showing soil conservation work in native areas.

103) *Ibid.*

104) NAR STS 138/72 CNC to NC Sinoia 27/6/1933.

105) NAR S1563 NC Annual Reports 1940 NC Chilimanzi.

106) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', p.35.

the first demonstrator was appointed, Vambe became one of his first ploholders, and in 1929 he harvested more maize from his one-acre demonstration plot than the remaining 31 acres combined. By 1932, he had abandoned all pre-colonial techniques, and it was owing to this success that Alvord decided to award Master Farming certificates. In his own words: "Alvord took the CNC out to the reserve to show him just what Vambe was doing and together they decided that Vambe should be honoured as a Master Farmer. So in 1934 at the Before Harvest meeting alongside his lands, Vambe was presented with a certificate as a Master Farmer. Thus began the scheme for Master Farmer awards...."¹⁰⁷⁾

On the whole, Master Farmer awards became increasingly important as an incentive to adopt progressive cultivation techniques. The NC for Marandellas quoted the demonstrator of South Shiota reserve as saying,

In passing I want to state that these Master Farmer badges are inducing natives to adopt better methods of cultivation. First they impart a sense of dignity to the wearer who feels he must keep his methods up to date or else he loses his well deserved sign of honour. Secondly, the mere fact of having a Master Farmer among them, induces other farmers to better their methods of tillage so as to win a badge also.¹⁰⁸⁾

Despite the increasing number of Master Farmers, the majority of the African population were not affected by demonstrators, and as the effects of soil erosion spread, more and more land came under cultivation in an attempt to offset decreasing yields.

During the inter-war years, African agricultural production expanded

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- 107) *Ibid.* This scheme became important in the 1950s when prospective Purchase Areas farmers were obliged to obtain a Master Farmer certificate before qualifying to purchase a farm, *vide infra*, p.152.
 108) NAR S1563 NC Annual Reports 1948. NC Marandellas quoting Demonstrator of South Shiota Reserve.

in absolute terms and remained constant on a per capita basis.¹⁰⁹⁾ When seeking to explain these trends - that is, the lack of significant per capita expansion despite the presence of the demonstrators - several factors must be taken into consideration. The effect of maize control acted as a disincentive to improved techniques producing bigger yields. Furthermore, the depression years contributed to these adverse trends: urban employment opportunities were limited, and even when obtainable, were at reduced rates of pay. The CNC commented on the effects of the above: "...the number of natives living on crown land is likely to still further decrease, as many are experiencing the greatest difficulty in paying the rent of £1 per annum and are moving into the native reserves."¹¹¹⁾ During the 1930s, approximately 50,00 people moved into the reserves.¹¹²⁾ This resulted in overcrowding and overstocking, which explain decreasing crop yields in these and later years.

The effect of the above was destined to become a vicious circle, for participation in the money economy through sale of agricultural produce was also uneconomical during the depression.¹¹³⁾ In the event of this, Africans were forced, once again, onto the labour market to supplement their incomes from agriculture.¹¹⁴⁾ This, too, added to deteriorating conditions in the reserves, for the majority of able bodied men were away and agricultural work was left to women and older men.

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- 109) G. Arrighi maintained that falling yields were not due to increased population which in these years remained more or less constant at 1,6 per cent per annum from 1906 to 1936, 2,7 per cent from 1936 to 1946 and 3,4 per cent from 1946 to 1956. He was of the opinion that falling yields were to be attributed to the fact that Africans were forced to cultivate increasingly inferior land.¹¹⁰⁾ This point, however, remains open to debate. Falling yields could be attributed not to the cultivation of inferior land, but rather to increased population pressure on land on which continuous cropping was, of necessity, practised, and which, owing to lack of soil conservation works, was becoming depleted of fertility. In other words, redistribution of population and lack of conservation resulted in declining yields.
- 110) G. Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', pp.212/3.
- 111) NAR CNC Annual Report for the year 1931.
- 112) R.H. Palmer, 'The Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.242.
- 113) G. Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', p.219.
- 114) Palmer estimated that by 1932 over 80 per cent of African cash earnings were from wage labour.
- R.H. Palmer, 'The Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.243.

With increasing pressure in the reserves, it was gradually realised that the six-year clause in the Land Apportionment Act, stipulating that by 1936 all Africans residing on white land were to have moved into reserves, could not be implemented. In 1936 Huggins amended the Land Apportionment Act, allowing an additional five years in which to effect the transfer.¹¹⁵⁾ This, too, proved to be unsatisfactory, and in 1941 the new Consolidated Land Apportionment Act was passed. This Act retained the principal features of its predecessor, but tightened conditions under which Africans could occupy land in white areas. It aimed partially at preventing white farmers from leasing land to Africans in return for labour services or rent. It also tightened provisions whereby non Africans could occupy land in African areas. This was to curb the practise whereby whites rented Purchase Area land for the grazing of stock.¹¹⁶⁾

Thus, under the new Act, Africans on white land were permitted to remain there under certain conditions. The CNC stated,

In terms of section 55 of the Land Apportionment Act, the Private Locations Act was repealed with effect 31/12/42. Natives in occupation of land in European areas in consideration of payment of rent, and whose agreements were entered into prior to August 1941, were authorised to remain in occupation under payment granted by the Minister of Native Affairs.¹¹⁷⁾

These developments were encouraged by a growing awareness that African areas were becoming dangerously overcrowded, and the possibilities of large-scale improvements in output were negligible. Perpetuation of the system of tenancy and the eviction of whites from African land alleviated this position somewhat. This solution, however, aimed at prevention rather than cure; and, during the course of the 1940s, more drastic measures aimed at both improving the conditions on reserves and increasing African agricultural output were adopted.

115) L.H. Gann and M. Gelfand, *Huggins of Rhodesia: The Man and His Country*, (1964), p.127.

116) M. Yudelma, *Africans on the Land*, p.73.

117) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1942.

"During the last twenty-five years I have been building a bridge, a bridge to the future, and, there is still a wide river to cross. It will be up to the European and African members of my staff to complete the bridge I have started. The river we are crossing is the fluid, flowing life of the African people, we are bridging the stream from their past to their future".

E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

5.1 The African Cattle Industry: A Bone of Contention

During the first few decades of white settlement, little effort was expended on improving the pastoral pursuits of Africans. Indeed, prior to the mid-1920s, little assistance was given in any spheres of agriculture.¹⁾ The passage of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, with its clause stipulating that all Africans on Crown lands move into reserves within six years of its passage, altered the situation somewhat. Gradually it was realised that not only was this clause unlikely to be realised, but that even with adherence to strict conservation methods, the problems of soil erosion and congestion were not abating. In this event, the government in the 1940s decided that the time had come to use force instead of persuasion in implementing these anti-erosion methods.

A few attempts had been made to improve the quality of African cattle prior to self-government. Indeed, possibly more effort had been expended in this area than in that of crop production. The motives behind this, however, were largely selfish. The white settlers having realised early in the period of white rule that the small African cattle were best suited to the harsh climatic conditions of Southern Rhodesia, built their own cattle herds up from a foundation of African stock. Dipping was made compulsory in 1922. This was done in an attempt to alleviate the ravages of Rinderpest and East Coast fever. In addition, the government purchased grade bulls from dip-tank surpluses in the hope of improving the quality of African cattle.

This policy was doomed to failure, and was finally abandoned in 1934. Government officials tended to lay the blame on the Africans themselves, who had resisted improvements for fear that whites would seize their cattle as they had done in the 1890s. Furthermore, the Ndebele in particular encouraged a hardiness in their stock which was best achieved by a process of natural selection - survival and propagation

1) Lack of pressure on existing land resources prior to this date, in part explains lack of government response to imminent problems of overpopulation, overstocking and poor agricultural techniques in reserves.

of the fittest. The CNC commented on Ndebele reluctance to co-operate with the government in conducting this scheme,

...But the Matabele are too self satisfied on this score and not as open to suggestion for improvement as are the Mashona. The rigid conservatism in regard of cattle is not unsupported by reason. They aim at hardiness and they get it. But in market value, the despised Mashona stock are already through better bulls, approaching the Matabele cattle, and threaten to surpass them at a distant date. In addition to those acquired by individuals there are now 3,151 grade bulls serving native cattle...(the) Matabele are less content than are the Mashona to leave the selection of bulls to officials. Their acquisitions therefore are mostly through private purchase.²⁾

It was also suggested that, "the animals are neglected because they are regarded as government property."³⁾ The Africans, then, saw no reason to give these animals any special treatment since they were not even their own property.

The main reasons behind the failure of this scheme, however, may be attributed to a lack of foresight. Vast sums of money were expended on the purchase of grade bulls in order to improve African stock, but these bulls were unable to withstand the harsh climatic conditions prevalent in Southern Rhodesia. The physical condition of these animals weakened, and in most cases they did not have an opportunity to mate with African cattle, offering no competition to the physically superior African bulls. Those that were able to mate with African stock passed on to their offspring not their good features, but their lack of stamina and inability to adjust to harsh conditions. "While overstocking continues," the CNC stated, "introduction of better bulls has opposite effects to the one anticipated. With the introduction of better blood, the resistance to the hard conditions, which are characteristic of native stock, is reduced. The solution may be to improve native stock by selection rather than continuing the policy of cross breeding."⁴⁾

2) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1929.

3) NAR S1542/N2 B-D, 1931-1939, Annual Native Board Meeting, Belingwe 29/6/38.

4) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1933. It was not until 1942 that this policy was followed up. *Vide infra*, p.138.

Had the experiment been controlled by resorting to stall feeding and paddocking, then the outcome would possibly have been more favourable. Lack of capital in these years, however, prevented the realisation of this possibility. In this regard, the CNC stated, "The result of overstocking was to dwarf the cattle, and while the policy of introducing better grade bulls is not yet abandoned, the benefit of the better strain is negated by insufficient nutriment."⁵⁾ The depression of the 1930s had a nullifying effect on what little progress had been made: Africans found it necessary to sell cattle in order to meet tax obligations since existing controls inhibited the sale of crops, and the grade bulls commanded the most favourable prices.

Other than this abortive attempt at upgrading African cattle, all other efforts in the 1920s and early 1930s were centred on improving and increasing crop production; and this became Alvord's principal concern throughout the period. It was essential to improve agricultural production in reserves, at least to the extent that they were able to cater to the subsistence requirements of Africans. The Africans had never considered their cattle to be commercial commodities, either for sale or consumption. They placed more value on their ritual and symbolic significance, hence their value as a possible source of food was negligible. Meat did not constitute a major item of consumption in the African's diet, being eaten only on rare occasions, such as upon the death of an animal or in cases of absolute necessity during famines or drought. For this reason, Alvord believed he would achieve greater success through concentrating his efforts on crop production.

Alvord's concern with the condition of communal grazing lands stemmed primarily from the detrimental effects that continuous grazing was having on the soil. Deterioration of grazing lands originated with increased usage of the plough which enabled larger acreages to be tilled, and indeed often necessitated them owing to lower yields from ploughed lands relative to those from hoe-cultivated lands. In

5) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1932.

order to increase cultivated acreages, grazing lands were cut back. The effects of this were not very pronounced in the early part of the twentieth century, when cattle numbers were still relatively low as they recovered slowly from the 1896 rinderpest epidemic. By the 1920s, however, cattle numbers had increased from 55,000 in 1902 to 1,495,803 in 1929⁶⁾ - a number which existing grazing lands, already diminished in acreage, could not accommodate.

When Alvord instituted his centralisation schemes in 1929, cattle numbers were estimated at 1,495,803.⁷⁾ Under this scheme, much arable land was re-allocated as pasturage; and this checked erosion while grazing lands improved. The primary aim behind centralisation, however, was not the improvement of grazing lands, but that of arable farming; the tillage of immense acreages of land militated against efficient crop production, as these could not be adequately cared for. Through centralisation, Alvord encouraged the tillage of smaller acreages, and yields therefrom were actually larger than those obtained on larger acreages, provided proper care and management techniques accompanied cultivation.

Centralisation did assist in slowing down the rate of deterioration of grazing lands, but aimed at prevention rather than cure - that is, it did not tackle the root of the problem: that of overstocking itself. In 1932, the CNC commented on the effects of overstocking on the land,

...So many many parts (of reserves) where the pastures are continuously fed down without the break necessary for recuperation. Then cattle travel each week to dipping tanks in their thousands, and each day, in many parts, to water holes. Centralisation is a start to combating this....But we shall also have to go to the root of the matter which is overstocking itself.⁸⁾

Pre-colonial systems of agriculture in the reserves militated against

6) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1929.

7) *Ibid.*

8) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1932.

attempts to improve African cattle. In the first stages of Alvord's extension services, no attempts were made to alter the structural base of the pre-colonial system. There was scope for vast improvements within the existing structure, through the utilisation of facilities and forces already available to Africans. In the field of arable farming, this did not pose an insurmountable obstacle, for under the pre-colonial system, cropping of land did occur on an individual basis; hence individual instruction could be forwarded and adopted without altering the entire system of agriculture.

Grazing lands, however, were held on a communal basis, and this posed serious difficulties to any attempts at rectifying problems relating to the care of cattle. Communal herds acted as a disincentive to improve stock; forward-thinking individuals were hindered by the retrogressive attitudes of remaining communal grazers. Grazings were scarce, and with all cattle owners competing for these, the more progressive individuals could not rely on others to co-operate by culling excess stock to reduce numbers to optimum carrying capacity. The only avenue open to these individuals then, was to follow the lead of the majority and increase their herds as much as possible. Furthermore, communal grazings encouraged the deterioration of grazing land itself: where no-one was responsible for its protection and individual action to alleviate the situation was impractical.⁹⁾

A further disincentive to efforts made at improving African stock was the vast difference in productivity between arable and grazing lands. Floyd pointed out that the average value of crop production was placed at about £4 per arable acre, and that of livestock output at about 3/- per acre of communal grazing. Thus, although arable land was poorly farmed, it yielded about twenty-seven times as much per acre as that of grazing land.¹⁰⁾ Africans, therefore, had no incentive to improve either cattle or grazing land as returns expected therefrom were so unfavourable. In addition, the traditional role of cattle in *lobola* (bride price) made them change hands so frequently that any

9) E.M. Makings, *Agricultural Problems in Developing Countries*, (1967), p.148.

10) B.N. Floyd, 'Changing Patterns of African Land Use in Southern Rhodesia', in *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, 25, 1959, p.36.

beneficial results from improvements would not accrue to the original owner. Thus numerical superiority continued to predominate over quality. Furthermore, in arable farming, returns from improvements were more rapidly forthcoming than similar efforts at a pastoral level.¹¹⁾

In view of this, there was not much scope for extension services in livestock during the first few decades of the twentieth century. In addition, Alvord's department was short-staffed in these years, and consequently attention was focussed on the improvement of arable farming. Recognition by the government of a measure of responsibility towards land usage was restricted to the prevention of the misuse of natural resources through soil and water conservation. Alvord, However, recognised that there was a lack of balance between arable and pastoral farming, and centralisation was the first method employed which sought to rectify this. Alvord constantly emphasised the importance of the use of kraal manure in crop production, and attempted to limit the number of cattle per capita to the amount of manure required to fertilise one acre of arable land.

As human and cattle population in the reserves increased, and conditions of erosion became more pronounced, it was decided that attempts must be made to offset the destruction of natural resources. Consequently a Soil Conservation Officer was appointed in 1936 when it was discovered that problems of sheet and gully erosion were affecting 500,000 acres (16 per cent) of arable land in Southern Rhodesia.¹²⁾ This

11) Owing to the importance of arable farming compared with that of pastoral farming the cattle industry suffered - many cases suited to cattle were used for crop cultivation - great areas devoted to maize cultivation could have been more profitably used for beef production. E.M. Makings, *Agricultural Problems, op. cit.* p.149. The policy, prior to 1940, of keeping Africans at subsistence level, would not have allowed this to materialise. Food was of prime importance, lack of markets rendering commercial agriculture unfeasible. In this event maize, being a staple food crop, could be consumed. Cattle, however, were not staple item in Africans' diet.

12) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

remedy, however, once again aimed at prevention rather than cure. The CNC, Taylor, and his successor, Carbutt, were reluctant to advocate compulsory destocking through fear that Africans would see this as a direct affront on them, and react in a similar way to their previous response to white seizure of cattle in 1896. Tentative suggestions were made to this end, but throughout the 1930s, no efforts were made towards enforcing these.

Centralisation, although separating arable and grazing lands and improving the latter to the extent that the numerous cattle tracks causing erosion were eliminated, did little to tackle the root of the problem: vast numbers of poor quality cattle, increasing rapidly and for which there were few markets. With the ravages of soil erosion becoming more evident, and both human and cattle numbers multiplying, Carbutt decided that the time had come to eliminate poor quality cattle. When, in 1933, Liebigs opened a meat extraction factory, the Native Affairs Department embarked upon a campaign designed to induce Africans to sell inferior cattle to Liebig's agents. This propaganda met with resentment: Africans were reluctant to sell their cattle at the low prices which had resulted from the post-war depression and collapse of the cattle market in the years 1921 to 1923. "It would be beneficial to the country," wrote Carbutt, "if the numbers of native cattle were reduced legitimately by sales...and in this connection Liebig's factory took 34,000 head of cattle in the ten months during which operations were carried on. NCs also arranged sales of cattle."¹³⁾

These activities, however, were conducted in a haphazard way, and there was no direction or control of these operations during the 1930s. With the failure of these propagandist methods, the emphasis was reverted to improvement of stock and pastureland, and to increasing the carrying capacity of reserves by the encouragement of intensive farming systems. The main emphasis, as in the past, was directed towards improvements of arable farming. Concerning this, the CNC stated, "It is intended to develop the reserves so as to enable them to carry a larger population, and so avoid, as far as possible, the

13) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1934.

necessity for organisation of more land for native occupation. This will be done by re-organising the system of occupation and a portion of the reserves previously uninhabitable due to lack of water...."¹⁴⁾

Despite these attempts to alleviate reserve conditions, it was becoming increasingly evident that the problem of overstocking would have to be faced and some means devised for its solution. In 1938 the CNC commented on this problem,

Propaganda and more direct measures to prevent overstocking have taken place in eight Native Reserves. Technical advice is given and administrative persuasion using pressure of native public opinion to induce selling of surplus stock of no breeding value is successful in its objective. Alternatives to this remedy e.g. adhoc legislation by the central authority is not without weakness but the situation needs a remedy.¹⁵⁾

This was the beginning of the movement which culminated in the compulsory destocking scheme of the 1940s.

During the Second World War, advisory services and extension work was intensified, but they were unable to remedy the extent of deterioration: "The natural increase in cattle exceeded reduction per head through sale and consumption."¹⁶⁾ This increase may be attributed to several factors, the most important being the resettlement of many Africans in the reserves when they were evicted from Crown lands in the 1930s. The CNC quoted the NC for Umtali as saying that "...congestion of population on reserves in his district. The corollary to these conditions is overcultivation and overstocking, followed by dangers of soil erosion and general deterioration."¹⁷⁾

The necessity for additional food requirements for the increased population in the reserves required the continual extension of cultivated acreages at the expense of grazing lands. Furthermore, Africans had suffered from the closure of cattle markets in the 1920s and 1930s, and this resulted in rapid increases in cattle numbers.¹⁸⁾

14) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1932. Acting CNC Bullock.

15) *Ibid.* 1938.

16) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.1 1934. Assistant Agriculturalist to S.N. Bulawayo 28/4/34. Report on Before Harvest meetings at Demonstration Centres.

17) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1931.

18) Africans moving into reserves during the depression years also lost access to markets owing to the remoteness of many reserves.

In this respect, the CNC stated in 1931 that Africans suffered a,

...severe financial blow from the closure of cattle markets. The accumulation of cattle thus forced on them by conditions beyond their control will unfortunately accelerate the overstocking from which the Native Reserves already suffer. Natives sold 41,156 head of cattle in 1931, as against 79,248 in 1930 (difference of 38,092). Natives themselves consumed approximately 80,000 head. Thus some 121,090 head of native cattle were disposed of during the year. Notwithstanding this there was a net increase of 70,000 - this demonstrates the vital importance of finding markets for surplus cattle. 19)

In regard to sale of African cattle it was stated,

I would not say that today's prices are unusually high. He has had higher prices before and he has also had the disappointment of seeing these prices drop by several hundred per cent. That happened in 1920 and the result of that is of course, that he holds back hoping to see the good old days restored....When he sells something it is generally for a purpose, but he has little incentive to sell today.20)

The above passage indicates that Africans had no incentive to dispose of their cattle on a voluntary basis.

Furthermore, the cattle marketed were usually of inferior quality when compared with white owned cattle. The animal husbandry instructor at Domboshawa school attributed this to lack of knowledge in pastoral pursuits. Quoting a student at the school, he stated, "Before the Great War European cattle could be sold for £15 or more than that, while black man's cattle could be bought for £7, £6, £5, lesser, Why....Native cattle were sent out lately in the mornings about 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock a.m. and brought in early in the afternoons."21)

In addition to being inferior in quality, many cattle marketed were also

19) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1931.

20) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission 1944.

21) E.W. Bevan, 'The Education of Natives in Pastoral Pursuits', in *NADA*, 2, 1924, p.15.

overaged. Makings attributed this to low calving rates amongst African cattle and high mortality rates among young calves, which resulted in the majority of cattle in herds being older animals.²²⁾ Furthermore, growth rates were slow, owing to feeding problems during the dry seasons when many cattle suffered severe weight loss. For these reasons, both breeding cattle and oxen were retained until they were too old to fulfil these functions.²³⁾

Compulsory destocking would increase cattle offtake from these herds and allow for improvement in quality among the remainder; and, under these circumstances, was the only solution. Improvement of grazing land was not possible: rotational grazing schemes could not be conducted on land already insufficient to cater for both arable and grazing requirements. And supplementary feeding required cultivation of fodder crops which was not feasible in those years when all available arable land was required for cultivation of food crops. As it was, cattle numbers were inadequate to produce manure sufficient for the increased arable acreage. Alvord stated in 1934 that,

More cattle are required to create sufficient manure for the increasing arable acreages - however, all available manure is used on arable lands and grazing lands deteriorated: all available kraal manure has been put on the lands and crops are better than in previous years. All grass on grazing lands, however, has been grazed off down to the ground and there are many natives who have very poor land. Again, the question of not enough land has been raised.²⁴⁾

Over and above these factors, Africans owned more cattle than they had done in the early twentieth century,²⁵⁾ and the total number of

22) This was because bulls had access to young heifers in communal herds before the latter were sufficiently mature to breed successfully.

23) S.M. Makings, *Agricultural Problems in Developing Countries in Africa*, p.153.

24) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.1 1934. Alvord to CNC 18/4/34. Report on Before Harvest Meetings in Demonstration Centres, Mondoro Reserve.

25) NAR ZAX 1/1/2 See Appendix 12, Table 1. African Cattle Numbers in Native Reserves.

African cattle owners also increased.²⁶⁾ The purchase of more cattle was, in many cases, imperative, as they were required to draw ploughs.²⁷⁾ Furthermore, as famine relief, and in some instances, the adoption of improved farming techniques, alleviated the dangers of famine, so the role of cattle for ritual purposes decreased thereby lessening the number of cattle slaughtered for this purpose.

Many Africans were reluctant to sell cattle because maize markets expanded in the late 1930s, commanding better prices than did cattle. A Cattle Inspector stated,

As markets for maize expanded in the late 1930s this affected the attitude to cattle: the area under cultivation has increased due to ploughing. They have native stores...They get a good price for their grain. The cattle are of a minor interest compared with their crops, provided they have sufficient oxen to plough they make profit from crops but erosion is curbing that.²⁸⁾

Simultaneous with this reluctance to part with cattle, there was a growing need in the white sector for the contribution of African cattle to markets.²⁹⁾ This factor played a role in the movement towards implementing the compulsory destocking scheme.

At this stage only 10 per cent of the population in the reserves had been persuaded to adopt better methods, and it was becoming increasingly apparent that in order to accelerate this movement both land cultivation and livestock management would have to be enforced.³⁰⁾ During the 1940s machinery was built along these lines. Alvord commented on this situation,

If we are to provide for future populations, the present

26) Arrighi stated that cattle were prominent forms of productive investment. From 1905 to 1921 they increased from 114,560 to 854,000 - an average of 12,5 per cent per annum. This fell to 6 per cent in the years 1921 to 1931, and 1 per cent from 1931 to 1945. Rapid accumulation, he claimed, was traceable to the existence of traditional mechanisms of transformation of current surplus into cattle. They were also seen as possible means of increasing future income.

G. Arrighi, 'Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective', p.214.

27) NAR ZAX 1/1/2 Alfred John Gifford, Cattle Inspector, 1938.

28) *Ibid.*

29) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission 1944.

See Appendix 12, Table 2 . Numbers of Cattle Sold to Europeans.

30) By 1941 the population was estimated at 1,500,000 and cattle numbers had increased from 330,000 in 1911, to 1,555,000 in 1935. A.K.H. Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*, p.24.

wide scale depletion and destruction of the land must be curtailed. It is the government's duty to see that they do not destroy it, by legislation if necessary. And it is our duty as government servants to teach them how to use it properly.³¹⁾

The CNC too, stated that owing to conditions in the reserves, the number of African owned cattle should be reduced legitimately by sales.³²⁾

Interest in African contribution to the national economy exhibited in the late 1930s and early 1940s coincided with this growing concern with the evils of soil erosion and the necessity of devising some means of remedying the situation. The government was forced, in the late 1930s, by Rhodesian Agricultural Union representatives to devote more attention to both African and white areas of Southern Rhodesia, and recognition of this problem culminated in the appointment of the Natural Resources Commission in 1938, of which R. McIlwaine was chairman.³³⁾ The Commission was "charged with an inquiry into the extent to which the natural resources of the colony were deteriorating/being wasted."³⁴⁾

In April 1939 the Commission submitted its report to the government, which in 1941 was made law with the passage of the Natural Resources Act. This Act made provision for "the conservation and improvement of the Native Reserves of the Colony and for other matters incidental thereto."³⁵⁾ In terms of this, it was stated,

...areas may be temporarily reserved against human occupation or cultivation, depasturing of stock or cutting of vegetation...destocking may be ordered by the governor of areas where the natural resources are being injured by overstocking, and orders relating to the depasturing of stock, cultivation of land, and control of water may be given to users of land by Native Commissioners for the adoption of

31) E.D. Alvord, 'The Progress of Native Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia', in *The New Rhodesian*, August 6, 1948.

32) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1934.

33) Annual Report of the Natural Resources Board for the year 1960.

34) *Ibid.*

35) *Ibid.*

such measures as are necessary for the conservation of the natural resources.³⁶⁾

The change in policy of the government to a more authoritarian control of African areas gathered momentum with the passing of the Natural Resources Act.

Following the passage of this Act, the Natural Resources Board was appointed with McIlwaine as chairman. This Board was empowered to "place orders on owners, occupiers or users of any land restricting or prohibiting its use, or requiring the construction of protection works, where such are necessary for conservation or prevention of injury to the natural resources."³⁷⁾

The government was also exhibiting an increasing concern with the extent to which overstocking was accelerating.³⁸⁾ It was found that of 14 reserves in the Bulawayo circle, 11 were overstocked according to standards laid down by the Department of Native Agriculture, and under these circumstances, compulsory destocking under the Natural Resources Act commenced.³⁹⁾ Although the Act was passed in 1941, no adequate machinery existed at this time with which to carry out the provisions of the Act.

In 1943 the procedure for destocking was decided by assessing the carrying capacity of the reserves and their current stocking rates. Government Notice No.612 of 1944 declared 49 reserves to be overstocked, and allowed Government Notice No.271 of 1943 on destocking of reserves to be put into effect.⁴⁰⁾ By 1945, destocking plans for each of these reserves were drawn up and applied. All senior staff in the Department of Native Agriculture were appointed culling officers, and were authorised to enforce cattle owners to reduce stock by the proportion

36) *Official Yearbook for the Colony of Rhodesia*, Vol.4, 1952, p.112.

37) Annual Report of the Natural Resources Board, *op. cit.*

38) Thus concern with the promotion of African agriculture coincided with, and was partly responsible for, ensuring that land usage and farming methods improved.

39) The destocking programme was to be accompanied by pasture management and improved methods: Two systems were recommended - both of them rotation systems - with a fallow period in which pasture lands could regenerate themselves.

40) NAR Annual Report of Director of Native Agriculture for the year 1945.

necessary to bring herds down to carrying capacity.⁴¹⁾ General propaganda programmes were entered upon by these officers in co-operation with the NCs in order to conduct the above regulations.⁴²⁾

The number of years over which the plan was to be spread was determined by the extent of overstocking and overpopulation, the degree to which natural resources had deteriorated, and the extent to which it was possible to redistribute stock by development within the reserve. Reduction of individual herds was determined on a percentage basis according to the size of the herd. This was to ensure that smaller stockowners were not placed at a disadvantage relative to large owners. The majority of plans were to be conducted on a five year basis.

The marketing of African cattle remained mainly in the hands of agents and speculators until 1945, when an agreement was reached between the Native Department and the Cold Storage Commission to organise marketing for the producers' benefit.

The price of cattle was fixed on a weight and grade basis and it was made mandatory that Africans sell cattle to the Cold Storage Commission at these prices. Prices received were fixed by the government, and those offered for the three most important grades of cattle were 19 per cent, 16 per cent and 10 per cent respectively below prices in the open white market.⁴³⁾ There were no proper auction sales: a price was merely offered which was either accepted or rejected. Although individual buyers were encouraged to attend dip tank sales, Liebig's and the Cold Storage Commission were the largest buyers, and it was maintained that only those firms would be interested in the

41) *Ibid.* Destocking had begun in the Victoria Circle in 1937 as a result of a foot and mouth epidemic. Destocking in other areas began in an ad hoc fashion in 1938 prior to the passing of the Act itself. NAR ZAX 1/1/1 Native cattle.

In 1943 European livestock officers were appointed, and in 1944 two livestock supervisors. These officers made livestock and grazing surveys of 12 reserves, that is, they initiated the surveys which were to become compulsory when destocking commenced. E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

42) NAR Annual Report of Director of Native Agriculture for the year 1945.

43) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.190.

African quality of cattle: "I think that the cattle that were sold were not of much use to anybody but Liebig's."⁴⁴⁾ This caused much resentment from African sellers - being the biggest buyers, Liebig's and the Cold Storage Commission managed to achieve a monopoly of this market, and profits therefore accrued to middlemen instead of to African sellers.⁴⁵⁾

The official attitude was stated as follows, "There is to be no compulsion. There is to be persuasion, and let it be, as far as possible, the persuasion of native public opinion."⁴⁶⁾ To achieve this, it was hoped that small cattle owners would exert pressure on those owning large herds, because it was the latter's cattle which were largely responsible for the destruction of natural resources, and small owners suffered at their expense. None the less, there were still complaints about the execution of cattle sales. Africans had no valuers to determine which grade their cattle belonged to, and no-one to protect them in assessing the true weight of their cattle. The procedure usually followed was that of selecting the most inferior cattle and leaving the better stock.⁴⁷⁾ One of the chiefs stated, "Cattle inspectors went into our herds and picked out the worst cattle and left the best."⁴⁸⁾ Furthermore, "Africans did not receive prices comparable to those which whites achieved in the open market: "The price available to me was 8/4 per 100lbs. The price available to the native was 4/7 per 100lbs."⁴⁹⁾

44) NAR ZAX 1/1/1 Native Cattle. Bullock CNC.

45) *Ibid.*, Abe Geoman: General Manager, Cold Storage Commission.

46) NAR ZAX 1/1/1 *op. cit.*

47) *Ibid.*, Robert Dunipace Gilchrist. Ranch Owner.

48) NAR ZAX 1/1/2 Native Munyaradze.

49) NAR ZAX 1/1/1 Robert Dunipace Gilchrist, Ranch Owner. One explanation as to the low prices realised at Weight and Grade Sales, was that at these sales only inferior stock were selected. In comparison, in non-destocking areas sales were voluntary, and therefore cattle offered included very few culled or scrub stock. The average prices in these areas were £5.0.10 compared with £4.4.0 in destocking areas.
NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1947.

The marketing system for African cattle benefitted white cattle owners. In controlling the flow of livestock, the Cold Storage Commission operated a "grazier scheme" whereby surplus stock were leased to white farmers until required at a later date.⁵⁰⁾ Ownership of these cattle remained in the hands of the Cold Storage Commission and the scheme was financed by them.⁵¹⁾ White farmers, therefore, were not obliged to make large capital outlays to purchase livestock, nor run mortality risks. They were given the added value upon returning cattle to the Commission, and this was usually high because the grading and price system was such that there were wide price differences between high and low grades. Whites purchased or leased low grade, cheap livestock, fattened them and returned them to the Cold Storage Commission. The animals were then reclassified and profits accrued to white farmers.

As cattle numbers decreased under the destocking scheme, attempts were made to improve the quality of African cattle; not, as in the 1920s and 1930s, by the introduction of grade bulls, but using the Africans' own cattle. To this end, a cattle breeding station was opened in 1942. Alvord stated with regard to this,

After many years of trial and error in attempts to cross exotic breeds of European cattle with indigenous native cattle, it was finally decided that the best cattle for the Africans was their own sanga cattle...an intensive programme was started to induce natives to improve their herds so that they could meet the requirements of an expanding trade in beef cattle.⁵²⁾

In this way it was hoped that when destocking had reduced reserves to their optimum carrying capacity, Africans would be induced to improve the quality of their remaining cattle. And as it was now necessary for Africans to make a larger contribution to the national economy, good quality cattle were required to meet market demands.

50) NAR ZAX 1/1/1 Native Cattle. Leo Alexander Levy: Cattle Buyer. "...3 different classes of cattle. There is bone cattle, which can be used only for frozen beef, and then there is the animal which has got a certain weight which can be used only for frozen beef, and then there is the animal which is bought from the native, fed up, and sold as chillers. Then there is another animal which the European buys from the native and keeps it for a few years and works it and either sells it in the market or exports it." The above emphasises the point that Africans were not competing on open terms with those dealing on the open market.

51) *Agro Economic Survey Part Two, op. cit.*, p.20.

52) E.D. Alvord, 'Development of Native Agriculture and Land Tenure', pp.49/50.

It was believed that African antagonism to the destocking scheme would not be too great. By 1942 many Africans were coming to view demonstrators as genuinely operating for their benefit, and no longer looked on them with suspicion. In the words of the CNC, "It is the belief at this stage of the development of Africans, that practical demonstration is worth more than any theory....suspicion with which their (demonstrators') efforts were viewed by the more conservative elements has now largely disappeared."⁵³⁾ It was thus hoped that Africans, trusting the demonstrators, would realise that the destocking policy was undertaken out of genuine concern for their well-being.

Furthermore, cattle prices during and after the war-years were inflated, and it was hoped that higher prices fetched at weight and grade sales would offset any suspicion Africans might feel towards government motives.⁵⁴⁾ There was still distrust of the government, however, and many Africans were reluctant to improve their cattle for fear that they would become desirable to the white man. Even many whites were of the opinion that the government had introduced destocking to eliminate African competition. One of the cattle buyers stated, "The government may have come to the conclusion that the native of Southern Rhodesia is competing with the European, and that may be the policy, to eliminate the competition by reducing." This statement, however, was vehemently denied: "No...because the CNC and the Native Department...they would not have been party to such a development."⁵⁵⁾

Other unforeseen disadvantages came in the wake of destocking schemes. Acreages planted to crops were already increasing and cutting into grazing areas, destroying the balance between arable and pastoral farming. The destocking scheme destroyed this even further and as a result there was no longer sufficient manure to adequately fertilise the increased arable acreage. Compulsory destocking, by cutting back on cattle numbers, made this position worse. Hence crop yields

53) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1942.

54) *Ibid.*

55) NAR ZAX 1/1/1 Native Cattle. L.A. Levy, Cattle Buyer.

dropped and more land was required for arable pursuits in order to maintain output.⁵⁶⁾ In addition, destocking cut off a convenient source of income and method of saving amongst Africans.

Prior to 1940, the 'correct' number of population on reserves was estimated by the carrying capacity of cattle. Each family required six cattle to accumulate sufficient manure to maintain the humus content and soil productivity on 6 to 10 acres of arable land. Six head of cattle required 6, 10 and 16 acres of grazing land each in high, medium and low rainfall areas respectively. (That is, 60, 80 and 100 acres per family.)

The larger numbers sold under the destocking scheme is not indicative of the overall success of the policy. That is, that Africans were aware that when cattle numbers were lower, and grazing not so scarce, they would then be able to strive for improvements in quality in their remaining cattle. On the contrary, many co-operated with the scheme and sold their excess stock through age-old fears of government intervention. "They are selling their cattle much more freely," said a Chibi storekeeper, "and they say that the reason is that they are frightened that the government is going to take away their cattle."⁵⁷⁾

Opposition to destocking grew, and progress in advanced agriculture and animal husbandry was too slow to keep pace with proper conservation of the soil. The population was increasing too rapidly to prevent arable holdings from becoming uneconomic units. Not only was progress in advanced agriculture unable to keep pace with deteriorating conditions, but the demonstration scheme also experienced a setback owing to the destocking scheme. The primary explanation behind this

56) It had been hoped that destocking would yield to increased crop yields. This, in many instances, did not materialise: planting occurred immediately after the first rains, but cattle were usually in poor condition at this time after long winter months, hence more oxen were needed to draw the plough. This necessitated the pooling of draught animals, and those who lent animals, usually did so only when they had ploughed their own lands. Thus borrowers were forced to plough late, which meant yields were lower. After destocking the position worsened for more people had lost their access to cattle.

57) NAR ZAX 1/1/1 Thomas Little, Storekeeper, Chibi district.

occurrence was that all senior officials of the Department of Native Agriculture were appointed culling officers, instead of employing a separate staff for this purpose, and as a result they immediately lost African backing and trust. Africans believed that instead of representing them to the government, the Department of Native Agriculture were carrying out the harsh features of a scheme which would operate to their detriment.⁵⁸⁾ Furthermore, those newly appointed culling officers operated from blueprints on destocking, the surveys of which were done by African agricultural officers. These culling officers were aware that in some cases they were destocking areas on the blueprints below their carrying capacity. This resulted in much bad feeling from Africans on the affected reserves.⁵⁹⁾ Hostility also arose towards white farmers living on land adjacent to reserves who acquired cattle cheaply from Africans, thereby leaving them little opportunity to sell cattle at reasonable prices.

Following the report of the Turner Commission in 1956, however, a considerable degree of freedom was restored in cattle marketing: marketing policies were changed and white and African markets integrated.⁶⁰⁾ Auction sales in reserves replaced weight and grade sales, grades were reclassified and prices raised for lower grades. All sales were conducted on a competitive basis, and the Cold Storage Commission became a residual buyer, thus providing a floor price for cattle.⁶¹⁾ Price and slaughter controls were abolished, and minimum prices were taken from a table listing the current grade/price structure. Cattle were graded according to their quality and then weighed.

To keep sales constant throughout the year, the government ordered that higher prices be paid at the end of the dry season when quality was poor, and lower prices at the end of the rainy season when quality was better. That cattle were needed during the first rains for

58) R. Dinnis, Interview, October 1979.

59) *Ibid.*

60) *Agro Economic Survey Part 2, op. cit.*, p.20.

61) Graziers wishing to purchase cattle now had to do so on a competitive basis.

draught purposes often prevented Africans availing themselves of these higher prices.

Results accruing from this change in policy were on the whole favourable. Prices for African cattle increased: in 1955/6, the average price rose by 25 per cent and there was a 10 per cent increase in the number offered for sale.⁶²⁾ At the end of 1956, African producers received an average of £2.19.3 more per beast than they did under weight and grade sales.⁶³⁾

The fact that the goals set under the compulsory destocking scheme had been accomplished was a possible additional explanation for the abandonment of the scheme. In this regard the CNC stated,

At the end of this period (April 1947 to June 1948) the excess in the 52 overstocked reserves was reduced by 70,4 per cent or 10,4 per cent more than the target set at the commencement of destocking to be achieved by the end of the third year. In achieving the object of reducing total holdings we are at the same time in some cases reducing individual holdings to an uneconomical figure due to the fact that we have no means of limiting or stabilising the number of stock owners, so that as these increase the permissible maximum of each individual holding must diminish.⁶⁴⁾

At this stage, then, there was no longer reason to continue the destocking scheme.

Although the scheme had been successful, administrators were aware that it was not an ideal solution to the problem. The CNC commented on this problem thus,

Although destocking measures result in reducing stock in overstocked Native Reserves to carrying capacity, they can only operate as a short term measure... (we) must find another solution. The problem, as it stands at the moment relates basically to the human population, therefore the problem of overstocking lies in solving the problem of rapid increase in African population and its relation to occupation rights

62) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.191.

63) R.W.M. Johnson, 'African Agricultural Development in Southern Rhodesia, 1945 - 1960', in *Food Research Institute Studies*, 4, 1963-4, No.2, p.206.

64) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year, 1948.

in Native Reserves.⁶⁵⁾

It was thus apparent that a more authoritarian control of agricultural pursuits on reserves was imminent, for not only were natural resources to be protected, but African production expanded.

In the final analysis, it would appear that the compulsory destocking scheme represented not a deviation from, but a continuation of, the policy of African development which, in the late 1930s, had undergone radical deviations from former practises. Compulsory destocking was part and parcel of the whole movement towards increasing African agricultural production, by restoring some balance between arable and pastoral farming, and by upgrading the quality of African cattle. This policy also aided total agricultural contribution to the economy through the operation of grazier schemes. Furthermore, the latter seemed to curtail possible white hostility towards attempts at upgrading African cattle. In 1924 the following comment was made,

It has been agreed that if the natives are taught to breed a better class of cattle, they will enter into competition with the white man, or they will become more independent and less inclined to work than at present. This would appear to be a short sighted view. If Rhodesian cattle are to find a place on the world's markets, there must be a constant and available supply of animals of uniform weight, age and quality. We cannot capture and hold a market with samples. A plentiful supply of native cattle up to standard will assist.⁶⁶⁾

It was not until 1940, however, when attitudes to African contribution changed, that these recommendations bore fruit.

5.2 The Move Towards Authoritarian Control of African Agriculture

The growing need for a revision of African agricultural policy was making itself felt, particularly in post-war years when African areas came to be seen as more than labour reservoirs and areas of subsistence

65) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1946.

66) E.W. Bevan, 'The Education of Natives in Pastoral Pursuits', p.16.

farming. During these years, the reserves assumed an added importance, and were viewed as potential centres of cash crop and cattle production. It was only in the 1950s, however, that positive steps were taken in this direction.

Until the late 1940s, agricultural development policies followed much the same lines as those in the early part of the century. These policies operated within the framework already provided in African areas, and no effort was made to alter the basic structure of land use patterns. While population in the reserves was still reasonably small, it was possible to extend arable acreages through development of water supplies and soil conservation in otherwise uninhabitable areas. Later, when the population became too large for continued application of this method of extension, there arose a need for a structural change in the Africans' agricultural base. This was impeded, however, by traditional tenurial patterns. Pressures in the 1940s of rapidly growing numbers, and increased migrations into reserves from white areas resulted in the abandonment of all previous policy and the pursuance of a more authoritarian method of developing African agriculture in the 1950s. During this period, methods used in pursuance of this aim rested not, as in the past, on persuasion through education and introduction of improved farming methods, but by compulsion and enforced adoption of new methods. In 1948 E.D. Alvord wrote that,

...In 1936 we here in Rhodesia started our programme of soil conservation work in the reserves. But man is now discovering that conservation is not enough. If he is to prosper where he now lives, his ploughs must turn out more and ever more from his arable land and his pastures must be made to support more and ever more livestock. In addition to soil conservation we must have soil building and maintenance under conditions of more and heavier occupation and production.⁶⁷⁾

Here Alvord realised the necessity of introducing compulsion to extension programmes. He admitted finally, after twenty years of hard work, that paternalistic endeavours to persuade the Africans to improve their techniques, would only reach a handful of them.

67) E.D. Alvord, 'The Progress of Native Agriculture in Rhodesia', in *The New Rhodesian*, August 6, 1948.

In the same speech, he commented on the need for a change in policy,

This year was the start of the second 20 year cycle of agricultural development in native areas and reserves. Heretofore we have been aiming to teach the native people to feed themselves. Hereafter our policy must change....It cannot be said that we have achieved any spectacular success even in the feeding of our people today, or at any time up to the present, as witnessed by the periodical shortages in different areas....astronomical figures are quoted of soil losses each year, and livestock losses through starvation every dry season run into the thousands.... I do not believe that it is any real answer to the problem to advocate fewer livestock or the mass movement of population. The only real answer is to improve the soil to maximum carrying capacity and maintain its productivity by proper management.⁶⁸⁾

In the same year, Alvord recommended a switch of policy from one of voluntary acceptance of improved methods, to one of enforced adoption through a Land Utilization and Good Husbandry Bill.⁶⁹⁾

Before the final step was taken, and this method resorted to, other attempts were made in the 1940s to develop and expand African agricultural output: credit facilities were made available to Africans, Native Purchase Areas were developed, and cash cropping was encouraged.

The lack of credit facilities for African farmers prior to 1945 was also responsible for the inability of many Africans, particularly farmers in the Native Purchase Areas, to become involved in commercial agriculture. The principal reason for this was that African farmers did not produce a large enough surplus to ensure repayment of loans. If money was lent, lenders were forced to accept a pledge of future earnings against the loan. The only avenue open to Africans prior to 1945 was through the sale of labour or cattle,⁷⁰⁾ or by borrowing from

68) *Ibid.*

69) *Ibid.*

70) A possible reason for lack of credit facilities prior to 1945, was that in the 1940s the labour market was full and a commercial class of African farmers was needed and these could be created without endangering the labour supply. Further, urban areas now demanded a more stable and skilled labourer, and not short term migratory labourers such as existed in the past.

public lending agencies created to meet their needs. The first such lending programme was initiated in 1945. The statutory Land Bank, which provided low-cost loans for whites usually against mortgages on the land, began to make advances to Africans in Purchase Areas - the only Africans who could make a pledge against the land.⁷¹⁾ Purchase Area farmers encountered many unforeseen difficulties in adjusting to the concept of individual tenure. Under the communal system, neighbours and kinsmen all assisted in planting and harvesting operations. In the Purchase Areas, however, this was not possible, as there were not often neighbours or kinsmen living in close proximity to these farmers. Thus there was the necessity to employ hired assistance, and this avenue was not open to them prior to the advent of credit facilities. The development of credit facilities was part and parcel of stepping up this development of African agriculture in the 1940s, particularly in view of the fact that they concentrated on Purchase Areas farmers - the one class with potential to become commercial farmers.⁷²⁾

Reserve African farmers were also encouraged to improve production in the late 1940s. In 1948, the Native Production and Markets Development Act created the Native Development Fund which came into operation in 1949. This Fund was supplementary to the sums voted by Parliament through revenue and loan votes.⁷³⁾ Money accrued to the fund in two ways. Firstly, by the pooling of various funds, the Native Maize Equalisation Fund and the District Cattle Marketing Fund, which were earmarked for special purposes prior to 1948. The releasing of these funds enabled them to be used to maximum effect to develop African

71) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.157/8. The size and scope of the programme was small. In the first ten years, less than 70 farmers received a total of less than £6,000 (*Ibid.*)

72) The fact that no credit facilities were offered prior to these years yet the existence of extension services was tolerated, ensured that they became self-sufficient, but not to the extent whereby they might become potential competitors to white farmers.

73) In 1940/1 £14,107 was voted for the development of agriculture in African areas. A paltry sum when compared with the £208,217 provided in the vote for white agriculture. After the Second World War, Africans received a larger portion of the vote, but the £2,000,000 spent on African agriculture from 1945/6 to 1953/4 was insignificant when compared to the £12,000,000 voted to white agriculture in this period.

R.H. Palmer, 'Agricultural History of Rhodesia', p.244.

production and marketing. Secondly, the government related prices of agricultural produce to costs of production of white farmers - there was no discrimination between prices paid to white and African farmers. The Act created a 10 per cent levy on all crops and cattle marketed by Africans in order to ensure that a proportion of income from production would be used to improve agricultural facilities.⁷⁴⁾ In the words of the CNC,

Native producers do not 'plough back' as development capital, anything like the same proportion of their returns from production as Europeans do. The Act, therefore, provides for a contribution from native producers towards the capital development of their areas by means of a levy on certain of the produce marketed by them...the whole of the levy and pooled funds are to be returned directly to all native producers by applying the whole of the new fund to the improvement of their production and provision of better marketing facilities.⁷⁵⁾

In this way, then, it was hoped that Africans would accumulate sufficient capital to enable them to expand production.

The Engledow Report of 1950 proclaimed that the purpose of the fund was that it be used entirely for the development of marketing and production. With regard to the Native Development Act, the report commented as follows,

...the measure, designedly experimental, brings some important advantages. It provides much needed capital for agricultural development; consolidates all the existing funds which are available for development with the new money (from a levy on sales of native agricultural produce) so giving greater freedom of use; unifies the administration of all these resources; avoids price discrimination between European and native producers; affords the means both of conserving native produce in times of shortage and encouraging types of produce specially desirable in any area. It thus seems likely to promote effectively the advisory and educational encouragements to improvement in native agriculture.⁷⁶⁾

74) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1948. In an interview Mr. Beaumont stated that the implications of those 10 per cent levies were that the higher producers were penalised, allowing inefficient producers to benefit, because the 10 per cent levy came off gross net profit.

75) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1948.

76) F. Engledow, *Report on the Agricultural Development of Southern Rhodesia*, 1950, p.90.

The Africans themselves, however, might have offset the benefits which accrued from the fund. For it to be successful, it required their co-operation and willingness to adopt new techniques. That it became necessary to apply enforced methods in 1950 may be taken as an indication that it was not entirely successful.

It was realised that for African production to be increased, marketing and transport facilities would have to be provided, and the new Fund met these demands. In this regard, the CNC wrote,

The part played by food production by communications...in a cash economy and in improved agricultural methods to promote it is largely governed by the existence of reasonable marketing and transport facilities, and that in the remote areas where they are negligible a persistant economy persists...NC Sebungwe, "Owing to the distance from railhead and resultant lack of markets there is little incentive to grow more grain than is required for personal consumption." Therefore, following the institution of the native production and marketing development fund, the highest priority has been given to the improvement of communications and from this fund and NR Fund no less than £61,000 were allotted to districts during the year for this purpose.⁷⁷⁾

Thus, in the 1940s and particularly in post-Second World War years, much effort was expended in attempting to facilitate growth of African agriculture. Yudelman has attributed the growth which took place during these years, not to agriculture, but white immigration.

"Rapid growth after the Second World War," he wrote, "...was a direct result of a rapid acceleration of European immigration into Southern Rhodesia and a large inflow of capital from the United Kingdom.

European skills and capital, combined with a plentiful supply of land and labour to expand agricultural production, to raise mining output, and to establish industry."⁷⁸⁾

Yudelman compared growth in the money sector with that of the peasant sector during the years 1938 to 1956. He found that there was little change in the productivity of African agriculture or incomes of those engaged in it in those years, and an increasing number of Africans

77) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1949.

78) M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land*, p.44.

entered the money economy as migrant labourers. In the white sector, however, net incomes increased by 800 per cent from £20,700,000 to £177,000,000. Taking into consideration population growth and rising prices for retails, this meant an average increase of 30 per cent per annum in real income. Immigrants who arrived after the Second World War had more capital than those prior to this: £31,400,000 in 1946-1953, compared with £400,00 per annum prior to the Second World War. These immigrants created a demand for goods and services and high rates of investment were made possible by funds from abroad.⁷⁹⁾

Continuing suspicion on the part of Africans to government motives contributed in part to the inability of this sector to respond to increased demand.⁸⁰⁾ The depression and the Land Apportionment Act also played a role in this regard. In the early 1920s, Africans were able to gain a foothold in the market economy through exploitation of natural resources - the use of the plough and increased acreages. In the years under review, however, as population increased, it was no longer possible, as in the past, to devote advisory services to extending arable acreage and providing water supplies. Soil deteriorated through continuous cropping and population pressure necessitated intensification of land use. In the 1940s, destocking schemes were part and parcel of fulfilling this aim. It was not until 1952 that a move was made to abolish the communal system of agriculture and implement a system of individual free-hold tenure.⁸¹⁾

In addition to the provision of credit facilities, increasing attention was devoted to the development of Purchase Areas, in order to make them more viable centres of production. Prior to the 1940s, all available staff were required in the reserves. It was believed that better farmers existed in Purchase Areas, whereas in reserves, all Africans were entitled to land irrespective of whether they could till it or not. The carrying capacity of these areas needed to be increased

79) *Ibid.*, pp.44/45.

80) *Vide supra*, pp.85/86.

81) This occurred with the passage of the Native Land Husbandry Act in 1952, but this is beyond the scope of this work.

and its usage improved. For these reasons all attention was devoted to the reserves.⁸²⁾

In the 1940s, however, more attention was focused on Purchase Areas. Until this time, the only work done was that of the Land Board,⁸³⁾ which began the work of demarcating, surveying and selling individual holdings. Progress was slow, and from 1931 to 1936, 548 Africans bought a total of 188,186 acres, the average holding being 343 acres at £74.⁸⁴⁾ Initially, no African could be induced to purchase land in these areas. Such was the situation that messengers of the Native Department and Post Office delivery boys were persuaded to purchase land in these areas in an attempt to allay suspicion.⁸⁵⁾

Reasons for this suspicion may be attributed in part to past interferences with African land holdings. Furthermore, many Purchase Areas were uninhabitable, and required the developments of water supplies and communications. There was also the problem of squatters who would have to be removed if these areas were sold. In view of the already existing problem of congestion in the reserves, officials of the Land Board were reluctant to add to it by removing additional Africans living on lands demarcated as Purchase Areas.⁸⁶⁾ Furthermore, many Africans purchasing this land did not develop it, merely leaving it as an old-age insurance for when they returned from working in the money sector. Approximately 90 per cent were not in personal occupation of their holdings and in 1939 the Land Board decided to give priority to those who would take up immediate occupation.⁸⁷⁾

During the 1930s, applicants for land in these areas were required to have between £5 and £100 in cash, cattle and small stock in order to qualify for a farm. Payments were to be spread over a period of five

82) R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

83) The Native Land Board had been established under the 1931 Land Apportionment Act *vide supra*, p.54.

84) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.213.

85) R. Dinnis, Interview, October, 1979.

86) R.H. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, pp.214-6.

87) *Ibid.*, pp.217-8.

years.⁸⁸⁾ Many Africans were reluctant to purchase land in these years, primarily because they believed they were being discriminated against in not getting a title deed as did whites,

I wished to buy a farm some time back but I felt it was not worth doing so since the Africans were not allowed to have title deeds after buying the farm. 'You know Africans get a certificate of title which is the equivalent of a title?' 'But that is not satisfactory, we prefer a proper title deed.' 'It is as good as a title deed.'⁸⁹⁾

Government indifference to Purchase Areas continued throughout the 1930s. It was only in 1939 that extension services, which had been in operation in the NRS since 1926, were given in these areas. In that year, a 'school on wheels' under command of an agricultural inspector began its duties of touring Purchase Areas and the reserves, giving aid to interested parties.⁹⁰⁾ This came at an important time: many of those Purchase Area farmers had occupied their farms in the early 1930s and had been on them for a decade; and having overcome initial obstacles, they wanted to make profits. The lack of extension advice had hampered this need; so, too, had the discriminatory marketing policies of the 1930s.

In 1944, in response to renewed demands, additional African agricultural instructors were appointed to assist in agricultural extension work amongst Purchase Area farmers.⁹¹⁾ These instructors conducted short courses in farming for groups of owners. Further changes occurred when in 1946, the government established training centres at each of the four experiment farms where ex African servicemen were given free practical training in agriculture. These were primarily for the training of those having made application to the Land Board for farms in Purchase Areas.⁹²⁾

88) Pollack, *Black Farmers and White Politics in Rhodesia, 1930-1972*, p.265.

89) NAR ZBJ 1/1/2 Mzengela.

90) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

91) *Ibid.*

92) *Ibid.*

By 1953 a Master Farmer certificate became a prerequisite for the purchase of a farm.⁹³⁾ This was partly to deal with the extremely long waiting-list for those desiring to purchase farms.⁹⁴⁾ Thereafter, many Africans became Master Farmers, with the primary intention of being able to move off the reserves into the Purchase Areas. "A sample of 286 Master Farmers in 1960 showed that 40 per cent had joined training schemes to purchase a farm, and only 60 per cent to learn better farming techniques."⁹⁵⁾

From 1930 African producers in Purchase Areas had direct access to the marketing board, and from 1949 were subject to deduction of the development levy.⁹⁶⁾ This factor acted to the detriment of improved production because it forced the more advanced Purchase Areas farmers to subsidise the more backward cultivators in reserves.⁹⁷⁾

The Agro-Economic Survey of Southern Rhodesian African Areas, conducted in 1958, found that there was a lack of labour input in Native Purchases Areas, and that these farmers were using the same techniques of production as they had been using in reserves, except on a larger scale.⁹⁸⁾ This may be attributed to the lack of development facilities until the 1950s. In 1938 a revolving fund was established to grant loans to African peasants. This body offered long, medium and short

93) D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System*, p.307. In this year there was a backlog of applicants totalling 4,110. Instead of increasing the surveying capacity, the government raised the qualifications necessary for the purchase of land. This was increased again in 1955, and came to include higher cash assets, period of involvement in farming, standard of farming previously practised, and age - preference being given to those between 30 and 40 years of age. Pollack, *Black Farmers and White Politics in Rhodesia, 1930-1972*, p.270.

94) In 1947, the CNC stated: "Recently personal occupation became a condition for approval and knowledge of proper farming methods." NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1947.

95) Pollack, *op. cit.*

96) R.W.M. Johnson, 'The Economics of Equality - African Rural Marketing in Southern Rhodesia', in *Technical Papers in Agricultural Economics*, No.6, 1963, p.10.

97) Pollack, *op. cit.*, p.269.

98) *Agro Economic Survey Part 2*, p.103.

term loans of £150, £100 and £25 respectively. Interest rates were set at 5 per cent, and repayment over a period of up to ten years depending on the type of loan.⁹⁹⁾

Interest in Purchase Areas and their contribution to the economy coincided with government efforts directed to persuading peasant farmers to increase acreages and output to meet increasing demand. Simultaneously interest arose in promoting cash cropping in furtherance of this aim. Cash crops had been introduced during earlier years, but met with little success.

It was not until the 1940s that persuasion to adopt cash crops was begun in earnest. A. Pendered, Officer of Native Production and Marketing Branch of the Native Affairs Department, stated in 1948,

Crop production...(is) primarily undertaken to supply subsistence needs and is therefore, mainly directed to growing the basic food crops of maize, small grains, groundnuts and beans, with smaller quantities of rice and wheat. Purely cash crops such as cotton were, until recently, non-existent with the growing demand for these basic foodstuffs in European areas, the native agricultural economy has become a mixed economy of subsistence and cash crops, and as marketing facilities improve so the proportion of the crop that is sold tends to increase.¹⁰⁰⁾

Pendered emphasised the crux of the problem: the lack of markets. Prior to the late 1940s, this was the largest single disincentive to the expansion of cash cropping in African areas. Indeed, the production of any marketable surplus was discouraged in the years immediately prior to, and succeeding, responsible government, except where these did not conflict with white agricultural interests.

The principal cash crop encouraged in African areas prior to the late 1940s was cotton. Cultivation of this crop in African areas started in 1924/5, at approximately the same time that whites were seeking an alternative staple to maize. A possible explanation as to why the cultivation of this crop was advocated in the reserves, was that increasing interest in this crop might divert African attention from the cultivation of maize. This white farmers welcomed at a time when

99) A.K.H. Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*, (1975), p.27.

100) NAR S611 Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch 1948.

government intervention and control was negligible in the fields of marketing and production.

Although seed was supplied free of charge by the Native Department, Africans were not easily persuaded to cultivate cotton; and in many instances it was abandoned in favour of food crops.¹⁰¹⁾ This was partly because more labour was required in its cultivation relative to that of maize. A further explanation was the insecurity involved in the cultivation of cotton: aware of the instability and lack of markets, Africans living in such close proximity to poverty could not afford to devote all their attention to cash crops in the hope of securing a market. The feeding of their people, of necessity, took precedence. The following season, after insect attacks, the experiment was abandoned and was not revived until the depression years, when white farmers once again sought to dominate the maize market. "In 1935", the CNC stated, "a special effort was made to find markets for crops Africans can grow to their advantage without meeting competition from European farmers. Cotton experiments show promise."¹⁰²⁾

Cotton experiments, then, resumed importance in the 1930s and the results achieved were more favourable than the previous attempt. Alvord, however, was initially reluctant to introduce this crop amongst Africans, believing (as did Africans themselves) that food crops were preferable to purely cash crops for which there might not be a market. Alvord, in commenting on the possible dangers involved in introducing cotton, wrote,

It is very difficult to introduce cotton among the natives, due to the fact that it is a strange crop to them and it is not a food crop. They are reluctant to substitute cotton for maize since maize is a crop which they know and from which they obtain a definite price. If a return of approximately £2.10 to £3.00 may be obtained from cotton there would be little advantage growing cotton instead of maize, where proper methods of tillage are practised, as the yields from maize will enable the growers to secure a similar return from his maize crops even at 4/- to 5/- per bag. There is no

101) M.C. Steele, 'Foundations of a Native Policy', pp.369-370.

102) NAR Annual Report of the Agriculturalist for Natives 1938.

question, however, that returns from cotton under ordinary native methods of tillage would be better than the returns they derive from the growing of maize...as the cotton give higher yields and would bring a larger cash income than maize.¹⁰³⁾

The price received for cotton in 1934 was just under £2.10 an acre, and on these results it was concluded that cotton was a suitable crop for Africans to cultivate.¹⁰⁴⁾

Furthermore, cotton had fertility-restoring properties and represented a desirable rotation crop under Alvord's scheme. This, coupled with the fact that it offered no competition to white farmers, led the Cotton Research Board in 1937 to state that, "Cotton is an ideal crop for natives to take up. It is a cash crop, offers no competition to European growers as it is an export crop, and forms an excellent rotation with maize."¹⁰⁵⁾ This was the beginning of the transition from a focus on subsistence agriculture to one in which cash crops were grafted on to subsistence practises. Henceforth commercial farming assumed growing importance. This was more noticeable in the 1940s, however, when a more concerted effort was made to introduce and popularise a variety of cash crops.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s the production of cash crops other than cotton was stimulated. In order to induce Africans to cultivate crops other than maize, whose marketing was still controlled, the Grain Marketing Act was passed in 1950 to stimulate the growing of small grains in areas most suited to those crops.¹⁰⁶⁾

Groundnut production had been encouraged by the Native Department since 1945. Pendered, the Marketing Officer, attributed this to the good prices offered for them.¹⁰⁷⁾ Attempts had been made in the 1930s to encourage African cultivation of groundnuts. This was primarily to keep Africans from any markets which whites might desire; and it was believed that production of this crop would not be of interest

103) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.1 1934 Alvord to CNC 17/11/34 Report on Cotton Growing by Natives.

104) *Ibid.*, Annual Report of Agriculturalist for Natives 1934. Cotton Growing by Natives.

105) NAR S1542 A4 Cotton Research and Industry Board 10/9/37.

106) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1950.

107) NAR Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch 1948.

to white farmers. The Assistant Agriculturalist commented in 1934,

(There is)...no fear of European farmers interfering in such a native export trade, as the price per ton of unshelled groundnuts would have to be over £20 per ton before European farmers would be interested. The cost of export to England cannot very well be under 6/6 per bag of 75 lbs. On that basis farmers would only receive 6/8 per bag.108)

It was not until the 1940s, however, that encouragement of groundnut production began in earnest, and by this time white farmers had found a secure export and staple crop in tobacco.

A major factor contributing to the lack of overall success in attempts to introduce cash cropping amongst Africans was that the predominant problem in those years - that of increasing congestion in reserves - remained unresolved. African suspicion towards demonstrators did little to alleviate this problem; and suspicions which had been allayed in the 1930s, intensified as the destocking scheme gathered momentum. In the following passage, an African comment on the opinions of the African population towards demonstrators,

Were the primitive methods of farming bad? They were not so bad in those days but they should be changed now in my opinion. Do you think the Africans are following the advice of the demonstrators? Not as I think they should because there is little suspicion on the part of some Africans. Their idea of demonstrators is to crowd them in a little space and compel them to produce so many crops in a space which is not big enough....The tendency to reduce the stocks of the Africans is the very thing that the Africans are today very much frightened of.109)

Thus the influence of demonstrators appeared to have experienced a setback at the very time when it was desired that African production be expanded.

One African stated, "The native people who are working still plow at home, we don't depend on the money we earn."¹¹⁰⁾ This was the crux of the problem in the 1940s: too many cultivators and not enough land. The fact that Africans believed that demonstrators were forcing them to decreased smaller acreages, did not make the solution any simpler.¹¹¹⁾

108) NAR S1542 A4 Vol.1 1934 Assistant Agriculturalist to the Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands 18/5/34.

109) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission. Native Mzingala.

110) NAR ZBJ 1/1/2 Wanyina

111) *Ibid.*, Nelson Charwadza.

The answer, then, appeared to lie in enforcement of improved methods in order to curtail erosion and terminate the existence of the 'part-time' cultivator who spent part of each year in the urban areas and was thus not an efficient farmer. One NC commented,

The agricultural future of the district even from the subsistence point of view is not bright unless soil conservation and improved farming methods can be enforced. The idea of improvement by gradual education is, I fear, too slow and by the time the native has arrived at the desired stage there will be little soil left that is worth cultivating.¹¹²⁾

In addition to the above, the limited number of demonstrators ensured that voluntary acceptance of improved methods would be a slow process. "By 1950 in Manicaland and S. Mashonaland," the CNC commented, "there was a 50 per cent increase in the number of demonstration centres, and with an increase of only 2-3 agricultural demonstrators respectively."¹¹³⁾

The inability of African agriculturalists to meet growing demands for agricultural produce, and the increasing degree to which soil erosion was depleting the reserves, culminated in the appointment of the Native Production and Trade Commission in 1944. In the following passage, the Marketing Officer outlined the reasons for the appointment of this Commission,

Native reserves and native areas are one-third of the economy. The agricultural potential is of importance to the economy. In the past these areas have not been relied upon to make any contribution to an integrated agricultural policy for the country as a whole, beyond producing for the subsistence requirements of their inhabitants and the sale of marketable surpluses in excess of this subsistence to the European area. The government has, through the Department of Native Agriculture, devoted increasing attention and funds to the organisation and improvement of the agricultural and pastoral production of the native peoples for the past 22 years....It has gradually become apparent that if this production is to be used effectively a suitable marketing organisation must be evolved. In 1944 the government appointed the Native Production and Trade Commission to examine there problems.¹¹⁴⁾

¹¹²⁾ NAR S1563 NC Annual Reports, 1940, NC Inyanga.

¹¹³⁾ NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1951.

¹¹⁴⁾ NAR S1611 Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch 1948.

"High priority," he later stated, "must be given to greatly improved communications to and within native production areas, lack of these is one of the greatest deterrents to would be traders."¹¹⁵⁾

In response to the demands of the Commission, the Native Production and Marketing Branch of the division of the Native Department was established in June 1948. In April of the same year, the government set up the Native Production and Marketing Council to advise on all problems of African production and marketing.¹¹⁶⁾ This Council was to survey the existing marketing facilities and advise on possible beneficial changes. The Council also decided that the scope of Alvord's work needed to be increased and advised that his staff be enlarged. When Alvord retired in 1950, he was to be replaced by two men: a Secretary for African Economic Development who was to "co-ordinate and correlate the work of the Administration, Native Agriculture, Native Land Board, Native Engineering, Native Labour and Native Marketing",¹¹⁷⁾ and under the control of the Secretary was to be the Director of Native Agriculture. The Council also advocated that a Land Utilization Bill with a Good Husbandry Act be promulgated, which were designed to enforce the adoption of improved methods.

Much time and effort was spent on examining existing conditions and deciding the most appropriate manner in which to initiate change. It was desirable not to antagonise Africans, and every attempt was made to avoid introducing changes which might evoke this form of response. Allocation of land was examined, surveys made of land potential, and amount of land allocated per family. It appeared that in non-centralised areas, land was allocated by the NC. The right of use each family was allotted depended on the NC - the maximum being 68 acres, 12 acres allotted for arable purposes, and the remainder, grazing land.¹¹⁸⁾

115) *Ibid.*

116) *Ibid.*

117) E.D. Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

118) NAR ZBJ 1/1/1 Native Production and Trade Commission 1944.

The Commission stated that, "approximately 1,000,000 of the 9,000,000 acres of arable land in the Native Reserves was protected by soil conservation works, and only a small fraction of the 12,000,000 acres of grazing lands have been protected."¹¹⁹⁾ Alvord himself thought that at the rate centralisation was going, it would be another twenty-five years before all African areas were centralised and under erosion control methods. It was obvious that something needed to be done to accelerate this pace and thereby alleviate the situation in the reserves.

In addition, the reserves would have to accommodate an increased population which was moving into them, or alternative land found for these people. "If indigenous families at present allocated in unassigned, forest and European areas," commented the CNC, "were to be accommodated in native areas, the native area would require to be increased to accommodate an additional 71,182 families, which on the basis of 100 acres per family, means an additional 7,118,200 acres."¹²⁰⁾ The allocation of additional land was not seen as the ultimate solution of the problem, for as the population increased, all land available for allocation would be allotted within the next few years.

The solution to this problem appeared to rest on re-organisation of African tenurial systems. On this subject the CNC stated,

It is pertinent to suggest at this stage that we should examine the basic principles of the native's occupation of land and make him appreciate more fully the fact that economics will not permit the whole community being agriculturalists, and that even if maximum agricultural occupation is to be achieved, this requires that natural resources must be husbanded and developed on lines that will enable posterity to carry on.¹²¹⁾

It appeared, then, that whites were willing to throw caution to the wind in one final attempt to induce Africans to both improve the condition of their soil and increase their productive capacity.

"Without some form of compulsion in proper farming methods," the CNC

¹¹⁹⁾ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁾ NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1946.

¹²¹⁾ *Ibid.*

stated, "he is unlikely to subscribe to any great extent to the economy of the colony in the export market."¹²²⁾ It was with the intention of enforcing improved agricultural practises that policy was formulated in the late 1940s. In short, it had finally been realised that progress could no longer be made within the existing framework. And that in order for production to be expanded to meet growing demands, the existing tenorial system in the reserves would have to be transformed into one more capable of meeting these demands.

In the eyes of administrators, the only possible solution was to enforce individual tenure. This would create a system of permanent agriculture and terminate shifting cultivation. Furthermore, it was hoped this would bring to an end the system of migratory labour, creating both a permanent rural and urban African with greater efficiency in both areas. And it was with these aspirations in mind that the Native Land Husbandry Act was passed in 1951. This represented the culmination of more than a decade of slow moves towards authoritarian control, resulting from lack of success in the use of persuasive endeavour.

122) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1947.

"For some years now we have thought about them as a mass of individuals.....All our planning was based on an approach to individuals - how to change the isolated independent cultivator on his patch of land and how to persuade or force him to increase his productivity.

In the first twenty years we tried to change him by demonstration and persuasion. When this was found to be a failure, policy shifted to one of 'compulsory planned production under discipline to ensure progress' '".

R.G. Howman, Economic Growth and Community Development,
pp. 26/7

6.1 Conclusion

It has been revealed in this work that, during the period under review, African agricultural policy in Southern Rhodesia was dictated and determined by events which occurred in the white sector of the economy. This analysis of the chain of events culminating in the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951, which enforced the adoption of improved methods of agriculture under individual tenure, has indicated that this movement toward authoritarian control of African agriculture did not come primarily as a result of an inherent inability of Africans to respond to the necessity to change. African resistance to change came more as a result of hostility and suspicion towards the white sector, and the latter's vascillating attitudes as to the role the African agricultural sector was to assume in the national economy.

Prior to the turn of the century, then, white settler effort was absorbed in the mineral wealth of the country and its exploitation. Accordingly, little time and effort was expended in the administration of Africans. The latter were permitted to continue unhindered on the same land and in the same manner as they had done in pre-colonial days.¹⁾ The only demands made on this sector were twofold. Firstly, the Africans were to supply agricultural produce to the mines, which they were able to do by extending arable lands into as yet unoccupied areas of Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, the Africans were to supply labour for the mines. This was ensured by the imposition of a hut tax which forced many Africans, especially those in the more remote areas, to seek wage labour in order to meet their financial obligations.²⁾

When, at the turn of the century, the settlers realised that the mineral wealth of Southern Rhodesia was not as vast as was originally anticipated, it was decided that an alternative must be sought for the country's economic base. Land, an apparently abundant resource, therefore, came to play an increasingly important role in attaining this desired end; and land settlement schemes were devised in furtherance

1) *vide supra*, Ch.2.1.

2) *vide supra*, p.19.

of this aim.³⁾ At this stage, sale of African agricultural produce provided undesirable competition for white farmers, and attention was therefore directed towards curtailing the continuation of this competition. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, this was not achieved through the passage of direct preventative legislation, but was realised through the indirect, though much welcomed, result of land policy.⁴⁾

The Native Reserves Commission of 1914 had as its specific aim the setting aside of areas fit for African occupation. The need for such a Commission had arisen as white farming extended into areas previously unoccupied by Africans; and as a result of the Commission's recommendations, Africans were frequently pushed into areas remote from the centres of mining activity.⁵⁾ This factor, coupled with the inefficient transport network of those years, severed African access to markets in many instances; and this forced them onto the labour market, which at this time was expanding owing to increased white farming and mining activity.

The Native Reserves Commission thus fulfilled two aims: it curtailed the sale of surplus produce by Africans, thus facilitating the expansion of white farming; and increased the labour supply of the country.⁶⁾ The need for Africans to enter the labour market in order to gain an alternative source of capital income to meet their financial obligations, appears to have decreased further the productivity of African agriculture. A large proportion of the African male population was absent from the reserves at crucial times; and they represented the most productive element in African society.⁷⁾

With the attainment of self-government in 1923, attitudes towards the purpose of the reserves underwent a fundamental change. They were no longer seen as temporary areas of refuge - enclaves for the old and infirm - for which the need would gradually cease as Africans were

3) *vide supra*, pp.161/2.

4) *vide supra*, Ch.2.2.

5) *vide supra*, pp.30-35.

6) *vide supra*, pp.33-40.

7) *vide supra*, p.40.

assimilated into the exchange economy. Instead, they came to be seen as areas in which Africans could develop along their own lines and in their own direction.⁸⁾

The passage of the Land Apportionment Act in 1931 reinforced these changing opinions. The inclusion of the clause stipulating that all Africans residing on white land were to move into the reserves within six years of the Act's passage, led administrators to reconsider the position of the reserves. The carrying capacity of the latter had to be increased in order that they might accommodate more people, and in furtherance of this objective, they were to be developed and not merely augmented as had been the policy in previous years. Furthermore, attention was drawn to deteriorating land conditions in those areas owing to congestion and the practise of shifting cultivation. With increased population pressure in the reserves, soil no longer had sufficient time to recover before being brought under cultivation once more.⁹⁾

It was thus decided to introduce schemes whereby Africans could be taught improved methods of agriculture - not so that they might compete with whites for scarce markets, but that they might obtain a subsistence existence from the land. In this way, the government would be relieved of the potentially enormous financial burden of maintaining the African population. Hence the introduction of African agricultural demonstrators.¹⁰⁾ Demonstrator effort in those years was directed primarily at terminating extensive methods of cultivation. Thereby it was hoped to allow an increased population to reside in the reserves, and at the same time curtail the ravages of soil erosion which was rendering many areas uninhabitable.¹¹⁾

In this manner, the apparent paradox at the base of African policy in those years was resolved. The decision to develop African areas, while at the same time reinforcing and consolidating the movement towards racial segregation thereby terminating African agricultural

8) *vide supra*, pp.42-45.

9) *vide supra*, pp.56/7.

10) *vide supra*, Ch.3.2.

11) *vide supra*, Ch.3.2.

competition, were in fact complementary rather than conflicting policies. If segregation was to be fostered, then African areas would have to facilitate a much larger population than were residing there at the time, and it was for these reasons that development schemes were augmented in the 1920s.

The fact that these schemes did not achieve any great measure of success in the years preceding the onset of the 'Great Depression' in the late 1920s, may be attributed not so much to the inability of Africans to adopt new methods, but to a combination of other disadvantageous factors. More important deterrents in these years were the relative insignificance of the small staff assigned to this task of almost leviathan proportions, and inadequate finance. So small a staff could not hope to engineer a major agrarian revolution amongst the vast numbers of people subsisting on such wide and scattered areas. Furthermore, finances allocated for the execution of this task were not in proportion with the nature of the task itself.¹²⁾

Land legislation in many cases also had the effect of undoing much of the demonstrators' success: the task of improving African agricultural techniques was often relegated second place to the task of restoring land conditions and the opening-up of previously uninhabitable land, for human occupation. With increased pressure in the reserves from population and stock, demonstrators, in most instances barely managed to keep abreast with deterioration in these areas.¹³⁾ Land legislation also had important psychological ramifications on the African populace. So much of their land had already been expropriated that many Africans quite justly feared that should it be seen that they could exist on even smaller areas, more land would be withdrawn from their usage. Expropriation of their cattle in the 1890s also made them reluctant to improve the quality of their stock for fear that this policy would be resumed.¹⁴⁾

The final contribution to African reluctance to accept demonstrator

12) *vide supra*, pp.84-89.

13) *vide supra*, pp.84-89.

14) *vide supra*, pp.85-86.

advice was the nature of their way of life itself. Living, as they did, so close to the poverty line made the risk involved in adopting new techniques that much greater.¹⁵⁾ Their own methods were well tried and had ensured their continued survival. What, then, would be the purpose of adopting what were for most Africans untried and therefore risky innovations?

With the spread of the depression in the early 1930s, African policy was again subjected to fluctuating trends in the economic base of the white sector. With the drop in maize prices in those years, white farmers, already in an unstable position owing to lack of a secure staple crop, were placed in an even more vulnerable position.¹⁶⁾ This culminated in government control of marketing and prices, and more attention came to be devoted to the termination of African competition.¹⁷⁾ Not only did the system of maize control operate against African producers, but the programme of demonstrator training was also cut back in order to eliminate even the possibility of African competition.

Towards the end of the 1930s, however, a slight lessening of white hostility towards African agriculture began to manifest itself. This change came not as a result of a more paternalistic concern on the part of the government and white settlers over the Africans' well-being. Rather this change may be attributed to the growing security of the white farming sector which had found in tobacco a secure export staple. Alongside this, the need arose for increased African agricultural contribution in complimentary fields, such as maize for domestic consumption, the cultivation of which white farmers had forsaken in favour of tobacco.¹⁸⁾

Furthermore, the demands of the labour market had been modified slightly. With the development of a nascent secondary industrial factor, unskilled migrant labour was no longer considered to be efficient. Thus in the 1940s attention came to be devoted to the creation of a class of semi-skilled permanent wage-earners in the urban areas, and

15) *vide supra*, p.84.

16) *vide supra*, p.90/1.

17) *vide supra*, Ch.4.1.

18) *vide supra*, Ch.4.2.

a permanent sector of the African population devoted to agricultural production.¹⁹⁾ In this regard, the CNC stated in 1948,

To attain the maximum production and carrying capacity of population in African areas and convert them to a cash economy which the need for increasing the Colony's food supplies and the spending power of the African demands, it is essential to have a stable population... which can devote its full time to production, and to eliminate from Native Reserves the excess of population for all of which land is not and can never be available.²⁰⁾

In this way, it was hoped, crop production would no longer be left in the hands of the less productive elements: women and old men. The absence of able-bodied adult men meant the absence of innovators. With the creation of a permanent urban and rural African population, however, this practise would cease.

The increasing attention devoted to the encouragement of cash cropping, and the development of rural credit facilities in those years, substantiates the opinion that more concern was evident in the attempt to increase African agricultural productivity. Simultaneous with this device, there occurred a growing awareness of the deterioration of natural resources throughout the entire country, particularly the rampant spread of soil erosion. This evil was not confined to African areas alone. Indeed, prior to 1945, white farmers employed essentially the same cultivation techniques as the African, the difference in those years being one of scale and not of technology.²¹⁾ To this end, the Natural Resources Act was passed in 1941 and compulsory destocking in African areas was begun. This Act ensured protection of the natural resources and the simultaneous increase in output as more favourable conditions returned.²²⁾

Until the 1940s, all schemes undertaken in the African areas had been introduced on a voluntary basis. Extension services were based on persuasion rather than compulsion.²³⁾ In the 1940s, however, with growing concern over natural resources and the need for a greater

19) *vide supra*, Ch.5.2.

20) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1948.

21) R.H. Palmer, 'White Farmers in Central Africa: A Study in Brevity', p.10.

22) *vide supra*, pp.134/5.

23) *vide supra*, Ch.5.2.

African agricultural contribution, it came to be realised that methods previously employed were not providing the required results. "The fraction of the whole that has adopted the improved methods," the CNC stated, "is so small that if the present policy is continued, the land occupied by Africans will be irretrievably ruined agriculturally before a sufficient number are putting these methods into practise."²⁴⁾ In these years, therefore, a more authoritarian approach to the problem was adopted. In this regard the CNC stated, "Without some form of compulsion in proper farming methods he is unlikely to subscribe to any extent to the economy of the Colony in the export market."²⁵⁾ When it was finally realised that the problems of markets and communications were inhibitive factors in eliciting African response to growing demands, the Native Production and Trade Commission was appointed in 1944. This commission reported that compulsory planned production was the only way to ensure increased output.²⁶⁾

Many of the Commission's recommendations were embodied in the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951. This Act represented a complete reversal of all previous policies. Changes in crop production and animal husbandry techniques were to be enforced through the creation of individual land tenure in the reserves. It had been realised that demonstrators were not making much headway and that further changes could no longer be facilitated within the existing framework. Increased productivity necessitated a change in the basic structure of the tribal system to one embracing more capital-and land-intensive means of production. That is, a structural change from one of conservation, and moving into hitherto unoccupied land, to intensive cultivation of existing land under a system of individual tenure.²⁷⁾

In the final analysis, then, the demonstrator programme lacked complete success, not as a result of an inherent flaw within the

24) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1950.

25) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1947.

26) *vide supra*, pp.157/8.

27) *vide supra*, pp.158-60.

scheme itself, but largely as a result of exogenous factors. It was not intended that they attempt to commercialise African agriculture, but merely improve existing methods. This in itself was difficult to achieve when Africans themselves saw no reason to improve and increase production if they were to be deprived of markets. In the 1940s, when it was desired that African agricultural production be increased, demonstrators themselves were no longer as efficient as they had been in earlier years. In order to increase the scope of the movement demonstrator training had been placed in the hands of missionaries and other bodies; and in 1951, ploholders, Master Farmers and Co-operators were recruited on a part-time basis to assist regular demonstrators.²⁸⁾ This resulted in a deterioration in the level of efficiency in the training of demonstrators which became evident in field-work undertaken in the reserves.²⁹⁾

In looking at demonstrator efforts in their entirety, it must then be asked whether the scheme actually did lack success. If one examines their achievements within the framework of preventative measures, particularly in earlier years, and in relation to the enormous obstacles which had to be surmounted, then their achievements were quite remarkable. Furthermore, one must consider how much greater deterioration there might have been had there been no demonstrators. "This is the first time in the Colony's history," remarked the CNC, "that we have had a major drought and famine which has cost the government practically nothing by way of famine relief to the native population."³⁰⁾ In addition, many have been prone to judge African contribution by the quantity of crops marketed. It must be remembered however, that these figures represent only a portion of total output: the bulk of production was retained in reserves for local consumption, which quantity whites would have had to supply if African production had not been sufficient.

It is hoped that this study has provided a guide to African agricultural development from 1890 to 1950. It is also hoped that this work will

28) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1957.

29) R. Dinnis, Interview, October 1979.

30) NAR Annual Report of the CNC for the year 1947.

illuminate the fact that Africans were not poor agriculturalists, but that many of their shortcomings were consequent upon exogenous influences exerted upon them by the white sector. Finally, it is hoped that it will be appreciated that demonstrator efforts, particularly those prior to the 1940s, were not unsuccessful. Indeed in the light of the obstacles Alvord and his staff faced in those years, the successes achieved were outstanding.

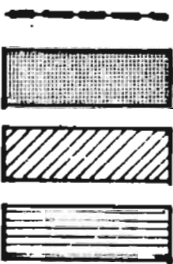
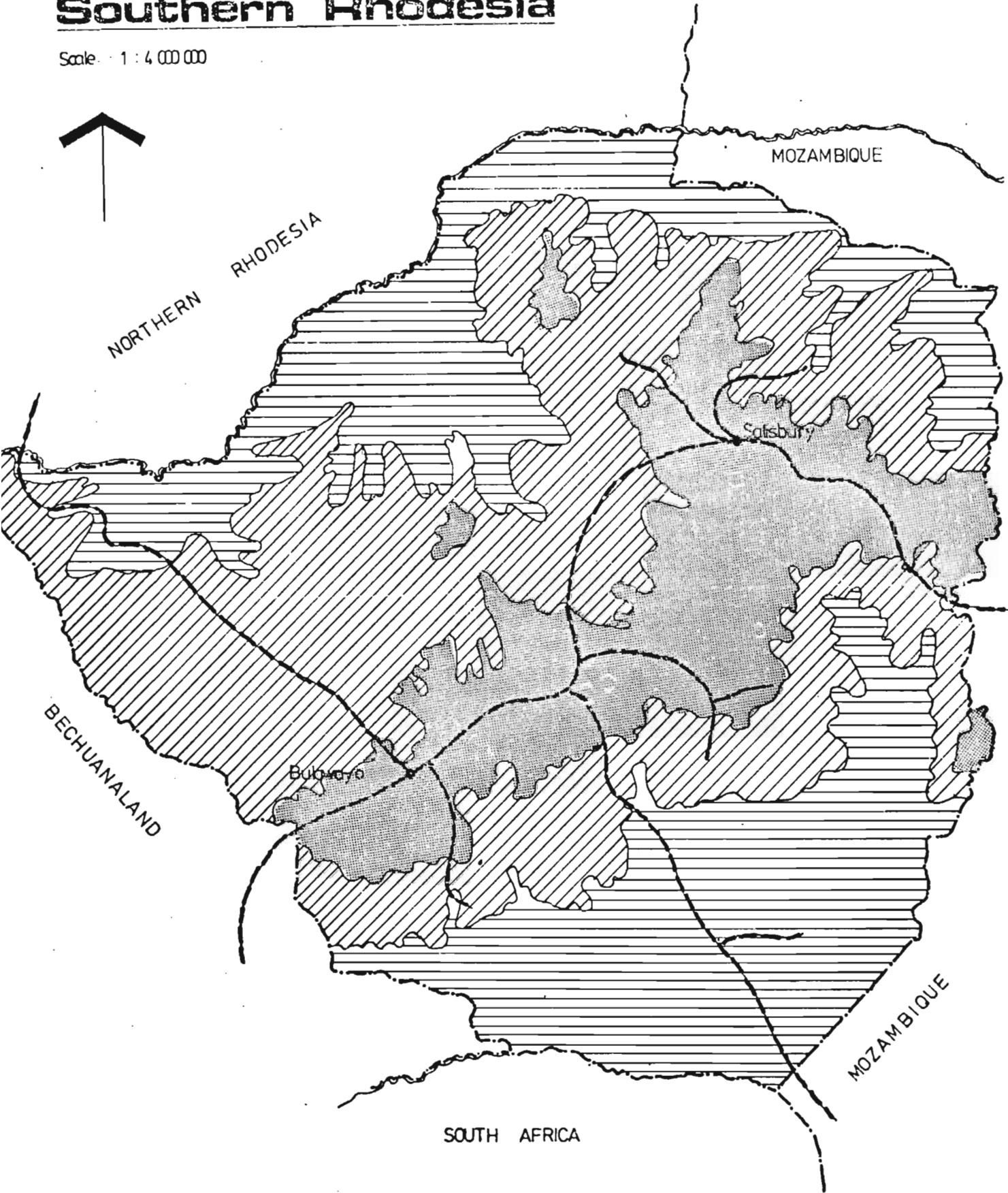
170.

APPENDICES 1 - 6

M A P S

Southern Rhodesia

Scale : 1 : 4 000 000



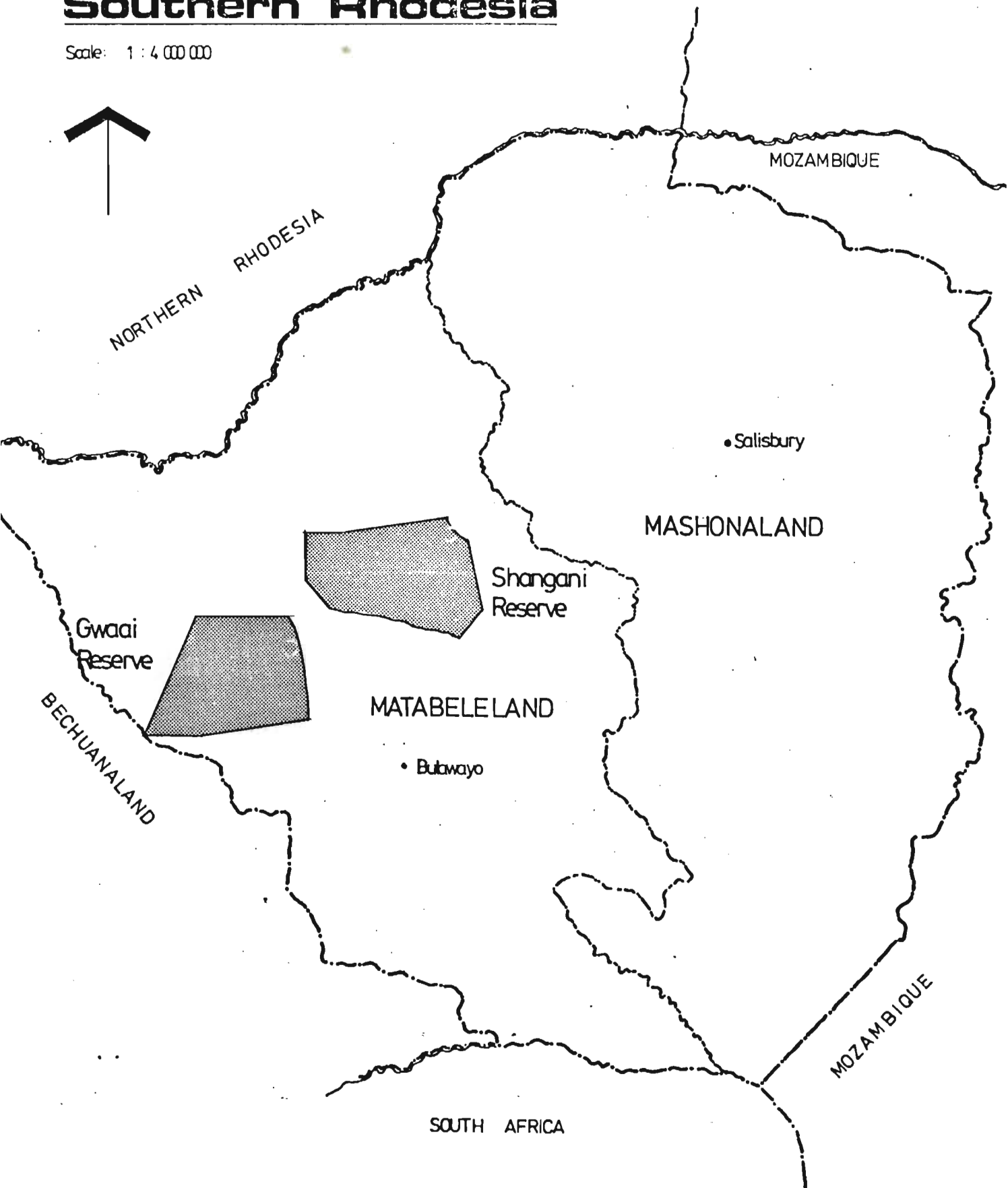
- RAILWAY LINES
- HIGHVELD (OVER 4000' / 1200m)
- MIDDLE VELD (3000' - 4000' / 900m - 1200m)
- LOW VELD (BELOW 3000' / 900m)

appendix 1

MAP SHOWING THE THREE VELDS

Southern Rhodesia

Scale: 1 : 4 000 000



NATIVE RESERVES



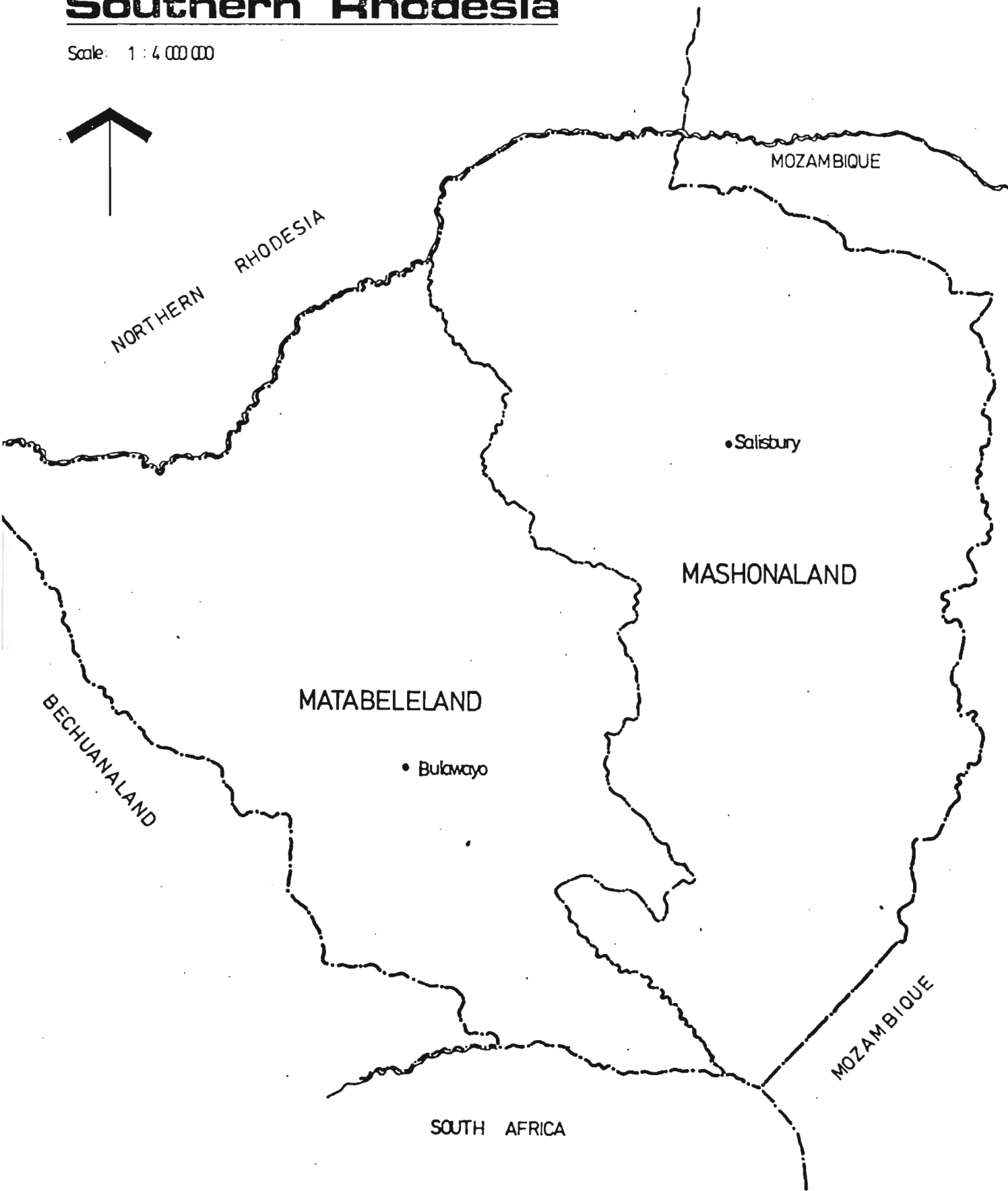
PROVINCIAL BOUNDARY

appendix 2

NATIVE RESERVES . 1894

Southern Rhodesia

Scale: 1 : 4 000 000



— PROVINCIAL BOUNDARY

appendix 3

THE TWO PROVINCES

Southern Rhodesia

Scale: 1 : 4 000 000

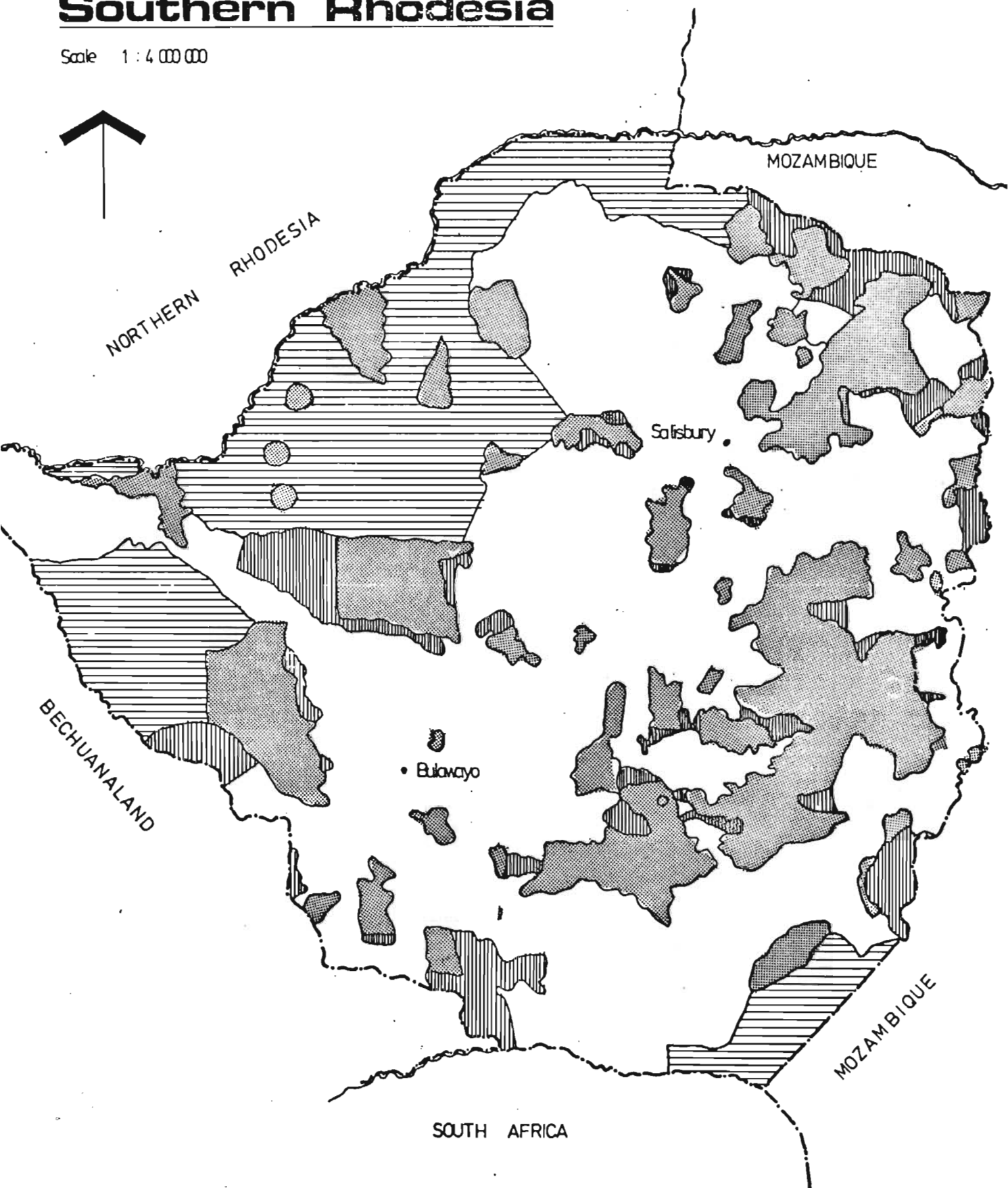


appendix 4

NATIVE RESERVES . 1910

Southern Rhodesia

Scale 1 : 4 000 000



NATIVE RESERVES

NATIVE PURCHASES AREA

EUROPEAN AREA

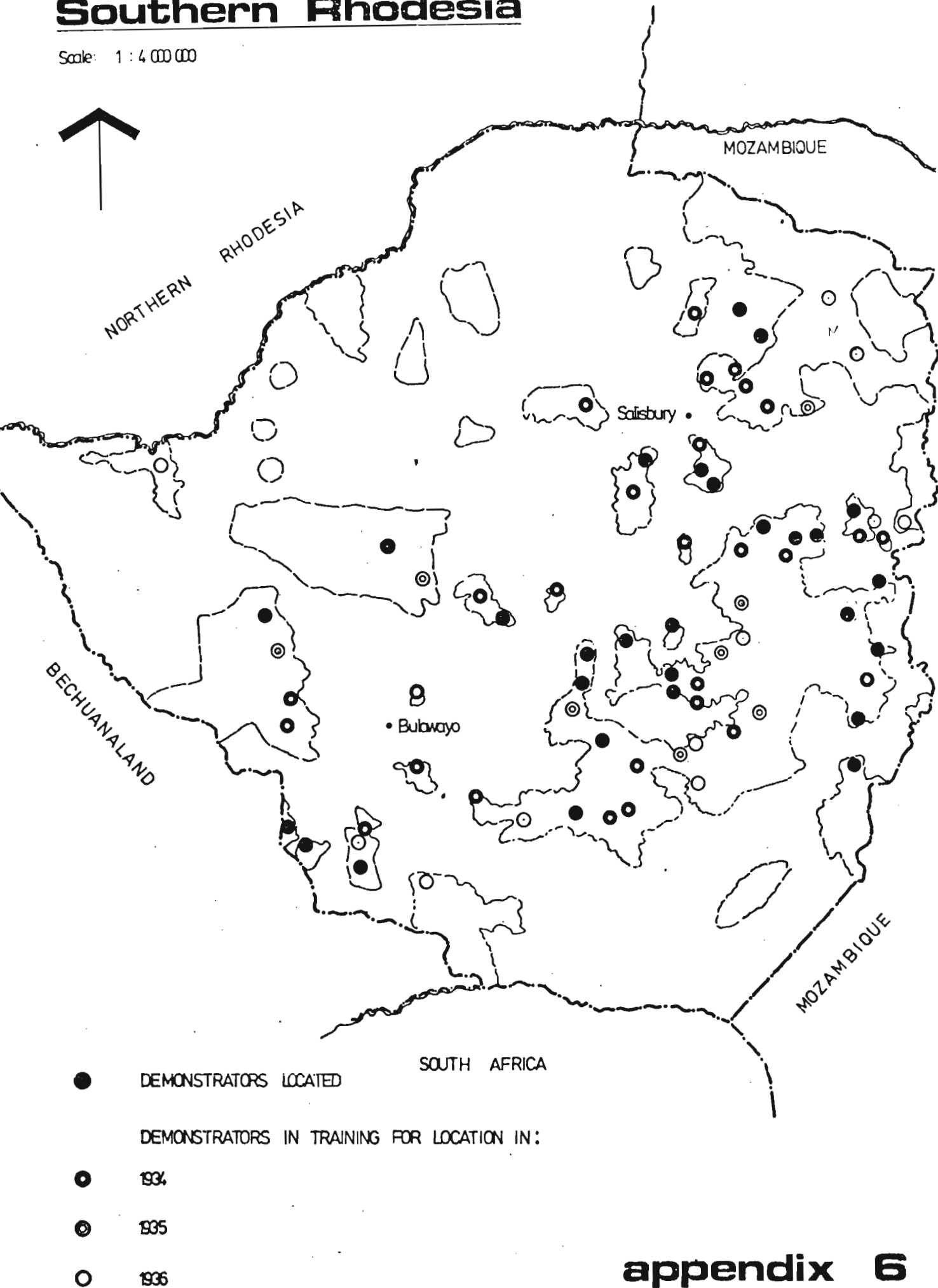
AREA FOR FUTURE
DETERMINATION

appendix 5

LAND APPORTIONMENT . 1930

Southern Rhodesia

Scale: 1 : 4 000 000



appendix 6

FARMING DEMONSTRATION WORK ON NATIVE RESERVES

APPENDIX 7

COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMONSTRATION WORK BY SEASONS

COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMONSTRATION WORK BY SEASONS (1)

SEASONS	CENTRE	NUMBER OF PLOTS	PLOTS: ACRES	YIELD IN BAGS OF 200 LBS		AVERAGE YIELD ON NATIVE LANDS
			TOTAL	TOTAL YIELD	YIELD PER ACRE	
1926-27	2	11	11	139	12,7	2,4
1927-28	11	88	90	432	4,8	1,3
1928-29	16	196	203	2,136	10,9	1,9
1929-30	15	198	163	1,499	9,2	1,8
1930-31	21	255	227	2,182	9,6	1,2
1931-32	30	491	335	4,548	13 6	1,1
1932-33	35	742	532	4,237	7,5	0,6
1933-34	41	1,280	1,042	10,680	10,2	0,8
1934-35	50	1,722	1,372	11,847	7,9	0,8
1935-36	60	2,407	1,867	19,301	10,3	1,1
1936-37	64	3,108	2,237	25,047	11,2	1,2
1937-38	64	3,533	2,501	18,160	7,2	0,7
1938-39	65	4,215	2,948	28,075	9,5	1,8
1939-40	66	5,619	4,141	43,381	10,4	2,0
1940-41	74	6,929	4,930	38,351	7,7	0,6
1941-42	74	1,898	1,277	11,811	9,2	0,8
1942-43	84	3,372	2,296	23,039	10,4	1,2
1943-44	93	4,597	2,526	29,258	11,6	1,4
1944-45	99	5,938	3,203	40,988	12,8	1,9
1945-46	103	5,393	3,680	37,604	10,0	1,9
1946-47	118	6,374	5,082	31,471	6,2	1,0
1947-48	134	7,352	5,679	57,068	10,1	2,5
1948-49	163	7,948	7,051	60,676	8,6	2,1
TOTALS	1,482	72,849	53,394	501,930	-	-
23 YR. AVERAGE	64	3,167	2,321	21,823	9,4	1,3

(1) Taken from the Annual Reports of the Agriculturalist for Natives

APPENDIX 8

COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK BY SEASONS

COMPARATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATION WORK BY SEASONS (2)

YEAR	NO OF DEMON- STRATORS	VILLAGES LAID OUT	ONE ROOMED ROUND HOUSES	MORE THAN ONE ROOM	CHURCH & SCHOOL	GRAIN HUTS	IMPROVED WATER SUPPLIES	MILES OF VILLAGE ROAD GRADED	TREE PLANTA- TIONS STARTED
1933	1	1	13	7	-	-	-	-	15
1934	1	27	27	14	-	22	-	-	18
1935	4	608	388	38	-	248	16	40	21
1936	10	158	2,189	74	6	1,127	22	25	103
1937	12	319	6,550	120	18	5,149	42	22	2
1938	12	306	10,439	232	23	9,512	35	29	-
1939	19	285	3,804	264	42	7,370	14	15	44
1940	24	400	5,816	1,329	63	4,153	75	70	40
1941	29	324	4,910	1,415	43	2,523	51	22	18
1942	38	820	9,819	1,717	63	7,611	106	74	83
1943	42	786	11,117	1,654	55	7,482	79	83	53
1944	46	566	13,139	1,021	149	5,753	254	163	11
1945	63	1,338	12,310	1,663	155	4,249	283	485	15
1946	69	1,703	12,669	1,415	185	5,537	394	156	272
1947	75	999	5,279	1,738	163	3,481	930	168	144
1948	86	1,374	13,092	1,854	193	6,447	427	239	151
1949	79	1,214	16,286	3,618	302	6,775	833	266	128
TOTALS		10,680	127,847	17,903	1,460	78,439	3,611	1,797	1,138

(2) E.D.Alvord, ' The Gospel of the Plow'.

APPENDIX 9

COMPARATIVE PRODUCTION FROM IRRIGATION PROJECTS

COMPARATIVE PRODUCTION FROM IRRIGATION PROJECTS (3)

NAME OF PROJECT	YEAR OPENED	FIRST YEAR ACRES	YIELD	YEAR 1949 ACRES	YIELD	ALL TIME TOTAL ACRES	YIELD	NUMBER OF FAMILIES
MUTEMA	1931	27	418	440	1,529	6,305	30,101	125
NYANYADZI	1934	48	422	1,111	7,688	8,280	53,588	279
MUTAMBARA	1936	139	1,165	398	1,573	3,472	18,006	120
MVUMVUMVA	1936	38	134	369	2,487	2,939	17,687	105
CHIBUWE	1940	16	126	146	708	954	4,370	64
MARANKE	1942	112	406	219	1,217	1,077	5,205	61
DEVULI	1947	150	686	465	2,687	615	3,375	109
TOTALS	7	530	3,357	3,148	17,889	23,642	132,330	864

(3) E.D.Alvord, 'The Gospel of the Plow'.

APPENDIX 10

ESTIMATED GROSS VALUE OF EUROPEAN AGRICULTURE (1925-1957).

ESTIMATED GROSS VALUE OF EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT, 1925-1957 (£000's) (4)

YEAR	FIELD HUSBANDRY	ANIMAL HUSBANDRY	TOTAL
1925	970	1,010	1,980
1928	1,830	1,500	3,330
1931	1,270	870	2,140
1934	2,110	1,190	3,300
1938	2,280	1,490	3,770
1940	3,120	1,770	4,890
1944	5,610	2,450	8,060
1948	15,220 ⁽⁴⁾	3,400	18,590
1952	26,980	7,030	34,010
1956	33,465	9,668	43,133
1957	33,912	11,174	45,086

Notice the rapid increase in value of crop output from 1944-1948, more than doubling the total value of output in these years. The bulk of this increase in crop sales came from an increase in the output of tobacco.

The noticeable increase in total agricultural sales in the 1940s explains the lessening of white fears of African competition, and hostility displayed towards the latter in these years.

(4)W.J. Barber, *The Economy of British Central Africa*, P. 132.

APPENDIX 11

SUMMARY OF SOIL CONSERVATION WORK IN NATIVE AREAS

SUMMARY OF SOIL CONSERVATION WORK IN NATIVE AREAS, 1936-1944 (5)

YEAR	CONTOURS	DRAINS & STRIPS	TOTAL	AREAS PROTECTED
1936	15	2	17	379
1937	155	8	163	3,879
1938	542	14	556	13,550
1939	1,501	122	1,623	37,525
1940	2,179	86	2,265	54,456
1941	1,901	299	2,200	47,525
1942	1,349	238	1,587	33,775
1943	2,548	452	3,000	64,066
1944	863	119	981	20,530
TOTAL	11,053	1,340	12,393	275,685

(5) NAR Annual Report of the Director of Nature Agriculture for the year 1944.

APPENDIX 12

TABLE I : STATISTICS FOR AFRICAN CATTLE NUMBERS IN NATIVE
RESERVES.

TABLE II : NUMBERS OF CATTLE SOLD TO EUROPEANS.

NUMBERS OF CATTLE SOLD TO EUROPEANS (7)

Sales of African Cattle increased markedly from 1931-1937 that is, in the years immediately preceeding compulsory destocking, thereafter, increase in sales was even more marked.

YEAR	HEAD OF CATTLE SOLD
1920	21,460
1926	27,144
1930	79,248
1931	41,156
1937	105,357
1938	156,851
1950	605,404

- (7) *Yearbook and Guide to the Rhodesia and Nyasaland*, 1939-1940
Statistics for Sales in 1950 taken from CNC Report, 1950.

STATISTICS PERTAINING TO AFRICAN CATTLE IN NATIVE RESERVES OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA
1902-1950 (6)

YEAR	NUMBER OF CATTLE OWNED	YEAR	NUMBER OF CATTLE OWNED
1902	55,000	1931	1628,299
1911	550,000	1932	1755,610
1913	377,090	1933	1748,621
1914	406,180	1934	1708,465
1915	445,795	1935	1853,462
1916	491,522	1936	1547,623
1917	551,632	1937	1582,062
1918	610,105	1938	1555,806
1919	652,776	1939	1590,310
1920	744,402	1940	1636,496
1921	854,493	1941	1768,690
1922	864,894	1942	-
1923	927,343	1943	1824,521
1924	1005,270	1944	1915,534
1925	1095,841	1945	1911,644
1926	1197,466	1946	1884,334
1927	1370,567	1947	1709,549
1928	1420,913	1948	1712,346
1929	1495,803	1949	1815,733
1930	1558,075	1950	-

(6) Statistics taken from CNC Annual Reports, 1902-1950.

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APPENDIX 13

COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS OF STATISTICS: STOCK AND AGRICULTURE

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF STATISTICS : STOCK (8)
AND AGRICULTURE

YEAR	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CATTLE	NUMBER OF PLOUGHS IN USE	ESTIMATED ACREAGE UNDER CULTIVATION
1902	55,155	Not Recorded	534,426
1911	330,403	3,402	843,336
1921	854,498	16,913	1180,460
1926	1197,466	27,584	1204,385
1931	1628,299	53,507	1429,106
1936	1547,623	79,015	1388,892
1941	1768,690	108,431	1765,230
1942	1765,919	115,688	1821,775
1943	1824,521	118,960	1843,502
1944	1915,534	121,081	1974,084
1945	1911,644	132,685	2095,940
1946	1844,334	139,705	2206,159
1947	1709,549	144,251	2202,432
1948	1722,346	150,782	2256,182
1949	1815,733	168,178	2252,000
1950	1832,415	173,690	2715,920

(8) NAR Report of Native Production and Marketing Branch for the year 1950.

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- i. Contemporary Works
- ii. Recent Works

B. Articles and Pamphlets

- i. Contemporary Works
- ii. Recent Works

3. THESES

1. PRIMARY SOURCESA Unpublished

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N3/11/1-3	<i>Native Commissioner Correspondence</i>
N3/11/4-8	<i>Native Commissioner Correspondence</i>
N3/ 3/1-7	<i>Native Commissioner Correspondence</i>
N3/6/3	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, 1903.</i>
N9/2/13	<i>Native Commissioner Half Yearly Reports, 1897-1923.</i>
N9/1/1 - N9/1/13	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, Mashonaland, 1895-1910.</i>
N9/1/13 - N9/1/18	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, Mashonaland and for the whole of Southern Rhodesia after 1912, 1910-1915.</i>
N9/1/18 -N9/1/23	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, 1915-1921.</i>
N9/1/23 - N9/1/24	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, 1921-1924.</i>
S235/502 - S235/505	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, 1924-1927.</i>
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S235/516 - S235/518	<i>Native Commissioner Reports, 1938-1946.</i>
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S1611	<i>Report of the Native Production and Marketing Branch for the year 1948.</i>
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ZAJ1/1/1	<i>Evidence to the Land Commission, 1925.</i>
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Mr. Dinnis founded the Native Co-operative Movement in the 1950s, becoming under secretary for Native Co-operatives and Loans.

Mr.D. Hampton, Personal Interview, November 1979.

Mr. Hampton was principal of Domboshawa school on the Chindamora Reserve from 1934-1963.

Mr. Beaumont, Personal Interview, July 1978.

Mr. Beaumont is currently Chief Extension and Training Officer for Devag in Salisbury, Rhodesia.

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